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THE COLLEGE NEWS

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BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

MARCH 26, 1992

St. Patrick's Day Parade celebration turns into a political war

By Ellen Sweeney

On the 16th of March, Judge Pierre N. Leval of the United States District Court in Manhattan refused to permit the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization (I.L.G.O.) from participating in this year's St. Patrick's Day Parade in Manhattan.

Judge Leval ruling was on the grounds that the gay group "was not entitled to vault ahead of other groups who were also on a waiting list to march and that by the time the group had filed its request for a preliminary injunction seeking admission to the parade, it was too close to the parade date" (Weber, Bruce, *New York Times*, March 17, 1992, p. A1.). The decision temporarily put an end to the question of whether the Ancient Order of Hibernians' were obligated to let the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization participate in the parade.

The furor began in October 1990 when the Irish Order of Hibernians, the sponsor of the parade, refused to allow the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization to participate in the parade. The Ancient Order of Hibernians' contends that the St. Patrick's Day Parade is a Catholic event, and, because of the Church's stand

against homosexuals, they are therefore justified in excluding the gay group from the parade. The Hibernians charge that if they are forced to include I.L.G.O.'s participation in the parade, it would be a violation of their First Amendment right of free speech and free association.

In his ruling, Judge Leval summarized the Hibernians' position: "They contend a serious symbolic offense would be caused to them were the Court to require the inclusion of an affiliate whose banner and message challenge and offend the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church" (Leval, Judge Pierre. *New York Times*. 17 March 1992, p. B2.).

The Hibernians attack the way in which the parade has become the center of a political debate, and the traditional meaning the parade as a celebration of Irish ethnic pride has been lost. The Hibernians' charge that the parade would be damaged by "the court's frustration of their lawful objective to keep their parade free of confrontation and political agenda" (Leval, Judge Pierre. *New York Times*. 17 March 1992, p. B2.) The result of this fight was that it became a political free-for-all with New York police. *see St. Patrick's Day Parade on page 3*

There's no going back to the USSR

By Juliana Falk

The Soviet Union does not exist anymore and the events that led up to its demise are so numerous that to review them all would take many, many volumes of the College News, which I do not believe will be happening any time soon. As a more realistic alternative, I have decided to address some of the many issues which have recently overwhelmed the former Soviet Union.

It is hard to believe that when I was starting college (I am a sophomore), Gorbachev was still in power and talking about reform within the Communist system. August 1991 changed all that. The USSR has collapsed and the Commonwealth of Independent States has emerged from the rubble.

Think about it for a moment, if someone had asked you about dismantling the Soviet Communist system and replacing it with a capitalistic, democratic type system, would you have said it was possible to do so? Perhaps you would have answered "yes", but you would probably have said that it would take a very long time.

But, what if you did not have time, let alone the resources or the know-how to create this new system, what would you do? Just ask Boris Yeltsin.

What to do, what to do. People to feed, people to keep warm, people who want freedom, democracy, and they want all of it now. After seventy-four years of the

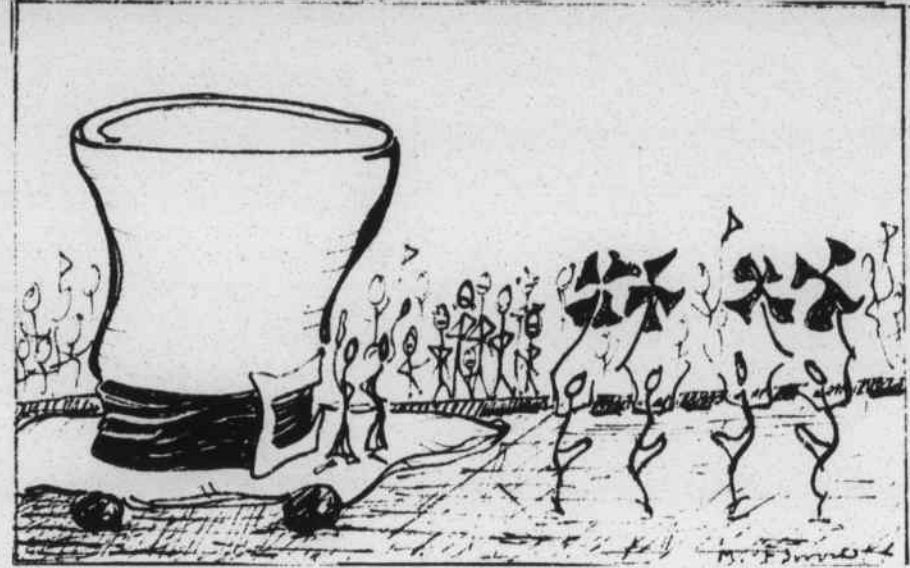
Soviet regime, the people wanted change. They definitely got it, but they also may have gotten more than they bargained for.

One of the first moves away from the old regime was Yeltsin's shift from the centrally planned economy to the establishment of free-market mechanisms. Price controls were lifted, causing prices to skyrocket. What a way to start the New Year—prices that doubled, tripled, quadrupled, or reached even higher levels of inflation while wages remained low.

It does not take a Bryn Mawr degree to figure out that this is going to create problems. People stockpiled food in anticipation of the explosive rise in prices, but the hoarded food was only a temporary relief measure.

So, what next? The former Soviet peoples—to put it bluntly—do not even know where to begin privatization. The conversion to a market economy will be a long difficult process. The big question remains to be answered whether or not the people will be patient enough to wait for the results they really want.

Perhaps the Commonwealth will learn from the West's mistakes when planning their dream society. But remaining loyal to something intangible is almost impossible to do in the face of immediate realities, such as not having food to eat. Something that many keep in mind now: at least there was enough to eat under the Soviet regime.



AIDS panelists share and educate

By Sara Rubin

Leonard West, David McColgin, and Ron Adamson spoke on the personal realities of AIDS, drawing from their own life experiences, on March 3rd in the Dorothy Vernon Room. The three are part of a Philadelphia group called We the People which is an advocacy group for people with HIV.

