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# BEFORE THE END OF THE WORLD

No. 2 Vol. 1 9 March 2007 Bennington College  
www.BeforeTheEnd.org

## Bennington Radio due to make waves

by Andrew Hobbs

After three years without a radio station Bennington College almost found itself with two. Students Kyle Schroeder, Will Lulofs, Michael Nordine and Devin Gaffney applied for and received funding from student council last term to set up an independent internet radio station. At the same time faculty member Julie Last has been working within the administration to gain access to the old broadcasting equipment, funding for improvements, a new location and cooperation from the Information Technology department to set up a web page for podcasts.

### Location an Obstacle

This term Julie is teaching a course on radio production and radio stories. The two groups were unaware of each other until this past week and have now begun talks of joining

**Perhaps the biggest  
obstacle at  
present is finding  
a suitable location.**

forces and resources. Perhaps the biggest obstacle at present is finding a suitable location. Three years ago the station operated from the third floor of commons but the room is now off limits since the entire area has been condemned.

At one time there were plans to renovate the area

where the snack bar used to be into a media center for students. A section of the space would have been reserved for the radio station. Plans for that part of commons have changed and the radio has been forced to start a search for other spaces. Currently the student run internet station has gained permission to use one of the rooms in the Fels quad. At this point in time it is unclear whether or not the broadcast station will be able to function from one of the Barnes house quads. The transmitter is weak and requires a strategic placing to get the most coverage over campus.

### Variety of Programming

Both Julie Last and the student operated radio hope and look forward to wide student participation and a variety of programming. Schroeder hopes to have many genres of music, comedy, interviews with big visitors to campus, and announcements. Lasts' students will personally produce various segments but also intend to make available a number of other student works. This includes recordings of music workshop, music festivals, campus bands, local bands, alumni creations, emusic projects, and a special *Before The End* news segment.

Schroeder estimates that the internet station will be up and running in two weeks.

*If you are interested in contributing broadcast material or assistance to the radio effort at Bennington College feel free to contact Kyle Schroeder by e-mail, at [kschroeder@bennington.edu](mailto:kschroeder@bennington.edu) or myself at 703-489-0540 or [ahobbs@bennington.edu](mailto:ahobbs@bennington.edu).*

## Hell on Earth?

by Eliza Slater

If there is a hell on Earth right now, it is probably located in the western region of Sudan called Darfur. You have probably heard some scattered details about the current goings on in this area, but more likely than not, you really don't know or care much. And why should you? Since America's headlines are occupied by the location of the corpse of a celebrity super model and the hair choices of a pop drama queen, there is clearly little room or attention for such trivialities as the brutality and violence that has resulted in the murder of at least 400,000 Africans. Let us not follow the shallow, absurdly self-absorbed, narcissistic footsteps of the general Western populous. Let us instead elect to become knowledgeable about situations of importance on the grander scale,

even if they do not directly or personally affect us – even if they are situations that take place in a third world country half way around the world.

In a short article in a student newspaper, only the surface of the immensely complex conflict in Darfur can be tapped.

**More likely than  
not, you really  
don't know or  
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why should you?**

But maybe if we can just begin to understand some of the basic facts governing the atrocities being committed in Darfur, we as individuals, as a campus, a community, a nation, and a world can take action in relieving the immense suffering cur-

rently being endured by much of the Sudanese population.

In 2003, rebel forces composed mainly of farmers and nomads from the region of Darfur began to attack government-associated targets with the aim of obtaining a voice and governmental support for their generally ignored region of the country. In response, the Sudanese government deployed militias to "defend" the government and its representatives. Despite the government's denial of a correspondence with the militia referred to as the Janjaweed, many sources lead to the speculation that it is this group that is allegedly responsible (with the lure of a government stipend) for the vast majority of the "calculated campaign of displacement, starvation, rape, and mass slaughter" that currently defines the state

See DAFUR on Page #

## Here comes the cavalry



African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) troops onboard a transport awaiting orders. AMIS remains the only external military force in Sudan's Darfur region. The Sudanese Government has rejected all other offers of outside assistance.

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TUE  
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THUR  
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## READERS' FORUM

*Opinions within this section belong solely to the author and in absolutely no way represent the views of Before The End or its staff.*

### *An open letter to the campus community –*

For most of you, the statement I am presenting here is unnecessary. For some of you, unfortunately, it is. It is a statement in response to insidious rumors/accusations in regards to me and Ariel Cohen, Hannah Wolfe, and Kristin Scheer.

Those of you who believe these mythologies know who you are. With some of you, I have had the painful experience of suffering disgusted, disdainful looks where we were once on good terms. Those who propagated these lies manipulated you and made you a host for the parasite of their petty ends. It has become necessary that I address these rumors with those who give them credence – it is to you that I speak.

To this end I have posted a webpage that goes into detail, fact by fact, in response to this malicious defamation: <http://student.bennington.edu/~jhoefs/facts.html>

Those interested in truth and integrity in our community will check it out, and give the information the attention it deserves. It should not take more than 5 minutes of your time to read. I urge any who believe these rumors to be true to at least check out this information.

Sincerely,  
Jonathan Hoefs

**This section is open to any constitutionally protected free speech. All students and readers are encouraged to submit material.**  
Email material to  
[submissions@beforetheend.org](mailto:submissions@beforetheend.org)

# DST Reminder: Don't forget to spring forward

by Tambu Kudze

March 11, (officially at 2am), clocks will be turned one hour backwards, two weeks earlier than previous years. After the passing of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 the U.S department of energy awaits the 11th of March to begin its study on how the law will affect the amount of energy used compared to previous years. The law changed daylight saving from the first Sunday of April to the second Sunday of March and the last Sunday of October to the first Sunday of November.

