

The
Stony
Brook

PRESS

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The University Community's Feature Paper

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Out of the frying pan...

Stony Brook welcomes new president from Queens College

by Garrison

At 11:00 Thursday morning, after being in office for only three hours, Stony Brook University's President Shirley Kenny held her first student media conference. Brief introductions were made, then she got down to business. Slick as an Exxon tanker, Dr. Kenny made the first move—what questions, she asked, did we have for her. After a brief moment of disappointment at the lack of any quotable opening remarks, we undaunted media mongers started firing questions at her.

A popular topic for Pres. Kenny was multiculturalism. She spoke at length about her achievements as President of Queens College, including numerous faculty minority appointments, and the formation of a multicultural council. The multicultural committee's prime function was "diversity training," teaching people to understand and value other cultures. The committee trained the administrative staff, who in turn trained academic departments, who trained the students.

Multiculturalism, says Pres. Kenny, adds to the value



of the educational experience. Unfortunately many people tend to be reactive to race and culture issues rather than proactive. According to Dr. Kenny, this multicultural proactivity needs to pervade the entire campus, at all levels.

When asked what issues she was interested in addressing, the President said that this campus needs a sense of self, a community feeling that this is "our place in America." As usual, she tacked on a qualifier stating that this won't happen unless all of us make it happen.

Dr. Kenny also wishes to strengthen the undergraduate program but admits that she is a bit wanting in the idea department here. Perhaps contrarily, she also wishes to continue nurturing and developing university research opportunities because, as she put it, "it's like riding a bicycle, you're either moving ahead or falling down."

Only time will tell if this *Texas Belle* has what it takes to lead this university onward and upward, until then she's a specialist in 19th century British theater with a cute accent.

Cinema Verité

by John Schneider

While many are at a loss to explain the popularity of "Real life" shows which use the camera to bring viewers an increasingly voyeuristic viewpoint of society, this type of entertainment has been foreshadowed in the merican foreign policy has always been an affair akin to the circus sideshow. But as the popularity of the novel has faded, and the price of movies has risen to an outrageous \$7, the media has created a new canvass upon which politicians have created the ultimate artform/artistic statement. Where once, fiction supplanted the factual use of media, a politicians have supplanted the publishing and cinematic industry by creating events which utilize the very writing of history as entertainment. What follows is a quick summary of the artistic ouevres of our government in recent times.

Granada: America Strikes Back!!!

It seemed that after Vietnam, there would never be a chance for the military higher-ups to have some fun in the sun, although the beaches in 'Nam were beautiful (so long as the snipers didn't get you). The public support just wasn't there. Finally, after years of undercover operations in Central America, President Reagan revived the idea of a military intervention/ratings booster/warm climate vacation with the invasion of Grenada.

A true actor, Reagan could see that the plot of this invasion would be a true success among the American people. It had all the elements of a John

Wayne movie: the suspense of the super powers colliding over the fate of a defenseless postage-stamp country being bullied by the "Evil Empire." The plight of the handful of Americans caught in the villian's grasp. The smiling faces of the pathetic downtrodden Granadans.. er Grenadians.. uhm... local inhabitants.

Yes, once again the armed forces of the United States of America would not sit idly by, holed up waiting for the big one, but would go out into the world and be the *good guys*, with flags waving and all but white hats on their heads. But, more importantly, there would be *beaches!*, something every military commander had been dying for ever since General MacArthur strode off a landing craft to a flicker of camera shutters.

It went off without a hitch, it couldn't have been better executed if it were an A-Team episode. Finally, something to make people forget about Kent State. Chalk one up to the old "Ron-bo" for giving the people what they wanted. Of course with little excursions like this there would always be the danger of American casualties, but hey, no pain, no gain. Do you think Notre Dame could have won one for the Gipper without a little suffering. In the end, it showed that the military could once again openly kick a little butt without the fear that it

would cause worldwide irradiation.

Hi-Ho Libya

While all this was happening, the Air Force grew a bit jealous over the attention other branches were getting, as fate would have it, they too would get a starring role; the shores of Tripoli were calling. No casting calls were needed for this sequel. With this joint U.S. and allies action, it provided the best bombing footage since World War II. No unpopular carpet bombing and napalm, just good clean scientific bombing. This production also provided the first foil to Ron "Go ahead- make my day" Reagan, the Evil Super-Terrorist, Moamar Quadafi... er Khadaffi... here was a guy so evil his name couldn't even be spelled uniformly by the media. Quadaffi, a man right out of a James Bond movie, bad to the bone, with an outrageous wardrobe, sinisterly flaunting any charges that he was aiding widespread terrorist groups.

The bombs dropped and the terrorism allegedly stopped, once again, we were on top. We all cheered, and Popular Mechanics ran an article about what exactly it was like to be in an F-111 during the raid, from a pilot's perspective. It was an idyllic time of American pride. We would show the world, no one would mess with us, we were top dog. The fear

had all but gone that the *other* superpower would oppose our actions.

Panama: This Time It's Personal

It seemed as if the reign of Ronald the Lionhearted would never end, but to devoted spectators of world domination it was apparant that his term would be up. But as the old warhorse was being put out to pasture; a new leader was being passed the torch. As a former head of the CIA (during the planning of the Bay of Pigs, no less) he was more than up to the task of finding a warm holiday spot for the troops. Capitalizing on Reagan's success with Ghadaffi, a new world leader was cast as the arch-villian in the invasion of Panama.

This would be a true man-o a man-o showdown, and was given the Monroe Doctrine seal of approval. After all, if we can't knock the neighbors around without fear of impunity, what's the good in being a major military power in this world? We might as well just give away arms without any exchange of terrorist hostages.

It was the feel-good invasion, and even the fact that Noriega wasn't as notorious or hard to spell as Quackdafi, or the question of whether he had been

please turn to page 6

Invasion Coming Soon! To a Theatre of War Near You.

As summer lurches into fall, once again our military is searching for the perfect summer hot spot to send our boys (and girls). Yes, enough time has passed and the military has been left out of the limelight. This can only mean another invasion for a little R&R (relaxation and ratings, that is). Which brings us to our current predicament. The O.J. case and whatnot have outshone our armed forces in the amount sheer violence provided for the media. But rest assured that when it comes to carnage, the military can play a hand that can beat two stiff's any day. With funding tight, and top brass anxious to get away for an exotic retreat, where in the world will these men and women be sent on another all expense tax-payer financed junket? Check your local papers for this years winner.

| Country | Opposition | Peacekeeping? | Beaches | Monroe Doctrine? | Magic Eight Ball | Comments |
|----------|--------------------|------------------|---------|------------------|--------------------|---|
| Rwanda | Hutus and Tutsis | Y | N | N | Signs indicate no | No Beaches |
| Bosnia | Serbs and Bosnian | Y | N | N | Try again | Land locked/No oil |
| Haiti | Raoul Cedras | Y | Y | Y | Signs indicate yes | Might be easier to just bring them all here |
| Cuba | Fidel Castro | N | N | N | Yes | Could be a real battle. |
| Ireland | IRA and Protestant | Y | Y | Y | Try again | Fight with people who have modern arms? |
| Cambodia | Khmer Rouge | Are you kidding? | some | N | No | Might cause Vietnam flashbacks |

Smokers' Guide To Stony Brook

Well kids, it seems that the powers that be here at S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook have laid down the law as to where one can and cannot smoke. What follows is a rough guide to the official smoking regulations as they apply to students, including some preferred smoking areas and wholly banned areas. Places not generally frequented by students, such as the Electric Sub-station, and South Campus buildings have been omitted.