We the People is about four years old and is comprised of people in their twenties and thirties, primarily men. Because the original Board of Directors decided that they must be led by and controlled by people with HIV, they stipulated that there always must be at least fifteen HIV-positive members on the board. According to West, they are presented with the "unique problem" that all of the members of the original board have died.

We the People has extremely successful outreach programs including Tuesday and Thursday night dinners which serve between sixty and eighty people, a boutique which gives away donated clothing and furniture, a speaker's bureau which is "willing to go anywhere," a hospital visitations plan, and financial help options for people on welfare, social security, and unemployment wages. They accept donations from all who want to help.

After their brief introduction, each speaker gave his own personal experience. Ron has been HIV-positive for about two years, although his doctors believe that he's been infected for even longer because of his low t-cell count. Before he found out that he was HIV-positive he had been using heroin for twenty-five years. According to Ron, people had given him bleach kits and had told him about the risks, but he just thought "that it wouldn't happen to me."

In a drug rehabilitation program he was offered an HIV test, the results of which were positive. After he found out, he didn't leave his apartment for a month because he was afraid of the stigma, and "thought that everybody would know." He is also a Vietnam veteran and is sometimes prone to depression, which kicked in after the test. At this time, he learned of We the People and went to talk to members of the group. They told

him that if he wanted to live, he couldn't use drugs.

Ron knows people at the organization who have been living with HIV for twelve to fifteen years. Then again, he also knows people who lived only two or three years. He believes that how a person takes care of himself and perceives his health chances contributes a lot to his longevity. It's good to hear about people living with AIDS and to become more positive. He says, "I'm doing real good now - I found out the power of positive thinking. And the doctor says that I need to lose ten pounds!"

Three years ago while David was working with Action AIDS and was a volunteer buddy, he decided to get tested for HIV. He believed that he had the symptoms and wanted to get tested to be certain. Although he thought he was infected and prepared to hear the news, his first response was the urge "to kill the messenger." He went to his office and could only sit at his desk. It was finally when his buddy group leader called him to ask if he would be at their meeting that evening that David cried, and "realized how strongly I was affected" by the results.

David started educating himself about vitamins, drugs, and alternative therapies, and joined support groups. He became more focused on "living life for now" as compared to his previous workaholic lifestyle in which he deferred gratification. Also, he had previously viewed his body as he did his car: "you shouldn't have to take care of it, it should just work." Now David meditates, exercises, and practices yoga to take care of his body as well as just to enjoy it. He and his lover of eight years, who is also HIV-positive, practice safe sex, which, he stresses, is not as difficult as people believe.

Leonard "had his first homosexual experience in West Africa" when he was in the Peace Corps. More recently, in 1985 his ex-lover died of AIDS, although they had been practicing safe-sex (they broke up in 1980, therefore they must have been infected in the 70's). Leonard doesn't blame his ex-lover, but he does blame lack of awareness and unsafe sex.

see AIDS panel page 8



Understanding, coping and living
see centers spread on pages four and five

Civil rights under siege in Ireland

14 Meath Street
Dublin 8,
Ireland.
February 26, 1992

The College News
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010,
USA

To the Community:

By now everyone knows something about the fourteen year old rape victim, whom the Irish government would not let travel to Britain to obtain an abortion. Happily, the injunction has been lifted. However, the crisis has not ended.

In 1983, the Irish people amended their constitution to guarantee the right to life for the unborn. The amendment passed by a two-to-one margin and was supported by the Catholic Church, the government and well-funded right-to-life organizations such as the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC).

The pro-amendment lobby claimed this amendment would not interfere with rights and liberties; instead, it would guarantee that abortion services would never be introduced in Ireland. The Irish people believed the lobby.

In 1986, SPUC took the Well Woman Centre to court because they were providing non-directive pregnancy counselling on all options, which endangered the fetus' right to life. In 1989, three Student Unions were also enjoined because they distributed abortion information. The University of Dublin is still paying the fine (SPUC's court fees). In the past year, the new *Our Bodies, Ourselves* was removed from the Central Library.

The issue is not a fourteen year old rape victim. This issue is basic civil liberties: the right to travel; the right to information; the right to choose. The "Repeal the Amendment Campaign" has begun, but we will lose some support because

the single issue has been resolved.

However, our biggest enemy is the government. The Taoiseach, Albert Reynolds, has repeatedly stated that they do not favor a new referendum at all—it would be divisive. But they are on the defensive now because of international attention. This attention must not abate. Please write to: An Taoiseach, Albert Reynolds, Department of the Taoiseach, Government Buildings, Merrion Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. Tell him that you are outraged and that he should support the call for a new referendum.

Tell him that if Irish women cannot choose to read about abortion, you will choose not to go to Ireland. We have an unemployment crisis in Ireland and the government has promised radical action. Tourism is one of our largest industries. The government must understand that a woman's right is everyone's right and that this issue has multiplying repercussions. Economic pressure from other nations will make them take notice.

If you are a European citizen, write to Mr. Reynolds and to your own government. Tell them you will vote NO to the Maastricht Treaty because of the Irish Protocol. The Protocol states: "Nothing in the treaty on European union...shall effect the application in Ireland of Article 40.3.3 [the right to life amendment] of the Constitution of Ireland."

Both the Irish government and the opposition are concerned that the treaty referendum will become an information/choice referendum. Assure them that it will.

Four thousand Irish women go away every year for abortion; this problem will not go away until we alter our constitution. It will not be fixed by a private agreement between the Church hierarchy and the (male) government. Please help us.

Elizabeth Murray, BMC '91



Editors' Note to the community:

We've heard lots of talk about the problems with the system, problems with Bryn Mawr, and more to our point, problems with the *College News*. What we haven't heard is how the ones who are talking so much are going to rectify these problems. Our sentiments seem to have congealed into "put up or shut up". We are all entitled to observe and critique, but we cannot expect someone else to correct the problems we see.

If you think that this newspaper does not address you or topics of concern to you, this is a problem you can do something about. We, the editors, do not choose what articles go into the paper, nor do we have a prefigured "type" of article that we accept; we print what members of the community decide to write.

