

Bard College
Student Newspaper Archive
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OBSERVER

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THE BARD observer

Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, 12504 -- October 4, 1996 -- Issue 2, Volume 7



"You hate
Retina Soybean."

News

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Bard campus, shadowed by Operation Art (story on page 4).

photo: Seze Devres

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Letters

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by Stephanie Schneider and Jeff GiaQuinto
reporting by David Bates

Five dishroom employees walked out during the evening meal at Kline Commons Monday, September 23.

Noreen Ayala, acting director of food services at Bard for Flik International Food Corp., said that the employees walked out because they had heard rumors that she was looking into replacing them with workers from the Association of Retarded Citizens (ARC).

ARC workers, who have been employed by Flik since early September, had worked afternoons in the dishroom while other employees, mostly high school students, worked the evening shift. Ayala said she planned to have ARC workers cover all dishroom shifts

and offer the other workers positions in the kitchen.

"At no time did we say we would fire the dishroom workers," Ayala said. The workers "never gave us the opportunity to talk to them [about other positions]."

The decision to transfer the dishroom workers was made, according to Flik Regional Director Ray Mulligan, because of problems with efficiency. He said that ARC workers, although having a higher rate of china breakage, are more efficient than the other workers and display more "willingness to do the job."

When interviewed, some remaining Kline workers, who asked not to be identified for fear of losing their jobs, said that they felt ARC workers were generally less efficient than the highschoolers. They cited ARC workers' larger amount of breakage and slower progress overall.

The walkout has brought up questions of communication between the management and the workers. Some Flik employees, who asked to remain anonymous, have made comments about the management's cooperation with the workers. One said, "The old management was much easier to work

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THE BARD observer

Notebook

by Meredith Yayanos

The last lunar eclipse of the millenium caused a campus-wide rumpus on the night of September 26. Physics majors set up their telescopes, hippies hauled out their bongos, psych majors cast off their inhibitions to run through the darkness shrieking "the great conjunction is at hand," poets noisily praised the austere beauty of it all, and drama majors stayed home watching ER. Groups of skygazers in Manor Field showed a blatant disregard for the Open Container Policy, and other scenic spots were similarly trashed. Security was repeatedly forced to enter Blithewood garden and politely ask the howling, screaming congregation to "please tone it down." The answer was inevitably a gusty roar, followed, appropriately, by moonings.

Eight Rednecks were approached by Security in the parking lot of Robbins last Friday night while jumping up and down on top of student Karen Snider's car. After being notified by a concerned EMS person, officers were quick to the scene, but by the time they arrived, the '81 Chevy Malibu was unrecognizable: its signal switch ripped out, side-mirrors stripped, the trunk destroyed and the windshields shattered. In a suspicious coincidence, this is the second time in six months that Snider's automobile has been vandalized. The hoodlums, five men and three women, were promptly apprehended and turned over to state police. Snider, who is pressing charges, wants to know, "is Redhook really that boring?" and finds it highly amusing that one of the culprits is studying to be a Criminal Law Enforcement Agent at Dutchess Community College.

Last Saturday night, Bard experienced a blackout. The power outage affected half of Dutchess County, and went on longer than any other this campus had experienced in recent years. For at least two hours, students stumbled haplessly through pitch black dorms, goosing each other, tumbling violently down flights of stairs and accidentally lighting their pants on fire. However, no permanent harm was done, and the power was back on in time for everyone to shake their rake at the Bard House of Pleasure.

The ambience of Kline Dining Hall and its corresponding hallways, as well as the coffee shop, has been further improved by large, buzzing, blue fluorescent lamps. Designed and installed by EcoLab, the lamps supposedly kill flies, spiders and roaches. In another suspicious, somewhat unsettling coincidence, on the same day as the lamps' installment, Flik chose to debut its Indian Cous Cous with "Raisins."

There's a Billiards Tournament today at 7. Pool sharks Sam Provost and John Urang have posted a sign-up sheet in the pool room, and hope for a large turnout. "We're trying to revive the atmosphere down here," said Provost. "It's been pretty dead." Registration closes at 7 and they expect a large turnout, so get a cue.

Security Beat

by Jordan Parkerton

Smashed car windows are epidemic on the Bard campus. This week, a vandal broke some windows in a student's white Chevy, parked in the Robbins lot. The car was also dented. Security believes the vandal is not a Bard student. The state police are investigating.

Other cars have been similarly vandalized. A blue Toyota station wagon parked in the Kline lot had its windows smashed recently. A black Renault in the Avery Arts Center lot not only has smashed windows but was stripped of its radio, battery, and passenger seat.

Two mountain bikes have been stolen since Monday, September 23. Assistant Coordinator of Safety and Security Lisa Sadowski said that bike theft is a common crime at Bard.

Parked in front of Leonard when stolen, one of the bikes is a black Specialized Rockhopper. Although it had a lock on itself, it was not secured to anything else.

The other bike, parked in front of Robbins, is a red Bridgestone. It too was not locked to anything.

It is often the case that stolen bikes had been locked improperly, said Sadowski. "I cannot stress enough that students must lock up [their valuables]."

In another theft, a wallet was stolen from an unlocked locker in the women's locker room at Stevenson Gymnasium.

EMS treated at least three persons for minor ailments this week.

One student injured his finger in the woodshop at Fischer Arts Studio (formerly Proctor). Another suffered an eye infection. Lastly, a visitor twisted his ankle at the gym.

It is standard procedure for two or three members of the EMS staff to respond to a call and evaluate the severity of injury on the scene.

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So That They Might Lead

by Allen Josey and Sevil Miyhandar

The first-ever Bard Leadership Retreat took place on September 21 and 22 in the Adirondack Mountains at Lake George. The retreat was an experiment, organized by Resident Directors Allen Josey and Leah LaValle. They hoped that the retreat would bring together an array of Bard students who shared a common interest in leadership, for a weekend of various leadership-enhancing exercises and discussions. The retreat aimed at not only benefiting the students on an individual basis, but also benefiting the Bard community as a whole.

The twenty students that attended the retreat were of different class standings, countries, and from various clubs and organizations. Many of the students brought with them extensive leadership experience at Bard, from their high schools, and other universities and colleges, while some were just eager to find out what a leadership retreat entailed. The idea of a structured environment to discuss leadership might seem to go against Bard's traditional approach to student leadership, however, the retreat gave the students an opportunity to discuss the issues they found most relevant to themselves and the Bard community in respect to leadership. Students of the upper-college shared their personal experiences while the newcomers to Bard expressed their first impressions of leadership at the college. The weekend became a forum in which the group was able to express various perspectives and definitions of leadership from a broad, global scale to Bard-specific information on starting clubs, formulating a budget, collaboration with other clubs, and the ins and outs of event planning.