General Restrictions

Smoking is prohibited in the following places and at the following events:

1. University rooms used academic instruction, including classrooms (seminar rooms, laboratories, and the like), lecture halls, and auditoria. Faculty offices or lounges, when being used for instructional purposes, are designated as no smoking areas during the periods of such use.
2. University buses.
3. University vehicles when used by two or more persons, one of whom requests that there be no smoking.
4. Elevators.
5. Restrooms.
6. Indoor public lectures and performances, including concerts, movies and theatrical productions.
7. Conference rooms and meeting rooms.
8. Lobbies, corridors, hallways and stairwells, and in other indoor public places except in areas specifically designated for smoking.
9. Museums and art galleries.
10. Dining facilities except in designated sections.

Student Residential Areas

Smoking will be permitted in bedrooms, only if all occupants of the room approve. Designation of suite living areas and common areas in apartments as smoking or non-smoking will be decided upon by a majority vote of all assigned occupants. A vote concerning the designation must be taken each time occupancy of the suite or apartment changes. Smoking will not be permitted in common areas, including hallways, laundry rooms, cooking areas, bathrooms, recreation and study areas, and lounges, with the exception of one lounge or common space designated as a smoking area by the College Legislature. Such designation will be made by a majority vote of the members of the Legislature at a regularly scheduled meeting at the beginning of each academic year. Similarly, each year the Chapin Apartments Residence Association and student governance in the new graduate apartments will consider designating a smoking area in the respective Community Centers. Such designation will also be determined by a majority vote.

Enforcement

1. Individuals who find themselves smoking in non-smoking areas should extinguish their smoking materials. Initial reminders by co-workers or supervisors

should be sufficient to assure positive compliance with these regulations.

2. Continued violations of the smoking regulations should be reported to the supervisor of the area in which the violation occurred, or to the Office of Human Resources.

3. Appropriate measures will be taken to deal with those who repeatedly disregard the regulations.

Buildings

Administration

Chemistry

Computer Sciences

Computing Center

ESS

Engineering

Harriman Hall

Health Sciences

Heavy Engineering

Humanities

Infirmery

Javits Lec. Cntr.

Library

Life Sciences

Basement-
First Floor-
Second Floor-
Third Floor-
Fourth Floor-
Fifth Floor-
Sixth Floor-
Library-

Light Engineering

Mathematics

Old Chem

Physics

Psychology A & B

Sports Complex

Staller Center

Student Union

Student Activ.Cntr.

Ward Melville SBS

Smoking Areas

No smoking in building, except in private offices

No smoking in building

Main Lobby

No smoking in building

Main Lobby, first floor

Main Lobby

No smoking in building

No smoking in buildings

Main Lobby

No smoking in building

No smoking in building

No smoking in building

No smoking in building

Corridor outside 051-060

No Smoking

No Smoking

Corridor outside 323D&323E

Corridor outside 441

Corridor outside 521

Room 651

Room L117

Main Lobby

Plaza level lobby

No smoking in building

No smoking in building

No smoking in buildings

No smoking in building

Rooms 2099B & 3003A

Rooms 243, 211, 212, 162A, 034 and 035

It's not built yet!

No smoking in building, except for individual offices on fourth floor

Students In The Hands Of An Angry God

In the sixteenth century there lived a man named John Calvin. He had a particular outlook on things which probably left not a few people emotionally scarred throughout their tortured lives. Heavily influenced by the works of St. Augustine, John Calvin composed a Christian philosophy wherein he put forth the notion that man, including both men and women, is not responsible for his salvation. That is, as Johnathan Edwards (a Calvinist) put it, it is only God's "mere pleasure" which keeps those nasty sinners out of eternal torment. Again, it is the "mere pleasure" of this angry God which secures good people from unholy damnation, and we should wonder that each of us hasn't been thrown into the fiery pits of hell already.

I think John Calvin would feel right at home here at Stony Brook. In Calvin's view, God cannot be bound by any mortal contract wherein he saves the souls of goodly folk and damns the souls of

the wretched. If you were a good Calvinist Christian, you followed all the rules and regulations, attended all the proper ceremonies, and generally lived in fear that on the day you were brought before the Throne of God, he just happens to be having a bad day and thinks it would be entertaining to damn you to everlasting agony.

The State University at Stony Brook seems to function on surprisingly similar principles. We stand in single file lines, filling out all the proper forms with a no. 2 pencil, and attend all the proper classes as dictated by major, minor, and DEC requirements; but in the end how many of us are told, "I'm sorry, Albany has no record of you ever having applied for financial aid," or in May of your senior year, "You can't graduate, you haven't taken Elementary Befuddlement 101." And there you stand, with no recourse but to cry out in anguished despair—perhaps a pleasing sound to the angry god of this Calvinist Bureaucracy.

In both scenarios the message is the same, "It doesn't matter what you do, but do this." What truly amazes me however, is how the individual saying this can take themselves so seriously. Just try and question the motives and/or procedures of the most holy omnipotent State University at Stony Brook and see how fast you get denigrated from pesky undergraduate to depraved leper. The real question here is why do we subject our selves to this?

Perhaps as Americans we still retain some remnants of our Puritan Past. Unfortunately for those ideas, this is 1994. It's time to put the old gods to rest, to carve out a new frontier of academic excellence. As a new school year gets under way, we at The Press wish to propose a toast to our fellow academicians. Hereafter we shall raise our beer glasses: To the passing of old ways, the making of new friends, and the absolute refusal to put up with any more bullshit!

The
Stony
Brook
PRESS

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Garrison Hoffman

Managing Editor
Shari Nezami

Associate Editor
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Distribution Manager
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Arts Editor
Ted Swedalla

Music Editor
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Staff

LivAnn Bacerra, James Blonde,
Lee Gundel, Doug Vescuso, Louis M.
Moran, Sensate Mass, John Schneider,

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060 & 061 Student Union
SUNY at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, NY 11794-2790
(516) 632-6451

ADD/DROP NAKED

Letters

Busing is Legal Again

by Louis M. Moran

If any other establishment were as downright rude and unconsciously combative toward the local population of its area there would be harsh sanctions levied upon it for its behavior, not only by the locals but probably by the governing body of the area. SUSB is, however regrettably, outside the invisible barrier that would allow sanctions to be levied against it. There's another State run school down the block, Suffolk Community College, it doesn't suck. If your answer to that is that there's less people at Suffolk you're right, there are. The answer back is simple: hire more people to cover the extra population... perhaps I adminis-

trative traffic clerk is not enough to handle twelve thousand people.

One of most painfully obvious examples of SUSB's disdain for those of us that commute to the University is that they've put the parking lot for us a *mile* away from the campus proper. If that were not inconvenient enough, they charge you to park in a lot that is poorly paved, barely maintained and completely open to all sorts of illegal actions from simple car keying to out and out assault on the unlucky who have to park here.

Compounded on this is busing the commuters from the lot to the campus in diesel-belching, kidney-smashing, hard-metal-bar-in real-hope-your-forehead, no-concern-for-your-midterm-time, no seatbelt, no-real-hope-for-survival-in-an-accident, ancient, Ralph Cramden busses. So after that total inconvenience, which need not exist, they charge you for it. Gut me and fill me with road salt please...