If someone expresses an interest in a topic, we may solicit an article on that topic. However, the contents of the newspaper are not solely our concern, but rather the concerns of the entire Bryn Mawr community. If you want to see something in the paper, either write it yourself, come to a meeting and bring it up, or let us know that you think something is missing. This newspaper provides a forum for discussion for the community, and it is every individual's responsibility to take the initiative for active participation in that forum.

So, as you complain about what is not being discussed or dealt with in the community, think about what you have done or are doing to try to change the situation.

And yes, we are all very busy. But you can make the time, if you care enough. And if you don't, then don't condemn the apathy on this campus, while you are contributing to it.

Womyn and men: it takes two to Tango.

By Elena McFadden

Now folks, I'll be the first one to admit that on regular occasions I take things a little too seriously, and that the accusation that I would not know a joke if it slapped me in the face is not an inaccurate description of my sense of humor.

Nevertheless, I feel compelled to comment on a subject which has been bothering me for quite some time.

The general subject is stereotyping, the particular is men, and the case in point is two articles hanging on doors in my dorm. For the record, I love the fact that these articles are up on doors—a magnificent use of otherwise wasted space for communication.

I am responding to the specific content of the articles, questioning not whether they should have been posted, but whether they should have been written in the first place.

The gist of article #1 is that there are ten, and only ten, types of men in the world—all negative types; the further obvious implication of which is that a woman who has ever dated a man must be pretty dense to spend time with such a vapid set of beings.

Article #2 is pretty well summed up in its title, which is "Why I Hate College Men," basically some woman's beef about how she cannot get herself a decent boyfriend.

My problem with these articles is not that there may be a significant number of men out there who fit these negative stereotypes (and significant numbers of women out there who date these men)—I am not going to stand here and try to convince you that the Haverman is only a myth—what I object to is the level of discourse which these articles bring to what I consider a rather important point of discussion.

Women and men have serious, historical, social, psychological, deep-rooted problems relating to one another. However, the solution to these problems in no

way lies in either side becoming close-minded, paranoid, stereotypical or violently angry.

The reaction which these articles elicit is that it does not serve women to go around speaking derogatorily of all men as if they were some sort of sub-human race. It is not a constructive use of energy, in any place or time, to make assertions about entire groups of people—every single person is different, so any such

assertion could never be true.

In defense of my lack of humor—given the chance that these two articles could have been written and posted entirely in jest in an effort to bring some lightness to such a somber issue as the possibility that women and men will never be able to live in harmony, I think, we have to ask ourselves whether this is

an issue that we can joke about in such a manner, or whether this sort of joke simply perpetuates the stereotypes, hurt feelings and anger which are already so prevalent.

For, as is most relevant, you can only expect people to give you the measure of respect you are willing to give them, and I, honestly, cannot see very many people on this campus responding to articles entitled, "Why I Hate College Women" or "The Ten Types of Women in the World," as anything short of reasons to have the owners of the articles brought before the Honor Board.

The fact that many men have hurt, oppressed, exploited, and violated our right to be human beings for so many thousands of years in no way justifies attempts to now deny their right to be human beings. Human beings cannot be categorized into such neat, constraining lists. It is what makes it hard for us to understand one another a lot of the time, but it is also what makes us such a unique species on this planet and why it is so worth struggling to figure out how we can live together in peace.

Women and men have to learn to live together: the effort to do so has to be made by each of us.

THE COLLEGE NEWS

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE VOLUME XIII, NO. 8, March 26, 1992

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Graphics	Monica Farrow
Ladies of the issue	Annick Barker, who helped us survive last issue. Megan Susman, who always sees a movie and writes about it.

Our next deadline is Friday, April 3. Letters and articles should be left in front of our Denbigh office or put in our mailbox (c1716) by 5:00pm. All submissions should be on a Mac disk. We will accept articles written by women and letters from men. All opinions expressed in articles and letters are those of the authors only and are not representative of the opinions of the Ed board.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The College News is a feminist newsjournal which serves as a source of information and self-expression for the Bryn Mawr community. Recognizing that feminism is a collective process, we attempt to explore issues of interest to all women, both as members of this college and of the larger world community. Through this continuing dialogue, we seek to promote communication and understanding and to foster self-confidence and independence in expression.

Women on the verge of a nervous breakdown go to Mount Holyoke: the Seven Sisters Conference

By Eleanor Chin

Does anyone remember when Urvashi Vaid was on campus last year? Does anyone remember all those strange and interesting women from far away places partying in Rhoads last spring? If you do, chances are you remember the annual Seven Sisters Women's Conference. Last year we hosted it at Bryn Mawr, this year it was at Mount Holyoke, in North Hampton Massachusetts, from February 28-March 1.

Seven Sisters was never one of those things that I paid much attention to, so I'll do a bit of background: every year the original Seven Sisters women's colleges—Bryn Mawr, Smith, Mt. Holyoke, Wellesley, Vassar, Radcliffe, and Barnard—choose seven delegates from each school (7 and 7, pretty cool huh?) and they all (those who show up anyway) go someplace and rap about women's issues.

This year's topic was Women's Health and Sexuality. Bryn Mawr, being the over-achievers that we are, sent 8 delegates this year: Kateri Paul '94, Valerie Tobin '94, Jennifer Pittman '92 (all returning delegates), Barbara Whitehorn '92, Angie Corcetti '94, Catherine Herne '95, Kanti Busch '95, and yours truly, Eleanor Chin '93. Delegates were selected via interviews conducted by Kateri, Valerie and Jen.

So anyway, on with the story...

We set off in a Bi-Co van (with a defective side door) bright and early on Friday morning, armed with lots of pillows, tapes, and M&M's provided by your friendly local dining services. After an uneventful drive up, we got to Mt. Holyoke at about 4 o'clock.

Did y'all know that Holyoke is bigger than us—about 1,800 women? I didn't. It's all built out of bricks and it is pretty spiffy but our food is better (except they get exam snacks every night). Anyway, once we got there, things got interesting. I don't think any delegate would give an identical account of what happened.

However, you might get most to agree on 'intense' as a good adjective.