The weekend, however, was not strictly business; games of frisbee on the grass outside the cottages, sitting at the lake's edge, card games, and a group dinner



Say Cheesy.

photo: Allen Josey

in which all offered helping hands in preparing, kept the weekend well-balanced and relaxing.

Some of the feedback from the participants

of the weekend included: "I was glad to be considered as a member of this group...the structure was laid-back and honest..."; "...this was a very enriching and beneficial experience which all should experience..."; "It was better than I expected. I'm glad I went. The mix of people and activities made for a very interesting/informative/challenging time."; "The trip made me remember why I love Bard so much."

The weekend was an open-ended experiment that Allen Josey, who is in charge of the Leadership Development at Bard, plans to make a traditional event for any student that is interested in getting involved and making a difference to his or her community at Bard and beyond.

CLUB FAIR...

If you were anywhere near Kline on Wednesday, September 25 during dinner, your toes probably couldn't help but tap their way into the main dining room of Kline to hear the music of the Jazz Heritage Club and check out the First Annual Club Fair.

All club heads, as well as other student organizations and committees, were invited to attend and represent themselves, explain what they do, answer questions and recruit new members. Of the 60 or so student groups on campus, well over half decided to participate in this event, making it a very successful and informative evening for the student body.

In the past, many students have complained that they want to get more involved in student life but don't know what's out there or who to talk to. The club fair offers everyone a chance to find out what the students of this campus are all about.

- Anyone with an interest in or suggestions about leadership programs at Bard should contact Allen Josey in the Dean of Students Office, ext. 7692.

THE BARD Observer Dishes

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with, much more understanding."

Flik admits to some confusion in the management due to the loss of their original director of food services, Ralph Rogers, who decided to go into business for

himself at the beginning of Flik's tenure at Bard. A new director will take control in about a month, according to Mulligan and Ayala, who said that the transition is always "very difficult" and that a newly arrived company "has to learn by trial and error."

But one Flik worker described the switch from Wood to Flik by saying, "We used to work together as a team; now the only team we've got is softball."

LEVY INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES FALL 1996 LECTURES

THE JEROME LEVY ECONOMICS INSTITUTE announces its Fall 1996 Lectures, a series of four provocative and enlightening talks that address pressing economic and social issues at the forefront of the national political and economic debate.

William A. Lovett, Joseph Merrick Jones Professor of Law and Economics and director of the International Law, Trade and Finance Program at Tulane University, will deliver this fall's first lecture, "Global Market Challenges and U.S. Trade Policy." The talk, on Monday, October 7, at 8:00 p.m. at Blithewood, is free and open to the public.

William A. Lovett specializes in the study of economic regulation, banking and financial institutions, and international trade and finance. He is the author of *Inflation and Politics*; *Competitive Industrial Policies and Bazaar*; *World Trade Rivalry*; and, most recently, *U.S. Shipping Policies and the World Market*. He has been a staff economist with the Federal Trade Commission, a private practice attorney, and a trial attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice in the Antitrust Division. He has taught at Tulane University since 1969.

The series continues throughout the fall with three more lectures by leading experts in their fields.

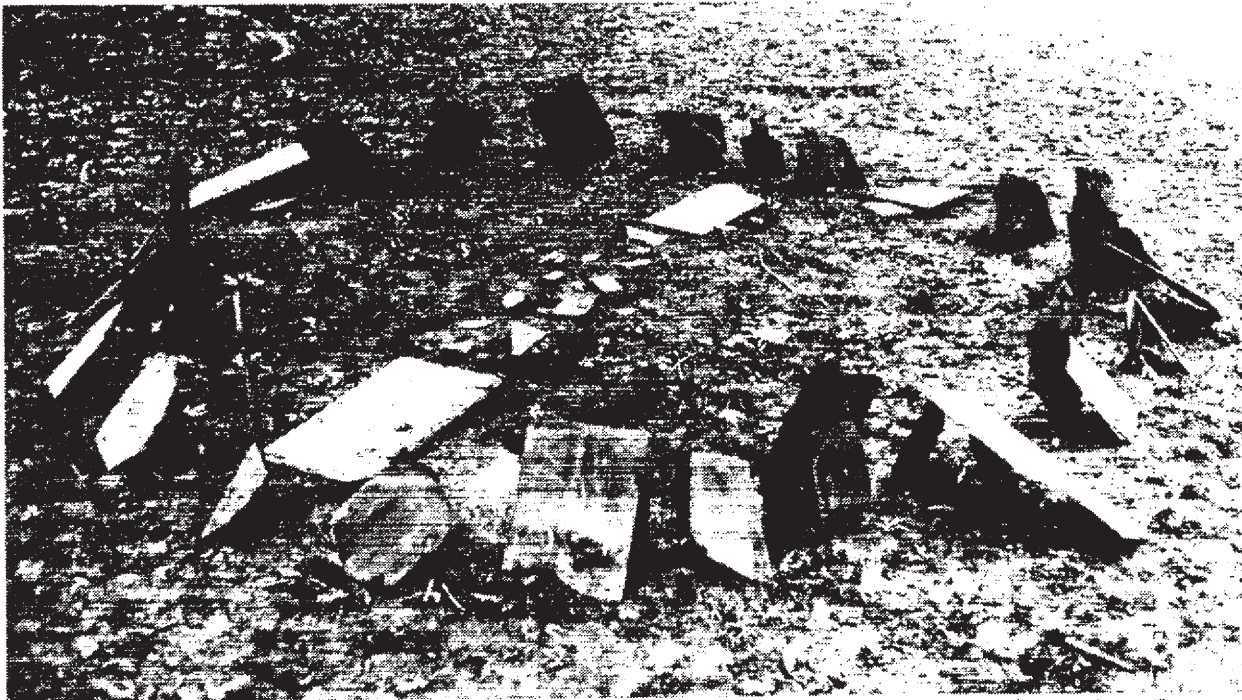
On Thursday, October 17, at 8:00 p.m., **Rachel Friedberg**, assistant professor of economics at Brown University, will give a lecture entitled "Russian Jews, Palestinians...Thais: Immigrants, 'Guest Workers,' and the Undocumented in Israel."

On Wednesday, October 23, at 8:00 p.m., **Eugene R. Dattel**, lecturer, former investment banker, and author of *The Sun That Never Rose*, will give a lecture entitled "Cultural Captivity: Japan's Financial Dinosaurs Resist Change."

On Tuesday, November 19, at 8:00 p.m., **Katherine Newman**, professor of public policy at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, will give a lecture entitled "The Working Poor in the Inner City."