Why not just come out and say, "Hey you Long Island dirt bags, go somewhere else... we don't want you! We'd much rather have our little multi-cul-

tural tea party without your overwhelmingly white, single occupant, fossil-fuel burning, churning up the asphalt, and ability to leave and eat for less than ten bucks a pop carcasses!" Well, you'd like to say that SUSB, wouldn't you?

Well SUSB it's pissing a lot of people off. Lines, we're used to. The overwhelmingly complex web of red tape that must be waded through in the Kafka inspired, Escher built Administration Building is becoming rote. We all must suffer these. Not every commuter is living at home so don't cry on my shoulders that living on campus is a cost burden; it is, but you don't have to. Take the bulk of commuters paying \$650 a month and up to live off campus.

Charging \$30 to get to school on top of the already high cost of living (insurance on your car anyone?) here is a step away from evil. Compounded by the fact that the service is better now that I'm paying for it than it was when I wasn't. It is obvious that SUSB holds me and my kind in low regard bordering on contempt.

The Press
welcomes your
letters and
viewpoints.
Submissions
should be less
than 500
words.
Handwritten
submissions
will be eaten.

Along the Color Line:

Why Ben Chavis Is Under Attack

By Manning Marable

NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Chavis seems to be doing every wrong. The national media is angry with him bringing Nation of Islam Minister Louis Farrakhan to this June's African-American Leadership Summit. Conservative leaders within the NAACP Communications Director Don Rojas called a "mini-summit" in Detroit, reaching out to black nationalists such as Maulana Karenga, the originator of "Kwanzaa"; poet/author Haki Madhubuti; and Black United Front leader Conrad Worrill.

In a stormy and controversial debate among members of the NAACP's national board, motions to oust Rojas and to censure Chavis for the Detroit caucus with black nationalists were defeated. Rainbow Coalition leader Jesse Jackson did attend the Baltimore summit, but spoke openly on several occasions to contradict the NAACP leader's statements. Baltimore was filled with rumors that Jackson had personally convinced a number of key leaders in the Civil Rights Movement and inside organized labor to stay away from the summit. Moreover, only two members of the Congressional Black Caucus attended the summit: Representatives Kwesi (D-Maryland), the caucus chairman, and Donald M. Payne (D-New Jersey).

The national media constantly fed public speculation that Chavis would soon be sacked as the venerable Association's Executive director. Even at the Baltimore summit, in his opening remarks, Chavis forcefully addressed his critics: "There are some who have thrown stones at us simply because we're trying to bring our people together... I would not be sitting here if my board did not back what I was doing."

The real issue which should be explored is not Chavis's personal history and political biography - although

these details help to explain much. Chavis was a celebrated political prisoner in the "Wilmington Ten case" two decades ago, a victim of racism within our criminal justice system. After his legal vindication, Chavis went to become the leader for Racial Justice. He was one of the first African-American leaders to focus on the issue of "environmental racism".

By defeating the candidacy of Jesse Jackson to emerge as the new leader of the NAACP following the retirement of Benjamin Hooks, Chavis marked the "coming of age" of an entire generation of post-Civil Rights Movement era activists into the main arenas of struggle. Chavis spearheaded the successful thirtieth anniversary March on Washington, DC last August. His personal charisma and energetic travels across the nation are largely responsible for an increase in the NAACP's membership by over 120,000 since April 1993.

What is really behind the public and private attacks against Ben Chavis is the absence of ideas, effective leadership, organizational action on the part of many traditional, mainstream black leaders. Without engaging in the rhetorical criticisms - by his personal example of commitment to black empowerment - Chavis challenges the lack of creativity, the absence of militancy and the paucity of political mobilization by his "elders". Leaders such as Joe Lowery of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference have complained to associates that Chavis fails to show the "proper respect" and gives inadequate consultation to him.

What Lowery should be reminded is that the problems of the 1990s are not the problems of the sixties. Nobody's seeking to obtain and integrated cup of coffee at an "all white" diner anymore. The voting rights act was passed nearly thirty years ago. Our problems today are not going to be solved by "racial integration",

or by what could be termed the "strategy of inclusion".

The former leadership of the Civil Rights Movement -- Coretta Scott King, Ralph David Abernathy, Whitney Young, Roy Wilkins, Dorothy Height, A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, Lowery, and others -- had certain assumptions about race and power in America. They believed that the white liberal state was a benefactor of blacks' collective interests. They believed that the Democratic Party was essentially our political ally. They favored incremental social change, not radical confrontations. They believed in "symbolic representation", that the advancement of individual African-Americans into positions of power and formerly all-white professions, would elevate blacks as a group. They never anticipated the rise of "Reaganism", the collapse of affirmative action and the welfare state, the massive growth of urban poverty and violence, and the class stratification within the black community. They had no language to articulate the rage of the "Hip Hop" Generation of the nineties.

In short, Chavis is trying mightily to bridge the gap between the Civil Rights Movement and where black America is going. Millions of our young people are thoroughly disillusioned with the political system and society. They feel that there is no future for them. Unless Chavis and the NAACP move rapidly to recapture the post-Civil Rights generation, the future of black people in American society is in profound jeopardy.

Dr. Manning Marable is professor of History and Political Science, and Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies, Columbia University, New York City. "Along the Color Line" appears in over 250 publications and is broadcast by more than 75 radio stations internationally.

Join the Press!

Or suffer the consequences of not being able to speak your mind to the troubled masses that populate this fine academic (soon to be sports) oriented campus. We can also show you how to clog-dance to German drinking songs and the art of hunting seawolves.

Meetings will be held every Wednesday at 1:00 PM in Room 060 of the Student Union, or call 632-6451.

Top 10 Targets for the Stony Brook Sniper

(first to reach 5,000 pts. wins a cookie)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 10. Freshmen | (1pt ea.) |
| 9. Construction Guys | (10pts) |
| 8. Traffic/Public Safety Officer | (20pts) |
| 7. Admin. Window Person | (30pts) |
| 6. Owner Of Wallace's | (40pts) |
| 5. Polity Exec. Director | (50pts) |
| [When there is one] | |
| 4. Blue Power Ranger | (75pts) |
| 3. FSA Executives | (100pts) |
| 2. Emperor Cuomo | (300pts) |
| 1. The Seawolf | (500pts) |

involved in some of our less than up-front international
continued from page 2

dealings couldn't hurt P.R. Plus, it finally removed that irking "wimp" label which the press had so unfairly tagged poor George. In retrospect, it was like a Marlon Perkins, "bring 'em back alive" Mutual of Omaha show. When at last we had the wild beast, Noriega, we caged him up and displayed him in the American media menagerie. We then gave him some lawyers and had our very own Roman-style "circus of the deposed dictator."

The Road to Baghdad, or Arabian Flights

With the success of Panama, the Bush administration upped the ante, a Soviet government on the edge of economic ruin made the stakes less risky, but this time there was a lot at stake, Oil, black gold, Texas tease. Once again the elephant gun was pulled out of the closet and loaded carefully for a Safari in the Middle East. The Invasion of Kuwait, was a spectacular television affair, with millions of dollars worth of special effects. And the heroes weren't just the men in uniform, but the *Patriots*, the missiles, the smart bombs, the tanks. Newspapers ran sidebars resembling baseball cards of each team's military hardware. The Russkie scud, the Stealth Plane, and in the center of it all, the war created the first true military sex-symbol, General "Stormin'" Norman Schwarzkopf.