First, there was the keynote speaker, Lillie Allen, a beautiful and impressive woman if there ever was one. Lillie discussed women's health as a holistic issue, not just concerned with physical and nutritional well-being and hygiene, but also emotional and mental integrity.

It is an incredible challenge for us as women to maintain our sanity and wholeness in the face of sexual and spiritual oppression built into our society. As women discussed their experiences, it was gradually revealed to what extent women, even in what appear to be sheltered communities like the Seven Sisters schools, are hurting and struggling to cope with their experiences. A lot of sharing and hopefully healing was begun at the conference.

In addition to a multi-faceted approach to women's health, from a mediocre seminar on positive self-esteem to early morning yoga, there were several interesting presentations. A midwife came to discuss her experiences and give a small talk on birth and natal care in the various hospitals where she had worked. For me, that was one of the most worthwhile portions of the conference.

By this point in the conference, many of the women there were acquainted with one another and discussion was very relaxed and informal. It was a unique opportunity to get together with a group of women, facilitated by an expert, and discuss differing views and experiences of a topic that is very relevant to our lives and health.

One of the more overwhelming events of the conference was an unscheduled viewing of the movie *Dreamworlds*, written and produced by a Smith College professor. *Dreamworlds* showed the image of women and women's sexuality as depicted on MTV.

MTV creates and caters to adolescent male fantasies of women who are sexu-

ally aggressive, insatiable, and constantly available for use and abuse by men. In doing so, MTV is contributing to rape culture and denigrating images of women.

Dreamworlds is an extremely worthwhile, well-done and well thought-out film. However, it contains extremely violent and disturbing imagery, including a cut from the rape scene in the movie *The Accused*. It is recommended that you see this movie when and where you feel safe and with some discussion and debriefing afterwards.

This year's conference raised a lot of issues for many delegates, as individuals and as part of a larger community of women. I think it brought attention to some critical needs for intimacy between and among women, in a society where women are isolated from one another. In that sense, it was a worthwhile conference.

However, there is a definite sense among the Bryn Mawr delegation that the conference was not well organized. I personally feel that it could have been structured to have a more informative and productive atmosphere.

Many of the events were focused on extremely personal matters. I think that we might have been better off spending most of our time in slightly less personal discussions, working on broader social and educational issues, using the different perspectives of the various women's communities of which we are a part.

Next year's conference will be at Radcliffe (this is highly theoretical since we seem to be having trouble tracking down the 'cliffies'). The returning delegates to talk to if you're interested in going are Kanti, Catherine and Angie.

The delegation will be doing a presentation in the Quita Woodward Room from 8-10 pm on Tues. March 31st. All members of the community are invited and encouraged to attend, ask questions, and maybe have a bit of tea which we hope to dig up from someplace.

RAPE AWARENESS WEEK

The Rape Culture Project put on display in the CC Main Lounge Monday 3/23.

The events still to follow:

Thu 3/26: 7pm. Joan Schumann, National Coordinator for the Campaign to End Homophobia, conducts a dialogue about "Lesbians and Violence" —Campus Center 210

Mon 3/30: 8pm. Monday Night at the Movies: The Accused Discussion to follow —CC Main Lounge

Tue 3/31: 2pm. Dr. Edna Foa discusses "The Psychological Effects of Rape" —Campus Center 210

8pm. Dr. Stanley Clawar discusses Women in Abusive Relationships —Campus Center 210

Thu 4/2: Open Mike and March

St. Patrick's Day Parade continued from page one

ticians scurrying to align themselves with either side.

The Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization has charged that their exclusion from the parade is a violation of their civil liberties. In the first offensive of their legal battle this year, Judge Rosemarie Maldonado, an administrative judge for New York City's Commission of Human Rights, found (on 13 March 1992) that I.L.G.O. was discriminated against by the Hibernians, and that the "discrimination was unlawful because the parade should be construed as public accommodation, like a restaurant" (Weber, Bruce. *New York Times*. 17 March 1992, p. B2.).

However, Judge Maldano decided that a decision to force the Hibernians' to allow I.L.G.O. to participate in the parade would violate "the Hibernians' First Amendment rights of free association and free expression" (Weber, Bruce. *New York Times*. 17 March 1992, p. B2.).

The case brought before the Federal Court was of greater legal importance. It charged that I.L.G.O.'s First Amendment rights were being "restricted, a charge that can only be made against the Government" (Weber, Bruce. *New York Times*. 17 March 1992, p. B2.).

In order for the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization to win its case, it had to prove that New York City's government was involved in running the parade or that the Hibernians were "were serving as a city agency.." (Weber, Bruce. *New York Times*. 17 March 1992, p. B2.).

Not only was this a harder case to prove, but it also brought the case into politically dangerous territory.

Judge Leval refused to rule on consti-

tutional grounds in which he would have had to decide whether the "right of free speech belongs to I.L.G.O. or the Hibernians" (Leval, Judge Pierre. *New York Times*. 17 March 1992, p. B2.). Although it was "assumed" that the Hibernians discriminated against the I.L.G.O., Judge Leval said that this discrimination was not a justification to allow the group to jump ahead of the forty other groups on the wait list. As Leval said, "Assuming without deciding that I.L.G.O. could show it was the victim of an unconstitutional rejection, that is its position: it may not be admitted to [the] parade in preference to the long list of prior applicants" (Leval, Judge Pierre N. *The New York Times*. 17 March 1992.).

He also found fault with the fact that I.L.G.O. waited six weeks until they filed their motion, giving the Hibernians only one week to prepare their defense. For the moment, the issue has been settled. However, there is no doubt that this is not the end of the fight for I.L.G.O.

As an Irish-American Catholic, I was appalled by the Hibernians' refusal to allow the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization from participating in the parade, but I was not surprised. Homophobia runs deep within the Irish character, and in no way would the Hibernians be accommodating to I.L.G.O. in their desire to march in the parade.

It is ironic that the St. Patrick's Day Parade, which began as a demonstration of the Irish community's ethnic pride and defiance to the WASP community which discriminated and exploited them, should now be seen as a symbol of anti-homosexual bigotry in this country.

