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OBSERVER

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observer

Volume 17 Number 3 March 23, 1977



Toward Parity

by Catherine Williams

For those of you who thought that the women's movement in general, and the Feminist Alliance at Bard in particular, were merely a result of some transitory stirrings in the female populace, I've got news for you. Not only has the Feminist Alliance continued to function as an active organization for its members, but it has also managed to sustain its goals in working towards changes in this community. Despite the persistent controversy and confusion that has surrounded the organization, the Feminist Alliance has held onto its identity; its influence has, by no means died out. Changes in attitude are difficult to measure; the shift takes place slowly and the change might seem infinitesimal. But I think that a new perspective on women has been gradually taking shape, and in part that perspective has been generated out of a very specific source.

Lisa Preschel and Gina Moss are the two women who function as organizers for the Alliance. They stress the fact that the Alliance functions on a cooperative basis — an attempt to avoid the traditional patriarchal set-up of the "chairman" holding precedence over the entire group. They identify themselves as *militant* feminists rather than *radical* feminists. They feel that the term 'radical feminism' has been abused and manipulated so often that it has acquired the wrong connotation, that of radical lesbianism.

Lesbianism should not be automatically associated with feminism. Although one may include the other within its concerns, there is no reason for feminism to be restricted to the narrow definition of defending only lesbianism.

At the moment the Alliance is working on a variety of projects. As a result of their sponsorship, Rita Mae Brown, author of *Rubyfruit Jungle* (one of the first novels to have as its central character a female heroine who is a lesbian), will be at Bard on April 27 to give a lecture and talk. They have also scheduled a performance late in May for a women's dance company called The Wallflower Order. An ex-Bardian, Kris Keefer, is a member of the group.

In addition to the speakers and events that the Alliance has sponsored and continues to sponsor (out of their own rather meager budget), they also address themselves to meeting the problems and deficiencies which are present in the Bard community of women. One of the things they are trying to establish on a regular basis is a referral center located in the Women's Center in Albee. They hope to get feedback from women about the doctors and services available in this area, so that they will be able then to pass on suggestions or give advice to those women who need it. They feel that there is a conspicuous deficiency in the existing

women's health care service - a deficiency that needs to be rectified. One of the ways in which they are doing this is by trying to get a self-help seminar/clinic here at Bard sometime next month.

Perhaps the biggest issue that the Alliance is now facing is that of the Women's Studies Program they have proposed. Women make up two thirds of the student body at Bard; there are only seventeen women teachers here, few of whom are full time. Relatively few courses involving women's studies have been taught. The Alliance hopes to establish a continuing, coherent program of women's courses in the four divisions. They propose that one women's studies course be taught every semester in every division with the exception of science and math. The emphasis of the proposal is on the need to research women's contributions to culture and history. There are many questions one can ask about the value of a women's studies program: would the intent of a subject be obscured by using women's issues as a focus? Is there really a need for specific courses in women's studies? As proof of interest in the proposal, the Alliance points to the more than 300 signatures they received on their petition which asked students if they would support a women's studies program at Bard. They feel there is a definite need to establish a consciousness on campus of

women's contributions to society. If I might quote their written proposal;

"The redefinition of women's roles in society is vitally important to many people, both men and women. Institutions of higher education provide one of the major sources of information and influence at a time when our values are being examined with a particularly critical eye. At a college like Bard, where the establishment of personal ethics is a priority, it is important to provide a wide variety of opinions to encourage a well-deliberated and rational picture of society. This is not accomplished until women's contributions are recognized and evaluated for their real worth."

Something that might be seen as an incidental influence of the Alliance yet is perhaps one of its most important functions, is that of creating a supportive atmosphere towards women here. It's one thing to be a single voice apprehensively raising individual complaints: it's another thing altogether to have those complaints heard and acted upon by a group of supportive women who have agreed that the issue is not only valid, but is indicative of a general problem which is being felt. The Alliance meets every Monday at 12:30 (during lunch) in the Committee Room. The meetings, which revolve around the specific projects and concerns of its members, are open to anyone.

Music; Music!

by Catherine Williams

Word has it that in the not-too-distant future, Bard is going to be inundated, permeated, positively soaked through with music. On May 6th and 7th, the College is to be the meeting place for musicians from colleges throughout the Northeast; a spring festival that will hopefully, as its originators envision it, involve all of Bard and the surrounding community in a multitude of musical events. There are a good many things about this festival that have already made it a unique endeavor; foremost is the fact that the festival has been entirely initiated by student interest. All the planning, the push and the wrangling necessary in getting an event of this scope off the ground has been shouldered by two Bard students. When asked about the purposes and goals of the festival, they responded optimistically with a number of ideas - not only for the success of the event in musical terms, but also for the impact it will have on the Bard community as a whole.

The essential message behind the festival was best described by its two initiators, Bruce Wolosoff and Larry Chertoff.

Bruce: We're going to have a weekend where students from Northeastern liberal arts colleges will get together at Bard to discover what's happening and to share some learning experiences with us... specifically in music, centered around

Larry: To the Bard community, it's going to mean in their daily activities, they're going to be confronted with music making in various areas of the campus; in front of the Commons, behind the Commons, in lounges...

Bruce: All over the place. Not to the point, we hope, of being obnoxious about it. We're assuming that the music making going on is going to be quality music making. People will be aware that it is a special time where they can get a unique type of focus on music.

Is the weekend going to be a mixture of performance and workshop activities, or primarily performance?

Bruce: Definitely a mixture. The amazing thing about this, if it comes off the way we envision it, is that the performers will be drawn from the audience, and the audience will be performers.

The general tone of the weekend is to be, in Larry's words, "informal to very informal." The faculty of the music department have all donated their time to the event as participants; both Bruce and Larry made it clear that they were "enlisting the aid of teachers as musicians - - - not as administrators." They hope the weekend will provide an opportunity for students who are particularly interested in music, whether they are

music majors or not, to participate in sessions and get-togethers. Larry mentioned that the Bard String Orchestra will be used as a resource; he was also toying with the possibility of using the Manhattan String Quartet, "... who I've yet to see. They're supposed to be in residence."

The bulk of the funding for this festival has come from student convocation fees. The administration, after some persuasion, has also agreed to absorb some of the costs. A registration fee will be charged to people outside of Bard who want to participate, and a package deal on room and board is being offered to people who come from far away and need a place to stay. To meet the rest of the costs for the weekend, certain Bard musicians have volunteered to do concerts in Red Hook (for high school students) to raise money. The major problem they are having at the moment seems to be that of housing the 50 - 75 people who will be staying at Bard. They were hoping to house people right on campus, but putting people in modular lounges and such requires the cooperation of a good many Bard students.