This was no puppet dictator we were up against either, it was Crazy Sadaam "Insane" Hussein, complete with a mustache as deadly as Hitler's. (Great line, John —D) A man who used *chemical* weapons on his own people. A man who was clearly not to be trusted

with nuclear weapons (unlike, say, Pakistan, Israel, or India). No doubt about it, where Khadaffi had been a nuisance, Hussein was a menace to the civilized world and should be taken out and shot like a rabid dog.

Knowing that the military wanted beaches for great photo-ops, the setting was perfect, one giant beach, from the sea to the desert (*and back to the sea?*). All of it filmed and censored by the military. Yes, the military had learned that most important thing in a war is to have complete creative control. The press would be hand-fed what was acceptable viewing of the battles.

As it turned out, the Iraqi troops were little more than paper tigers, easily buried beneath the sands in the greatest experiment in wartime earth moving ever conceived. Those that weren't buried just gave up. So much for one of the top ten armies in the world; they weren't even contenders. All the pre-fight speculation and threats masked the truth that the odds-on winner would be the good 'ol U.S. of A. More importantly, at the outset, it was decided to let the military off on any fights that gave the Iraqi's the home turf advantage, they didn't stand a chance (???). And so, with weary smiles, a few bodybags and some strange, possibly incurable illnesses, our boys came home with nice tans to parades down Main Street.

Somalia: The Quest for Peace in the New World Order

The clock was counting down when George decided to leave the Oval Office with one final parting shot, one last hurrah, one ultimate "Ride 'em up" for the poor saps of the Third World. The policemen of the world would sally forth into the archaic Tribal Lands of Somalia, where relief workers were being shot up like swiss cheese and thousands went to bed without any supper. If there was anything we were prepared to fight

for, it was the right of other countries to have an idyllic Norman Rockwellesque existence, or in this case a more savage Rudyard Kiplingesque one.

It had all the good vibes of a Live Aid Concert, and it was almost guaranteed to be left in the unwitting hands of the President-elect. A feel-good war that made headlines, with an air of kindness and compassion; there were no doubts of why we were there, and no worries about any Vietnamization of Somalia.

The Soviet Bloc had finally bit the big one, and it felt good to be Numero Uno, (even if we were in the process of slowly being edged out as an economic power by Japan). It was an action that showed the military's more tender side. Why, those loveable trained killers were finally doing something for the less fortunate, the bighearted lugs.

Besides giving us a chance to use some of our military hardware before the expiration dates came up, it was a Christmas reminder for all of us that we should be thankful for all we had, a charitable action in these confused times that had a Dickensian charm to it. We could all nod in silence at the dinner table, each agreeing with Tiny Tim, "God bless us, each and every one."

With President Clinton in office, not much changed. Withdrawal dates were posted and reposted—it seems the Somali warlords were politely waiting until the U.S. troops withdrew before they continued the power struggle amongst themselves. But sooner or later, as all media events do, the Somali situation went quietly from page 1 to page 4, silently slipping away to be recorded as a footnote in the textbooks of tomorrow.

COLUMBUS WAS SO DUMB HE THOUGHT HE LANDED IN INDIA.

EVERYONE CONSIDERED HIM A HERO.

PERHAPS YOU THINK DIFFERENTLY.

IF SO, WE HAVE A PLACE FOR YOU—

THE 1994 PRESS

COLUMBUS DAY

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

IN FACT, YOU DON'T HAVE TO WRITE ABOUT
COLUMBUS, THE NEW WORLD OR NATIVE
AMERICANS AT ALL.

AUTUMN IS ALMOST HERE,
PUSHKIN'S FAVORITE TIME OF YEAR...

send all submissions
to Room 060 in the Student Union
by September 22

express yourself in poetry, prose and pictures

WHICH MEANS, JUST WRITE ABOUT LOVE, LIFE AND DEATH!

IRON MURRAY

by John Schnieder

There is a story of a man who lived deep, deep, deep in the heart of suburbia and how he held a job as claims adjuster for the Mutually Dependable Insurance company. He was a lonely man who made less than 50K a year without benefits. He had no family to speak of, save an aunt Trudy in Vermouth, Idaho who sent him macramé pot holders and a Yuletide fruitcake for his birthday and Christmas respectively.

One day the head of the claims adjustment division called for Murray. It seemed that there was a problem. The Mutually Dependent Insurance Company had recently acquired the Amalgamated Polysorbate Company's policy for fire and flood, only to have a freak accident flood the Amalgamated Polysorbate Company's factory with Vanilla Fudge Ripple ice cream. The entire claims adjustment division was aghast and unable to fathom how to handle this situation. The company was under great duress and someone was needed to visit the factory and assess the damage caused by the flooded ice cream.

And so it was decided that Murray would travel to Pensakoola, Nevada (scenically located, and only a three hour drive from Reno or beautiful Lake Tahoe) to visit what remained of the factory. It would be a harsh trip since travel vouchers for business class no longer were given and the only seats the company would pay for were coach. Murray silently accepted the tickets and solemnly went home to pack his belongings, several fruit cakes and a pair of Aunt Trudy's finest macramé pot holders.

Murray sat in the last aisle of the plane, patiently, enduring bad service and sneers from the beautiful-yet-incredibly-stupid flight attendants. He paid no mind to the obese lawyer from Seattle who talked incessantly and took Murray's aisle seat, block-

ing not only his way out, but any hopes of getting up to stretch or go to the bathroom. All the while he concentrated on the job that awaited him in Pensakoola. Not once did he question his honor and duty to the Mutually Dependent Insurance Company. When suddenly, in the middle of Stanley and Iris (that is, if you had bought the headphones from your steward or stewardess, and were not simply trying to read the lips of the characters) the pilot, copilot and navigator of the plane became sick from a virus in the beef stroganoff. Fortunately Murray's dinner had not made it past the portly and pungent passenger next to him, thus saving him from certain death. Unfortunately, Murray's luck didn't last very long. Within moments the plane began plummeting to the earth.

Murray awoke to the acrid smell of the roasting carcass of the lawyer who, now deceased, had occupied the seat next to him. He had been spared from the crash since the last seats in coach are the safest. With no time to lose, he grabbed his carry on luggage and left the flaming wreckage minutes before it exploded.

The plane had crashed in the desert. The heat was blistering, melting even the soles of his shoes. Murray wandered through the desert for days, pot holders wrapped around his feet. He went without food for days, buzzards circled overhead and landed near him. He used the fruitcakes to hit the buzzards and kill them so that he would have something to eat. He used his eyeglasses to build a fire from some of his excess clothing so at night he would be warm and cook.

Days passed and he went on aimlessly, all the while knowing that if he did not get to Pensakoola soon, he'd be laid off for unexplained absences. His hope dwindled, he saw mirages in the sand, houses with two car garages and swimming pools, blocked up expressways, supermarkets. It seemed so long ago that his life was normal. What would he do when he got back from

this savage wasteland. How would he be able to deal with this tragedy, even if he was getting a tan for the first time in his life. Would he need group therapy, and how did he really feel about his self image?

Finally after countless days and nights, there in the distance, on the horizon was civilization. Las Vegas!! and as he crawled into the first casino he came to he reached the first row of slot machines and at the very first one, a woman with a cup of coins turned around... looked at him... and said, "Christ, Murray, if that's the way you treat my pot holders I'm just not going to send you any more. You look like a bum, do you know that?"

