

News & Views

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Union Begins Work On Contract Negotiations

Dec. 18th Victory Means GSEU Represents SUNY TAs & GAs At The Bargaining Table

By Marianthi Lianos and Patty Hubbard

The spring semester of 1993 begins with a certified union for GA's and TA's. The balloting, administered by the Public Employment Relations Board, was conducted through the mail from November 23 to December 17, and concluded with a 1936-338 win for the Graduate Student Employees Union, Local 1188 of the Communications Workers of America. Approximately 50% of all eligible SUNY GAs and TAs participated in the certification election with 85% of all who participated voting yes. With the winning of this certification election GSEU is now the largest graduate student employee's union in the nation.

Pre-negotiations

Active leadership has initiated the preliminary steps to begin contract negotiations. On January 21st the GSEU had a first contact with the Governor's Office for Employee Relations (GOER), the state agency that will conduct contract negotiations with the GSEU, and SUNY. The next meeting is scheduled for February 18th, in Albany. SUNY does not appear eager to meet with the Union's negotiating team. Michael Rowen (GOER) has suggested that negotiations begin only after all information necessary for bargaining is gathered. According to Union negotiators, their time-table looks something like 5-6 weeks from now.

Representatives from each SUNY center and the colleges have been selected to be on the negotiating team that will bargain with GOER/SUNY. In alphabetical order by campus, our negotiators are; Tim Dubnau (History, Albany), Thomas Reiffer (Sociology, Binghamton), Steve Keller (American Studies, Buffalo) and John Ward Regan (History, Stony Brook). Thomas Sobocki (Brooklyn Medical School) will

be representing the other SUNY colleges and Marianthi Lianos (Sociology, Stony Brook) will be representing the statewide executive committee. Along with those students, Steve Early, a CWA representative, will participate in negotiations. His role is primarily to consult and coordinate the team's activities. The negotiating team has already met twice in Albany and is currently working on a contract outline and a draft proposal.

GSEU energies on the Stony Brook campus are focused upon the development of a departmental network to foster effective communication with its members. The network will work through graduate student volunteers within each department who will be responsible for updating ten of their peers on contract negotiations and who will relay relevant information and opinions to a member who attends coordinating committee meetings (which are usually held on Mondays at 1pm) and bargaining committee meetings. The primary purpose of the bargaining committee is to formulate proposals, prioritize

demands and work on contract issues. Currently its members, in cooperation with the statewide negotiating team, have been working towards formulating a draft contract proposal. The information that the negotiating team and the local bargaining committee will be using is derived from the results of the bargaining surveys which were distributed at the end of last semester.

Bargaining Survey Results

Here are some of the needs that preliminary findings (primarily from Stony Brook) indicate. Of the respondents, 80% indicated that they need individual health care, while 17% indicated the need for family coverage. 51% said that there are no clear funding criteria in their department, while 35% said that there were. About 62% mentioned that the years of support offered in their department are insufficient, while 35% said that adequate years of funding were provided. Also, 70% of the respondents indicated the need for clear job descriptions, while

only 20% said that they are not needed. Currently, 800 surveys have been collected and 200 have been processed.

From these preliminary results the GSEU is beginning to assess what issues the Union must bring to light and subsequently address while negotiating with the Governor's Office (GOER) and the University.

A Good Contract...

The most critical factor in any contract negotiation is the active involvement of the membership. Union organizers advise students that the best way to secure a good contract is to keep informed and active in this process. "The Union has the potential of alleviating problems and frustrations TAs and GAs have experienced for years; find out who your departmental contact is, or become one (the more the merrier!)" says union organizer Patty Hubbard. "All GSEU meetings are open to all interested members and to the extent that your time permits, we urge you to become part of this exciting process."

A Farewell to TAP?

Will another helping hand for graduate students be cut off?

Governor Cuomo's SUNY budget proposal for the fall includes cuts in the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). Of particular concern for grad students is the proposed elimination of TAP money for first year incoming graduate students. According to Sherwood Johnson of the Financial Aid Office, the grad students who would be admitted without TAP would also not be eligible for TAP as they continue their programs, thus gradually phasing out TAP entirely for all grad students.

While just a proposal at this point, the cuts are part of larger budget adjustments that will go to the legislature for action. The budget should be finalized by April 1st, although past budget battles have dragged on into August, reminded Johnson, and there is no guarantee when the final word will be in.

In the meantime, campuses are mobilizing, said Assistant Vice Pro-

vost John Schmidt, both to analyze the effect this will have on tuition scholarships to prepare some reaction. A cut in TAP funds affects a department's ability to offer tuition waivers, a significant portion of grad student aid. Waiver amounts are calculated after TAP has been deducted from a student's tuition. Thus, for a student with a \$1500 tuition bill and \$500 in TAP money, a department only needed to supply \$1000 for a full waiver. Less TAP money, then, means departments will have to make up the difference, spreading their resources even thinner.

This is definitely an issue that grad students can and should take up with their legislators, said Schmidt, through lobbying and letter-writing.

Campus Project Coordinator for NYPIRG (New York Public Interest Research Group) Jeremy Potter put the TAP cuts in a larger perspective. According to a press release from NYPIRG's office, although the gover-

nor proposed no significant cuts to the SUNY budget itself, he did propose cuts in financial aid and no restoration of the \$203 million that has been cut from state support for SUNY since 1988-89.

"The Governor gets an 'A' for acknowledging that tuition is already too high and a 'D' for the damage that will continue because he did not restore the drastic budget cuts of the last two years," said Potter. Cuomo gets "an 'F' for financial aid cuts that will slam the door to a college education for thousands."

NYPIRG is one of the student groups organizing meetings between Stony Brook students and their legislators at local offices and on Monday, February 22 at a statewide Higher Education Lobbying Day in Albany. NYPIRG is located in room 079 of the Student Union, 632-6457.