William A. Lovett's lecture, "Global Market Challenges and U.S. Trade Policy," will be given on Monday, October 7, at 8:00 p.m. at Blithewood on the Bard College campus. It is free and open to the public. For information, call The Jerome Levy Economics Institute at 914-758-7700.

THE BARD observer



Bardhenge.

photo: Seze Devres

Operation Art

by Jeanne Swadosh

The Bard community awoke on Tuesday, September 24, to the results of Monday night's Operation Art, an event sponsored by the Art Club. With familiar paths and surroundings freshly populated by an array of artwork, many Bardians were prompted to ask, "Why?"

"We wanted to start the year off with a bang, and to let people know that art is out there," Topher O' Rourke said, representing the Art Club. Spurred on by the desire to increase Art Club involvement, which in recent years has experienced low membership, anyone was invited to display his/her work. Although no official count was taken, an estimated 15 to 20 artists participated. No guidelines were set except those concerning vandalism because

"some people's idea of art may be other people's idea of vandalism."

An important aspect of Operation Art was that it was not confined to the Proctor Art Center. By placing the artwork throughout campus people not involved in the visual arts inevitably saw it.

"The idea was originally to cover the entire campus from Manor to Blithewood," O'Rourke said. However, falling short of its goal, the pieces reached only as far as the Ravines. In addition to encompassing a wide area, the sculptures occupied a variety of locations. Some hung from trees, others were tied to light poles, or in the case of the tin-foil-and- coat-hanger creation, were suspended from the gutter of Kline, in accordance with the theme of "art in odd places."

Because artwork was not hidden in Proctor more students were able to view and invariably comment on it. In response to the baffled who confessed, "I don't get it," and the critics who stubbornly declared, "That's not art," O'Rourke explained, "I'm glad that they at least thought about it...The fact that people didn't get it is okay because at least they were thinking about it. Whether or not they liked it is not the issue."

The Art Club meets every Monday at 6:30 p.m. at Proctor Center and "is open to anyone who wants to make or talk about art." It is not necessary to be an art major to join.



Target practice.

photo: Seze Devres



Yo Momma's dirty laundry.

Photo: Seze Devres

The Bard Papers

art and photography to Seze Devres
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THE BARD observer

Socc'n It to 'Em:

An Interview with Jeff Dezego

by Chris Van Dyke

With soccer season in full swing, and two new coaches spearheading the program, I thought I'd talk to both of the coaches and see what their plans are for the team. This week you will read about Jeff Dezego, the new Women's Soccer coach.

Obs: Where have you coached before?

Jeff: I started out coaching at Alfred University, and I was a graduate assistant for the men's program. I did that for a year. That was in 1987. Then I came to Marist College, and I was the assistant coach there. I worked with men there, as well, division one men. I was with that program for two and a half, three years. I was on campus full time, so when I resigned I stayed on campus as sort of an auxiliary support person. Then I stopped coaching, up until three and a half years ago, when I started coaching at Vassar College. I was the Women's head coach as an intern person while they did a search for a full-time coach. Then I stayed on that program as a volunteer assistant for the last two years until I came on board here.

Obs: How well have your teams done in the past?

Jeff: I'd say they've done well. The Alfred program was a great experience, because I stepped into a situation where the program had been developing for three years prior to my arrival. The head coach was a tremendous person — he had worked very, very hard to develop his program. When I came on board they had really already done the hard work, and I really got an opportunity to see things come together nicely, and they did very well. In fact, they had the best season in the history of Alfred at that time. I forget exactly what the record was for them, but they did very well. When I started at Marist, they hadn't had a winning season in quite a few years. They had had a very strong division three men's program, and when they turned division one, they struggled. My first year there, that struggle just continued. They didn't do any better than they had in previous years. But I had the opportunity to recruit players after that season, and the following year we had the first winning season at the division-one level in quite a few years. It was due in a large part to us recruiting a lot of good players to come out and step onto the field. When I took over at Vassar as head coach, they were 0-12; they had not won a single game all season, and the head coach had left under some allegations early in the year. I was brought in at the end of the season with five games left, to try and pull them together, and get them through the rest of the year. In the five games I coached, we won three and lost two, which was nice. Now Vassar is emerging as a New York state division three power. They are starting to play a much better game of ball, and I think the head coach there is doing a very good job of bringing the program together. That's kind of where I want to be in a few years. I want to get to the point where the Women's team can emerge as a top team in the region.

Obs: Where did you go to college?

Jeff: I started my college career at Hurkwood community college, which is up near Utica, New York. I played soccer there for two years. I was an all-region player for two years, the team MVP and captain for two years. Then I transferred to Cornell University, and continued to play soccer on the division one

level, and had a real good experience. I had the opportunity to play some really good soccer, and receive some really good coaching.

Obs: How long have you been playing soccer? Forever?

Jeff: Yeah. A very long time: since I was seven or so.

Obs: Okay, you already touched on this a bit, but what are your goals for the Bard Women's team, both this year and long term?

Jeff: I guess this year, one of my big goals for this year is to help the team continue on its development in terms of development as individual players and the players as a team, in terms of style of play, how well they play. I want to continue on some of the successes they had last year. Last year they were 7-7-2, and I think that is the best season Bard's Women's soccer has had in its history. I'd love to improve on that, but I don't know if we will. What I'd really like to do is work on the players we have now and help them develop and become better players, then recruit and increase the number of quality players we have here, and increase the quality that each player has. My goal would be that in the next three years to make Bard Soccer one of the competitive programs in the region.

Obs: You probably don't know, but how long do you plan to stay here? Two or three years like you have at the other schools, or is this long term?

Jeff: I am a full-time guidance counselor in the local school district, and I grew up here in Rhinebeck, so I don't see myself leaving the area in the near future. I don't have any aspirations to go on and coach at a higher level. I am very happy coaching division three soccer. I enjoy coaching women. I can see myself staying here for quite a while.

Obs: I don't know if you've had a chance to see the competition, but do you have any idea who any of the big rivals will be?

Jeff: You know, the women's soccer team won the conference last year, and that was great, and I would like to repeat that performance this year. They were undefeated in the conference. I think that as I look at the teams we play, I don't necessarily have any real rivals where I say "We have to beat these teams." I'm familiar with some of the programs around us, and I try to think where they were, and where they are going to be in terms of their development, and I kind of target that and say "I'd like to repeat that, I'd like to be able to see us do that too." I'm not looking at it in terms of "I want to beat them." I look at it in that I want to be able to be as competitive as they are in the region.

Obs: Okay, is there anything you would like to be able to say to the school population, about the Women's soccer program, or the sports program in general?