Murray passed out and was revived at the bar by a round of free drinks from a woman from Seattle whose husband had died in a plane accident, leaving her financially well-off from his insurance policy. Murray had no real problems adapting to civilization. Although he lost his credit cards in the desert, he was able to receive new ones within days. He received notice from his employer that he was being terminated for an unauthorized leave of absence. Stricken with grief, he tried throwing himself from a hotel room window, but survived when he landed on top of a stretch limo. He sued the owner, and received a large sum of money which he invested wisely in long-term low yield bonds which would keep him financially secure, and eventually married a topless showgirl named Bunny.

Three years later, penniless from a devastating divorce, he returned to his home. Through luck, good psychological counseling and a variety of prescribed pharmaceuticals he was able to regain both his job, and his standing in the community, as well as with Aunt Trudy. He now has true happiness, and full dental coverage. His career and home are more meaningful than wealth and love, and he may in the future hope to be promoted to Vice President of his division.

How to break a leg

By Aaron Swartz

Three actors stand stiffly in a line reading from their scripts. One actor seems not to know what to do with his free hand and finally digs it deep into the safety of a pocket. The others, more daringly point, lift and wave their arms, anything to avoid the pocket. Finally, the scene is over. There is an uncomfortable silence in the dimly lit theater. All eyes are on the man sitting in the shadows. He whispers to a woman sitting next to him. They both start writing. The silence seems endless. Then suddenly an authoritative voice says, "Thank you. Next!" and the actors exit. More actors enter and the auditions for the Theater department's fall season continues.

This fall Stony Brook's theater department is presenting four productions, *The Tales of the Lost Formicans*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Raft of the Medusa*, and *Master and Margarita*. But before the excitement of opening night and many curtain calls is the all-important audition. During the first two weeks of school over fifty students, from various departments, in the university auditioned. They went to a first reading, then hopefully to a first and second call-backs. And finally, the most talented and most appropriate are cast.

Farley Richmond, the Chairman of the Theater Department since 1987, explains that every director holds their auditions slightly differently. "I have my actors read from the script,

but this isn't always the case." John Cmeron, the director of *The Tales of the Lost Formicans*, asks for a prepared monologue. "Sometimes there is just an interview. In New York there are cattle-calls where the director just searches for a particular look and most actors never even read," he continues, "In these massive cattle-calls the director just keeps yelling 'Next!' until someone catches their eye."

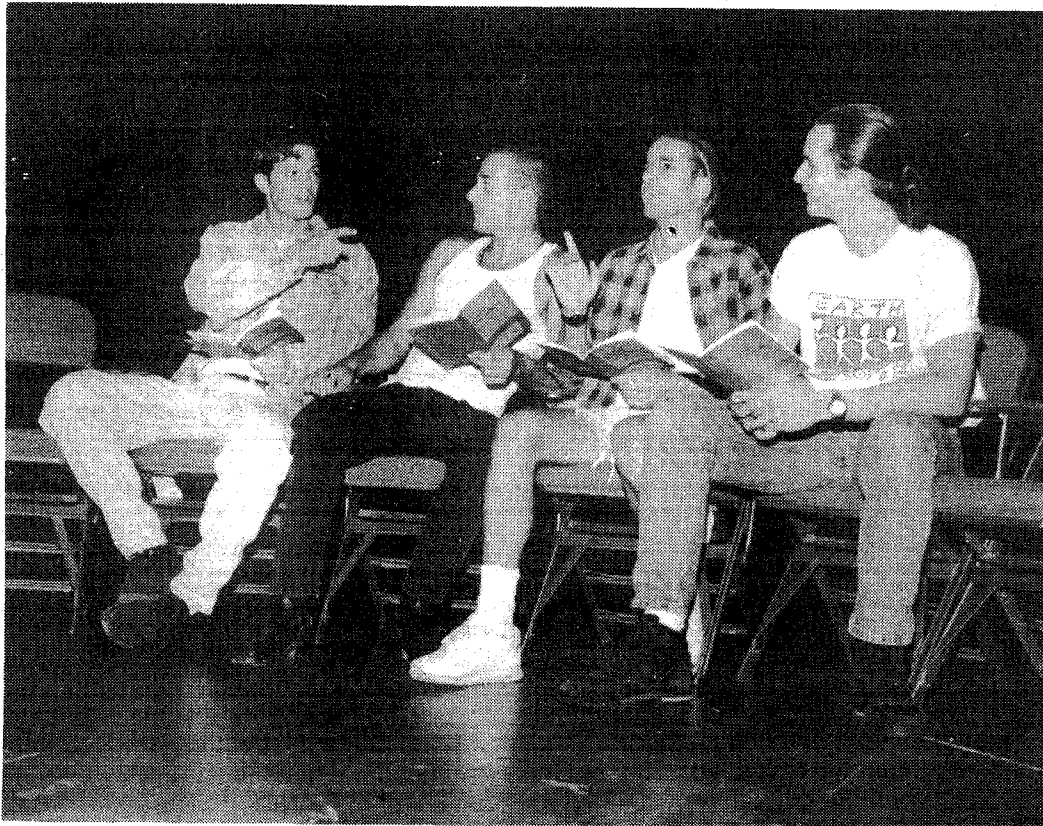
Having the 'right look' is very important. "Every director has a set image in mind before the audition," says recent theater department graduate, Vinay Pathak. "It is very taboo

but very practical." The director also looks for talent, voice projection, articulation, and connection with other actors.

Phoebe Whisnant, a 20-year-old exchange student from North Carolina is sitting outside the dance studio quietly waiting to audition. This is only her second audition and she admits to being a bit nervous. Whisnant is not a theater dept. major and is auditioning because she has always enjoyed the theater. "I'm auditioning for the fun aspect of it. I'm not putting any pressure on myself," she explains. However, when the door opens and she is called in, her movements become urgent, her faces loses its smile and she becomes very serious.

Robyn Kolterman, a bubbly 19 year old Bette Midler look alike, has just come from her audition for *The Diary of Anne Frank* and is very eager to talk. "I get giddy before and after auditions, but I use it to my advantage," she says. Kolterman explains that she does vocal and stretching exercises before an audition. She also likes to stand still for a while beforehand so she doesn't twitch and fidget while she auditions.

The auditioning process exists as a harsh reality for some actors, while others just see it as a fact of life. "If you do your best and you are prepared you have nothing to complain about," says third year theater major, Chris Graham. "You get used to it after a while. If you want to be an actor, you just do it," he says. "It's a part of your life."



From the darkest reaches
of the infernal abyss,
The Stony Brook Press
presents...

Arcane Answers

(an advice column of diabolic origin)

To my humble servant Azazel,

Throughout the ages, it always has amazed me how much you assume. You assume that I am a "new age parrot," I am not. You assume that I am mortal, I am not. You scream at me, "I AM IMMORTAL. You are nothing!" There is a tinge of fear there and it is ever so delicious. You say that you have seen the face of god. You are a fool; god has many faces. It seems to me that the only thing you do know how to do is throw empty insults from an equally empty intellect. Oh, I can assure you that the wheel of time turns, and even though you and I are not subject to it, you are not immune to me. Mistress Death has been gathering more than just mold and has asked me to do a favor for her. I was hoping that you would have been wise but you disappointed me as usual. I am not a bellowing caterwaul asking for an ounce of your ever-present hot air. You are addressing someone far older than you can fathom, fledgling. I was watching when you were created and you exist now only for my enjoyment, which is quickly fading [sic]. You will soon be extinct, but I admire your efforts corpulent one, continue for now.