(See page 5 for a listing of addresses and phone numbers of state and federal representatives.)

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*executive editorial***"The Stony Brook Plan:"****Undergraduate Initiative Should Be Redesigned To Benefit All; Not Just A Privileged Few**

The GSO strongly supports the concept of an undergraduate initiative. We believe that putting more money, effort, and planning into undergraduate education will benefit the educational structure of Stony Brook as a whole and enhance all of our experiences at the University. We remain concerned, however, with the motivation and implementation of such an initiative, particularly with the way in which the problems facing undergraduate education have been framed, and with the rhetoric of the document which has come to be known as "The Stony Brook Plan". The rhetoric of this document and of the administration has implied that the ills of our undergraduate program can be located in a singular lack: the missing and mythologized "high-achieving" student. Although the administration, in response to student outcry, has attempted to distance itself from the more unpalatable aspects of the Plan, the meaning and intent of the Plan as it now stands remain clear.

The Plan's purpose is almost solely to recruit a different and "better" student population, and is best revealed by one of its more egregious instances of contempt for the current student body. The Plan clearly states on p. 13 of the document's draft that the administration is encouraged to design initiatives that would create a sense

of special privilege among students in the Stony Brook Plan," i.e., those newly recruited high-achievers. Denials of this premise by top administrators and vows that this is not reflective of the intent of the Plan as a whole do not in the least diminish its effects, so long as their conclusions remain the same. The substantive reasoning of the Plan does not change just because administrators refuse to name privilege as such. We know, and the undergraduate students know that the real question to ask, and the real test of the administrator's good faith is: where is the money headed? The answer to that question will reveal whether the administration is truly committed to all students, or only those who fulfill its fantasies. If the money is funneled into programs that benefit only a few students, rather than ones in which all undergraduates can partake, the denial of privilege is meaningless. We will have two Stony Brooks: one for the elite and one for the unwashed masses.

The current Plan would offer special opportunities for a very few Stony Brook undergraduates, including more faculty interaction and research opportunities, individualized attention, a placement office, special field trips, and even superior housing. But what about non-Plan students? What resources will be left for them? The Plan as it is now designed would by definition accommodate only a very

small number of 'selected' students. But all Stony Brook students share some common needs: more individualized attention, smaller classes, more faculty interaction and engaged interest of the faculty, well-taught courses, job placement, and improved housing, to name a few. The selectivity of the Plan would use up the minimum resources Stony Brook has available on a few students, changing nothing in the lives of the vast majority. Its impact on the day to day quality of living at Stony Brook would be minimal, and yet it is the daily irritants of Stony Brook, its low standard of living which concomitantly lowers self-esteem, that are of main concern to many Stony Brook students.

We must not forget that Stony Brook is a public university and as such has the mission of a public university. Stony Brook has a commitment to New York State residents regardless of past achievement and a duty to foster the talent of all of its students, ensuring that each has the opportunity to fulfill her or his potential and meet her or his personal goals. Stony Brook also has a responsibility to improve the quality of experience for all students, not just

for those who have the choice or opportunity to go elsewhere, but for those who, for academic or financial reasons, cannot afford to go to a different school. We need a Plan that will offer substantive improvement in the quality of living and the educational opportunity of those students who traditionally make up Stony Brook's population, not one that will simply entice a new and privileged class of students. Such a Plan would surely recognize the abilities and capacities of our current students.

If the money is funneled into programs that benefit only a few students... we will have two Stony Brooks: one for the elite and one for the unwashed masses.

A committee has now been formed to study possible initiatives and determine the best ways to implement improvements in undergraduate education. Its recommendations will undoubtedly form the heart of the final Plan and direct the flow of money. We hope this committee remembers that we are a public university whose mission is to educate all students equally, and we hope also that, as has been said before, it remains concerned with producing rather than merely attracting excellence.

**GRADUATE STUDENT
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NYPIRG Gears Up For a Semester of Work on Education, Environmental and Social Justice Issues

This semester the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) plans to continue its fight for a cleaner environment, consumer protection, students rights and a more just society. By working with NYPIRG, Stony Brook students are able to bring about specific changes in the New York State legislature and at the local level. Some of the issues NYPIRG at Stony Brook will be working on the semester include:

Increased Funding For Education: Cuts to SUNY Stony Brook's budget damage the quality of the education Stony Brook students receive. This semester NYPIRG will work to

freeze tuition, restore cuts to financial aid and restore funding to the SUNY budget.

Environmental preservation: New York State is drowning in a sea of garbage that, through landfilling and mass incineration, pollutes our environment and threatens our health. NYPIRG is working towards the safer solution of reducing, re-using and recycling our garbage. We will lobby at the state and local level for the passage of legislation to strictly limit the use of excess packaging which accounts for one third of New York State's waste stream.

Small Claims Court Action Center: Lied to? Cheated? Swindled? Learn how to fight back! Learn how

to fight back! The Small Claims Court Action Center helps student and community members use the Small Claims Court to protect themselves when they have been ripped off.

If you would like to work with NYPIRG this semester, on any of these issues, I urge you to attend NYPIRG's General Interest meeting February 17 at 1:00pm in Union room 236. If you can't attend the General Interest Meeting but would like to find out more about NYPIRG call the NYPIRG office at 2-6457 or stop by in Union room 079.

Jeremy Potter
NYPIRG Project Coordinator.

viewpoints

UNION DUES, UNION BLUES...

Two RAs Question the Value of Unionization for Research Assistants

RAs: Don't Fall Into The Trap

By Chris Kushmerick

Physiology and Biophysics (Research Assistant)

Attention all Research Assistants: hold off on signing GSEU pledge cards. Research Foundation has promised benefits to RAs. GSEU wants to reclassify you as a State employee, a process that could lead to a long court battle and subsequent delay in receiving benefits. Keep your options open; wait and see what happens with the TA/GA contract process. Once you sign the pledge card, there is no turning back.