Larry: I see it as a problem only in the sense that we don't have a solution for it yet. In all my years at Bard, I've never seen that kind of communal spirit. And you know it's unfortunate, this is a small school but it seems that the different disciplines never run into each

other. I know cases of faculty members not meeting each other for a decade on campus. Doing something like this, it's kind of an experiment to see if the people of this community might cooperate to pull this kind of thing off as an investment in the future benefit of the community.

So one of your goals is to get the whole college to respond to an event which is being sponsored by a particular area or discipline?

Larry: Definitely. It could have the potential for bringing the Bard community together in a very positive, long range way.

Bruce: Activities are most meaningful when they're generated out of the things that interest you, instead of when they're canned and spoon-fed you by people who tell you you're supposed to like it. I think that's behind the whole philosophy of Bard. It has a lot to do with why we're doing this.

Would you like to see other divisions follow suit?

Larry: Absolutely.

Bruce: Not on the same weekend though.

Continued on Page 2

Bard

MURRAY REICH: SOMETHING GOOD COMES TO THE COMMONS

by Stephanie Carrow

Streams of color that bounce, like billiard balls, against the boundaries of a red field, then diffuse into particles and scatter out a broad window, into the open air beyond. A string quartet whose individual instruments produce sounds which blend so harmoniously with each other, it is as though a new, unique sound were created by an invisible, fifth instrument. These are only two of the many ways in which artist Murray Reich sees his own creation at Kline Commons, and looking at the wide, floor-to-ceiling mural, one cannot help but agree with his assessment. To the students, faculty and administration at Bard, and to the employees at the Commons, it would serve as a welcome breath of fresh air for the eye; to Mr. Reich, it represents part of a continuing process, already twenty years in length, of learning discovering and exploring the basic truths in art and nature.

Murray Reich is an articulate, intense man with an engaging smile, who uses words as eloquently as he applies paint to canvas, when discussing his work and his ideas on art. He admits to being able to talk for hours about his painting ("All artists do," he says with a grin), he never seems to run out of things to say, and he appears to take great pleasure in enlightening anyone who is interested in learning. In an interview with him on March 17th, with the mural nearing completion (and as yet, untitled), Mr. Reich spoke fondly and eagerly about his painting, the circumstances which led to its creation, his objectives in art and his goals of similar mural paintings in the future.

The amount of time spent in the actual creation of the mural was about one month: two weeks of planning and designing on paper, and two weeks of painting, which, becoming "an obsession," took up almost every spare moment of Reich's time. But even if we were to disregard the twenty years of Reich's artistic growth, of which the past three have been spent in developing his variation on pointillism (or dot-painting), we should still take into account the many months of thought, decision-making and searching that went into the mural's preparation. Reich had begun to feel that his canvases — which dealt with themes of color and light similar to that of the mural — needed to be expanded to a larger surface, which would give his colors more area in which to interact and alter in appearance, and which would allow his paintings to achieve a full effect of bouncing color and light. On a trip to Italy last summer, his observation of frescoes helped to solidify the idea of expanding his work into a full-size mural. Returning to Bard, Reich conferred with President Botstein and Vice-President David Wagner on the prospect of using a wall in one of the campus buildings for this purpose; they enthusiastically told him to choose the wall he wished to paint, and after searching the campus, he finally decided upon the wall in Kline Commons.

The Commons wall seemed to fit perfectly the criteria which Reich had set up for the placement of his mural: it was a large, uninterrupted space; would not be blocked by furniture, as in the library or main dining room; would be on open display to the public, with sufficient space for people to stand back and view the painting in its entirety; and it would exist within the proper physical environment necessary to interact with the painting. In the case of the Commons, the floor-to-ceiling windows adjacent of the mural allow the additional advantage of interaction with the external environment.

The gallons of "Aquatec" acrylic paint needed for the mural, which would cost a few hundred dollars, were donated by its manufacturer, Leonard Bocour; the painting which should provide the college community with a great deal of visual pleasure has not cost Bard a cent. (Mr. Reich notes with a smile that he has managed to get free meals and coffee during the times he has been at work on the mural).

Murray Reich calls his style of pointillism "primary painting"; he works in primary colors (red, yellow, green and blue) and applies them to his canvas using the simplest, most primary mark, the dot. But Reich's paintings are no more about dots than music is about written notes. They are merely the vehicle through which a symphony of expression is created. In Reich's paintings, it is the expression of the phenomena of color and light, and of changing dimensions, as they occur naturally. Although he works out a basic design beforehand, he has no idea exactly how a painting will turn out, because he "follows" the colors as they interact according to their natural properties. Connected with this is the interesting phenomenon of optical mixing: the juxtaposition of the colored dots causes our eyes to blend them into new colors—orange, violet, turquoise and even white; but absolutely no mixing of colors is done on the mural itself. Similarly, the color value of the red background changes as different colored dots are applied to it. In the same sense of "following," Reich allows the dimensions of the diagonal strips of color to behave naturally, getting narrower toward the center of the mural, wider at the ends.

Reich sees his mural as an intellectual undertaking, a search for truth in art. He has worked to create a relationship not only between the colors in the painting but also between the painting and its environment (for example, he took into consideration the green of the field outside when he chose the complementary color, red for the mural's background). But Reich has also tried to achieve a "sense of energy" in the bounding streams of colored light, and he observes that unless the painting delivers an emotional impact to its viewers, it doesn't work as art. It is further interesting to note that, despite the feeling of freedom which the painting evokes, it actually has a definite symmetry:

a small red rectangle in the middle of the "white area is the exact center of the painting.

Perhaps the most personally heartening discovery Murray Reich made while painting his mural was, as he explains it himself, the reaction of the college community to his work. Until this past month, Reich had always painted in the privacy of his studio, and he concedes that he didn't know what to expect from the crowds who would gather daily to scrutinize his work. But, Reich notes with evident appreciation, the reaction from everyone has been "incredibly moving." People, he says, whether they have understood his painting or not, have been "warm and encouraging." There has also been so much interest expressed in his painting that he is thinking of giving a public talk at the Commons, when the mural is completed, to explain his painting and to answer any questions about it.