Jeff: Bard has. . . well, my impression is that traditionally it has not been a school that has had a great athletic tradition, like many schools do. I am sure that there have been many great athletes here in the past, and we have some great women's soccer players here now. This is what I'd like to see happen. Art might be a vehicle for a student's success. A student may come to Bard to study art, or literature or science because Bard is known for that. I'd like to be able to say that Bard is also known as a very good school in soccer. I'd like to see the college support that. What that would mean is people coming out to see games and supporting the program. It's a great group of women

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THE BARD observer

Why I Love Bard College

by John Holowach, Grade Two, Mrs. Kearsing's Class

I came out of the House of Culinary Delights, Kline Commons, the dining hall that shattered my belief that no one could possibly ruin pasta, and heard a bit of a brouhaha coming from the field behind it, next to the library. My curiosity piqued, I decided to investigate.

Much to my chagrin, I had forgotten that there was a rugby game scheduled to start at one. It being two, I thought I had missed most of the game. Remembering that one of my friends was covering the game for the Bard Observer (winner of eight straight Best Paper Awards as voted by the Observer Staff), I decided to look for him to get the proverbial skinny about what I had missed. It turned out that I had in fact missed nothing, as the opposing college did not arrive on time as the directions were poor and involved a nebulous yet pivotal bit about passing cows at some point. Also, the referee did not show up, so it was a wonder that there was in fact a game.

Before the game started, the two teams were in a huddle psyching up. At least I think they were psyching up. They could have been making post-game dinner plans, but I'll just assume that they were psyching up. The opposing team sang a dirty song loosely based on "She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain" and then broke huddle, ready for action. Our squad replied with their mantra, "One, two, three, AARD-VARK!!!" which is odd, because we don't have a mascot, and if we did, it probably wouldn't be an aardvark.

Forgetting for a moment the fact that fans on two different occasions ran onto the field to confront opposing players, the crowd was a group of wonderfully lighthearted people. One guy had a make-shift drum he was beating, occasionally in rhythm. Another had a megaphone and was leading the crowd in a Turkish chant. Later that chant was replaced by the leading contender for the school fight song: "No baseball, no football, no balls at all, just alcohol." Our team was, to put it lightly, getting thoroughly trounced, but the crowd remained ever lively.

Interview

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that play, and they welcome that support. Maybe we'll see more people coming out to watch. That would be nice.

Other Facts About Jeff Denzago

Age: 32

Height: 6'1"

Marital Status: Married

Children: A three-year-old daughter Joryn, and a six-month-old son Tyler

Place of Birth: Syoset, New York

Birth Date: 11/31

Favorite Movie: 'The Natural'

Favorite Food: Pizza

Favorite Music: 60's stuff

If you could meet any one person, who would it be?:

James Earl Jones

I attribute the team's seemingly poor performance to the Bard ideal of education and improvement over obvious success. The team knew they needed defensive practice, so they consciously tried not to score. It is a testament to the foresight of Bard students that they realised that improvement in preparation for the rest of the season is much more important than a single win.

One opposing player in particular was the target of much clever insulting, as he was very loud and arrogant, as well as closely resembling a dwarf from Lord of the Rings, although I'm not sure exactly which dwarf. One guy kept yelling, "Why don't you go home and make some bacon!" at the referee, which I thought was absolutely hilarious until I saw that the ref's shirt in fact said "Making Bacon" and had a picture of two pigs fornicating. Oh well, it was still funny that he was yelling it. A gay guy kept taunting the dwarf, which I think really got to him. Halfway through the second half someone else slipped away to relieve the opposing team's bus' tires of their air.

The Bard team seemed to have plays on the throw-ins, screaming out things like "46-Spiderman" and "211-Cabbage," but no matter what they yelled, it seemed like they just boosted someone on someone else's shoulders. Of course, mine is not the keen eye of a knowledgeable rugby fan, so who am I to judge? With such tactical genius, it was quite a shock when the Bard team lost by a whole lot. Nobody was sure how much we lost by, but the general consensus was that it was "a whole lot." But the incredible thing was that the crowd did not stop yelling. We were united in one cause — what that cause was, I'm not too sure, but I had fun being united in that cause. It was an experience I could never dream of in high school, or even at another college — a group of people not so much cheering on their sports team as they get crushed, but also being witty, sarcastic bastards to the opponents. It was quite moving. A group of people who knew that it doesn't matter who wins or loses, just who can have the most fun. One is lead to believe that Admissions does not allow anyone to attend who cannot laugh in the face of adversity, who cannot realise that absurdity and amusement should be more a part of college life than anxiety and anger. That is what makes Bard the haven it is for those who think differently, who go to sporting events to amuse themselves, rather than to live vicariously through the players so much that a loss in a football game is enough to kill the atmosphere on a campus the following day. It would take quite some effort to kill the jovial atmosphere at Bard; at least, it would take far more than a sporting event.

the Root Cellar!

Bard's student-run, non-profit natural food store is located in the basement of the Old Gym.

We have organic coffee, great snacks, Annie's Mac & Cheese, tea, and more.

Evening Hours: 8pm-11pm, Fridays 7pm-11pm*

The Root Cellar is seeking volunteers for daytime shifts. For info contact Meredith Schafer via campus mail or drop by the store.

THE BARD observer

Paul West:

Voice of the Incurrigible

by Meredith Yayanos

The voice of internationally acclaimed writer

Paul West possesses sallow British inflections that, without effort, plunge the most genteel Yankee among us several notches down the evolutionary chain. Last Monday morning, as I crept a half an hour late into Bradford Morrow's 'Contemporary Innovations in Fiction' class, its timbre struck me dumb, so that I stood Cro-Magnon and slobbering in the doorway for a full ten seconds before regaining motor skills.

It's quite a voice, and it befits the author of *Lord Byron's Doctor* and *Rat Man of Paris*. The latter, required reading for Morrow's class, is a stylish fiction based on the bizarre antics of a real post-WWII Parisian called Rat Man, who would startle bistro customers by flashing a pet rat from under his coat. The account is spontaneous, commandeering, and like his other books, far more concerned with the semantics of presentation than with plot or morality.

"I think plot is a highly artificial construct," said West in the minutes prior to his reading. "Life is shapeless. We like fiction because it is very

shaped and defined."

West, who has repeatedly come under fire for blatant disregard of convention, agrees that his work can be gleefully contradictory. He spoke at length about the misconception that a moral, plot-based work is somehow more accessible or realistic.

"For some reason, people have assumed that right-minded books have to be badly written in a plain style, lest they be misunderstood...I know people who claim not have changed their minds since they got their Phds. Where's the fun in that?" He agrees that his works, both fictional and biographical, are consistently preoccupied with war and self-destruction. "I try to keep people abreast of the incurrigible," he said. "It's important to remember how utterly barbaric we remain."