The idea of daylight saving time was first suggested by Benjamin Franklin in 1784 but was not implemented until Englishman William Willet mentioned it again in 1907. Daylight saving time was fully adopted in the US on March 19, 1919 and its benefits were realized during World War I when war costs had to be reduced as much as possible.

In winter, the advantage of daylight saving time is offset by homes' and businesses' need of lighting in the morning. It is less effective in the winter because it

is very dark and people tend to use lighting more in the evenings. In summer, if there were no daylight savings time, early-risers would use less energy. The energy used during the existence of Daylight saving is offset by the decrease in the amount used in the evening since the sun sets later. During these bright evenings people tend to organize outdoor activities that do not require a large amount of

the time and most crimes occur during the dark nights. It was also noted that there were less traffic accidents as people no longer traveled from work and school in darkness. These are some of the results that still hold true to the present day.

Not everyone is in favor of daylight saving, according to U.S Department of Energy. Some people say that the extended daylight hours make people visit friends frequently therefore wasting gasoline. It is also said that people in warmer regions will use more energy to cool their houses making the expected saving of energy negligible. Those with sleeping disorders complain about how difficult it is for them to get used to the time changes. Poultry farmers also complain about their chickens having a hard time adjusting to the time changes. (I really wonder how chickens notice that the time has been adjusted backwards or forward!). These complaints have not been taken into consideration. The extended daylight savings time is believed to have to potential to increase the number of voters in upcoming elections. It is also expected to decrease

**More likely than not, you really don't know or care much. And why should you?**

energy compared to that consumed by indoor appliances used if they had stayed home.

According to the Department of Transportation, after most part of the nation was put under extended daylight saving time because of the 1973 Arab Oil Embargo, there were more advantages to it than they had originally planned for. During this period there were fewer crimes as it was daylight most of

## How many of these are yours?



Andrew Lacasse/BTE

COLT (Community Outreach Leadership Team) presents the students with their own mess: a mass of paper cups collected across campus.

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### BEFORE THE END OF THE WORLD

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#### ISSUE COORDINATOR

Mariel Nuñez

#### LAYOUT

Andrew Przystanski

#### MISSION STATEMENT

December 8, 2006

*Before the End of the World* stands for integrity and a professional approach to student journalism. Because *Before the End* seeks to serve as a reliable news source for Bennington College and a medium for the free expression of an array of ideas and opinions, it is crucial to provide a meaningful journalistic experience to every writer and, in turn, reader.



# Long road ahead for S. Council

by Andrew Hobbs

Let me be the first to admit that I did not exactly fulfill my responsibilities as a student council representative last term. I missed four or five meetings. This, under the new bylaws (essentially the student council constitution), would have had me thrown out of the body for a surplus of unexplained absences and forced Sawtell to elect a new representative. Unless, of course, student council were to lose the entire bylaws document they spent all of last term drafting...which somehow the council has managed to do. Thus the student council's first term after undergoing a drastic restructuring was a complete and absolute waste.

Somehow I was persuaded to continue as a representative for Sawtell this term de-

spite my lackluster performance in the past. When during the first meeting it was made known that the bylaws had been lost I was speechless. How can a student council lose its governing document?

Taking all this into consideration; I think it's quite remarkable that I came out of that first meeting with more hope for student council than ever. There are many capable and dedicated students who have already gotten the ball rolling toward making real accomplishments this term.

I especially urge all the houses to demand that your representatives attend meetings throughout this critical point in the life of student council. But maybe you don't mind if the handful of people that attend control the whole council.

## Ballroom event "astounding"

by Rose Strickman

Normally, I'm not one for social events; I always fall asleep at parties and I hate team sports. But I have to—I just *have to*—go to the ballroom dancing lessons.

I put my coat down in the entryway of the Student Center. I'm late; as always, everyone else is already there. The students are facing each other in two parallel lines. I see a space and slip into it, figuring I'll pick things up as we go.

Surreptitiously, I eye my fellow dancers. The boys are dressed in their usual jeans and shirts and so are some of the girls, including me. The advertisement specified semi-casual, but what does that mean at Bennington? Some of the girls are wearing beautiful evening dresses while others are so colorful and tropical that I have to wonder what their formal dresses must be like.

The instructor, who obviously takes dancing very seriously, is elegantly dressed and insists that we practice all the formalities. When we change partners we must bow,

**The advertisement specified semi-casual, but what does that mean at Bennington?**

introduce ourselves and ask if they would like to dance. It is explained to us that merengue is a "nightclub" dance; you're supposed to meet people through it and have fun dancing. Thus, the dance is all about inviting and repelling, spurning and accepting. With Julie Moore helping him, the instructor—Alex by name—

demonstrates each step and tells the students to copy it with their partners.

Before long everyone is bumping into each other and tripping over their own feet. Alex sighs. "Let's try that one more time," he says.

Alex must be an astonishing teacher because before long, amazingly, we're actually performing the steps and doing reasonably well. Soon he turns on the music and I started to enjoy myself as we execute the steps.

Now Alex ups the ante and we're doing entire dances! The music is divine—if you like salsa with a zing—and pretty soon we're all whirling around the Student Center. Incredibly, we're not bumping into each other much, but then, we're not paying too much attention to the original steps either. People are kicking their legs in the air and performing tap dance steps; I throw in a few Mexican folk dance steps I learned in high school, just for fun and

See DANCE on Pg 8

## Having a Ball



Sabina Shresta/BTE

Two Bennington students brushing up on their merengue at the ballroom dancing event in the Student Center. Merengue is a type of lively, joyful music and dance that comes from the Dominican Republic. The name of the dance translates to whipped egg whites and sugar in Spanish.