Considering the positive reaction of the public and Reich's obvious personal satisfaction with his mural, it is easy to understand why he is very hopeful about receiving commissions for further mural paintings elsewhere. Reich speaks earnestly about his interest in achieving truth in art, rather than creating merely a "pretty" picture. Out of truth, however, beauty is sure to emerge, and we have only to look at the mural in Kline Commons to understand this basic principle of art. In the future, if we are lucky, we will see many more murals by Murray Reich.

MORE OFFICE NEWS

by Siobhan Silag

Many students at Bard have been wondering about the Office of Program Development. The name of Gene Mason, who is the head of this Office, has been heard a lot, but community residents often don't know what he does or stands for. Politics, rumor and discussion have confused the definition even more.

The Office of Program Development and Special Projects has the responsibility of developing and funding new programs at Bard. This means finding sources of aid for various academic, administrative and non academic programs.

The objectives of the aid and Bard's interests must be compatible. In other words, funding not in line with Bard's philosophy, would not be acceptable for program development. The office also examines and evaluates non-grant programs and their potential use for the Bard Community. Examples of these are the Higher Educational Opportunities Program (HEOP), The Independent Studies Program and the year round use of Bard facilities.

Any program, which can be of use to the Bard Community, be it Administrative or Faculty development, or Academic or non academic development is searched for and evaluated. Grants obtained by the Office are usually for future use, not present. The explanation for this is that the money should be used for development, not for already existing program.

Music

Continued from Page 1

Do you foresee any other inconveniences that the festival might present?

Bruce: Negligible.

Larry: I just don't see a string quartet playing a Beethoven quartet in front on the lawn on a spring day as being an annoyance.

Any other thoughts on the festival?

Larry: When it happens, we're also looking towards the future. . . We're hoping to get it as an annual event, that will eventually rival the Marlborough Music Festival.


(chuckle, chuckle, jeer)

Bruce: Oh, come on . . . well, I don't know, maybe you're right.

Larry: I am right. I really think it has that kind of possibility.

Both Larry and Bruce are viewing the festival as a thoroughly "up event." Part of their purpose is to show outside people what kind of place Bard can be. They're hoping that students who are willing to either donate or share their rooms for the weekend will contact them soon. They are also looking for any kind of suggestions and responses from the whole student body.

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Reviews

"As in a dream"

by Peter Kosewski

Chekhov described *The Seagull* as "a comedy, three female parts, six male, four acts, landscape (view of a lake); lots of talk about literature, little action, five tons of love." It is an accurate enough description of this tragicomic fantasia set at a country house in Russia in the late 1890's. The persons we watch in Chekhov's drama are, in a very gentle way, eccentrics, or humorous characters: each has a little tic or compulsion that is effusively, and though critical opinion might disagree with me here, not altogether realistically displayed. "Why do you always wear black," Medvedenko asks of Masha, his beloved. "I am in mourning for my life," she replies. The setting is realistic, the *dramatis personae* plausible, but the dialogues in *The Seagull* go beyond realism, and it is not insignificant that Treplev, the aspiring symbolist playwright, and young lover, states that, "I must represent life not as it is and not as it should be, but as it appears in dreams." The tone of this statement is important, for it explains fairly the interpersonal atmosphere that brings out the effusive, the symbolic and the comic in Chekhov's characters. Enough said.

The Bard production of *The Seagull*, under Larry Sacharow's direction, suffered from a lack of this pervading atmosphere, so that Treplev's furious exit, Arkadina's sudden change of heart regarding her son, and the like, seemed oddly unmotivated. In all fairness, I suspect that this tonal inadequacy was due not so much to the actors as it was to visual problems. The setting, attractive unto itself, was rather small, and broken up into a number of small surfaces that were not very conducive to our sense of open space in the very impor-

tant half of the play that takes place outside. Too, those broken surfaces were not used very consistently, and thus it seemed that the garden, instead of having a specific geography, was too arbitrarily terraced. Another problem, and a serious one, was the nature of the costumes: the clothing as a whole was baggy, the hems were falling down, and pieces of dress could be singled out for use in plays from the years 1776 to 1950. What I am trying to suggest, is that in a play where the establishment of tone is so very important, the Bard actors had a great deal of visual disruption to overcome before we could begin to appreciate their individual performances and the production as an ensemble effort.

Carol Wood, as Arkadina, and Robert Mason, as Dorn, provided the most compelling performances of the evening, but it was not until quite late in the play that James Cuetara and Polly Corman, as Treplev and Nina, were sufficiently isolated *en scene* so that we could see and feel their performances without distraction. Kevin McKiever, as Sorin, was fascinating to watch, but he threw away his best dialogue in an impenetrable dialect, a problem shared by Basil Steele, who portrayed Shamraev, the most outwardly comic character in the piece. Thankfully, J.C. Brotherhood's appropriate suavity took up their slack.

Life not as it is, nor as it should be, but as it appears in dreams It is the key to the play, and perhaps, in light of Mr. Sacharow's productions of *Life is a Dream*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the key to the director's interest in it. The play almost came through, the performances as well, but in the French sense, nothing was realized, too much was indicated.

Mingus

by John Large

Following bop, jazz has undergone three especially significant developments. First, by adopting fresh modal concepts and African-influenced phrases, Miles, McCoy Tyner and Coltrane made noteworthy harmonic innovations. Secondly, Ornette Coleman and Sun Ra sired the "free jazz" onslaught of jarring polyrhythms and continual modulations. (For a number of reedmen this signaled a complete turn-around from most "cool" conventions; for percussionists it was a move out front with greater independence.) The third notable development has been Charles Mingus.

In the mid-Forties, Mingus was a minstrel on the L.A. jazz scene, strumming on porches, at gigs, or on trolley cars en route. Buddy Collette recalled, "In a sense, Mingus was the most creative here. . . He had a mixture of his own thing, Duke and bop . . . no formula. His music had more surprises than anyone's . . . always something new."

And invariably, Mingus' bands have shown impeccable handling of abrupt shifts in tempo, startling thematic changes, and some of the most interesting counterpoint in the past fifteen years of jazz. He is an eclecticist, someone who's worked in the sundry vanguards and then incorporated their ideas into a well-rounded, personal vision.

One of the most adroit Mingus ensembles was the quintet - highlighted by George Adams' sax-playing and Don Pullens' piano work - which recorded the *Mingus Moves* LP. I honestly didn't expect to see that surpassed, but Wednesday night's quintet did so for the most part.