If you need more reasons to eschew the Union, consider the following.

In the last *News & Views*, the Union made the following statements (Bidermann *et al*, "Past and Present Leaders Speak Out"):

"SUNY's Budget will increase by over \$100 million in this coming year alone because of negotiated increases won by [unions]."

First of all, this is false. According to February 1993 issue of *The Voice* (UUP Newsletter), "The executive budget does include a \$50.3 million increase. However, since SUNY needs \$62 million to cover negotiated salary increases, Cuomo has proposed ordering SUNY to cut other expenses by \$11.8 million to free up money for the pay raises." In other words, union pay raises will likely come as a result of retrenchments or user fees (from students).

Even if the Union did not know that Cuomo would cut SUNY's budget, the statement still would have been misleading. The proposed budget still needs to be approved by the State Legislature. Historically, the budget from the legislature is less than what the governor requests. Therefore, negotiated salary increases do not mean that the SUNY budget will automatically increase.

Bidermann *et al* state that "RAs should be allowed to vote on unionization however they choose to define themselves". However it seems that the choice has already been made. GSEU is trying to get RAs reclassified as State Employees, as is evident by their pledge drive to petition PERB. Once 30% of RAs are signed up, our fate is sealed. This is happening despite the fact that the GSEU knows that the Research Foundation has promised (in writing) benefits to RAs. If the Union really wanted to help RAs, it would stay out of the picture. Rather, the Union wants to "organize" RAs to increase its own clout.

Bidermann *et al* state that many

items were "won" by the union folk, and were subsequently taken away because students were not unionized. They cite such things as "Faculty-staff parking privileges, pay raises, grievance procedures and a child care subsidy". This is blatant lie. None of these benefits have been lost. As a member of the Child Care Board of Directors, I can assure you that the \$55 thousand subsidy from the administration arrives safely every year. The grievance procedures are in place, faculty staff parking privileges have not been lost. Pay raises have not been rescinded.

Bidermann *et al* claim that benefits for the 100 or so graduate students at Stony Brook funded from IDC money will not come from the campus budget. To support this claim they quote SUNY Vice Chancellor Anslow as saying that any negotiated benefits for any union will come from the State. The problem is they asked the wrong question and therefore got the wrong answer. IDC funded TAs and GAs will not be a part of the same bargaining unit and therefore will not automatically get the same benefits as TAs and GAs on State lines. The money for IDC funded TAs and GAs will come from the campus budget, or more likely, the number of such TAs and GAs will be cut.

Admittedly some of these issues are complicated. Some of the authors may have been misinformed. However I am not willing to credit them with that much ignorance. In my opinion these are false statements, which Bidermann *et al* knew were false when written and were put in for the purpose of deception. These people have no right to be ignorant. They are past GSO officers and UGSO employees. They have been paid lots of money (thousands of dollars in some cases) from Student Activity Fees to be educated in this matter. They should be held accountable.

TAs and GAs: these are the people who you elected. You ignored our warning and now the Union's hand is in your wallet. RAs: don't fall in to the same trap.

The Empirical Approach

By Monica McTigue

Pharmacology Research Assistant and '91-'92 GSO President

This article is directed to the attention of all SUNY Research Assistants employed through the Research Foundation of New York. DO NOT SIGN UNION AUTHORIZATION CARDS AT THE PRESENT TIME....

Most Research Assistants are aware that SUNY TAs/GAs have unionized under GSEU Local 1188 of CWA. A recent NAGPS (National Association of Graduate and Professional Students) e-mail announcement indicates that "GSEU...has begun a pledge drive. Once 30% of SUNY's approximately 2000 RAs sign authorization (ie.pledge) cards, a petition seeking Public employee status will be filed." Indeed the drive has begun with authorization cards circulating through SUNY campuses explicitly authorizing "the Graduate Student Employees Union, Communication Workers of America Local 1188, to be the exclusive representative for collective negotiations under the Public Employees Fair Employment Act..." In other words GSEU is seeking to re-classify SUNY Research Assistants and bring them into the TA/GA union.

I have been "employed" by the Research Foundation as a technician and doctoral candidate for 11 years and served last year as the President of the Graduate Student Organization. I have observed the GSEU saga almost from its inception and spent the bulk of my time as GSO president fighting to save TA/GA lines. I have studied GSEU files that date as far back as 1982 and have spoken at great length with local union leaders, administrators and faculty about graduate student unionization. I currently serve on a Middle States Reaccreditation Task Force dealing directly with access to Research and Scholarship along with (among others) the Associate Provost for Research, Chairs of Computer Science, Neurobiology, and Political Science. I have been in contact with members of the Research Foundation Board of Directors and am in daily contact with at least one member of RF's Sponsored Projects Advisory Council (SPAC) Committee on Resource Development and Management (ie. budget committee). In other words, I have a lot of information at my disposal.

My conclusion and advice is clear: Hold off and study the issue closely. You are trained to analyze and question. Time is on your side. DO NOT LIMIT YOUR OPTIONS!!! I will not go into a debate

about GSEU, however I strongly urge you not to sign an authorization card if approached by a union organizer. As last year's GSO Vice President Alfons Haffmans would say: "It's time to do the experiment."

Simply put: RAs are not in the same position as SUNY TAs/GAs. Construction will soon begin on a second Life Science Building at the Stony Brook campus. Governor Cuomo has approved a \$10 million Graduate Research Initiative for SUNY in his Executive Budget. Local Administrators have stated that these funds will be directed toward Engineering and the Basic Sciences. All indicators point to an increase in the number of RAs funded at SUNY Campuses, not a decrease. Importantly, the Research Foundation has promised in writing to give benefits to RAs. In addition, the Research Foundation Personnel Service Committee (PSC) can be described as extremely pro-active with respect to RA health insurance and benefit packages.