## Rebecca Tinsley "not a Heroine"

by Andrew Lacasse

"I am not an expert and I am not a heroine," Rebecca Tinsley began her address this past Wednesday after Elizabeth Coleman spoke highly of her involvement and long record of her accomplishments.

Tinsley came to the Student Center equipped with a slideshow with dozens of images of the Rwandan landscape and its people. She briefly told the story of a genocide that killed 800,000 Tutsis, but focused on the stories of several remarkable young women. Although many of the women had been beaten, tortured and raped, they had remarkable hope and insight for the future of their country.

Many relief efforts have people making baskets or providing a meal to a person, but Rebecca Tinsley believes the best way to help them is to teach them something. Sustainable relief efforts helped widows by providing them with skills. Animals are raised,

bees are kept and crops are grown by women in a widows' home and will provide food and money for them to sustain themselves.

More important are the children of Rwanda, only 7% of whom will continue to secondary school. The young women of Rwanda have consistently been cheated out of an education. 30% of those enrolled in Rwandan secondary schools, and only 10% of Rwandans who continue to universities, are women. Rebecca Tinsley cites the traditional views of Rwandan males as the reason for the low number of women attending schools. Tinsley knows that the girls of Rwanda want to be educated; they do not want to make baskets.

The future Rwandan Girls School in Mutara is Rebecca Tinsley's most noteworthy project. The school will have an emphasis on the sciences in order to educate young women for six years, creating the future professionals, that Rwanda desperately needs. The school will enroll only young

women, rather than men, as Rebecca Tinsley believes that Rwandan women are the most eager to learn.

At the end of her visit Rebecca Tinsley asked for the support of the students, faculty and other College community members. Although she made it clear that she would not turn away million dollar donations, small donations are what she is looking for. She is most eager to find people willing to assist in the instruction of English and information technology for future doctors, biologists and engineers who will need these skills.

The Rwandan School for Girls will tentatively enroll 200 bright young women in January 2008 and 600 by January 2010. Every Rwandan will not be enrolled at the school, but it will mark remarkable progressive step for Rwanda. Tinsley may not be a heroine, but next year 200 girls will claim she is. They'll proclaim it in English and type it on keyboards.

## Community School akin to Bennington

by Mary McLaughlin

"When I hear, I forget. When I see, I learn. When I do, I understand." The Chinese almost made its way into my FWT essay, but words just could not fill the blank page past the quote. Certainly, it describes my experiences over Field Work Term, but it also fits my "standard" education here at Bennington. In fact, it fits everything. I found it on the cover of a pamphlet about The Community School. The Community School (TCS) reminded me strongly of Bennington College.

Though smaller, TCS is of roughly Bennington proportions, with a 10 to 1 student to teacher ratio. During my stay over FWT, there were about 40 students at the school, between 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade. They occupy one large house, on 310-acres of farm in New Hampshire, not far from the border with Maine. In this house is the Doris

L. Benz Library, a computer lab, a theatre, a kitchen, a shop and more. A class is held in nearly all of the rooms of this large white building but their far from the public high school nightmares we hear about so often.

The morning begins with a 10 minute meeting: announcements are made, happy birthdays are sung, dish duty is assigned, attendance is taken and interesting facts (or stories) are shared before students go to the first class of the day. The first class is the longest—it goes from about 8:30 to 12. The students are free to pick from a list of classes including physics, drawing intensives, 20<sup>th</sup> Century Genocide, Biology and so on. Every month, students move on to a new class but not before displaying what they've done and learned to other students and parents in a "Walk Around" (Think open house,

See SCHOOL on Pg 8



# Students cuckoo for sudoku

A math professor spoke at California State University at Chico this past Friday about a number game that doesn't involve math: sudoku.

Professor Rick Luttmann from Sonoma State discussed techniques at Chico with students. "The secret is asking the right questions," Luttmann said. "Try the possibilities and see what consequences there are."

Sudoku, which means "single number" in Japanese, was invented by an American in 1979, al-

though puzzles of a similar nature appeared in French newspapers in the nineteenth century. Sudoku is a grid with nine boxes (nine columns and nine rows). The object is to find numbers one through nine in each row and column without repeating them.

The game has gained much popularity and is said to be beneficial for the mind. Part of the appeal is that it depends on logic instead of math and requires no external knowledge as crosswords do.

## SUDOKU

EASY

			6	4		5		
	4	5						
9	3	6				1		2
		4	9	8		2		6
		3		6		9		
1		9		3	7	8		
6		7				3	8	1
						4	7	
1				7	5			

## HARD

4			2			3		9
8			5					
	9		7	1				2
				5			8	1
	1						6	
9	5			8				
	3			2	6		7	
					5			8
7		5			4			6

Sudoku is a logic-based number placement puzzle. The objective is to fill a 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9. The puzzle setter provides a partially completed grid.

# Men's sweat attractive to women, says study

Men's sweat attracts women, reported Louisiana State University's The Daily Reveille, citing a study by researchers at the University of California at Berkeley that was published in the Journal of Neuroscience.

Researchers found that men's sweat emit chemicals that affect the physiology of women. According to The Daily Reveille the study was conducted last year and included 48 undergraduate women, who were asked to take twenty sniffs from containers of androstadienone. Androstadienone is a derivative of testosterone and

is found in male sweat as well as in saliva, blood, and semen. "It smells somewhat musky," reported CNN. In the study researchers mea-

other functions."

The levels of cortisol in women who sniffed androstadienone shot up in less than fifteen minutes and stayed high for over an hour, according to The Daily Reveille. These chemicals and compounds have been researched for years in other animals as well to isolate chemicals that affect women.

However, men shouldn't rush to the gym anytime soon since the reaction from women was mixed at best.