-Isabella Noddaba

My Dear Noddaba-dabba-doo;

I don't know who writes your material for you, but if you like I can recommend someone who is actually qualified to have their words in print. The more pressing issue, however, is your lack of perception. What you wistfully regarded as fear in my last column was, in fact, awe. I could not believe that any being short of a major deity would be so irresponsible as to address me in such a fashion. Your blatant lack of civility

suggests to me that if you indeed have any power at all, it must be freshly aquired. Only an impish



acolyte would bellow and caterwaul as such. I was equally confounded as to why you persist in carrying on with this "Mistress Death" business. Quite frankly I wish you would

leave Death altogether out of this. It hasn't done anything to warrant your liable characterizations, and gets on just fine with help from enither you nor I.

I credit you in that your spelling has improved somewhat, but your incessant, delusional ranting has all the appeal of a dead whore. My advice to you is to go back to what ever hovel you oozed out of, practice your manners and your spelling (you spelled 'fading' wrong in your letter), and in a millenia or three come out and try not to be such a ninny.

-Azazel

P.S. My sincere apologies to any and all readers who enjoy necrophilic urges, and may occasion to indulge in a dead whore or two. Here, however, I am refering not merely to a recently deceased lady-of-the-evening, but an odiferous, stiff, cold, maggot-breeding, former rutting bitch-in-heat. -Az

Please send all correspondence to:
The Stony Brook Press
Rooms 060 & 061 Student Union
Stony Brook, New York 11794-2790

MOON RISING

By Tommy Crean

Hello and welcome to another edition of *Moon Rising*. I have received some input on the first column from a good friend (hi Gene). He said that I should have explained myself more clearly, because he did not understand what I was talking about. I guess he was right, I do tend to ramble.

Since Witchcraft is an often misunderstood practice, in this issue I will try to clarify some common misconceptions. First, let me say that I do not speak for all practitioners. Since Wicca, Witchcraft, Wiccacraft (used interchangeably) is an unorganized religion, some views tend to vary. But there are some fundamental beliefs (truths).

The main truth is of the duality of deity, Woman and Man, separate and yet the same, at war and in love, a Goddess and a God, however we choose to name them. The balance of nature in perfect union. From this union all life springs. The idea of a Goddess (woman) is a major break from the more popular masculine dominat-

ed religions of today. That is one reason why witches' and their craft have been the subject of a lot of propaganda (ha-ha), a plethora of persecutions and a myriad of lies. We do not worship Satan, do not condone human sacrifices and do not try to convert your larvae; oh excuse me, children (a joke). And the wild, perverted sexual orgies, although they do sound fun, I have yet to partake in one. Our craft is a religion of love, wisdom, and of acceptance of the cycle of Nature. There is no hell, except that which we create, and heaven is evolving to call the Goddess and God our kin. They call the craft (of the wise) new age, but it is actually far older than any of us can imagine.

Another fundamental truth is that there is more than one path to Deity/Goddess/God. Some people have trouble in seeing that Deity can take on many forms. For the Christians, Deity is Jesus Christ, and he is the only way. Is it not possible that God foresaw that some people would have the need to believe in only one way to return to the source, so she developed this religion

for those people. A lot of people have a problem with God coming to meet us (why?); she loves us, so why not establish many paths so that we, in all our varied forms and ideas, can reach her. Each person's path is right for them.

There is much more information on this subject, but I fear I may be inciting a good old fashion witch burning. There are two parts of Witchcraft, the religion and the magic, both are independent. The religion is as above, the worship/reverence of the Goddess and God. Magic (sometimes spelled magick) is the natural ability in all of us to manipulate the energy in ourselves, as well as in objects to cause a change in reality, which is relative by the way. Anything that we dish out returns to us, be it good or bad. Magick is a gift of the Goddess/God, it helps bring about our evolution toward them. By each and every one of us practicing our own form of magick we help bring us and the gods closer. Once one starts on the path towards enlightenment/ascension, there is no turning back.

By Rachel S. Wexelbaum

To the freshmen, who will sculpt
Stony Brook in their own image

One day the Aral Sea will fill up
with water again.

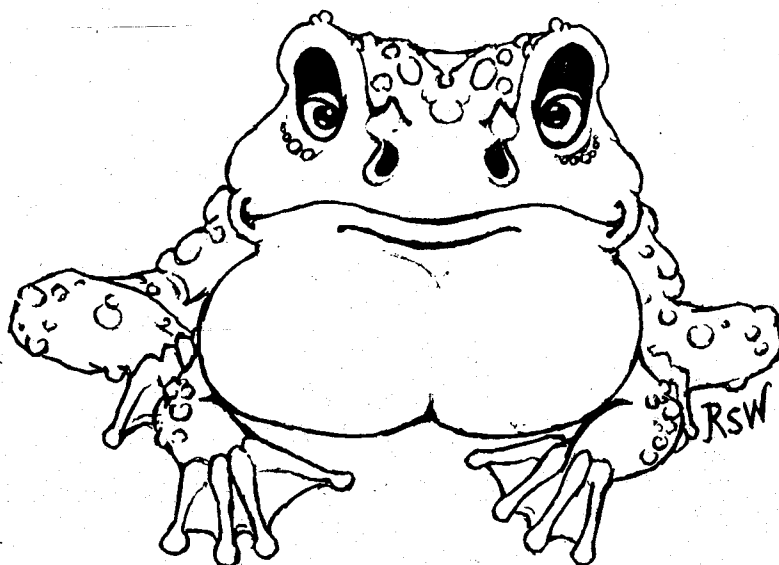
For those of you who do not keep up
with environmental disasters or read
atlases for fun, the Aral Sea was once
a large body of water in southern
Russia. Due to the inefficiencies of
primitive Soviet irrigation systems, in
fewer than twenty years this magnifi-
cent inland lake has turned into a
cracking mud bank. Many people see
this tragedy as one of many testaments
to Russia's decline, the destruction of
our planet and life as we know it.

But the nihilists always forget that
Nature is a hopeless optimist...

Deep in the dried mud of the Aral Sea rest millions of
frog eggs waiting for the spring floods. Billions of
insect eggs and seeds wait in that same crust, waiting to
hatch, eat and be eaten. Life shall begin again.

An ancient toad also waits under the crust. Toad had
survived the Bolshevik Revolution, two world wars and
the Chernobyl disaster, so she wasn't going to die off in
a hurry. She was kind of lonely, though, and contem-
plated the dried-up world around her.

Soon the rains will come, she thought, and the chil-



dren will return. They will swim and play happily
though the water just like old times, and life shall begin
again.

Then, all of a sudden, Toad began to panic. This is
what old people do to occupy their free time—create
problems where there are none. "Then what will
become of them all?" she mused through the crum-
bling dried mud. "Their parents are dead—they will
have no one to teach them how to run the world!"

And Toad took it upon herself to teach the children
once they hatched. They would learn reading, writing,
arithmetic, and science. They would learn history, and

how to be good citizens of the lake. They would learn
about life on the land as well as in the water, and she
would teach them what to fear and what to love. And
life would go on again.