The large Irish community present in the United States is the result of Britain's harsh and bitter oppression of Ireland since the seventeenth century. Forced to leave their homeland in order to escape oppression, the Irish came to America in the hope of finding freedom, only to become the victims of oppression once again. While looking for jobs in New York, my Irish grandfather was greeted with signs saying "No Irish Need Apply".

The Irish had their own way of dealing with the anti-Catholic and anti-Irish prejudices they faced in America. They spent many years raising money in order to build that immense Gothic cathedral in the middle of New York City in honor of Ireland's patron saint, St. Patrick, and to spite the WASPs who considered them subhuman.

A large part of the Irish character suffers from the effects of centuries' worth of oppression. As a result, the Irish have an inferiority complex to a certain degree. They are preoccupied with the image of themselves which is presented before the world. Their oppressors had often depicted the Irish in a negative light. Not only were the Irish alcoholics, but they were also slothful, lazy, feckless, superstitious and mentally deficient. These stereotypes continue to cast a shadow over the successes of the Irish community in this country.

As a result, it is ingrained within the Irish character to be a black mark on oneself and one's family if one should lose face in the community, or, even worse, to lose face before the outside world. That was the underlying current

during the whole legal battle between the Hibernians and I.L.G.O.

One of the Hibernians interviewed said he joined the Order because he "was tired of the old potatoes-and-a-six-pack-of-beer image people have of the Irish" (Stanley, Alessandra. *The New York Times*. 18 March 1992, p. B2.). The fight was nothing less than a battle over what image would be presented of the Irish people. The Hibernians asserted that the true Irish are heterosexual, while I.L.G.O. fought to be accepted as legitimate members of the Irish community.

During the parade, marchers shouted at I.L.G.O. protesters to go back into the closet. It is one thing to be "sexually deviant" and a curse to your family, but it is unforgivable to parade your perversity before the world.

The other great irony was that the Hibernians used Catholicism's warped—as I see them—views on homosexuality as a justification for excluding I.L.G.O. Given his teachings of love and respect for all of God's children, I cannot imagine Christ denigrating homosexuality as a sin or denying homosexuals their basic human rights. However, I can see Christ castigating the Hibernians for their hypocrisy and hatred of their brothers and sisters. It is the use of Christ as an instrument to oppress and dehumanize others that is the true sin.

Until the Irish and the Catholic Church rid themselves of their ridiculous ideas concerning homosexuality, the Irish Lesbian and Gay Organization will continue to fight in order that they might gain their place as rightful members of the Irish community.

Understanding, Coping, and

"A month of sounds, smells, and feelings"

By Hania Al-Hallaq

When a non-Muslim is told about Ramadan, she will usually get the facts. When I am asked about Ramadan, I give my usual spiel that has developed over the years.

"Ramadan is the Muslim month of fasting; no, we do not fast for a month, we fast from sun-up to sun-down each day for a month; yes, we cannot eat, drink, smoke, or chew gum, we cannot break fast if the sun disappears behind the clouds; Ramadan has a couple of purposes, when a person fasts, she can better appreciate what people normally take for granted, this strengthens her will-power as well as allows her to empathize with those less fortunate than herself."

Yet Ramadan consists not only of facts, but of feelings too. It is a tradition, a total atmosphere. When I think of Ramadan, I think of the way it is celebrated in Kuwait.

During Ramadan, schools let out at 1:00 p.m. instead of the usual 2:30 p.m. Homework was eliminated, and lunch and classes were shortened. It was actually against the law to eat in public in Kuwait; anyone who did so was fined. Therefore, anyone at school who was not fasting had to eat lunch inside the gym (because our school did not have a cafeteria). All afterschool activities were cancelled.

A normal workday in the Middle East is from 9-1, and then from 4-8, as opposed to 9-5. This is very convenient in Kuwait, because Kuwait has a rather hot climate, and it is hottest between 2-4 p.m. During Ramadan, the workday hours shifted to end earlier so that adults and children were home in the afternoon. Napping was the most prevalent activity during the late afternoon. In fact, I

would nap until it was time to eat.

Kuwaiti television did not broadcast until after sunset. The broadcast started with the national anthem, some Quran readings, then the prayer call which signalled sunset. Most people turned on the TV to find out when to break fast. It usually remained on and as a consequence, most of Kuwait watched the same programs during Ramadan. The next day at school, everyone was talking about last night's episodes.

An hour or so after dinner, the city came to life. Most people were in their air-conditioned homes all day because it was hot and because they were fasting. Night time was a different thing altogether. Everyone had been rejuvenated after dinner. Shops all over the city were open from around 8 p.m. until 1 or 2 a.m. People did their shopping and socializing during this time. The sleepy, lethargic country had been transformed into a bustling, hubbub of activity.

Many people went to evening prayers, and many others got together late at night to have "breakfast." In my family, each weekend one family cooked "breakfast." Each Thursday (which is the equivalent of Saturday here), my two aunts, my uncle, their families, and my family would gather at one house. There were cousins ranging from my age to a newborn baby. Everyone was talking and eating, eating and talking.

I guess one of the best parts of Ramadan was the three day Holiday, called Eid Al-Fitter, that comes at the end of Ramadan. As the month went on, one became more and more tired by all the excitement; however, that excitement built towards the climax that is Eid. Early in the morning of the first day of Eid, most Muslims went to the mosque for

Eid prayers.

It is on that day that for the first time in a month, everyone eats during the day time. It always felt very strange to eat in the day time, when one had not been doing so for a month. Families and friends visit each other to celebrate the Holiday. There are desserts which are traditionally eaten during the Holiday, just as there are desserts that are eaten during Ramadan.

All the children and some of the adults buy new clothes in celebration—a new outfit for each of the three days. In addition, relatives give each of the children a present, money. The more relatives you visit, the more money you accumulate. Family members are not the only ones given presents, for it is very traditional to give alms to the poor so that they can share in the festivities. Generally, Muslims give a portion of their income in alms that month; also, if any one orders a lamb for the first lunch after Ramadan, they only keep about one-tenth or possibly a little bit more of the lamb and distribute the rest to the more unfortunate.