"Sweat isn't the number one characteristic I look for in a man," said junior Annie Schwartz.

More likely than not, you really don't know or care much. And why should you?

sured the level of cortisol, which according to CNN is "secreted by the body to help maintain proper arousal and sense of well-being, respond to stress and

# Harvard Medical School: Hour of TV adds 46 calories

The Harvard crimson reported that each additional hour of television translates to forty-six additional calories for toddlers, according to a study from the Harvard Medical School. "The study attributed toddlers' weight gains to the consumption of fattier foods rather than lack of exercise. Many of the food items were high in calories, sugar, and fats, including trans fats," reported The Crimson.

## Hard to treat

Researchers also linked watching television to an unhealthy diet, influenced by commercials and eating while watching TV. The report was unveiled at the American Heart Association's Annual Conference on Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention in Orlando, Florida.

"Obesity is very hard to treat once it has started," said Sonia A. Miller, the Harvard Medical School student who headed the ambitious study. "We can already see the influence television has on three-year-old children, and it seems that reducing screen time will be very important in relation to the prevention of obesity."

## 1,200 mothers surveyed

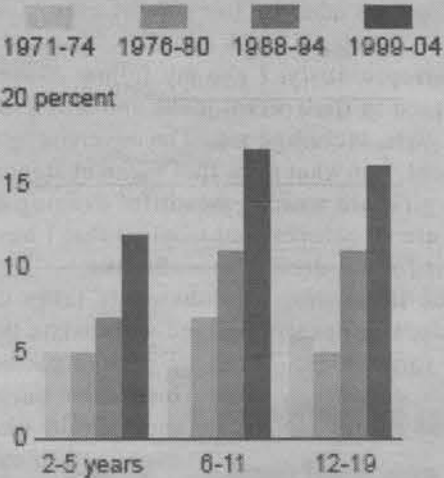
The Crimson reported that the study was based on questionnaires completed by 1,200 mothers about the television patterns of their three-year-old children. The researchers controlled their data for certain socioeconomic factors and the body mass index of the parents.

Bruce Bistrian, a professor of Medicine, however, said that "although [the study] would suggest very strongly that the children are eating more and eating the wrong kinds of foods, they're also doing less. You don't know if these associations are causative. It could be that these children who are watching television are already overweight."

## Youth obesity rising

Obesity has increased greatly in American youth over the past three decades, with the highest rates among children ages 6-11.

## Obesity among U.S. children and adolescents, 1971-2004

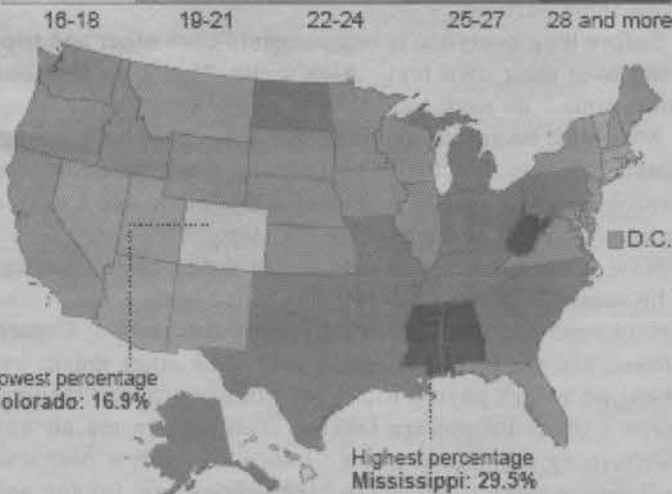


SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention AP

## Obesity rates continue to climb

Mississippi, Alabama, West Virginia and Louisiana led states with the highest percentage of obese adults.

## Percentage of obese adults, 2003-05



SOURCE: Trust for America's Health AP



## N.Korea, Japan in war of words

by Hector Najera

A week ago, on Thursday, Japanese and North Korean diplomats held talks for the second day to consider restoring ties between the two nations. The day before, talks were cut short due to tensions over the abduction of Japanese by Pyongyang during the 1970s and 1980s.

### Japanese abducted

In 2002 the North Korean government admitted that it abducted thirteen Japanese citizens in order to train its spies in the Japanese language and culture, which angered the Japanese. Japan demanded the return of all surviving captives and five were repatriated, but North Korea claims the other eight have died. For Japan it is impossible to restore diplomatic ties without the resolution of this issue. North Korea also seeks the settlement of issues stemming from the Japanese colonial rule of the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945.

In February, the six-party talks—comprised of North Korea, South Korea, the United States, Japan, China, and Russia—reached an agreement that requires North Korea to disable its nuclear program by mid-April. At that time North Korea must also allow the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency to verify the termination of the nuclear program.

### "Atmospheres of Terror"

However, before the moribund North Korean economy can benefit from millions of dollars in diplomatic recognition and energy aid, other sensitive issues must be addressed. For North Korea such issues include alleged "atmospheres of terror" created by Japan after Pyongyang's nuclear tests last year. In a letter submitted Wednesday to U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, North Korea accuses Japan of cracking down on pro-Pyongyang groups in Japan, calling the searches of the offices of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan illegal.

As the talks continue they will have a definite effect on the twenty-three million North Koreans, of which most live in poverty. Currently there are about 600,000 ethnic Koreans living in Japan, many descendants of the two million Koreans brought to Japan as forced laborers during Japan's 1910-45 colonization of the Korean peninsula. Out of these about 80,000 are pro-North Korea, while over 200 thousand support South Korea. The rest are neutral.