Toad was now a woman with a mission. Blindly she
plowed through the dried mud with short, frantic gasps,
screaming her lungs out for the good of the children.
She would be there to greet them once they emerged
from the lake bed, and she would inform them that she
would be their teacher, their leader.

Unfortunately, with all of her wisdom, Toad forgot an
important thing. Toads exposed to the white hot desert
sun quickly dry out, dehydrate and become crispy. A
snake passing through the dried bed learned that toads
who meet such a fate are particularly tasty.

MORAL : Don't try to change
the world before you've seen it
(i.e., look before you teach).

MORE IMPORTANTLY:
Those in the biggest hurry to
help others most often cannot
help themselves.

—From the Ol' Dirt Road

"Pandemonium Cheesecake" Hits it Big

By Scott J. Lushy

Over the course of the summer, I had the unique
experience of sitting in on one of 90.1 WUSB's
newest radio programs, the "Pandemonium
Cheesecake" show, hosted by fellow undergrad Ted
Swedalla. I didn't quite know what to expect from
him being broadcast all over the island, but I would
end up being pleasantly surprised.

I was fortunate enough to witness Swedalla's debut
on the airwaves, which aired sometime near the sum-
mer's beginning. He was a bit nervous, which was
obvious during the show's first half-hour. But, con-
sidering that this was the first time he had ever been
on live radio, this was to be expected. As the show
got rolling, he began to loosen up, eventually return-
ing to the weirdly funny guy I had come to know.

The next time I was able to attend Swedalla's show
(which incidentally airs every Tuesday morning from
4-6:30) was just before the present semester began.
For this show, Swedalla had recruited the services of
his long-time friend and frequent cohort on the show,
Don Eccles, as well as myself and his sister Kim
(who was in town from Florida for the week.) With
our assistance, Swedalla was able to stage a truly
hysterical parody of Woodstock '94, complete with
"live" bands performing on stages set up all around
the Stony Brook campus. While admittedly cheesy,
cheesiness was exactly what he was shooting for,
and it succeeded brilliantly.

Other highlights of Swedalla's "Pandemonium
Cheesecake" show are the frequent calls from "Bob
the Word Archaeologist" (who, in case you haven't
figured it out, digs up obscure and usually humorous
words for the public's listening pleasure), and the
"Celebrity Endorsements," which are nothing but
shameless (and usually not very good) parodies of
celeb voices espousing the true genius of his show.
These "endorsements" range from the barely recog-
nizable (such as Gil Gerard) and the truly washed-up
(Erik Estrada) to the dead (Tom Carvel) and the fic-
tional (Chubsy-Upsy, Buford T. Justice, Rainbow
Brite and Punjab.)

However, since his show is musically oriented, its
strength must lay in its play list. Swedalla likes to
play more cutting-edge music, such as the Reverend
Horton Heat and Uncle Joe's Big Ol' Driver (two of
his personal favorites.) Other favorites include Liz
Phair, PJ Harvey, Truly, Sugar and Dinosaur Jr.
While alternative/underground music comprise the
bulk of his spinnings, the final half-hour of
Swedalla's show is generally reserved for what he
calls "Artist Spotlight," which focuses on a particular

artist's work (ranging from Weird Al Yankovic to
Richard Thompson.) And who could forget the
"Spotlight on Juice Newton?" This is probably due
to the fact that, due to FCC regulations, he can't play
bands like Liz Phair after 6AM- too many expletives
in the lyrics.

All in all, Swedalla's "Pandemonium Cheesecake"
show makes for entertaining listening for either the
"early bird" or the "night owl" who enjoys a fairly
eclectic assortment of music. And, as always, his
phone lines will always be open to anybody who
may have a request. Believe me, if he has it, he'll
play it (he doesn't get many calls- four in one night
is tops so far.)

Notes: Sugar's latest release, *File Under: Easy
Listening* is out (as of 9/7.) Look for a review next
issue..... Liz Phair's new one, *Whipsmart*, is due out
9/20. Can't wait for that..... Hot singles so far this
semester: R.E.M.'s new one, "What's the Frequency
Kenneth"; "I Alone" by Live; Offspring's "Self
Esteem"; and Deadeye Dick's "New Age Girl".....
The only program on MTV worth watching anymore
is "Alternative Nation". None of the other programs
play anything new and interesting anymore. Maybe
they should deep-6 the play list every now and
then..... Is it just me, or has Queensryche fallen off
the face of the earth?..... Under the heading of "It
better be good, or else", the new Pearl Jam is due out
in mid-November..... Did the MTV Music Video
Awards make you sick too? No good bands win
anything anymore. It's always the same ones every
year. This year, two deserving bands, Green Day
and the Beastie Boys suffered because of it.....
Anyway, that's it for now. Any comments or insults
should be forwarded to The Press office under the
heading "Attn: Music Editor." 'Till next time.



THIS DINOSAUR NOT EXTINCT

Dinosaur Jr. Continues to Rock On in Latest Effort

Without a Sound
Dinosaur Jr.
Sire/Reprise Records
By Scott J. Lusby

Dinosaur Jr. made their major label debut a few years ago, being hailed by mentors Sonic Youth as one of the next great alternative/underground bands (when such a thing wasn't *gauche*, as it is now.) Powered by frontman J Mascis' innovative guitar riffs, they managed to grab hold of a sizable audience within the alternative genre. However, their latest release, *Without a Sound*, threatens to broaden their fan base to the point where they may actually become a household name. And I must say, it's about time.

Despite the album's moniker, *Without a Sound* is anything but reticent. If noise is your fancy, then this is the album for you. Those of you who happen to be familiar with my reviews will find that this album is consistent with most of those I have reviewed before; usually, the noisier the better. *Without a Sound* certainly fits this description.

J Mascis continues to compose every aspect of the song writing, as well as playing just about every instrument and doing all the vocals. Although he had a few assorted musicians help him out with backing vocals and maybe an occasional rhythm guitar, make no mistake: Mascis is Dinosaur Jr., in much the same manner that Trent Reznor is Nine Inch Nails. Both men orchestrate just about every creative aspect of their albums' conception.

Upon the first play through of *Without a Sound*, this fact becomes obvious to those familiar with Mascis' previous effort. His fingerprints are all over the album- from his screeching solos filled with deafening feedback and harmonics to the gravelly whine of his voice. To be honest, his voice is just downright horrible; sometimes it seems as though Mascis tries

(and fails) to hit notes that only dogs can hear.

While this would present a major problem for any other band, Mascis actually turns his vocal deficiencies into an asset. Believe it or not, his wretched voice fits wonderfully into the sludge of noise created by the never-ending onslaught of power cords and feedback, such as on the tracks "Get Out of This," "Grab It," "Even You," and the first single, "Feel the Pain."



It is precisely this point that makes Dinosaur Jr., and especially this album, work. Power, pure and unadulterated. This is Mascis' greatest strength. Much like other great guitarists of today and yesterday (Keith Richards comes to mind), Mascis' true genius lies in his ability to create incredible rhythms. He is not a soloist first, and a rhythm guitarist sec-

ond. Rather, Mascis lets his rhythmic sections carry his compositions' power. This is a refreshing change from some of the solo-happy bands that have popped up over the years (sorry Lou- Van Halen falls into this category despite Eddie's ability to write great rhythms.)