The first piece (for Rockefeller and Attica), though reminiscent of his prodigious output at the tail end of the Fifties, lost something to the poor monitoring and comparatively weak trumpeting. But not a bad opener . . . with (methinks) a few ironic bars from "If I Were A Rich Man."

"Good-by, Pork Pie Hat" was something of a let down. The piece was quickly composed in response to the news that Lester Young had died; it is an elegy to the progenitor of "cool." Originally, John Handy and Booker Ervin gave it a smooth, subdued treatment - soft slurs bursting into poignant wails - in homage to Young's style. Whereas Ricky Ford's verbose, staccato approach wasn't apropos. Overall, the ver-

sion smacked of "Here's our signature piece, which we'll get out of the way here and now" . . . rifferama.

Having disposed of that, the quintet took off on what was probably one of the most dazzling musical ventures any of us is apt to encounter. Jack Wacath produced some very agile, well-thought out trumpeting which touched off a series of incomparable improvisations. Ricky Ford had found his medium, and sustained his impassioned, mercurial tenor work over incredible lengths. Doubtless, few rising saxophonists will push themselves to go out on limbs quite as much and as far.

Bob Neloms climaxed the entire act with an accelerating performance of what appeared to be a largely scored solo, full of striking textures and odd intervalic relationships. During his burst, I heard an awed listener whisper, "We've got a new Monk here."

The jam floated by, briefly quoting old Mingus tunes like "Celia" and wound up leaving much of the audience drained. After the break, the band paraded an odd assortment of styles. As I'm unappreciative of Colombian Indian music, I'll leave it to others to assess the arrangement and delivery of the first piece. From there on out, the audience was treated to some campy, old-fashion funk and to playing which typifies Mingus derivations from his original synthesis of Ellington swing be-bop. Again, Wacath and Ford came forth with intelligent, sturdy improvising.

Throughout the evening, Mingus himself gave simply stated, discrete solos. He is not a bassist who bides his time pulling bottom notes off melodies and then strides into the limelight on cue with a lot of flash. Rather he underscores the efforts of his bands, giving solos as recapitulations.

But overall, Charles Mingus is a composer. He's the major proponent of Ellingtonia since Ellington; and perhaps the most substantial jazz composer since Ellington. His pieces, his achievements as band-leader/task-master, his early Sixties arrangements (culminating in the *Black Saint and The Sinner Lady* ballet), reveal a scarcely paralleled creativity. Alongside men like the Duke and Ornette Coleman, he is a genius whose musicianship rivals and probably excels the accomplishments of the cream of the conservatories.

Lives of Three

In many ways the title of this play by Maria Irene Fornes might well have been "The Rarely Successful Life of 3". Not so much because of the plot or theme but because of the playwright's limited abilities. Using a format reminiscent of Beckett's, Ms. Fornes can only suffer by comparison.

The superior efforts of the '3', however, almost overcame the inferior material. Garwood, Carol Wood, and Bud Ruhe performed above and beyond the normal call of duty. Their timing, flawless delivery and expressive grimacing was a credit to Director Dana Burgess and almost made the second half of this evening's double feature bearable.

The beginning was successful, the middle was mediocre and the ending was an insult. A few laughs early on deteriorated to not so polite comments and finally to downright impolite yawns. The problem was, that the point of these ten little blackouts was elusive. If it was literal; then it was trivial; if it was symbolic, then it was obscure.

The final insult to the audience was the epilogue. In what was contrived to be a satirical and pseudo Shakespearian resolution in verse, the actors recited an "apology" for the play. Ms. Fornes owes us all an apology.

A.N. McKnight

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Towards Liberal Arts

Bard is on the verge of large and far reaching changes. Next year the tuition will reach a new high of \$6500 and many students are wondering whether a Bard education is worth this enormous sum of money. With the unemployment rate at between seven and eight percent, with professionals, MA's, and Ph.D's out of work, students face a dismal world outside. We will all have to scrape the bowl to feed ourselves. An undergraduate degree is certainly no guarantee of meaningful work and with that realization comes another: that we must have another reason for attending this or any institution.

Why do any of us go to college? What will, can, and should a college education give to us that will better enable us to be responsible participants within our society? This question is immediately being explored among this and other leading liberal arts institutions. Questions of methodology seem to prevail, with philosophical and ideological differences being hammered into form.

President Botstein has written several articles in national publications. Harper's Magazine regularly carries articles regarding the status of higher education. The most recent faculty seminar, given by Professor Burton Brody, proposed several far reaching ideas. Among them was the establishment of a committee to look directly into curricular issues. (The Educational Policies Committee has also expressed a desire for a student/faculty committee.) Dr. Brody feels that perhaps a return to a form of "general education" would best serve the interests of future citizens. Other ideas available are for a core curriculum, such as that which exists at St. John's in Annapolis. St. John's students spend their four year tenure reading the hundred odd "great books" and discussing the ideas contained therein.

We agree that students need specific information. The universe we live in appears more and more complex as science and technology reach deep into the structure of reality and extract secrets for man's use. President Botstein proposes in his *Change Magazine* article that students need to have a firm grasp on the structure and implications of scientific investigation.

President Botstein also proposes in the same article that students need a broad historical perspective and an appreciation for history as a continuing, dynamic process. He asserts that today's students are shockingly ahistorical.

With the advancement of our technology comes more leisure time. How should that best be employed? What should the status of the visual and performing arts be in every individual's repertoire?

Given that information should be taught, the question arises of what is most important to teach in a finite four year period?

The biochemistry that one learns now will be obsolete in 10 to 20 years. Perhaps the real education lies not in what we learn but in how we learn. It is impossible to prophesy the future; to determine what specific skills and facts each of us will need to meet a changing world. Is it not more important to know how to identify problems, (asking the right questions), put them into a broad perspective, and then solve them; to be able to use our knowledge as an "access to tools."

In the ill-fated 1975 Bennington Futures Report the committee made specific recommendations regarding how to broaden a student's academic exploration beyond the divisionalism that existed, but no recommendations on how to encourage the intellectual development of the student. We have yet to see President Botstein address this important question in his writings.

May we make a few suggestions. We agree with President Botstein's emphasis on a knowledge of the scientific enterprise, a historical perspective, an appreciation of and fluency within the performing and visual arts, and the ability to write and speak coherently. We feel that beyond these facts lie the importance of knowing how to think, how to digest information and synthesize perspectives. We feel this ability to think is best encouraged in an environment relatively free of restrictions and narrow perspective such as a core or general curriculum would offer.