## Negotiating with the press



AP

Japan's Chief negotiator for the North Korea - Japan bilateral talks, Koichi Haraguchi speaks with journalists in Hanoi, Vietnam, March 7, 2007. The afternoon session of bilateral talks aimed at normalizing relations between the two countries was abruptly canceled on Wednesday after North Korean officials balked at Japan's demands that Pyongyang resolve the issue of abducted Japanese citizens before trying to normalize ties.

## H. Chavez of Venezuela stirring up a storm

by Hector Najera

He has called President Bush "the devil," is allied with Fidel Castro, accuses United States officials of plotting assassinations against him, but he rules the fifth largest oil-producing country on the world. So he's O.K.

After spearheading a failed coup in 1992, Hugo Chavez became president of Venezuela in 1998, winning with 56 percent of the vote. Since then he has survived a failed coup against him, a general strike, economic depressions, and the criticism of his government. However, he has continued to grow in popularity, especially with Venezuela's poor. He has brought the democratic process to people living in ranchos and shanty towns, initiating programs aimed at making the adult population more literate, and directed the nation's oil wealth towards programs aimed at helping the poor. He has also bought billions of dollars in Argentine debt, establishing ties with Nestor Kirchner, president of Argentina and other Latin American leaders.

The question of his popularity remains. For instance, when he called President Bush a devil, the U.N. assembly clapped. In the 1990s Chavez rose to power on a platform of Bolivarian principles. (He bases his beliefs on those of South American revolu-

tionary Simón Bolívar, who fought for the liberation of vast portions of Latin American from Spanish rule in the nineteenth century). Chavez includes among his beliefs that of defending Venezuela's political and economic sovereignty by opposing imperialism, which explains his hostility against the United States. He also aims at increasing the population's political participation through popular votes, instilling in people a national ethic of patriotic service, establishing economic self-sufficiency, the elimination of corruption, and a fair distribution of the vast oil revenues.

In an interview with Julian Brookes, an editor of Mother Jones, reporter Richard Gott explained some of Chavez' Bolivarian principles, "[Chavez] recognizes the significance of the ideas of Bolívar. He's more interested in culture than in economics. All leftist revolutions in the past have been based on an economic restructuring of society. Chavez isn't so fascinated by that, but he is fascinated by the need for Latin America to reestablish its cultural identity outside of American cultural imperialism." In this spirit, Chavez continuously denounces attempts by the United States to influence Latin American economic policy.

It is difficult for Americans to understand what is so appealing

See CHAVEZ on Pg 8



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# Quo Vadis Bennington?

by Ross Dillon

## PART II

### IN THE LAST EPISODE:

*The year is 2156. America has collapsed and become the world's largest nature reserve. A fearless young reporter, Steve, has taken an National Geographic-sponsored expedition into the heartland to report on what has ecologically occurred in the absence of humanity. What he finds shocks him and the world: an enclave of civilization, located in what formerly was the state of Vermont, sustainably supporting their hill-top fortress as the world passes by. At one point they were a college called Bennington, now they are a commune called Green Mountain, and they are the last Americans.*

What a grey and useless day. Perfect day for curling up with some chocolate drink on the recliner and looking at the comics.

Of course this option was not available to me, I bitterly remembered as I trudged along the heartlands of the American interior. I suppose the term heartlands is misleading. Earlier that year I'd trekked up from Texas through what had been Oklahoma, Nebraska and Missouri. At this point I had to decide to head East or West before going any further North. The readers opinion poll showed more interest in the East, barely. So East I went, sending in weekly columns to my editors and informing my readers, at not just the National Geographic but also the Post and Independent, of the landmarks I'd seen and my commentary on the collapse of the American system. It was history in the making.

I'd done some backpacking, but no more than a few months, around Russia and the South East coast of Africa. This assignment was purely luck, a fun opportunity to go deeper into the world's largest natural park, the ruined continental United States empire. And ruined was true in more than one way, the deterioration had started before the place was abandoned, and so they decided that waiting one hundred years since the collapse of America would be a good time for

me to explore the wilderness. A couple of adventurers had, of course, already documented their trips into the interior, notably Tyler Smith, a young man who landed on the San Francisco coast and spent two months going East, to Utah in the end, and then spent two months in the Southwest getting picked up in San Diego. Most notable about this trip was Smith's hallucinatory writings he sent back, not factoring into consideration that he would be travelling through some of the roughest climates on the continent; luckily he survived the trip due to his vast backpacking experience. The other notable was the six-month journey of Conrad Anker III who went south from Vancouver to Mexico. I suppose after these excursions, a one year trip was the next logical step. Also, I suspect, since the past two expeditions had been on the West coast the public was now interested to see what had become of the East. The American interior will, I predict, be like Everest before the ski-lift was installed. Whoever manages to do something first on it gets their name in the history books.

One nice feature of the interior that Everest did not have are signs and roads. Though I'd not want to drive on the holey weed-reclaimed asphalt highways they are tremendously convenient in not having to bushwhack. The metal signs may have fallen off their wooden posts, or not, but they tell me how far I have to go before sunset. The East is far more compact than the midwestern cornbelt I'd been in before. All for the best, I suppose, as I now could write more about specific places rather than America in general, and first encounters with everyday things and decrepitness. Going East I'd spent July in Philadelphia and August on New York. I was due back to Acadia, Maine to be picked up by boat in October. Now I had time to kill, so I went North into Vermont. I had not crossed far into the state when the sky went grey.

## Sarah

By Rose Strickman

... Slowly, Sarah released him, both physically and mentally. He turned and stumbled back into the Shack. Sarah listened closely, but she heard nothing incriminating; no cries of, "Yo, Henry, what's on yo' neck?" or "Law, Henry, what's wrong wit' you?" After awhile, Sarah melted silently away.