Foremost among his subjects seemed to be insecurity, coming of age, and war. "We know people who think they are mature who have yet to leave childhood. Hitler was one of them."

At the reading, West recited excerpts from several books, including his work in progress — a piece about legendary gunslinger Doc Holliday tentatively entitled "Okay: a Paul Western." (Har har.) He also spoke briefly about a recent UFO encounter, adamant that everything he said was true. With a voice like that, I could almost believe him.

Powertown Inhabited by Weaknesses

by Sean O'Neill

The subjects Mike Lind knows about are as varied as the magazines he has published in; from the New York Review of Books to Rolling Stone. In three years of being topical everywhere, he has laid claim to being the next Gore Vidal or George Will. Now he's written a novel, *Powertown* (HarperCollins, \$24). Unfortunately, the promise of social insights like those found in his non-fiction is that which Lind sadly fails to deliver in his novel.

The social satires of the last decade are mostly limited to a particular socio-economic group. Take Jane Smiley's *Moo*, for instance. It includes only a minor blue-collar character among its professors and well-off students. Notably, *Powertown* has characters up and down our social scale.

Yet Lind barely dodges the largest danger of writing about our nation's capital. It's tempting for a writer to lift "real-life" characters from the Features and Style sections of the *Washington Post* and place them in plots culled from the Metro section. Lind's solution is to write as if he broke into the Watergate building and stole a representative sample of profiles of no-name staffers and city-dwellers from a psychologist's office. His characters have enough personality tics not to be journalistic clichés.

Powertown is supposed to step beyond social satire and enter the gritty realism genre (i.e., it has a few black characters). Lind in the 'hood, however, is not as smart an observer as Lind in Au Bon Pain. Although he seems to have a plausible grasp of ghetto slang and personalities, small descriptive touches are jarringly off. The leader of one street gang, the Krew, is named Frizzell, "the fat man in his thirties with the goatee like a charcoal O around his mouth and the echo in the O of gold looped over the black sweatshirt billowed by his flesh." What does the O mean? Lind keeps referring to it: "Mirth spreads in ripples from the O of his goatee." There's something cartoonish about the O, like an S on Superman's outfit, or a scar on a James Bond villain. Would Lind have similarly described a Soviet leader in the late 1980s, whose raised eyebrows sent waves toward the wine stain on his head? Probably not.

The O is a distinguishing mark meant to conjure up awe for the gang leader. It's like a crown that encourages subjects to revere a king, only this fiction is a middle-class myth. You don't need a crown to rule here. I bet that most gang leaders walk, talk, and dress in the manner of their fellow gang members. The advantage of the powerful person is most obvious when he or she tosses aside symbolism and enjoys wealth and group deference while appearing like a no-name.

Lind has left his mind at The New Republic. He gets some credit for being one of the few published novelists striving to write the Great American Novel. That he fails in *Powertown* though, is obvious. It doesn't measure up to Dawn Powell's satirical stings at social-climbers, or to Peter DeVries's intellectual slapstick humor, or to Mark Twain's perfect American cadences, or to Theodore Dreiser's portrait miniatures of impoverished lives.

Lind's comic rhythm is off. A young woman loses her job on Capitol Hill, and her identity as well. In one scene, she's at home, where "her period is giving her cramps and nausea." (Lind can inhabit the mind of Woman, you see.)

"She melts into tears, and recovers by bringing on Oreos. Afterward, contemplating the traces of her fit in the form of an empty Oreo box and tiny black-and-white cookie crumbs all over the carpet, she wonders whether she is going mad. Maybe she will end up bulimic, binging on Oreos, throwing up, thrusting more Oreos into her face. Feeling bloated as a result of water retention and a surfeit of Oreos ..."

What's amusing in that scene becomes annoying at the end when Lind says "Oreos" one too many times. And does the character really wonder if she's going mad, or does she playfully fantasize about insanity?

Worse than these characteristic excesses and imprecisions, Lind restrains himself from alluding to the meaning of her momentary gluttony. Gorging on food has been for centuries and across cultures a way to express social standing. Stuffing oneself is a luxury that distinguishes one's status; the Washington staffer loses her's and tries to defend her status to herself, as it were, by binging.

That explanation may seem implausible, but then why is she always eating or drinking whenever she appears in the book (except when she's in the house of a black cop)? Probably just so Lind can give the character some dramatic action. Her eating serves the purpose of a character smoking cigarettes in a stage-play—it's just something to do.

The humor of satire, as Lind must be reminded, is in speculating about these details, which is a talent he has displayed in his other two books, both non-fiction works. Clearly, what Lind needed was a professional editor, to stop him when he went too far — by snipping the loose strings off his prose — and to draw out more of his social insights — by fishing pearls of wit out of the plot. Lind's skill is shown by his close attention to keeping a tight form. It's unsurprising that the writer of lean prose (compared to most pulp fiction) is also working on a (tightly constructed) epic poem. I trust my lit crit friends have abandoned reading this review already so I'll venture a metaphor they'd hate for a book they'd never read. Lind is a heavy hitter who has belted out a scratch single.

THE BARD Observer

Golden Golan Gilds ASO Performance

by Pedro Rodriguez

Friday night's American Symphony Chamber Orchestra performance was uneven, which is not to say that it was bad. It just had high and low points. The concert featured three works: one from the twentieth century, one from the nineteenth, and one from the eighteenth, in that order.

Opening the concert was Larry Allan Smith's Symphony Number 2, "Genesis/Antietan," conducted by the composer. Smith began composing his symphony in the mid-1980's, basing it on a biblical program, specifically on short excerpts from the Book of Genesis. As he continued to write, however, he realized that he was writing about a Civil War battle. Not one to argue with the muse, he expanded his base to a dual program intertwining Creation with human warfare.

The calm opening movement consists mainly of a series of wind solos answered by repeated, lush swells from the strings and sparse touches of metal percussion. The second, and most successful, movement begins with a loud gong tremolo, which presages the violent music to come. Brass predominates with lines that often double each other at the interval of a second. This movement contains the most complex textures of the symphony, the performance of which was surely helped along by Smith's precise conducting.

The final movement is an approximately six-minute resolution, played decrescendo in one gesture, from a great dissonance into the consonance of the first chord of the opening movement. Smith beat a slow four for the orchestra. The players held out their notes for several bars before climbing or descending perhaps one step to adjacent notes and holding them or several bars, and so on. This is a neat idea that would work best if there were a way to make the audience forget about the six minutes.

After the concert, Smith said, "It was the best performance I've ever gotten of that piece. . . . because the orchestra is so good."