Ramadan, a month of fasting and self-control, ends with a big bash; then everyone resumes their regular eating habits and lifestyles, hopefully enriched by the experience. However, the heightened sense of community found during Ramadan dissipates until the next year. All the desserts, TV shows, money, and new clothes associated with Ramadan and Eid disappear too until the next Ramadan and Eid.

As illustrated, Ramadan is not just a month of fasting. It is a month of sounds, smells, and feelings. It is a month of a different pace of life. It is, in total, an atmosphere eagerly awaited each year by Muslims of all ages.

Panel discussion on similarities between Judaism and Islam

By Sara Rubin

Bryn Mawr Professor David Rabeeya, Rosemont Professor Ghaznavi, Bryn Mawr students Nadine Allaf '94 and Sara Koplik '93, spoke on February 18th at the Campus Center about the religious, linguistic, and cultural similarities between Islam and Judaism. This panel was set up for several reasons, according to Allaf: to show that not all Muslims are Arabs, and to explore the cultural similarities between Muslims and Jews, as popular media always seems to focus on the tensions and differences.

Professor Rabeeya, a Sephardic Jew born in Iraq, opened the panel discussion with his view that "learning about Islam and Judaism is not a luxury anymore." He mentioned three reasons why this discussion couldn't have happened until recently: first, the Israeli-Arab conflict has blurred all other issues; second, popular perceptions of the Arab world and Muslims as synonymous are widely accepted without specific information; and third, Sephardic Jews represents only 15% of Jews in world.

There is a common misunderstanding about this Jewish Arabic background: according to Rabeeya, in European-dominated Judaism in Israel, Ashkenazic Jews and European Jews tend to look down upon Sephardic Jews, sometimes calling them "Arab Jews" or "Oriental Jews." Hence, there is a lot of information on the Yiddish language and the Holocaust in the U.S. and Israel, but not nearly as much about Sephardic Jews.

Rabeeya reported that there are one billion Muslims in the world, the majority of whom live outside of the Middle East. Of the 14.2 million Jews in the world, 4.2 million are in Israel, 5.1 million in U.S., 700,000 in France (primarily those who left Algeria), 1.5 million in Russia, and 600,000 in Latin America.

Historically, the similarities between Judaism and Islam can be seen in their primitive democracies, and the women taking a great deal of leadership in the composition of

poetry about fights and struggles. Rabeeya, also, added that the similarities extend to the fact that as a Jew he can accept the main statement of the Islamic Shahada, which proclaims that there is no other deity than God. Their differences can be seen in the second part of the Islamic Shahada—the belief that Muhammad is God's prophet—versus the Hebrew belief in its own significant prophets; and the Islamic Sheria, Muslim law, versus the Hebraic Halakha, Hebrew law. It is interesting to note, however, that Sheria means "path" or "road," and Halakha means "to walk."

Continuing the discussion of similarities between Muslim and Jewish law, Sara Koplik and Nadine Allaf spoke on the similarities in Islamic and Jewish dietary laws, the position of women in each culture, and prayer in each religious context.

Allaf explained that Muslims cannot eat meat unless it has been killed by chopping off the head, as painlessly as possible, and draining the blood from the body. The animal is to be treated as well as possible up to this point, and should be killed from behind so as not to scare the animal. Muslims cannot eat pork and also cannot drink, buy, or sell alcohol because "man has to always be in control of his desires and senses."

Koplik said that Jewish dietary laws are similar to the Islamic ones with respect to slaughtering animals and draining the blood. Jews cannot eat pork, cannot eat calf and mother's milk together (doing so was a Canaanite practice, and one way that Jews identified themselves as distinctly separate from their enemies was by doing the opposite of what they did), can only eat animals with clove hooves who chew their cud, and of fish, can only eat those which have scales and fins.

Allaf reported that Muslim women must cover their hair and bodies in order to control their own desires as well as to limit those of men. Koplik said that the same practice is spoken of in the Talmud: married women must cover their hair so that it be reserved for

their husbands. Both spoke of the public world of men and the private world of women, illustrating this with prayer.

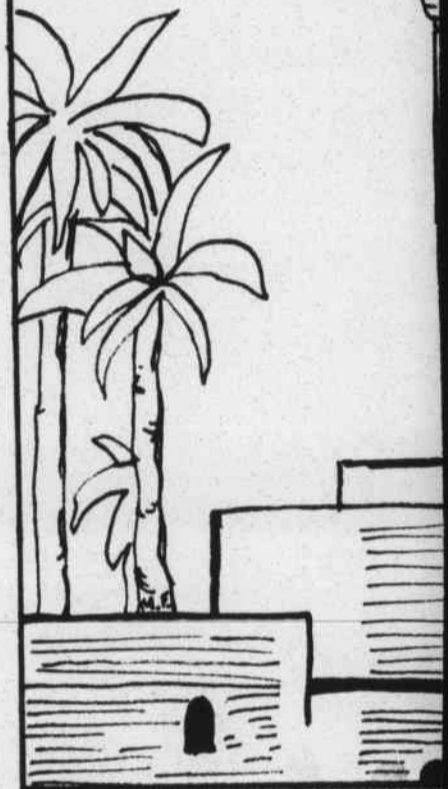
In Judaism, women's prayer is individualistic, private, and they do not have to recite specific prayers 3 times per day as men do, whereas it requires 10 men to form a "minyan" (a formal prayer group) for prayer, which more closely resembles Muslim prayer practice. Allaf added that Muslim men pray in a mosque, in a group. Women pray in the house, and although they can pray in a mosque, they are not very encouraged to.

In terms of serving as a witness in a court of law, Jewish women were forbidden to testify, except when it was to say that another woman's husband was dead in order for the woman to be able to remarry; for things which affect the individual, such as divorce, a woman could testify for herself or another woman, or when all the men are gone from the town. In strict Islamic law, a woman could be a witness, but her testimony is weighted as half that of a man's.

Professor Ghaznavi, a non-Arab Muslim, spoke on the religious textual similarities between the Talmud and the Koran. All religions are connected with a tribe, place, or a prophet, with proper nouns such as Judaism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism. That is, except for Islam, which is derived from the word "Sallama" which means "to submit, to surrender, to make peace with, to settle your account."