She staggered into the woods. She should have felt satiated, and indeed her hunger was gone, but now her stomach was roiling. Sarah gasped, clutching her belly, and crawled behind a tree, where her stomach ejected its contents all over the ground.

She looked at her vomit, nonplussed. Then the smell hit her, and she recoiled, snarling. "Licker!" That said it all.

Sarah backed off, utterly disgusted: Henry's blood had been saturated with alcohol. She hadn't noticed before because she'd been so hungry, but her changed body had rejected the whiskey in the most direct way possible.

No more liquor for Henry Wheelwright, Sarah decided firmly. She did not want to throw up every time she fed on him.

Then it hit her. She had fed on a human. She had driven fangs into his vein, had drunk his blood and used her powers to enslave him and make him hers.

Sarah swayed as she realized what she had become this night. She had risen from the grave. She had feared the lights of humanity. She had drunk human blood. She was damned. A member of the undead:

After such a devastating realization, Sarah felt a strong need to be alone. Of course, she was already alone, but now she wanted to be in a truly private place, with a roof and walls (already she was developing a vampiric love for enclosed spaces), where there was no chance of discovery. She turned and ran silently through the shadows of the woods, heading for the Cave.

The Cave wasn't precisely private; children came there all the time, daring each other to go further and further into the dark, labyrinthine tunnels and low-ceilinged rooms of stone until they were lost and had to be rescued by lantern-wielding adults. The Cave was said to be haunted by the ghost of a murdered girl as well—but in her present condition, Sarah hardly felt in a position to fear ghosts. She wasn't afraid of the dark, either—that would simply be ludicrous. So she slipped down the well-beaten path to the Cave's mouth and slid inside, heading deep into the maze of stone, going deeper until she reached an out-of-the-way room in which to mull over the night's events. She collapsed to the floor, leaning wearily against the wall. Even here, in the absolute lightlessness of the Cave, she

could clearly see every detail of the opposite wall. Shuddering, she closed her eyes.

She was a vampire. She had risen from the grave, sliding straight through the undisturbed earth, from her coffin in the graveyard. She had seen in the dark as a human would in the light, had been as one with the night. She had—and this was the dreadful part—viciously attacked a man and drank his blood. She had done the unforgivable, according to the preacher in the clapboard church that she vaguely remembered attending when alive. And she had enjoyed it. Sarah wondered how this had happened, what had caused her to become a vampire. Surely she hadn't done it on her own. She thought back, brow wrinkling in concentration. It was, she found, very difficult to remember things that had happened before she died, like trying to swim upstream in a river of molasses. Still, she persisted, and the images slowly came to life:

Pa was missing. Again. Well, not precisely, his family knew exactly where he was. The problem was getting him home again.

"Sarah, youse got to go," Ma said from where she lay nursing the new baby. She was still recovering from this latest birth and couldn't get out of bed. Tears of frustration poured down her cheeks. "Go an' gets that varmint home!"

"Ah dunno, Ma," Sarah said doubtfully, looking outside. "Yuh know Ah doan like to go out in the dark—"

"Jest take a big stick, den, an' hit anyone who comes near!" Ma yelled, more frustrated than ever. "Jus' get him!"

So Sarah took Grampa's old cane and ventured out of the tiny one-room hut into the night. She was very nervous. It wasn't safe for a white girl to go wandering in the dark, let alone a colored one like herself. There were rapists and murderers out there, and they would be more than happy to attack a Negro girl. She gripped her cane tightly as she made her way toward the Shack. To get to the Shack, one had to cross a wide field of grass. Sarah ventured across its moonlit expanse, feeling a bit easier now that she was so close to her goal—

The attack came without warning. Sarah never had time to use her cane. Even now she couldn't remember all of it; it had happened too fast. All she could recall was a white face lunging at her, fangs thrust forward, the cane going flying, then two daggers sinking into her heart. And pain, chest-ripping agony that flared high as a bonfire, consuming her in a red-hot inferno until she fell away into blackness...

The next thing she remembered was standing beside her grave, burning with the desire for blood. The intervening weeks (yes, it must have been weeks, the night she died had been flooded with moonlight and tonight was moonless) were a blank. In spite of everything, she felt a twinge of

disappointment: this may have been a unique chance to find out what really lay beyond the grave. But she recalled nothing.

Maybe it's always like that for vampires, she thought, and shivered.

That word: *vampire*. She still couldn't believe that word applied to her. Vampirism was something that happened to other people, not to you or anyone you knew. Everyone knew vampires were out there, that they were in truth everywhere, but they also knew there were vampire hunters who kept humans safe. It certainly could never be *you*: *you* would never be bitten, *you* would never be killed, *you* would certainly never become a vampire. That sort of thing always happened to someone else.

Unfortunately, as Sarah realized too late, everyone was "someone else" to someone else.

Sarah explored her teeth with her tongue. Yes, there they were: her canines had lengthened slightly and grown dagger-sharp. Indeed, one of them cut her tongue and blood flooded into her mouth. Revolted at the taste of her own blood, she gagged and spit it out onto the cave floor.

Sarah looked down at herself: a bony-thin colored girl, shoeless and in her Sunday best as she had been buried. She unbuttoned the front of her pink gingham dress and looked between her breasts at the place where her white-faced attacker had bitten her.

Nothing. There was nothing there, not even scars such as she had left on Henry's throat. But she knew she had been bitten there. The white-faced vampire's fangs had driven all the way into her heart. Sarah wondered morbidly how he had managed that. Her own fangs didn't seem long enough to reach a human's heart, and besides, they were positioned wrong: it would be next to impossible for her to bite someone in the chest.

Sarah sighed and buttoned her dress. The technicalities didn't matter. What mattered was that she was a vampire.