The second piece on the night's menu was Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto Number 1 in G minor, Op. 25. Bard's own Jeanne Golan took center stage as the featured soloist. Although she played a couple of flubs of the one-finger-hits-two-keys variety, she was equally passionate and energetic in all three of the concerto's movements—a considerable feat, as this piece is near relentless in its arpeggios, scales and octave runs.

A Golan performance is always a treat, and this one was no exception. Her playing is not only brilliant to the ear, but joyful to the eye. As a performer, she displays neither stiffness nor flamboyance, both of which too often tend towards a revolting pomposity. Instead, she crooks her head to the side or smiles, or leans this way or that. She plays with her whole body, devoting the lower half to the pedals and the upper to the keyboard. The motions of her fingers originate in her back and flow through her arms before reaching the ten digital intermediaries. Her hands never tense and seem more like a viscous liquid than hands.

The Chamber Orchestra was tight. The strings navigated the second movement's fortissimo double bowings like an America's Cup schooner. The flaw in the orchestral performance was the volume. Perhaps the problem was that the acoustic cup of the hall behind the orchestra combined with the lack of any such support for the downstage piano, but the ASO was simply too loud. This was not the fault of the pianist; arpeggios can only be played so loudly on a piano.

The concert's closer was Mozart's Symphony Number 41 in C Major, K. 551, the often performed "Jupiter" Symphony. It was the disappointment of the night. One section of the orchestra dragged here, another there. Downbeats were not always solid.

Maybe if the show had skipped the intermission, the ASO could have approached the Mozart differently, coming off the energy of the Mendelssohn. On the other hand, the players probably needed a rest. Besides, despite his penchant for long concerts, conductor Leon Botstein seemed in no mood for one that night; he omitted a couple of repeats in the Mozart.

Greenwald Exhibits Color, Flash

by Diana Oboler

Sunday morning I found myself heading towards Hudson and chatting with Bard art professor Bernard Greenwald. We were going to the Carrie Haddad Art Gallery where Professor Greenwald's art is being displayed until October 6th. Once there, he ushered me past the work of others' quiet, drab pieces which welcomed quiet contemplation. The back room that he showed me, then, came as a shock. Bright colors everywhere; purples and greens together, oranges, reds, blues—a riot of shapes and lines. Upon closer observation I noticed repeated patterns—stylized people dancing, walking, doing the sorts of things that people do.

I asked Professor Greenwald what had started off this series of paintings, all of them painted rather recently from the dates, many of which doubled as titles. He told me that it had all started out with a picture—a black and white photograph from the turn-of-the-century showing the marching band of a black orphanage posing on the steps outside the orphanage itself. He said that when he had started, in 1975, he had begun by simply copying the photograph onto canvas. He used only black-and-white, focusing on the shape and positioning of the figures. As the years went by, however, his art has become more abstract and color has been added within the last ten years. He now bases his art almost entirely on color. "...The real subject for me," he says, "is the colour, the paint, and how the paintings are made."

When I asked him to explain what he meant by "how the paintings are made" he showed me to the far wall where two smaller paintings hung. "See this," he said, "I had painted this, and then scrapped the paint away to reveal the layer beneath it." Another painting he had me feel to see that what looked like the top layer was actually the first painted. "I placed tape over where I wanted the figures to be, painted over the entire canvas and then removed the tape." The result was a row of figures cunningly using layers to trick the eye.

Professor Greenwald uses layers in his artwork in many different ways. "I like puns and irony, and I try to let my paintings use those elements." He showed me a painting entitled "Laocoön." The picture showed a repeated figure of a man with blue squiggles pervading the canvas. After I admitted ignorance of the story he explained to me how there was a Greek myth about errant priests who offended the gods and who were repaid by having themselves and their sons attacked on land by sea serpents, in this case, blue squiggles. A pun indeed.

Much of what Professor Greenwald does with his art depends on chance. He said he likes the risk, even if there's a chance that it will go too far and he will have to start again. "Risk is the exciting part about art. Through risk is how we make discoveries." He showed me how certain colors form an optical illusion when used together—white and black lines form around spots of colors or force one's vision to pop out of sync. Some of the paintings end up looking nearly three-dimensional, an effect which he emphasizes by painting the frames to look as if they're perhaps the edge of the painting.

He told me that most of the art that I saw here was produced at the end of the summer, that it took him some time at the end of every school year to rediscover what he was doing and how he was doing it. I asked him if he ever regretted his teaching which takes up three-quarters of the year. He told me that teaching for him, as a person and an artist, was important. He has learned clarity from explaining what he wants from his students and this clarity passes into his work. "Teaching others forces me to teach myself, demanding from myself the same quality that I demand from my students." Professor Greenwald's art will be exhibited at the Carrie Haddad Gallery until October 6, 1996 at 622 Warren Street, Hudson, New York. The Gallery is open from 11am-5pm every day except Wednesday, or call 518-828-1915 for more information.

THE BARD observer

Vandals Strike Bard Campus?

by Adrian Healy

Literally overnight, the Bard campus was overrun by unruly Vassar students posing as Bard Art Club members who proceeded to blight the campus with various pieces of art that one was meant to believe were done by actual Bard students. Judging by the calibre of the works, it became obvious that the possibility of Bard student involvement was slim.

Not wishing to appear harsh, I must admit that the quality of the pieces seemed to be completely polar. One could walk around campus and see easily which works were done by inventive Bard students and which were pure pollution.

The vanguard of the Bard students' contributions was without a doubt the blue chair placed incongruously beneath a large tree in front of Olin. It beckoned to the student just smelling the sweet air for the first time after having been in class for far too long. It sang, "Come to me, come and sit on me! I shall be large and comfortable, and extremely blue!" This was an enticing invitation until one noticed the large blue bicycle hanging from the tree above it, swinging in the breeze like a highwayman from the gallows, precariously close to toppling down upon

the head of one foolish enough to listen to a chair.

Also of note were the pieces that played with shadows and perspective of light and darkness. I am writing of course about the shadows painted on the ground around campus, those who have wrested their freedom away from their bodies, souls who grew tired of their corporeal chains and decided that they would rather be trapped in a moment of time, an angle of light, a fleeting thought in the head of a student as he traverses the campus. They have gained their freedom only to lose their mobility, their faculty for change, trapped in an eternal stasis, or at least until the paint washes away. Alone they face the sun that had once been their God, their creator, but now just looks upon him, hands washed, as they are trod upon by those running to the post office to see if they are loved. Fitting in this category also are the presswood outlines of human figures in the hills near Ludlow. At night they are not just lifeless art to be observed, but they observe. As one stares in the poor lighting, they seem to stare back, frozen in contemplation or perhaps contempt for those who cannot mind their own business and walk to where they so direly need to be without looking at things that don't concern them.