According to Muslims, Allah is not a specific name of God, but is the sole creator. He created the entire universe, laws and set the world into motion according to his will. Therefore, nothing is non-Muslim because "you are all Muslims to begin with...there is no escape from Islam" because the prophecy is universal. As Dr. Rabeeya stated, Islam is an "inclusive" religion which historically stressed conversion, versus Judaism is an "exclusive" religion which did not encourage the conversion of others.

According to Professor Ghaznavi, Shi'ite



Panel speakers from L-R: Nadine Allaf, Sara Koplik

Living with One Another

My lack of multicultural education

By Laura Brower

Michaele Ferguson's article, "Lack of Multicultural Education in the U.S." (*The College News*, February 26) struck a raw cord in my stomach and in my fears. As of late, my journey into daily existence has consisted of a discontinuous but persistent awareness that "I am a WASP."

A WASP. Let me impress upon you that fact, because it means a pervading guilt trip for me. Like Michaele, I have heard, "You are white, you are unable to grasp even an inkling of the anger and pain non-whites feel." Like Michaele's, my education has not provided me with a knowledge of the experiences and achievements of different ethnic groups and races.

A meager excuse is that I was raised in a culturally and racially homogeneous Europe; believe me when I say that Europe rejects foreign cultures much more strongly than does the U.S. I agree with Michaele, but would like to add to her thoughts some of my feelings.

I feel guilty; I am scared.

While I believe that the anger of Afro-Americans is justified and that I have no right to tell them not to be in pain, a consequence of this is that I am afraid of addressing them. I am painfully self-conscious when talking to Afro-American Mawrters or Fords, or even when I smile at them. I feel like a pathetic liberal, trying to make up for centuries of oppression with a show of pearly white teeth.

Somewhere, I feel that I don't truly deserve her "Hello" contribution to my social life. I feel guilty, because I know that her anger is legitimate. I am scared, because I know that my culture deserves it, even though I, as an individual, may not feel that I am racist.

I should perhaps fill in a little background and account for what some would call oversensitivity. My grandfather was born and raised in the South (I am not attacking the South), and inherited very early on a certain racism. *Ebony* is a "darn nigger magazine"; he turns the television off when the Pizza Hut ad comes on, as he doesn't want to watch that "darn nigger", Aretha Franklin, sing on TV.

West African Film Series

By Heather Luden

Recently a series of West African films came to Bryn Mawr as part of Black History Month. With a mesmerizing and unembellished representation, these films manage to suffuse even the most unexposed of viewers with a sense of the richness and dignity of these ancient cultures which remain so alien to the majority of people.

Having been introduced to the variety of African cultures through the course texts of Bi-Cultural Novel, taught by Katrin Burlin, I was interested in seeing the visual representations of the concepts found in the novels by authors such as Buchi Emecheta and Tsi Tsi Dangarembga. The film most closely related to these feminist and bi-cultural concepts deals with the subjects of female circumcision and the pitfalls of marriage traditions. But rather than filling the viewer with a sense of horror and estrangement, the films and books manage to both enlighten and build bridges of sympathy and understanding.

The sense of a female "double vision", straddling gender and culture from a doubly disempowered position, transcends experience to unite women through a common history of oppression. The dissimilarity of experience is equally enriching, providing as differences often do, a broader perspective and a more open mind.

Amidst the recent controversies on campuses regarding the value of a diversity requirement, films and books such as these remind us of the simple beauty of shared experience and empathy. Taking advantage of the offerings that surround us at this college is one way to achieve such an awareness.

My father, who obtained, with the full respect of his family, a Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Penn, still maintains the hypocritical racism of the "upper class" distinguished pater familias. And then there's my nerd of a fourteen year old cousin, who tells me that there are too many blacks at his school. Why? Because there is one black kid who teases and humiliates him all the time.

I received that kind of treatment from

"...before that...I condoned a racist society, simply by being ignorant of the dynamics involved."

whites from "decent families" for a good ten years of my life. Out of sheer bad luck (this is irony), this kid happens to be black: what really is a common manifestation of children's cruelty to one another becomes a social and racial issue.

The bottom line is that my family is racist. The result is that I always get 1) angry, 2) upset and 3) vocal when these incidents arise, but that all of my protestations are to no avail whatsoever.

I was discussing this with an old family friend, who just could not grasp why I was so upset about the family racism and eventended to agree with them. Very much on the defensive, she told me that I could not impose my opinions on her; after all, I owed respect to her opinions. A powerful side of me says that I cannot respect her opinion, because I feel she is downright wrong. Call it liberal fascism if you want.

There's a "BUT"—this is my family, this is part of me, no matter how much I try to reject it. My family and, hence, I, represent a culture which condones racism.

I would also like to describe an incident which occurred during the International Students Orientation, prior to Customs. At an informal plurality discussion, a self-de-

clared WASP Mawrter was verbally attacked for having said something which was interpreted as: "I am the epitomy of U.S. society."

The anger in the women's voices which rang through Thomas 110 scared me to tears, probably because, being a newcomer straight from France (although an American citizen), I realized that I probably could have said the same without thinking twice.

I know better now. But before that discussion, I condoned a racist society, simply by being ignorant of the dynamics involved. At work one day, I was assigned the job of taking down the Black History Month decorations in Erdman Dining Hall, while doing that two black students walked by. I heard, "Those decorations have been up for a week and they're already being taken down," and "February is the shortest month of the year."