A vampire. She was a vampire. One of the damned. She would be craving blood for the rest of her life, hounded by the sun, hunted by men with dogs—as her slave ancestors trying to reach freedom in the North had been hunted—until they caught her and ripped her apart and staked her and she went to Hell, despised by man and God—

As her fear and panic rose, Sarah started hyperventilating, and tears poured down her face. She clutched her knees to her chest and rocked back and forth, weeping.

Softly, without thinking, she began singing a hymn that they had sung in the barely-remembered church: "We walk in de light/ De beautiful light/ Droplets of mussy shine bright/ We do not fear de dark, dark night/ For we walk wit' Jesus, light of de world."

And so the creature of darkness sang of lost light until morning. A vampire.



## Why Can't I Own a Canadian?

HumanistsofUtah.org

*Dr. Laura Schlessinger is a radio personality who dispenses advice to people who call in to her radio show. Recently, she said that, as an observant Orthodox Jew, homosexuality is an abomination according to Leviticus 18:22 and cannot be condoned under any circumstance. The following is an open letter to Dr. Laura penned by a east coast resident, which was posted on the Internet. It's funny, as well as informative:*

Dear Dr. Laura:

Thank you for doing so much to educate people regarding God's Law. I have learned a great deal from your show, and try to share that knowledge with as many people as I can. When someone tries to defend the homosexual lifestyle, for example, I simply remind them that Leviticus 18:22 clearly states it to be an abomination. End of debate. I do need some advice from you, however, regarding some of the other specific laws and how to follow them:

When I burn a bull on the altar as a sacrifice, I know it creates a pleasing odor for the Lord - Lev.1:9. The problem is my neighbors. They claim the odor is not pleasing to them. Should I smite them?

I would like to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. In this day and

age, what do you think would be a fair price for her?

I know that I am allowed no contact with a woman while she is in her period of menstrual uncleanness - Lev.15:19-24. The problem is, how do I tell? I have tried asking, but most women take offense.

Lev. 25:44 states that I may indeed possess slaves, both male and female, provided they are purchased from neighboring nations. A friend of mine

**I know from Lev. 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?**

claims that this applies to Mexicans, but not Canadians. Can you clarify? Why can't I own Canadians?

I have a neighbor who insists on working on the Sabbath. Exodus 35:2 clearly states he should be put to death. Am I morally obligated to kill him myself?

A friend of mine feels that even though eating shellfish is

an abomination - Lev. 11:10, it is a lesser abomination than homosexuality. I don't agree. Can you settle this?

Lev. 21:20 states that I may not approach the altar of God if I have a defect in my sight. I have to admit that I wear reading glasses. Does my vision have to be 20/20, or is there some wiggle room here?

Most of my male friends get their hair trimmed, including the hair around their temples, even though this is expressly forbidden by Lev. 19:27. How should they die?

I know from Lev. 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?

My uncle has a farm. He violates Lev. 19:19 by planting two different crops in the same field, as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend). He also tends to curse and blaspheme a lot. Is it really necessary that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them? - Lev.24:10-16. Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws? (Lev. 20:14)

I know you have studied these things extensively, so I am confident you can help. Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging.

Your devoted fan,

## There She Goes

by Hector Najera

There she goes, hugging her purse to her chest, wisps of hair floating about her head. She's taking quick steps, moving farther and farther away from the ripe horizon.

She left dinner ready and has forty-five minutes to get to the factory. The bills hide between promotions from this store and that, all stacked in one corner of the kitchen counter. The fridge is almost empty, and she's down to her last twenty. It'll be the first of the month soon, and the rent has to be paid.

It's Saturday again and Carlos left without telling her. He's making a habit of it. When he comes back I'll deal with it, she thinks. For now there are dishes Juanito left. The bathroom needs cleaning. The room needs to be vacuumed. The stove has accumulated grease. The clothes need to be ironed. Juanito, turn off the TV, she says, but it stays on for "another minute." She scrubs another pan. Finish your homework, she says as she walks to the television set and turns it off. When he comes back I'll deal with him. She's back at the sink. She scrubs harder, the grease must come off.

The meeting is long. They are telling her that he can't stay in this school anymore if he doesn't improve. The teacher with the big nose is talking now. She glances about. The room has nothing on the walls and is hot. She remembers the stack of papers in her kitchen counter. Another two weeks, they say. Until the end of the semester.

She missed her bus. Damn it. The phone is ringing but her boss isn't answering. She hangs up and waits for the next bus. She wonders if Carlos heated up the food for himself and Juanito. They are lazy; maybe they haven't and are hungry. Damn it. Twenty minutes later she sees the bus coming down the hill. She grabs her purse and stands up. During the ride she stares out the window. She forgot to mop the floor. Maybe Carlos will see it dirty and do it himself. She reaches her stop. Don't be late again, says the boss, telling her the value and necessity of punctuality. She keeps her head down. Damn it.

There she goes. Her shoes neatly tied, the socks mismatched. The light of day fades as a light breeze caresses her face.

# BEFORE THE END

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**DANCE cont.**

laughs.

But for the next song I am without a partner, so Alex dances with me. If dancing with my first partner—a girl who towered over me—was fun, then dancing with Alex was astounding. Unlike my first partner, he insists on following the original steps, but does so with such panache that I enjoy dancing with him as much as I did with her. We whirl gracefully across the dance floor and Alex can't stop himself from introducing some new moves that he didn't teach us; I keep up reasonably well. I feel like I'm floating in Nirvana. Dancing is a transforming process for me:

**SCHOOL cont.**

every month). After a 40 minute lunch, students go to an advisory meeting to discuss progress and to do a little house keeping. Then classes start up again. In the afternoon, students take math, foreign languages and English. But that's only 3 days a week. On one afternoon, after advisory the school re-groups to have the weekly democratic meeting to discuss issues at the school and what's happening within the school. After the meeting, the students scatter to various pursuits: some go to the nearby elementary school to help in a classroom, some go outside in an outdoor survival class, the list of different things to do changes every couple months and students have no shortage of learning opportunities. Another afternoon in the winter is dedicated to physical education. Some students go skiing and snowboarding and others stay to go walking, do Tai Chi, use exercise equipment. A few students go swimming and ice skate.