According to Dr. Clinton Rubin, a member of the RF Personnel Service Committee: "The main focus of our last meeting was the issue of benefits for graduate students. We were considering a number of packages and working to find the quickest way to get these benefits to RAs. The PSC is very aggressively pursuing the best benefit package available for RAs and this effort is independent of any ongoing unionization and contractual negotiations between SUNY TA/GAs and the State University." Dr. Rubin describes the PSC's perspective on the matter as follows: "Graduate students deserve and need health benefits. It is too bad that RF did not take action on this issue in the past; we are doing everything possible to correct this at the present time."

To sum up: RAs should approach the issue of unionization empirically. I urge RAs to take a close look at this new union. Is it really wise to join a union that wastes time scribbling "WE WON" on union stickers and engages in other forms of male posturing? It will be unfortunate if RAs get pulled into a long court battle between GSEU/CWA and the Research Foundation. Both GSEU and RF are making a number of promises. Talk is cheap, delivering on these promises is quite another matter.

viewpoints

On the Issue of Gays in the Military: A Call To Action

Editor's note: Douglas Futuyma is a Professor of Ecology and Evolution currently on sabbatical in Washington D.C. A grad student in the Ecology and Evolution Department agreed to share his "open letter" with us. The issue of gays in the military has been receiving a lot of media attention lately, and has been the focus of organized efforts to shoot down President Clinton's proposal to end discrimination against homosexuals in the military.

News & Views welcomes your intelligent commentary or analysis on this and other national or global issues.

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Greetings from Washington, where I am on sabbatical leave and have been sharing in the excitement and optimism that ideals for a better society have been reborn.

I write to ask, with the greatest concern and urgency, that you lend support to the campaign for civil rights that has been set off by the controversy over President Clinton's promise to end the ban on gay and lesbian people in military service. This will unquestionably be the crucial event that will determine whether gay people can look forward toward an equal place in society, or toward continued exclusion and harassment. In the 1950's and 1960's, white Americans joined with African-Americans in their fight for equality; I hope you will do the same in what many consider to be the 1990's equivalent of that struggle.

The issue of gays in the military will be the chief rallying point of the extreme religious right; to the extent that they gain strength from it, many other of our social ideals will be imperilled. They shall be launching a campaign of disinformation and slander, playing on widespread fear and ignorance.

Military and political opponents of President Clinton's intention argue that admission of gays may increase the risk of AIDS; but the military already screens for it. They argue that admission breaks with military tradition, the same argument they used against integration of African-Americans and women into the armed forces. They argue that heterosexual recruits will feel uncomfortable, which is, again as in the case of arguments used against President Truman's initiative on racial integration, to grant bigotry a louder voice than the argument for social justice. They argue that morale will be disrupted in communal showers and living quarters; but anyone who has used a gym or fitness center has shared a locker room with gay people, usually unknowingly. Under President Clinton's order, the vast majority of gay military personnel will be no more likely to disclose their sexual orientation, except to close trusted friends, than they are now, for fear of ostracism (at best) and verbal and physical harassment (at worst; consider the recent murder of a gay sailor by, allegedly, two of his shipmates). In the end, integration of gays will be a non-issue, as it is in the Israeli military, one of the world's most disciplined and effective. I plead with you to write in support of lifting the ban, to President Clinton, to Senator Sam Nunn (Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee) and to your Senators and Congressional Representatives. I enclose a possible form for such a letter. I and many others will be immensely grateful for your support. With very best wishes,

Douglas Futuyma
January 28, 1993

SAMPLE LETTER

Hon. Sen./Rep. _____
Washington, DC

Dear Senator/Congressperson,

I urge you to support President Clinton's intention to issue an executive order lifting the ban on service by gay and lesbian people in the armed services. I feel that the issue of social justice and equality of civil rights for all Americans is at stake. The arguments against President Clinton's stand issue from unjustified myths and fears; and I should expect the military to allay concerns about possible misbehavior by rules that should apply equally to gay and heterosexual personnel. Please do not grant to prejudice a stronger voice than to social justice. Support President Clinton; do not let this issue compromise the effectiveness of a new administration, and lend your support to the ideal of social equality for which our country stands.

Sincerely Yours,

Don't Forget The Zip

The power of organized (or simply heartfelt) letter-writing and phone-calling campaigns is often underestimated as a political tool. Last month, however, a spontaneous outpouring of response from constituents (i.e. letters and phone calls) kept Zoe Baird from becoming Attorney General. And it may have a big impact on how legislators vote on President Clinton's proposal to end the military's prohibitions against homosexuals.

Below is a list of addresses and phone numbers of local, state and federal lawmakers. Let your senators and congressional representatives know how you feel about gay rights. Let your state legislators know important TAP and other financial aid is for struggling grad students. And

U.S. Congress

George Hochbrueckner (D 1st Cong. Dist.)
3771 Nesconset Highway, Suite 213,
Centereach, NY 11720 (516) 689-6767
124 Cannon House Ofc. Bldg., Washington
DC 20515 (202)-225-3826.
Committees: Armed Services, Merchant
Marine & Fisheries

U.S. Senate

Daniel Moynihan (D) 405 Lexington Ave, 41st
Flr., NYC 10174 (212) 661-5150.
464 Russell Senate Office Bldg., Washington
DC 20510. (212) 224-4451.
Committees: Finance, Env. & Public Works,
Foreign Relations, Rules

Alphonse D'Amato (RC) 7 Penn Plz, Suite
600, NYC 10001 (212) 947-7390
520 Hart Senate Ofc. Bldg. Washington DC
20510 (202) 224-4451.
Committees: Appropriations, Banking, Housing
& Urban Affairs, Select Comm. on Intelligence

NY State Senate

Kenneth Lavallo (RC Sen. dist. 1) 325 Middle
Country Road, Selden NY 11784
(516) 696-6900
806 Legislative Ofc. Bldg., Albany 12247
(518) 455-5191
Committees: Child Care, Education, Insurance