The process of learning to think is basically a process of confrontation with confusion and ignorance. It is necessarily an earth shaking, spiritual process filled with sleepless nights, heated debate, and failure. Knowledge cannot be taught, only confronted. In the same manner, ethics can not be taught, ethical problems can only be confronted. Education, and perspective occur in that confrontation, not in the assimilation of massive quantities of factual information.

It is our opinion that overregulation of the curriculum would lead to an ideological approach to the world. St. John's graduates seem to be proud of what they know and not much interested in what they do not. This seems to stem from the rigid course of study each student must follow. Everyone knows the same things and there is little outside perspective or interest in outside issues. When asked why so many St. Johnies married other St. Johnies one St. John's graduate said, "it's just unthinkable to live your life with someone who does not think the way you do." This lack of perspective and ability to take intellectual risks stems from the very narrow, sheltered, ideological approach to the curriculum.

Ideologies are necessarily amoral. With a system of rules available to the individual, he need



only compartmentalize his experiences, apply the rules, and out will pop an ethical direction in which to head. All will happen without confrontation with the epistemological fabric needed to struggle with issues. If Bard is to encourage morality it must not trap itself into the narrowness of ideological approaches to the curriculum.

In order to encourage a confrontation with moral responsibility we suggest a major revision. Prescott College required a three week long outdoor education program for all entering freshman. This program stressed group problem solving and confrontation with individual emotional and physical strengths and weaknesses. Through challenging outdoor experiences students learned that they were part of a larger whole and had a social responsibility. They also learned their own needs to be just as real and important as other members of the community. This confrontation with self and an immediate community can be enormously valuable in the development of self-respect and direction. A similar program for Bard would be useful.

In terms of curricular changes, we agree with the Bennington Futures Report that there needs to be a deemphasis in departmentalization and *majoring* in one field. The Futures Report suggests that students do major work in two opposite fields such as Physics and Art or History and Chemistry. We believe this would

be a sound program except that students would have little time to explore the breath of the college. Breath could be attained by restructuring the classwork to be more rounded. For example: in freshman physics, the examination of the epistemological basis for mechanics; in chemistry, the reading of Mach and Poincaré. In the other disciplines similar broadening steps could be taken.

Certainly the debate should continue. The proposals outlined are only the first step. Curricular changes must occur to meet changing times. We endorse the formation of a student/faculty committee to explore what possible changes should occur. We also strongly support the idea of a residential campus with faculty living on campus in low rent housing. We believe that the presence of faculty on campus encourages intellectual debate.

Perhaps most important in encouraging students to confront knowledge is the presence of faculty who confront it themselves. In order to guarantee the high quality of faculty Bard is accustomed to, and now enjoys, we strongly urge a close look at the Walter's document by the Faculty Senate and E.P.C.

Education is a dynamic process that occurs at all times. With close and vigorous exploration of curricular programming, Bard should be able to actualize its enormous potential to be a very fine liberal arts institution.

"To justify a course of policy in its largest dimension is to predict what will happen if that course is not taken, to prophesy the unknowable turns of history. All that any leader can do is call upon wisdom, judgement, and national principle, a sense of a knowledge of present reality, and then act on the speculative and intuitive guess that results. This enormous limitation is reflected in Albert Einstein's famous reply when he was asked why the politicians could not catch up with the creations of science - he said that 'politics is much harder than physics' - and in George Kennan's testimony that 'the most important thing a government such as ours can have, as it faces the long term future . . . is right principles, rather than the gift of prophecy.' The huge and inescapable uncertainties of this process impose on any sensible statesman an essential skepticism, from which flow at least two guiding rules: to decide as little in places of danger as present urgencies require, leaving room for change if events contradict judgement, and to take as few risks as action requires, refusing to hazard enormous consequences on speculation. The most frequent flaw . . . running through the arguments on all sides, is the recurrent claim that the unknowable can be stated with certainty."

RICHARD N. GOODWIN
TRIUMPH OR TRAGEDY:
REFLECTIONS ON VIETNAM

Letters

To the Editor;

It is my opinion that the only thing worse than a hysteric is, an educated hysteric. Bard seems to have a super-abundance of these creatures.

I was recently coerced by a couple of these borderline cases into signing a petition entitled "Beaches for Bard". The petition is in support of a proposal to move the Hudson Valley to the Carribbean, (or was it the Carribbean to the Hudson Valley)? I can't remember which.

Now come off it your guys, what is this game your playing. First you know as well as I do that petitions as instruments of reform are worth jack-shit for getting anything done. Shared ignorance doesn't produce enlightenment. Secondly the logistics of such a scatterbrained project are mind boggling.

An informed source from the physics department explained the problem to me in these knowledgeable terms. Quoth Mr. Tom M. Talpey.

"Look at it like this. If you took an infinite number of mental mutants equipt with an infinite number of plastic buckets, it would take them nearly forever to even find the river. Also, as you bail the Carribbean into the Hudson it all runs back into the Atlantic and. . . well. . . after all you have to look at it like one big puddle."

Many thanks for this learned point of focus.

Now I don't know what you all are into but if this kind of bureaucratic salivation is your idea of a good time then, by all means, put down your pens and grab your buckets, Buckets may well prove to be much more appropriate toys for you then pens.

Hey Leon, hand me that ass' jawbone will you?

J.C.

To the Editor;

As the co-chair persons of the Beaches for Bard Club, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the people who support our cause and have helped raise the political consciousness of the community. We were gravely insulted by the editor's statement that Mayor Daley's death went unnoticed. We both had stiff drinks at the shocking news. There are people here who have heard of Idi Amin and Dave Schultz

Some may think that our issue is both futile and childish. We agree, but it is no sillier than the quota of TV's allowed on campus. Some have the mistaken idea that our cause is symbolic and that we are reacting

to the tuition hike. We care more for creative comforts and class than transitory economic discussion. We stand for nothing, but we don't stand against anything either.

We assume that Leon has contacted the Army Corp of Engineers and can report to us after the strike of April 1 - 10. We realize that we probably won't get the Caribbean 'til next year, at the earliest, because of immense amount of paper work.

It is a human trait that we lose our humors and become rather serious and "mature" in traumatic times. We both realize that some people are daily trumatized, and that humor, however subtle and poor, is difficult to muster. However, we should all forget our burdens and unite for one brief moment. The Caribean (sic) soothes both intellectual mobs and drunks.

Pat Cone & Martha Toomey
Co-Chairpersons for Beaches
For Bard

observer

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The OBSERVER wishes
Dr. Bish a happy return.