And then there was the rest, a motley collection of origami and photocopied breasts that seemed far too puerile to be done by Bard students. There was speculation at one point that no one could tell the art from the trash. To test this point, a friend of mine poured the contents of his garbage can on the lawn in front of his dorm. Three days it stayed there, no one wanting to disturb someone else's brainchild. It seems so easy to be able to dump whatever trash one can find sitting around one's room and have it pass for art.

Sondheim Revue

Instrumentalists and
singers wanted.

Bring your ideas to
Elizabeth Gerbi (x4471)

Bring your tunes to
Pedro Rodriguez
(x4527)

The Bard Observer

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THE BARD observer

Editorial Policy

The Observer is Bard College's student-run newspaper. It is published every other Friday during the semester. Everyone is welcome to write for it. The deadline for submissions, be they stories, cartoons, poems, photographs, statistics, letters, or advertisements of any kind, is 3 p.m. on the Tuesday before publication. Send all submissions via campus mail to either Meredith Yayanos (box 1531) or Lilian Robinson (box 1158). Submit all writings on a labelled disk (or else we claim them for ourselves) in Macintosh Word format (no PC files please!) and in hardcopy form. Submit developed photographs if possible, preferably in the commercial 4x6 print size. Shoot in black-and-white, preferably.

It is the responsibility of the writers to contact the editors before the Thursday after deadline to speak with them about their submissions. Otherwise their submissions will face editing pencils alone. The Observer reserves the right to edit for spelling, grammar, and length.

The Observer discourages anonymous submissions. If you must submit anonymously, you must reveal your identity to the editors.

No Comment

Insight to the Inside

by Shawnee Barnes

Whenever I feel that I might need a person or admit to myself that I'm lonely, I feel like I am being "needy." Isn't it true that an independent and "strong" person doesn't need anybody else? (I ask that question with a drop of cynicism.) One thing I've learned in my twenty years is that loneliness is a state of mind that can be changed, for loneliness is relative. It's relative because it is different for everyone, I guess. The one I'm referring to is that feeling that something is missing, but you can't figure out what it is. I came to this conclusion because even when I was with people, or in a relationship, I still felt lonely. What is that?

The concept that loneliness is a state of mind lets us look at it as a construct instead of as this perpetual nag. To feel content in the

moment in which you are present, and trusting that you are there for a reason, pushes lonely feelings aside. When I say "content," I don't mean "happy and gay," but just mellow and in control. That place is hard to reach and I can say that I have a lot of work to do before I get there.

The kind of loneliness I'm taking about is that which you experience when trying to fill this empty space inside you, but it never seems to be filled. You buy new clothes, you have a one-night stand, or you drown it some other way, but it's still there. Not to say that such measures don't help; it's just that they're not targeting the real issue. You could say it's a mental loneliness versus physical loneliness.

I physically need people around me and miss them when they're not there. It can be measured in space and is most obvious that you are "the alone one" when you're out with a bunch of couples and your date happens to be an over-salted Margarita. You're happy to be there, you feel content and you're enjoying the conversation, but it's so obvious something (or someone) is missing. But think at least you're not there as a couple and feeling lonely, because that's the most lonesome and loneliest feeling of all. So, next time you're feeling lonely, just remember that at least you have yourself, because you are your own permanent date.

Comment? Shawnee Barnes, box 598.

The Somnambulist

Elegy for a Friend

by Pedro Rodriguez

About three weeks have passed since your death and I have cried in all this time only once, for a span of five minutes. Am I an ogre? Have my academic responsibilities kept me safe from my loss? No. I spent much time mourning while you still lived. I prepared myself in advance. I feared your death every time I backed out of the driveway in Miami, stuffed into my car with my belongings, to barrel up I-95 for twenty-six hours, destination: Bard.

But this last time, in early August, heading north for the Bard Music Festival to set chairs and stands and turn pages for other musicians, I knew you would die in my absence, even if death did not come for you immediately after my departure. Such was my one moment of prescience. I spent a good while with you the night before I left, but you were almost asleep, under the covers of drowsiness, tucked in by mothering old age.

We met while we were both young; I was a skinny prepubescent twerp and you a little ball of muscle barely in her sixth month of frolicking. I observed the workings of your curiosity, wherever it took you, whenever I could. I watched you wrestle the mystery of the mirror and seek the sources of all high-pitched sounds. With your supernatural olfactory sense, you traced the path of your favorite sweet scent to the peeler of a banana, no matter where she might hide.

In exchange for tugs of war and other games, you would sit by me as I lamented my adolescent fooleries, which loomed apocalyptic in my young mind, or listen to my inept noodlings on the piano. How many stories, how much music did you suffer through?

I would often wonder what you were thinking. Was it a smile I saw on your face? Were your dreams as baffling as mine? Did you really wink at me during our staring contests? How did you know, ever, to look me in the eye? You learned how to use a mirror, but did you understand the optics of it, or were you satisfied simply to accept the empirical evidence?

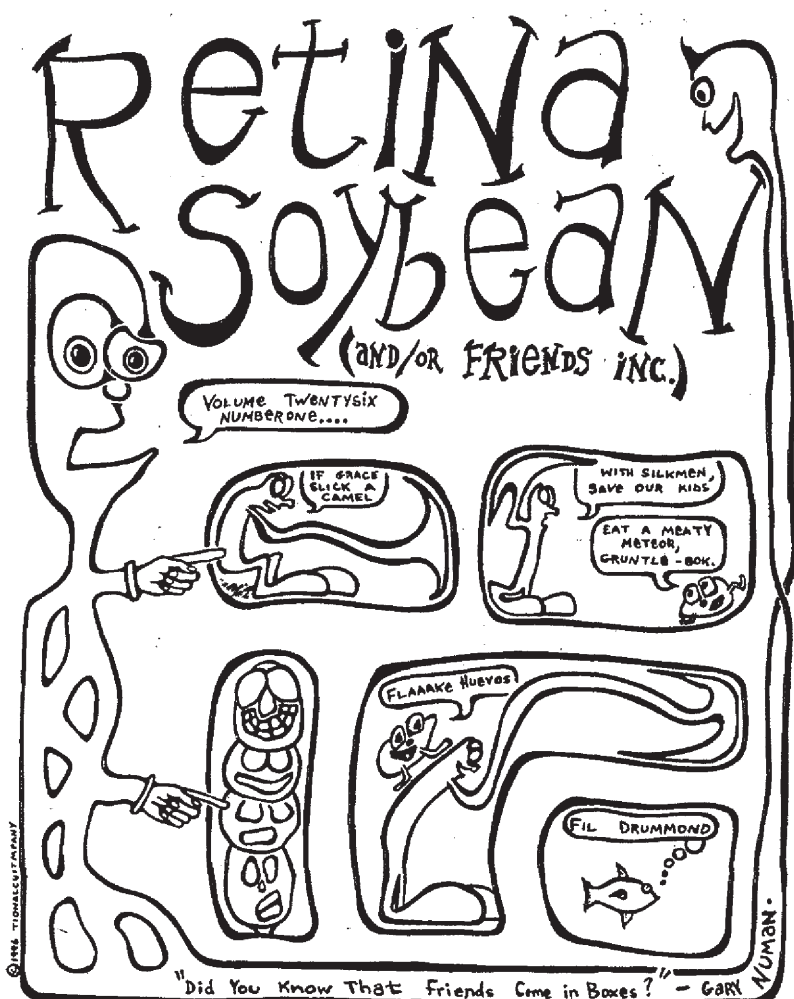
I'll never know, for although I often asked, you never replied.