NY State Assembly

Steve Englebright (D 4th Assem. Dist.) 149
Main St. Setauket 11733 (516) 751-3094
628 Legislative Ofc. Bldg. Albany 12248
(518) 445-4804

Governor

Mario Cuomo (D) State Capitol, Executive
Chamber, Albany 12224 (518) 474-8418
2 World Trade Ctr., 57th Flr., NYC 10047
(212) 417-2100

President William Clinton

The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
NW, Washington, DC 10500
(202) 456-1111

For Other Elected Federal Officials:
Federal Information Center
1-800-347-1997

profile

An Interview with Marianthi Lianos: Graduate Student, Activist and Union Negotiator

"I consider it important, indeed urgently necessary, for intellectual workers to get together both to protect their own economic status and to secure their influence in the political field."

--Albert Einstein, on why he joined the faculty union at Princeton.

This is the second in a series of interviews with politically active graduate students on campus, people who somehow manage to take time away from their studies to work on issues that affect us all in our relationship with the administration.

Marianthi Lianos has been involved with the Graduate Student Employees Union at Stony Brook for over a year, as a member of the coordinating committee and as a part-time organizer this past summer and fall. She currently serves as statewide GSEU vice-president, and will be taking a leave of absence from her studies to be on the bargaining team as GSEU begins contract negotiations with SUNY in Albany. Ms. Lianos is a fourth year graduate student in the sociology department.

News & Views: What prompted you to get involved with the union?

Marianthi Lianos: The funding situation in my department. We really started feeling the cuts affecting people. It became pretty clear that there wasn't enough funding to go around, possibly forcing some to leave the program.

N&V: Is your work in the union related to your research as a sociologist?

ML: Last year was my third year, which meant that I was almost done with my course requirements and thinking about my PhD thesis. In general, my interest is in political sociology, social movements, how social change occurs and how people change society. Once I got really involved in this, I started seeing it in terms of larger questions, such as why do unions, particularly graduate student unions develop, and what is the incentive or motive of graduate students to do that? Why are they suddenly emerging again after their first development in the late 60s and early 70s. Suddenly again you have the UMass situation and Berkeley trying to get a contract, and the SUNY case. So I guess I am interested in it from a sociological perspective. I think eventually every social scientist has to research things that they're interested in and care about; that's part of what I think good research is.

N&V: Plus, you have an active involvement in the issues.

ML: I know what's going on in the movement. I'm in a position with access to a lot of information about grad student unions, a lot of privileged information and I know where to look-- for the questions and the answers.

N&V: You deal with union issues at the state level as well as at Stony Brook.

ML: I've been dealing with the state

level since this summer. I was an elected officer (statewide representative) so I know what's going on in the GSEU. Right now I'm a negotiator as well.

N&V: Being a contract negotiator for all of SUNY grad students TAs and GAs is a big job...

ML: It's a heavy responsibility. I think the process is going to be exciting: reading other students' contracts to see what other people have gained, to see what we can gain, how to deal with the university management, trying to identify issues, see what grad students think about them, and then trying to negotiate for things that grad students think should be in the contract.

N&V: What has been the most gratifying aspect of this work so far?

ML: Two things. First of all, the political experience has been very good. I feel that I have learned a lot in terms of how the university functions, how it operates as an institution, and the issues of higher education, like why is public higher education underfunded. These are issues I'm interested in as a sociologist and as a person. And then the people I've met through my work in the union have made it worthwhile-- Elizabeth, Patty, Jean, people in Albany and Buffalo and Binghamton... It gave me a sense of a community of graduate students who have certain common goals and common issues. We work together and are good friends.

N&V: And it's worked, the campaign for unionization. You've had some great victories in the past couple of months, first the PERB ruling establish-

ing TAs and GAs as state employees, and then the election in December with 85% of the voters in favor of GSEU as their bargaining representative.

ML: To succeed in something you've been working on like that is very gratifying. We did it; we made history. GSEU is the largest grad student union in the country.

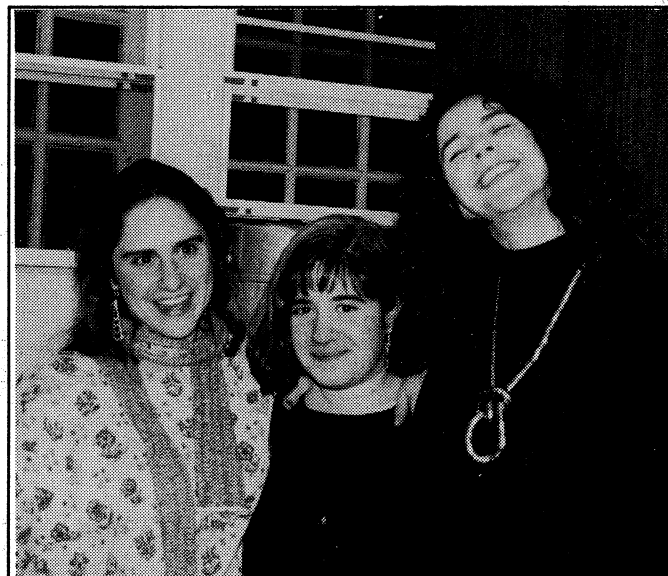
N&V: What have been the most frustrating aspects of your work with the union?

ML: The amount of time I have to spend on it; it's a lot of work. And the times when things didn't seem to work. Trying to get people involved is hard; we had to approach it again and again from different ways. Part of how it eventually happened was that we won the right to unionize from PERB. Then things started falling into place.

Recently, the most frustrating thing has been dealing with the University administration.

N&V: Why?

ML: Since the certification election, once it seemed likely that unionization was actually going to happen, they started paying attention to what we as graduate students had been doing for a long time.