Tales of Courage



TREEROOT: The Seemingly Endless
Inexorably Continuing Excerpt From
"An Exercise For Its Own Sake"

By Andy Abbatepaolo

"Three flights up, on the right. Apartment 3C. Can't miss it," the landlady croaked hoarsely.

He paused indecisively at the door. Inside, someone moaned.

Sounded like a goat, he thought. Treeroot disliked operating as a maverick. He longed for *official endorsement*, or at least someone to share the blame with, if something went wrong. But, even if he hadn't been suspended from the force, *everyone else* thought that he was insane, suffering from fantastic paranoid delusions.

He didn't want their pity. He wanted their help. After all, he was working to save the world from extraterrestrial domination! A global purge would be far more effective than his pitiful one man crusade.

His jaw set, he overcame his insecurity and went into action. He kicked the door in and shot the first thing that moved. The boiled ham dropped dead in its tracks.

Downstairs, Treeroot realized, the landlady was already frantically dialing 911. He reassured himself that his stormtrooper tactics would gain him enough strategic advantage to offset what they cost him in time.

"Alright, everyone out where I can see you!" he ordered, still standing in the hall. Straight ahead, he could see a black and white television set, showing a *Roadrunner* cartoon. From behind the open door, a whimper.

"Please, don't shoot us," a woman's voice pleaded, "We're unarmed." She began to cry. He tempered his reply, hoping to coax her out gently.

"I just want to ask you a few questions," he promised, emptying a round into *Wile E. Coyote* for punctuation. He decided it was time to enter, with the smoke from the demolished television swirling to form a dramatic backdrop. He closed the door quietly and looked around.

On the floor to his right cringed a small rodent-faced woman wearing a discolored white slip, at the GO corner of a *Monopoly* board. Across the board, at *New York Avenue*, stood a recently shaved goat, glaring at him from under a black leather gambler's visor. The goat had more property, and appeared to be winning.

Across the room, between the smoldering ham and the defunct television, sat an immense uprooted cabbage plant; fully three feet in diameter. Over it, at eye level, was an embroidered wall-hanging depicting Edwin's birth. Each doctor and nurse was holding two fire extinguishers each, and his mother wielded the claw hammer herself. A life-size portrait of Edwin, in living color, stared malevolently at Treeroot from his left. He shuddered when once again their gazes met, and he returned to the business-at-hand with renewed vitality.

"What's your name?" he demanded.

"Cathy," she wept back.

"Look, I don't want to hurt you," he comforted the tormented creature, "but I will if I have to. I just need a few answers to a few questions. First, where did he come from?"

"Who — 'Boss'?" she squeaked, pointing at the goat nervously.

"No. *Him!*" he pointed at Edwin's portrait, "Your boyfriend."

"Oh, Edwin," she dissolved in tears, "He died in a train accident."

"I know that! I want to know where he came from!" he shouted.

"I don't know what you mean. He grew up in Boston —" she stopped when she saw the look on Treeroot's face.

"To Hell with Boston! What planet was he from? *Who sent him — and why?*" He was crimson with fury. He was sure that she was concealing something, and he was determined to have it.

"You're crazy," she whispered under her breath, as if she only just arrived at that conclusion. It was not the right thing to say, even whisper, just then. Treeroot had heard her, and was very upset. *Enraged* was not the word.

He fired at the *Monopoly* board, taking out *Marvin Gardens* and most of *Water Works*. Cathy screamed.

At the sound of her anguish, the door burst open — again. Two policemen tackled Treeroot, disarming him and wrestling him to the floor. They handcuffed his hands behind his back and a third man administered a sedative. While they waited for the drug to take effect, they strapped him securely into a stretcher. Outside, an unmarked ambulance idled patiently. As they carried him out, he shouted warnings at the top of his lungs. He told them to beware the treacheries of *that alien woman*, that the world was being taken over by *sentient cabbages*, that inanimate objects could *no longer be trusted*, and so on. They ignored him.

The plainclothes detective, who had given Treeroot the injection, turned to address Cathy as he closed the door on the captured lunatic's ravings.

"*Double-X one*," he announced meaningfully.

"Excuse me," she apologized politely.

"*Double-X one*," he reaffirmed.

She was thoroughly tired of all this odd talk. "I'm sorry, but I'm afraid that I don't understand you," she went on, "What I'd like to know is: *Who's going to pay for my TV — and my Monopoly game?* Not 'double-X one. Don't feed me that shit!" She adjusted her slip, suddenly realizing how many men had seen her in it. Modesty aside, *it was dirty*, she thought.

"Then, *Double-X one* means nothing to you?" he asked rhetorically. "In that case, can you tell me exactly what happened before we arrived?"

"In a minute. Pardon me while I throw something on. I'll be right back," she got up off the floor, and the goat crossed the room to sniff at the cabbage.

Inspector Notaman discovered his error in a flash of intuition. While she left the room in search of a bathrobe, he redirected his attack. By the time she had returned, he had established telepathic contact with "Boss" Tweed, the goat. Not for the first time, he thanked his many years of training as he simultaneously carried off the tedious duties of his role as police inspector, while accepting "Boss" Tweed's *Local Coordinator's Report*, recounting all pertinent occurrences since the last *Sector — Administrator's Review*.

Treeroot would surely have given his life to make the contents of *Local Sector Coordinator* "Boss" Tweed's report public knowledge to humans everywhere. Remember him next issue, as *you* are made privy to that information. In the meantime, *beware of sentient cabbages!*

Sports

by Roderick D. Michael

It was a good feeling to be a member of the 1976-1977 Bard basketball Team. As a freshman, I can only imagine the frustration and embarrassment the coach, the upperclassmen ball players, and the Bard community had been through the previous three years. This team not only generated enthusiasm for the coach and the players but it created an excitement and a harmonious feeling among the Bard community, students and faculty alike. However despite this enthusiasm and excitement, I have personal sentiments about the team, which are stated below, but to be fair, I first had to mention the highlight of the 1976-77 school year at Bard. To sum it up best, I quote a prominent senior who said to me, "This is the first time I felt excited about Bard."

When considering Bard as my college for the next four years, the athletic atmosphere struck me as being casual. According to the Bard Bulletin (76-77), "...the sports program aims to provide relaxation from the tensions of academic life". This was exactly what I had in mind.

Athletics for me, began with choose-up games after dinner. These were basketball games where the pressure to really produce didn't exist. The emphasis was on playing and not so much on winning. So when the call for team tryouts came, I answered it and made the squad.