As far as individual songs go, *Without a Sound* is more upbeat, more potent than their previous release, *Where You Been*. This served to correct the one mistake Mascis made when writing the 1993 release. *Where You Been* started off strong, with "Out There" and "Start Choppin'" (which has one of today's greatest riffs driving it), but unfortunately tailed off until it reached a sort of anticlimax at its end. However, *Without a Sound* is chock full of foot-stompin', headbangin', friend-bludgeoning music from beginning to end. Just wait until you sample "I Don't Think So" or "On the Brink"; you'll be grabbing the nearest inanimate object and aiming it at your friend's cranium in no time.

All kidding aside, *Without a Sound* is an extremely powerful album, one that will have you doing the ol' butt twitch in your seat before you realize what's happening. Which brings me to my final point- its length. *Without a Sound* is short by today's standards; its eleven songs take less than fifty minutes to finish. This combines with Mascis' fast, driving rhythms to create a frantic pace, which leaves the listener almost winded at its conclusion. And, it also happens to make it more enjoyable in the long run; in plain English, you won't get bored of it.

What's left, after all is said and done, is an album which is not only a must for all Dinosaur Jr. fans, but also for anyone who enjoys a good sludge-fest every now and then. If you happen to fall into either one of these categories, then *Without a Sound* shouldn't be missed.

Next Issue: Sugar's *File Under: Easy Listening*, unless something else happens to catch my eye in the meantime.

A Couch Potato With an Opinion

By Joseph Grassi

This past summer I took part in the great tradition of Generation X'ers (I'm offended by that label but its functional) which was watching a very unhealthy amount of M.T.V. In my observations one particular video held my attention. Oddly enough it was the one with the least special effects, the least cleavage (OK, it contains the tiniest bit of cleavage but not enough to get the feminists angry.) I don't even care for the song and no matter how many times it came on I couldn't change the channel and I couldn't do one more thing. I couldn't put my middle finger down. For some reason my middle finger was automatically raised to the T.V. screen for the entirety of the video every time it came on. Yet I couldn't turn it off. I was compelled to watch Lisa Loeb and the Nine Stories' video "Stay." Maybe it was the way Lisa Loeb exits the camera's right and re-enters on the camera's left. I think it's pretty cute the way she keeps walking in circles around the camera person.

Can somebody please tell me the difference between Phish, Live, Helmet, Collective Soul, and the Meat Puppets? If there is any substantial difference between these bands including their fans (in other words, is it usually the case that if one likes one of these groups that one would appreciate the rest of them?), would somebody please write in and illustrate the difference and/or spell it out for me, because I just don't get it.

The best video by far this summer, in my opinion, was "Liar" by Henry Rollins. It had all the elements of a truly great piece of art. This video had social comments, irony, humor, theatrics and passion which is atypical of M.T.V.'s usual "Bikini Sex Beach M.T.V." The key to truly enjoying this video is to take everything Henry Rollins is saying and imagine that it is coming from the mouth of your ex-girlfriend/boyfriend. This little tid-bit of advice will increase your video pleasure immensely, I assure you in this particular video's case. It's even a little bit scary!

Joe- You are right; "Stay" is a silly video. Nothing of any substance exists within it. As far as the differ-

ences between the bands you mentioned, it is pretty simple. Phish and Collective Soul have a "poppy" (i.e. they're commercial); Live is kind of like a "heavier" R.E.M. (very social conscious); the Meat Puppets are just plain strange; and Helmet may as well be thrash metal.

As far as The Rollins Band's "Liar" video, this is an interesting piece. However, it is not the best of the summer (neither overall nor by Rollins.) If you want to see a really socially-conscious video by Rollins, look for his new one, "Disconnect." Also, "Kiss the Frog" by Peter Gabriel is an amazing piece, if special effects are your thing. Thanks for the letter- just do your homework on your music next time. Write again! -Ed.

Joe- Lisa Loeb and her glasses are the hottest things in a video since Merchant's legs in "Because the Night". The moron's guide to those bands you mentioned: Phish is the Spin Doctors' older brother; Live is a nerdy Queensryche; Helmet is a good version of Metallica; Collective Soul is a Poison of the 90's; Meat Puppets are only famous because of Nirvana. -Ed.

Not fade away

By Ted Swedalla

Hoi, chummers! Nyx Smith's book *Fade To Black* (his second in the continuing *Shadowrun* series) contains, as do all *Shadowrun* novels, high technology, corporate double-dealing and magical activities. The world of *Shadowrun* is an alternate future of earth, with magic and metahumans (elves, dwarves, trolls) returning to the earth as foretold by the Mayan calendar. [The date of this return of magic is December 24, 2011].

The year is 2055, national governments are weak and often are being run by huge megacorporations, whose only goal is to make nuyen (the world's monetary unit), by making their goods better, faster and stronger. The megacorps often are at war, stealing technology or employees from each other. Since it would look bad for them to be involved in kidnapping and industrial sabotage they hire 'shadowrunners' to do these snatches for them. Shadowrunner is the generic term given to the people who make their living by working for megacorps against other megacorps, off the books. The megacorps are very concerned with what the public, the people who buy their goods, think of them, so they try to maintain flawless images.

One thing that sets apart Smith's book is the main characters. Usually the characters in these books are nuyen thirsty killers with a do-for-me-and-I-won't-kill-you philosophy. Rico, the leader of the shadowrunning group, has something unheard of: honor. And as the back of the book says 'honor alone distinguishes a man from the ravaging dogs that fill the streets'.

In this world where 'nuyen talks and bulldrek walks' you can see why things like honor and loyalty can easily be forgotten in the face of a 10K nuyen certified credstick. Rico and his band roam the plex of Newark, which stretches from Rutherford to Rahway and has over 10 million

people living in its borders. They have carved out a niche for themselves among the other shadowrunners in the plex. Piper is his consort and the teams' decker. She 'jacks in' to the worldwide computer matrix, using a variety of programs to sleaze information from megacorp's database. Of course this is illegal. The other members of the team are Shank, an ork ex-mercenary, Thorvin, a dwarven rigger



(he can jack into vehicles, making them an extension of his body) and Bandit, the flaky but brilliant shaman. Shamen are magic users to whom the power of the earth is open to be utilized, and they feel a deep connection with Mother Nature.

Another of the book's strengths is its richness. Smith gives his characters, even the minor players, strong personalities and individualistic quirks. You can hear Mo Rasheen's Indian accent when he talks and see the difference between the clouds of deaths that surround Ravage and Claude Jaeger. The scenes with Piper inside the matrix also highlight the richness. Smith uses the freedom the matrix allows to its full advantage, creating an exciting world-within-a-world.

The story revolves around Rico's team and a job they are contracted to do. The initial job turns out to be a silicon slide (very easy), but it is the ensuing chaos that the story concentrates on. Should Rico continue with the original plan after he finds out what it really is? Or should he jeopardize his entire team to hold onto his honor? Who are the real enemies? Who can he crash with when the squat goes nova (crap hits the fan)?

Even without having read any other of the *Shadowrun* books or having any sense of the whole cyberpunk world, you will find *Fade To Black*, is an excellent book. Sharp images of a corporate-run world mixed with a healthy dose of urban sprawl nightmares topped with the mayhem of magic and matrix, puts this book among the best of new fiction. Plus the addition of new slang words that could define our generation, this book is an enjoyable ride into a future that seems all too possible.

Best to go down to your local mall and get your copy now before it becomes impossible to read, due to the last minute cram sessions and term papers. If you can't find his latest, you can always look for his first book *Striper Assassin*, or if you ask me nicely, I might let you borrow mine.