Marianthi Lianos, center, with fellow sociology students Lisa Handler, left and Anna Linders, right.

They were saying we can't do this and we can't do that because 'the law says...' but in a majority of the cases the law was highly ambiguous, for example on whether and where we can put flyers up. We were put in situations where we weren't sure what to do legally; that was frustrating.

And, I'm having to take a leave of absence in order to be able to do this without jeopardizing my career as a graduate student.

N&V: I was wondering how you were able to spend so much time on this. How do you justify taking time from your studies to do political work? And how do you persuade other students to do some of that as well?

ML: For myself there are two things. One is that I think political activity and my vocation are very closely linked. I can't see myself as being a professional or a citizen

continued on page 6

Setting The Record Straight...

Don't believe everything you read. In its Feb. 1 issue, the *Statesman*, a campus newspaper, ran an article on page 6 which erroneously announced the unionization of the GSO. The article hopelessly confused both the issue of unionization and the identities of the GSO and GSEU, two very different organizations with different missions.

To clarify, grad student TAs and GAs have indeed voted for union representation; specifically, they have voted for the Graduate Student Employees Union (GSEU) and its affiliate union, Communication Workers of America (CWA) to represent them in contract negotiations with the state. This followed a long legal fight to get New York's Public Employees Relations Board (PERB) to recognize grad student employees as employees under New York State Labor law.

The GSEU is a SUNY-wide organization with branches at the four SUNY university centers. The vote, conducted in December, showed overwhelming support among grad student TAs and GAs for union representation, with 1,936 in favor and 338 against, according to union organizer George Bidermann (not 3388 against, as reported in the *Statesman*). The tally does not include 129 ballots contested on technicalities. For legal reasons, the GSEU does not yet represent Research Assistants (RAs), nor does it technically represent grad students who do not have state-funded teaching assistant or graduate assistant jobs.

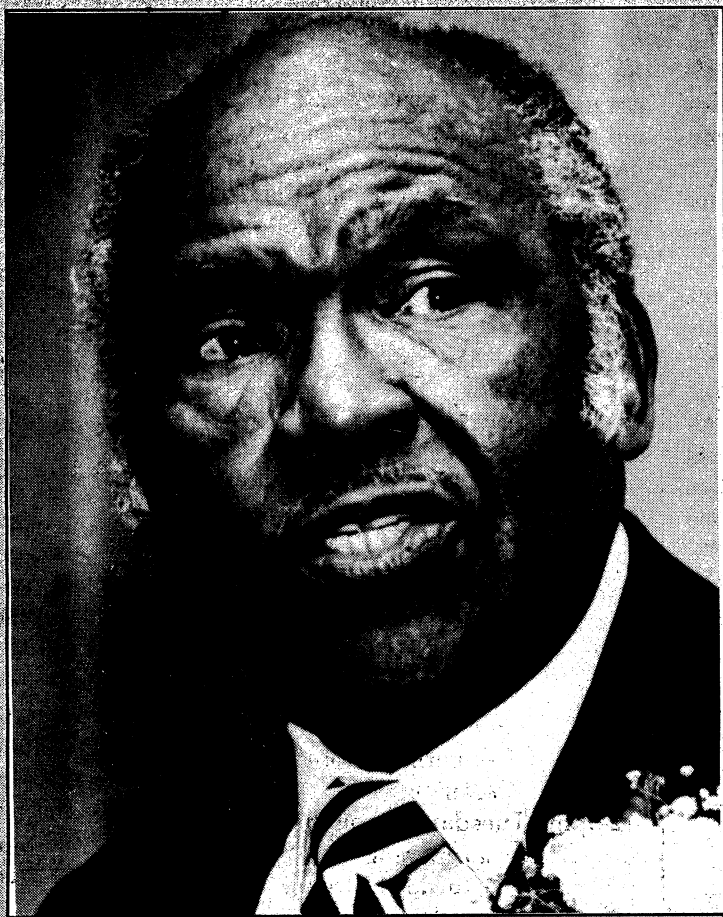
The Graduate Student Organization (GSO) is not affiliated with the GSEU and it represents all grad students regardless of funding or position. GSO is a campus organization funded by Stony Brook grad student activities fees, and it deals with stu-

dent government issues, representing grad students on various administrative committees. It speaks for the grad student community in matters involving Stony Brook's administration. GSO also plays a role in grad student cultural life, funding a number of organizations and events on campus.

While GSO also advocates for grad student rights, issues pertaining to a grad student's status as teaching assistant or employee will now be handled by the GSEU. GSEU has begun preliminary bargaining with the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) which will handle contract negotiations between grad student employees and SUNY, their employer.

The GSEU victory in December ends a more than decade-long struggle for union representation of grad students at SUNY campuses.

"A NEW CENTURY, A NEW CHALLENGE, AND A NEW BEGINNING"



A LECTURE BY

ARTHUR FLETCHER

Chairman, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights

Thursday, February 18, 1993 8pm

Staller Center for the Arts, Recital Hall

This lecture is Free and open to the public.

Sponsored by the Office of the Provost and Newsday.

1992/93 UNIVERSITY DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES



Deadline for the next
News & Views is Friday,
February 26th for Tues-
day March 2nd issue. We
publish roughly every
three weeks.

The next issue will have
special features on
Women in Science, and
Sexual Harrassment at
the University.
Your input is welcome.

Send articles, commen-
tary, letters to the editor,
ads, and listings for the
events calendar to
News & Views
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Lianos----

Continued from page 5

of a country without being politically active on a cause that I think is important. I feel it's my responsibility as a person to be political. Also, I've been involved with this for quite a while now, for about a year, so I wanted to see it through.

I think it's a myth that you're either a professional graduate student or a professional activist. I think people who really want to can do both; you just have to find a way to balance your time.