My concept of a team is a group of guys striving together to reach a common goal - to become a solid unit. This would take a strong coach, a mature attitude, and a good understanding of the goal. However, I feel this understanding never materialized and thus began my disillusionment of basketball at Bard.

At pre-season practices, upperclassmen on the starting five were habitually late, while I made concerted efforts to be on time daily. This not only angered me but it caused dissension among the rest of the guys on the team. These upperclassmen ballplayers felt that they were indispensable. They also knew that the coach was not going to penalize them for their actions. Thus, an irresponsible attitude on the part of these ballplayers coupled with a powerless coach, started a split among team members. Numerous talks and meetings were to no avail. The upperclassmen ballplayers continued to take advantage of the situation.

The beginning of the season brought about the surfacing of this spilt. At practice sessions, the coach divided the team into shirts and skins but this division went deeper than just fabric and flesh, it was his so-called confidence ballplayers and his no confidence ballplayers. In other words, the starting five were the coach's bread-and-butter ballplayers and the rest of us were bench warmers. Now I realized that some players are better than others and that there has to be a starting five but that doesn't mean to neglect the rest of the team in terms of participation and standards. However, there was a neglect in the latter and a double standard emerged on the team. It was clearly exemplified when reporting for the bus to away games. If a bench warmer was late, he was either sarcastically ridiculed or simply left behind. But if a member of the starting five was late, which

was often, we would sit and wait. I then asked myself, "Am I part of this team?" Thus, I began to think about quitting but decided to stay on for my own personal reasons. While staying on, I adopted the same "me first; team second" attitude that the upperclassmen had.

Mid-season exemplified the bad result of winning. The more we won, the more the coach's "win at all costs" attitude seemed effective and that led to even less playing time for the guys on the bench. This question of playing time is one which was debated by the coach and myself. I felt that since this was not a big-time college of big-time basketball league, every man should get a decent amount of playing time—especially at home games. However, as coach, the final decision was up to him and as you fans witnessed at home games, my feelings were taken like a grain of salt. We continued to win and this feeling of wasting my time began to spread to other guys on the bench.

The end of the season caused a sudden rise of pressure coming from the upperclassmen of the starting five. They began to lecture me and others, on the do's and don'ts of a championship team. All of a sudden, it wasn't fashionable to come to practice late, nor was it cool to be late for the bus. These same upperclassmen ballplayers who, months ago, were doing the same exact things, were now telling me not to do it. With this expected turn around, I began to think, "we started off this season without dedication, without caring, and without pressure but now they want myself and other guys on the bench to shape-up." I wondered, is this the same athletic atmosphere I sensed at the beginning? Is this "win at all costs" attitude the attitude of BARD? Will it continue at the next sign of a strong team? These are questions the next potential ballplayers will have to answer.

To the numerous fans who asked me, "What happened at the playoff game," I will simply state "He (the coach) lived and died with the starting five."

Notes

STUDENT STRIKE DECLARED A WASH-OUT

By Andy Abbatepaolo

The residents of Cruger Village, better known as the barracks, have united in opposition to recent measures taken by Building and Grounds in the interest of Energy Conservation. Of the forty students living in the barracks, only two refused to join their neighbors in this demonstration against pressure limiters in the showers and the reduced hot water temperature. They quote Con Edison's assertions that both of these measures used together result in greater energy consumption, in that the hot water heaters run constantly to meet demands made by longer, less satisfying, showers, which use a greater percentage of hot water versus cold than when the heaters are operated at their normal setting. They feel that they have arrived at an expressive way to make their position understood.

Simply stated, barracks residents will not take showers and/or baths until these inconveniences are corrected. They are allowing themselves only a quick hand rinse in the morning and before retiring at night, in the interests of minimal hygiene. It is believed that protests from faculty and staff will bring pressure to bear on B & G to take action. Inside two weeks, it is predicted that the administration will have no choice but to comply.

The strike began Monday, March 14, and by Friday that same week, more than a dozen faculty had issued formal complaints, insisting that student demands be met. As a temporary measure, air fresheners have been installed in most classrooms, and in some extreme cases, portable air conditioners.

Barracks people invite other students, living in other dormitories, to likewise abandon deodorants and soap, advising cheerfully, "It's not really all that bad — once you get used to the smell!" Leaders of the Wash-out, as they refer to it, are so pleased with the initial reaction that they are considering expanding their list of demands, to include a laundry, drainage for the front walks, a smoother driveway....

Is this the harbinger of a new wave of social reforms? Or does it have the aroma of terrorism, with the population at large held as helpless hostages? And how will history treat these desperate heroes and their noble sacrifices? If they win their battle, they will come out smelling like roses. If they lose —

RAFFLE FOR BOOZE

The Pet Committee is raffling off a quart of Jack Daniels. Tickets are 25 cents each, and can be obtained from members of the Committee. A drawing will be held on April 30th.

Proceeds from the raffle will go to the Columbia-Greene Humane Society, which is an excellent institution that has handled many Bard Animals.

Noel Sturgeon
BARD PET
COMMITTEE

CORRECTION

In issue number two a reference to Katherine Graham was made. She spells her name Katharine.

Our apologies.

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ADOLPH'S



DR. BISH

Thousands of readers have written, asking, "Well where were you last issue?"

Dr. Bish has returned to Bard, and has been down with the flu. "From notes during a month in and out of bed, — allowing my hand to follow my intuitive mind, writing my own prescription—

A joy in me, or not exactly distinguishable, both within and without — in the trees, and shapes and sounds, the air between the forms. I have all the urges, I think, of the wandering monk who seeks a secluded shelter and deeper meditation, less distraction.

and spring snow
turns to rain and
thunder
making
animals look back
astounded, they become
vulnerable
as memory
hearing shadows."

Dear Dr. Bish;

Why do I need so much sleep? I could get so much and more things done if I slept less. I feel like I need 9 hrs. to feel good. I know some people function on 4 or 5. I go thru phases when I can, which makes me wonder why the 9 hrs? Perhaps you could suggest to me better ways to prep. for sleep and to maintain & obtain a deeper sleep. Much of my life would become easier if I could knock off about 2 hrs. a night. — Snore: Z — Z — Z — Z

Ms. Sleepyhead,
"1977"

P.S. I hope your stay in Mexico with the lovely Senorita was good for you. The sun and Senoritas have amazing healing graces.