TCS focuses on being involved in the community around them, which is why the students are expected to help clean up around the school, but a bigger part of this is reflected in the involvement of nature in education. Students are involved in an organic farm and a certified tree farm on the property, as well as a reclamation project involving an adjacent sand pit. Studies in forestry have taken students as far as Costa Rica, the Czech Republic and Japan. Still another element of community involvement in TCS is the 150 hours of community service that must be achieved by each student before he or she can graduate.

TCS was founded in 1989 and since 1992, 85 students have graduated after completing 21.75 credits, 150 hours of community service and a senior project. The Board of Trustees includes student members and encourages student input during weekly meetings. The six main ideas of TCS are:

- Learning should be a fascinating adventure, a rigorous but joyful pursuit.
- Each individual has natural talents and intellectual aptitudes.
- Cooperation and teamwork are essential to a sustainable society
- Learning is an energetic pursuit.
- True learning calls on every facet of the human mind, heart and body.
- Learning is the doorway to the wonders of culture, the natural world and the community.

More information can be found at [www.communityschoolnh.org](http://www.communityschoolnh.org)

I go from being myself to being a light-footed, light-headed glamorous lady. I know it will only last as long as the music does, but it does feel marvelous!

The music comes to a halt, and so do we. "You dance well," Alex says to me, smiling.

I smile back. "Thanks," I say, knowing that I don't dance well; I just love it too much to dance badly.

**DARFUR cont.**

of the region ([savedarfur.org](http://savedarfur.org)).

Since this civil war broke out in 2003, it is estimated that at least 400,000 people have been killed, and that two million have been internally or internationally displaced ([savedarfur.org](http://savedarfur.org)). For some perspective, this is equivalent to the killing of about half of San

Francisco's population, and a mass of people about the same size as New Mexico's population being forced to flee from their homes. The situation is severe enough that most aid organizations that have been there at any point since the conflict began have pulled out, and even the allocation of such basic survival necessities as food, water, medicine, and hygiene products is nearly

impossible.

The response of the international community has been slow and muted. Resolutions have been passed, peace agreements have been brokered (albeit poorly), and cease-fires have been negotiated (and broken); politicians have patted each other on the backs, and we, the international community have shaken our heads, and proceeded to turn the other cheek. It is not that there is a great solution that we are refusing to install; there is not. The situation is a true humanitarian tragedy spurred by political corruption.

The Sudanese government is refusing any aid from the United Nations (whose willingness to commit to an African nation in crisis-mode is questionable anyway) and the African Union is extremely under equipped to make a sufficiently significant impact. It is unquestionable that underlying the blatant brutality of this mass murder and exodus is deep seeded governmental corruption, religious clashes and racial tension, but these difficult road blocks in no way justify the rest of the world's complacency in the face of this humanitarian calamity. We cannot all be world leaders, and perhaps we, as individuals cannot even influence those who have the ability to alter the current trend of tragedy in Darfur. But if we ignore the events that have precipitated and continue to influence this catastrophe, we will never know if a greater outcry from the world at large could have saved one more life, prevented one more rape, or disarmed one more child. If we continue to ignore the genocide in Darfur, the only potential interpretation to be formed in retrospect will be regret for the grossly insufficient manner in which the world is responding to the mass brutality being inflicted in innocent civilians.

**Walking in a winter wonderland**

Andrew Hobbs

Students returned to Bennington to find over 18 inches of snow covering the ground. Pictured here, a snowman stands guard by the student center.

**CHAVEZ cont.**

about a man like Chavez. Argentinean president Nestor Kirchner has already established ties with Chavez. Fidel Castro, president of Cuba, has a long stand-

ate how extremely disliked they are in much of the world and particularly in Latin America, for old-fashioned historical reasons," says Gott. "The United States has intervened all over Latin America for more than 100 years. They've been in Cuba at the base in Guantanamo since 1898. So there's this tremendous legacy of hostility that's absolutely open to any progressive regime to exploit."

In many respects Chavez has been unable to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. In his attempts he has alienated traditional businessmen and political elite. His moves to refuse the renewal of operating licenses to television stations have brought him considerable criticism for establishing an authoritarian government, but in Caracas there are still many anti-Chavez publications.

Yesterday President Bush set out on a five-nation tour of Latin America, which began in Brazil. There protesters met his arrival and clashed with police. Chavez, after landing in Argentina where he

plans to lead a march against Bush's visit, criticized Bush's intentions. "You've got to give the U.S. president the gold medal for hypocrisy, because he said now he's worried about poverty in Latin America," Chavez told reporters. "Now he's discovering ... after so many years that there's poverty in Latin America, precisely when the U.S. empire is the principal culprit."

Chavez's popularity in past years has wavered from 80% to 30%, but today he is more popular than ever. His ideals and policies are molded by his beliefs against imperialism, and he uses the United States as a representation of this. Understanding him and his rule will require studying much more than today's news; it will demand an exploration of the history of a part of the world fed up with poverty and the uncertainty of progress. Chavez isn't going anywhere, and neither are the issues that support Bolivarian platform.

by Christie Goshe



ing friendship with Chavez. Bolivian president Evo Morales is sympathetic of Chavez, and Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa is an admirer of Chavez. "People in the United States tend not to appreci-