N&V: Getting back to union matters, there is fear among some students that GSEU's pushing for better TA/GA salaries or health benefits will mean fewer TA/GA positions to go around in the future. You'll be negotiating the contract for us-- how do you respond to this issue?

ML: There are two aspects of this. The reason higher education has been cut has to do with more than just

university politics. The decisions to make cuts have to do with what state and federal governments think the role of higher education is, and whether they think public education is worth funding. It's a separate decision made somewhere else.

When you talk about whether people will lose jobs if we get a union in and ask for benefits, the answer lies in how good a contract you can get. If you don't provide some clause in the contract that protects people from being cut, then people may lose their jobs. But if we negotiate a contract strong enough to protect people from losing their lines, then it's not going to happen. You have to negotiate for a combination of economic gains and rights to ensure that won't happen. That's what a good negotiator can do - but it largely depends on support here on campus from graduate student members.

the arts

Celebrate the Year of The Craft With Classes at the Union Craft Center

If you're looking for an outlet for the 'artist within' or even the 'bartender within', the Union Craft Center can help. Pre-registration for spring classes is going on now; classes are open to both the University community and the community at large.

Basic and advanced art and craft courses, photography, leisure and recreation courses are professionally taught, and some include membership privileges, enabling students to work on their own in the craft center weaving, ceramics, or photography studios. These inexpensive, informal classes are a great way to learn a new skill, meet new people, or just have fun.

Kayaking comes to Stony Brook

Among the new classes offered this year are beginning and intermediate kayaking. According to Craft Center Director Marcia Weiner, kayaking has joined the ranks of the most exciting water sports. "You no longer have to travel far to enjoy it as Long Island has 1600 miles of coastline and rivers. Our Fundamental Course teaches basic skills plus rescue and survival techniques, and leads to a Red Cross Certification."

The Intermediate course will include advanced paddling techniques, and additional self-rescue and rescue techniques to

prepare kayakers for the advanced moving water session.

Other new classes include Bonsai, the Japanese art of raising and training dwarf trees, and Qigong, a Chinese exercise technique. Wine Appreciation, Bartending, Social Dance, Scuba Diving, Yoga, T'ai-Chi, and Self Defense will again be offered.

Children's Workshops

An expanded Saturday morning workshop begins February 27 and continues for four weeks. A Mixed Media class will focus on painting, drawing, collage and printing for ages 5-7. A Clay Workshop will include various methods of handbuilding, clay sculpture and glazes and firing for ages 6-8. Beginning March 17 a three-week drawing class will emphasize on landscape drawing using charcoal, pastel and paints, and working outside.

Adult Art classes include Drawing For All, Watercolor, Stained Glass, and Silkscreen Printing. In addition, non-instructional figure drawing workshops will continue to be held, Friday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30, with a live model. No pre-registration is necessary, the \$4 fee is payable at the door.

Ceramics, Fiber and Photography

Excellent classes or simple membership privileges are available in the ceramics, fiber, and photography studios. Pot-

tery, handbuilding, Raku, Weaving, Papermaking, Bookbinding, Basic and Intermediate Black and White Photography classes are available.

The Union Craft Center is operated as a program of the Department of Student Union and Activities, and is located on the lower level of the student union building. For class schedules, registration and fee information, call the craft center at 632-6822.

Union Art Gallery Plans Diverse Season

In celebration of Black History Month, an exhibit entitled "Invisible No More" is on view at the Union Art Gallery, 2nd Floor of the Student Union Building, from February 1 through February 12. It features the photographs of Orville Robertson, whose works have been shown in major universities and galleries in the New York area. This series of photographs shows Black people's daily lives in New York City and the Caribbean area.

Mr. Robertson will be on hand at the gallery Wednesday Feb. 10 to speak about his work.

From Feb. 15 to Feb. 26, "Close to Nature," an exhibit of hand-embroidered narrative tapestries from Pakistan. This traveling exhibit celebrates the work of children who practice the ancient Kashmiri craft, and has been shown at the Washington Textile Museum. Works will be for sale.

Upcoming Art...

The Staller Center Gallery this month features the work of graduating students from the University's MFA program in studio art.

Paintings, photographs, and installations by Vickie Arndt, Brenda Hannegan, Julie Larson, Maureen Palmieri, Jeff Sturges, and Ron Wakkary will be on view 12-5pm, Tuesdays through Fridays. A special opening reception will be held Saturday February 13 from 6:30-8pm. All are welcome.

"MYTHS THAT DIVIDE US; HOPES THAT UNITE US"



A LECTURE BY

BARBARA EHRENREICH

Author of *The Mean Season: The Attack on Social Welfare and The Worst Years of Our Lives: Irreverent Notes from a Decade of Greed*

Tuesday, March 2, 1993 8pm

Staller Center for the Arts, Recital Hall

This lecture is Free and open to the public.

Sponsored by the Office of the Provost and Newsday.

1992/93 UNIVERSITY DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

"From the back of the room, a young guy yelled up, 'Arthur, you've just got to be a lot more outspoken. You've got to be much more aggressive...'

He turned and told the young man, Jesse Jackson, 'I'm just not arrogant and I ain't never gonna be arrogant. I've got to do it my way.'"

-Reprinted from Newsday, Feb. 8, 1993

in memoriam

ARTHUR ASHE

1943-1993

calendar of events

A selected listing of events on campus that may be of particular interest to graduate students

Tuesday, February 9

Margaret Homans: "Contemporary African American Women Writers and postmodern Feminism." Ms. Homans is a professor of English at Yale University. Lecture presented by the Humanities Institute and the Women's Studies Interdisciplinary Feminist Studies Lecture Series. 4:30pm at the Humanities Institute, Library E4340.

"El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz," documentary film by Gil Noble. 1pm. Rm. S-224, Soc. and Beh. Sciences. Sponsored by African Studies. Call 632-7470.

Africana Studies Panel Discussion, "Malcolm X, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz," Moderator: Amiri Baraka. 7pm, Union Auditorium. 632-7470.