Dear Sleeper;

Your doctor recommends a deliberate, week-long exercise in going to bed at a similar hour — without exception — and getting up 7 hours later. When you wake, *get up*. Not suddenly, don't startle your slowed-down system. Prepare yourself the night before by first sitting quietly in the dark or by candlelight, breathing steadily from the lower abdomen, mouth closed, tongue lightly on the roof of mouth . . . back straight, legs comfortable beneath you, yoga-style, or on a stool or chair — whatever suits you best. Count from 1 to 10 your exhaled breaths, then begin again. Passing mental imagery, thought material, etc. will arise — let it go. Concentrate on lowering your energy from the head and shoulder area to the abdomen. If you allow your nervous system to slow down, one way or another, and do not eat too near bedtime, as well as getting right up in the morning you should sleep more soundly and require less rest. You might bring it to 5 hrs. — each of us varies in this respect a great deal. Also advise short rest and/or nap midday for everyone — take 2 hrs. out if possible midday. Rest with feet elevated.

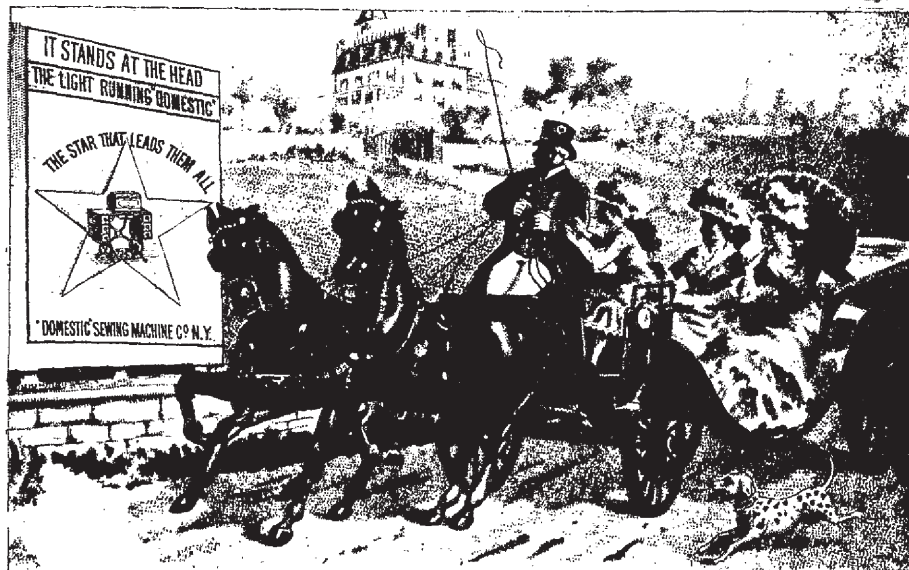
Also note, fresh air in room, reduce coffee, harsh teas, spicy foods, too much sugar, smoking, alcohol. Take, however, a bit of something before bed. You might find love-making a nice way to retire. Finally, my T'ai Chi teacher gives a long dissertation on the bed itself, since, he says, we spend one-third of our lives in it. He recommends cotton sheets, firm mattress, etc.

Dear Uncle Wilhelm;

A short note re. an absolutely great sewing machine, see ad below. Not sure if the Domestic mfg. over there in U.S.; let you know more later.

Enjoyed the translated material of Tatmas el Taltac . . . source omitted, apparently: Edith Whitehead Simpson, *Harvard Lamplighter*, Vol. VII, April, '35. Reminds me to share certain new finds with you for the Bish Egyptology collection next visit.

Sidney Bish
New Gate Commons
London 5, G.B.



Dear Dr. Bish;

In response to the Egyptian scribe, Tatmas el Taltac, 4th dynasty: I agree with the basic premise of his idea that we should find what is truly constant: God/Reality instead of attaching ourselves to that which changes; personality, situation, material goods, but on the other hand we hope to find that each human, especially those we love, are in fact speaking the truth, and when a promise is made that it comes from the heart and from the Real rather than from the ego which fears rejection, dissatisfaction, etc.

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

St. John ch.1

I must also bring attention to the misspelling of my name. It is The Green Mamba, not Mambat.

Thank-You.

What I am trying to say is that we are the mouth-pieces for the truth- it is the special duty and capability of human beings to reveal and make manifest the truth and therefore take an active part in creation. The whole thing will go stale without our help: we are the salt of the earth.

Dear Ms. Mamba;

Thanks again for writing and pursuing the topic we generally categorized as "romance", I believe. Dr. Bish sometimes forgets what were our topics from last issue.

Regarding your earlier letter which concerned questions on violence, a few thoughts arose during the night. It's a tough problem to trace all the way along when one isn't entirely lucid due to other tasks, etc., but it seems to me violence does

spring from a sense of separation- perhaps a deluded sense but nevertheless a most common and fundamental part of the mental makeup of most of mankind. Let's go into it more as time goes along. Another note from the middle of the night: "Go with violence, never against it." If you can maintain a base of loving (i.e., a true sense of wholeness/oneness as opposed to separateness), you will not "believe" the violence and it will dispell itself and/or you will re-route it (see, principles of Aikido for example, or any other serious discipline for that matter).

TODAY'S BISHERY

Note of congratulations to the Bard Basketball team, coaching staff, and fans. We all thank you for an excellent season.

Note to Lori re. the Black Knight, look in usual place.

NEXT WEEK

Coming soon:

Dr. Bish's presidential platform (reform) for Bard, "An Unacceptable Policy", and this year's Billy Bish Awards.

Send your thoughts, problems, comments, etc. Use the media, shape your own life.

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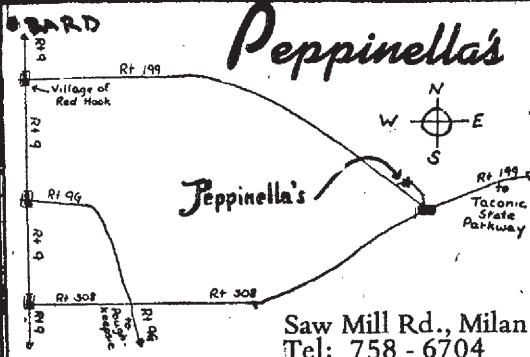
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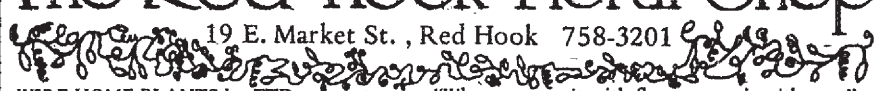
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