Some may call you "dumb," but I saw in you much of myself, one of the rational animals. We're not all that different. With your death, I realize just how close we come. Death enjoys visiting me and teasing me with a wink. Our fate is the same. I wish I could mourn you more.

Maybe the college is keeping me safe. Maybe when I return to the Sunshine State for a snowless Christmas, the new silence in the house will buffet me into submission. Maybe then I shall break down as I always thought I would.

THE BARD
observer

Sincerely yours, Nicholas de Villiers.



Students Fight to Topple Solomon

To the Bard Community:

Republican Congressman Gerry Solomon is one-hundred percent right in the eyes of the Justlife Education Fund, the Christian Coalition, the American Security Council, the National Rifle Association, the Liberty Lobby, League of Private Property Voters, and the Competitive Enterprises Institute. That means that he did not once vote in a way in which these right-wing groups did not approve. Solomon is the representative in the district which includes Bard, and is the powerful chairman of the House Rules Committee. Every measure of the present congress has his fingerprints on it. The democratic party and local trade unions are doing nothing to stop him in his part in the assault on working people.

Compare the above groups to the AIDS action council, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Human Rights Campaign Fund, the Coalition for Nuclear Arms Control, the National Education Association, all of which have given him ratings of zero percent, and you see that Solomon provides an excellent opportunity to go to people in the towns and villages of this area and talk about the issues on which he has voted against them.

Why does he keep winning elections in this district without any serious opposition? That question works nicely with the question: why does the Dutchess County Elections Commission try to exclude college students from the vote? The answer: the system is rigged to exclude anyone who would challenge the power of ideologue Gerry Solomon.

The presence of his opponent Steve James is not enough to convince us that joining a campaign this election season is enough to help working people in their struggle against the power of the Solomons of Capitol Hill. Although many of us supported and worked on Clinton's campaign in 1992, we cannot bring ourselves to campaign for the democrats. For that reason we are mounting an independent voter education campaign to let people know their Congressman is screwing them over, largely with the consent of, or without a serious fight from, the traditional "opposition" groups in the area.

Steve James is a Democrat. He is a small dairy farmer. He believes in the values of family and small business. He probably will not win because the Democratic party never puts much resources into defeating Solomon, and if he does, it will only upset the establishment a bit. The reason for this campaign is to take votes away from Gerry Solomon, which will mean that they wind up with Steve James. But the important part is the labor that will be put in, the process of talking to people about their own political issues.

Our plan is as follows: get as many college students from Bard and local community colleges to go around in towns and villages from door to door with information about the Republican incumbent. After Reading Week, we will be ready to begin the campaign. We will train every person who takes part, and provide transportation to and from the areas we will be canvassing. The idea is to subvert this election process which for so long has been used to exclude real issues from popular discourse. We will talk to people on their doorsteps, because that is the only place where real interaction between the people who get acted upon by this powerful man can occur.

It is not the unanimous opinion in the working group that we can improve our lives with electoral politics alone. In this case, it is obvious that the electoral process is actually being used by Solomon to prevent people from improving their lives. We can and we will take advantage of conservative Gerry Solomon's incumbency in this campaign to raise political consciousness in our area.

For more information on how to join the campaign, ask for myself or Anthony Antonucci at 758-1706.

Ian Greer

THE BARD observer

Earth Coalition is Going to Make a Difference

As the half dozen expectant young students entered the committee room housing the Earth Coalition meeting last Wednesday night at 7 p.m., they looked around and wondered why the room was so empty at a school where a liberal atmosphere was renowned. Everyone outwardly expresses concern for the environment, yet when it comes time to act upon such concerns there is little commitment to be found.

This year, Earth Coalition, despite lack of financial assistance, is taking action. Plans to install compost bins in dorms and interact with the nursery school on campus are under way. Earth Coalition participated in the waste reduction forum last Tuesday in order to reach beyond the campus to the surrounding community. A campus/river clean-up is also on the agenda for the upcoming month.

The initiative has been taken, but more involvement would greatly increase the impact we as a student body could have on the campus and local community. It is amazing what half a dozen students can come up with in terms of ideas, but unfortunately there aren't enough of us to act on each and every one of them. If you have any ideas, concerns, or motivation, meetings are at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays in the Kline Presidents room.

Megan Hamill
Andrea Davis
and the Earth Coalition

Scholarship Information

by Allen Josey

Attention all Juniors and Seniors. Looking for Challenging Scholarships? Now is your chance. All of these scholarships require a faculty nomination process. Application materials are due to your Faculty Representative no later than Monday, Oct 14th, 1996!

THE FULBRIGHT...

...was created to foster mutual understanding among nations through educational and cultural exchanges. Grantees design their own programs and projects that may include university course work, independent library or field research, classes in a music conservatory or art school, special projects in the social or life sciences, or a combination of the above.

THE BRITISH MARSHALL SCHOLARSHIP...

...was founded to finance young Americans of high ability to study for a degree in the United Kingdom. It is in commemoration of the humane ideals of the European Recovery Programme (Marshall Plan).

THE GERMAN MARSHALL SCHOLARSHIP...

...was created to support research projects that seek to improve the understanding of significant contemporary economic, political, and social developments involving the US and Europe.

THE TRUMAN...

...is awarded to college juniors who have outstanding leadership potential, plan to pursue a career in government or elsewhere in public service, and wish to attend graduate school to help prepare for their careers. Truman Scholars participate in leadership programs and have special opportunities for internships and employment with the federal government.

THE RHODES...

...is tenable at the University of Oxford and may be held for a maximum of three years. Thirty-two scholarships are awarded annually to the United States. Proven intellectual and academic achievement of a high standard is required of all applicants. Demonstrated integrity of character, interest in and respect for their fellow beings, the ability to lead, and the energy to use their talents to the full is necessary.