Wednesday, February 10

Photographer Orville Robertson will be Artist-in-Residence at the Union Art Gallery, 2nd floor, Student Union from 1 to 5pm. "Invisible No More", and exhibit of his works in celebration of Black History Month is ongoing through February 12th. The Gallery is open Monday-Friday from noon to 4pm or by appointment.

Thursday, February 11

Dmitri Urnov: "Multinationalism in Soviet Literature and Culture: Myths and realities." Lecture presented by the Humanities Institute Issues in Cultural Studies. 4:30pm at the Humanities Institute, Library E4340.

Library Gallery: Mosaic/Blocks/Masks. Works by MFA student Sally Kuzma. Reception 5-8 pm. Exhibit runs through Feb. 14.

Friday, February 12

Grad Student Party sponsored by the Graduate Student Organization (GSO). End Of The Bridge, 2nd Floor Student Union. Live Jazz Fusion Band, snacks and discounts for grad students; all welcome. 9pm.

Saturday, February 13

MFA Show, Main Gallery, Staller Center. Works by

graduating students in Stony Brooks MFA program in Studio Art. Reception: 6:30-8pm. Works By Vickie Arndt, Brenda Hannegan, Julie Larson, Maureen Palmieri, Jeff Sturges, Ronald Wakkary. Through Feb. 27.

"Sophisticated Ladies," a Staller Center Special Attraction, by the same people who brought you The Acting Company. Main Stage, 8pm. \$22, \$20; children under 12 half price. Call 632-7230.

Sunday, February 14

Baroque Sundays at Three. "If Music Be the Food of Love:" Features new Baroque group *Basso*, with vocal and instrumental music from the 17th and 18th centuries. Staller Center Recital Hall, 3pm. Free. Call 632-7330 for more information

Monday, February 15

"Close To Nature," Pakistani Children's Narrative Tapestries Sales and Display at the Union Art Gallery, 2nd floor, Student Union through February 26. The Gallery is open Monday-Friday from noon to 4pm or by appointment.

Tuesday, February 16

Black History Month Guest Speaker Dr. Manning Marable, University of Colorado Center for Studies of Ethnicity and Race in America. Soc. & Beh. Sciences Rm. S-224, Reception: 4pm; Lecture: 7pm.

Wednesday, February 17

Michael Warner will speak on *Queer Theory* in relation to the film *Black Narcissus*. Lecture presented by the Humanities Institute Issues in Cultural Studies, 4:30pm at the Humanities Institute, Library E4340.

"Religion and the African American Community," Bishop Emerson J. Moore, Archdiocese of New York. 3:30pm. Cosponsored by Africana Studies and Catholic Campus Ministry. Library Room E2345. Call 632-7470 or 632-6562.

Thursday, February 18

University Distinguished Lecture Series: Arthur Fletcher, Head of US Commission on Civil Rights: "A New Century, A New Challenge, and A New Begin-

ning." Staller Center, 8pm. Free. Sponsored by the Office of the Provost and Newsday.

Friday, February 19

The Institute For Medicine In Contemporary Society: Images Working Group. Discussion on the production, use and interpretation of various images in our contemporary culture. 4pm, Radiology Conference Room, Level 4, Rm. 135, HSC. Call 444-2765.

Saturday, February 20

Hungarian Chamber Orchestra, featuring works by Bartok, Haydn, and Dvorak. Staller Center Recital Hall, 8pm. \$20. Call 632-7230 for information.

Sunday, February 21

English Department and Africana Studies presents Amiri Baraka and the Blue Ark. The Poetry Center, 8pm, Rm. 238, Humanities Bldg. Call 7373.

Monday, February 22

Higher Education Lobbying Day in Albany. NYPIRG is organizing meetings between SUNY Stony Brook students and their legislators. Call Project Coordinator Jeremy Potter at 632-6457 or stop by NYPIRG's office in the Student Union, room 079 for more information.

Black History Month Arts Fair sponsored by Union Craft Center. Student Union Fireside Lounge, 10am to 5pm.

Tuesday, February 23

Helen Grace will lead the faculty seminar, "Economic Pleasure & Pain: Masculinity, Hysteria and the market." 12 Noon at the Humanities Institute, Library E4340. Call the Institute at 632-7765 if you are interested in attending.

Black History Month Arts Fair sponsored by Union Craft Center. Student Union Fireside Lounge, 10am to 5pm.

Wednesday, February 24

Black History Month Speaker: Dhoruba Bin Wahad, former Black panther. Sponsored by African American Students Org. Union Auditorium, 8pm. Call 632-6828.

Ethnicity in America Lecture Series: "Postmodern 'Drag': The Text of Blackness as Political Imaginary." Wahneema H. Lubiano is a professor of English and African American studies at Princeton University. 4:30pm at the Humanities Institute, Library E4340.

Saturday, February 27

Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra, featuring Bartok's "Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste." Staller Center Main Stage, 8pm. Tickets \$9; student discounts available. Call 632-7230 for information.

Sunday, February 28

Gospel Extravaganza, sponsored by UNITI Cultural Center, Stony Brook Gospel Choir, & the Interfaith Center. Staller Center, 6pm. Call 632-7354.

Monday, March 1

Women's History Month Opening Ceremonies (Sponsor: Campus Residences): Student Union Fireside Lounge, Refreshments. 12:00-1:00pm

"Winners of the Long Island Crafts Guild Exhibition" in celebration of the Year of Crafts. Through March 12 at the Union Art Gallery, 2nd floor, Student Union through February 26. The Gallery is open Monday-Friday from noon to 4pm or by appointment.

Tuesday, March 2

Barbara Ehrenreich: "Myths That Divide Us; Hopes That Unite Us." University Distinguished Lecture Series, Staller Center, 8:00pm. Sponsored by the Office of the Provost and Newsday.

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