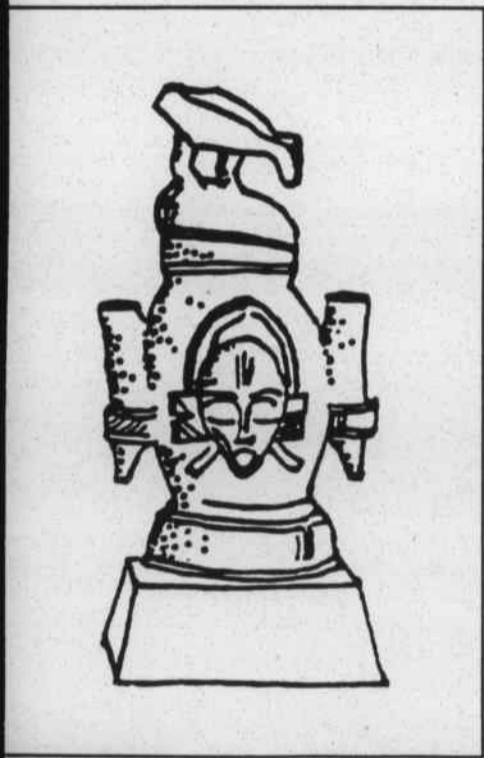
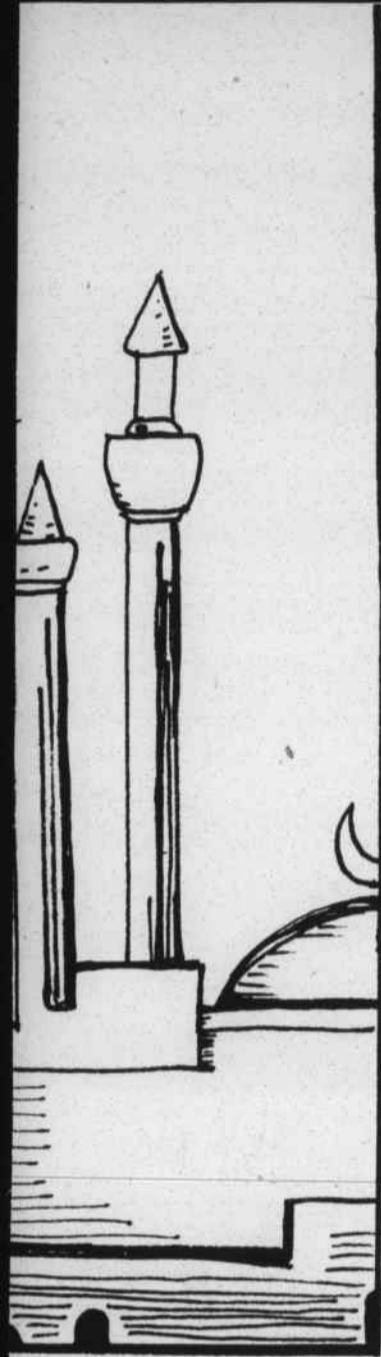
I was a destroyer, the perpetrator of "No Black History" for the eleven months to come. Not only was I ignorant, but I was also a destroyer of African-American culture.

Finally, I will say that I condone a racist society, simply by having absorbed its culture and by living comfortably within its heart. Our culture is, by nature, racist. Over centuries of history, beginning with the exploration of Africa by the Portugese until now, we have been racist. We have imposed our presence on them, our religion on them (*Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe), our economic system on them (which has proceeded to destroy the economic independence they had), and our culture on them (immigrants to our country are expected to assimilate).

Everything the West had was assumed to be better. There is no escaping it. But, so far, my life has constantly accepted and been nourished by this culture. If I weren't a "good" product of Western Culture, I would not be at a "good" liberal arts college.

As an individual, you can, indeed, not be racist. But you can escape your culture only to a certain point, because your culture holds you very firmly with its bony fingers. If you can escape your culture, I certainly cannot. And I cannot escape the color of my skin: I am as white as a sheet.

Dykes To Watch Out For



plik, Prof. Ghaznavi and Prof. Rabeeya.

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

The Bryn Mawr Romance Connection

By Smita Lahiri

Miranda Jarrett, the pseudonym for Susan Holloway Scott, an employee of our very own Bryn Mawr Department of Public Information, brings us a swash-buckling addition to the Harlequin Historical series. The very title of her new novel—*Steal the Stars*—evokes the multiple themes of the American Revolution, the starry heights of passion and dangerous intrigue; and this reader is happy to say that she was not disappointed.

The novel opens upon the "satisfied smile" of Eliza Raeburn as she contemplates the cargo of rum with which she and her father, a Providence merchant, are about to set sail for St. Kitts. Eliza, a capable lass ever since the death of her mother, is her father's accountant and constant traveling companion. This time, however, all is different. Eliza's father has just made the disturbing realization that his daughter is no tomboy auditor, but instead a breathtakingly beautiful red-head. Muttering darkly how the sea has been made unsafe by nefarious British navymen (who have, just a few days earlier, captured and imprisoned Eliza's favorite cousin Nat for evading cargo tax), he orders Eliza to stay at home with her ledgers.

Of course, there is more to it than that. The Rhode Islanders are plotting to raid and destroy a British ship in order to teach them a Lesson, and they have enlisted none other than one Gardner Grif-

fin, a rough and mysterious sailor (and undercover Son of Liberty) to lead the attack. Gardner and Eliza notice each other at an elegant Providence party, being the only ones who have quite obviously Dressed Wrong—Eliza is in mussed, wrinkled linen and Gardner in salt-stained sea boots. The two cast each

other a sympathetic glance, but Eliza feels an instantaneous and unaccountable "tell-tale blush, creeping across her breasts and up to her cheeks." The assembled company, who have been watching the furtive progression of the

raid turns to be a mere easily won skirmish. Nevertheless, some excitement ensues when Gardner unmasks Eliza in the presence of a wounded British officer. The two gasp in surprise, and Gardner feels a sudden desire to kiss her, but

thinks the better of it. (He regrets this furiously later.)

Later, at the victory party, he steals off with Eliza to learn all he can about her captured cousin Nat, whom she implores Gardner to rescue. Gardner thinks once again of kissing Eliza but is overcome by unsteadiness. Perhaps the "sweet fragrance" of Eliza's skin or the "tantalizing shadows" playing dizzily over her moonlit breasts have made him queasy. (Nevertheless, the reader is slightly disappointed, expecting a stronger stomach from a seafarer.)

Also at the dance is prosperous Josiah Buck (a closet supporter of British rule) who, aside from the minor pock marks and a wooden leg, is "comely" and a Good Catch. Josiah ("Josey") and Gardner take a deep dislike to each other. They are competitors for Eliza's attention, although Josey's peg leg is a decided handicap on the dance floor. Gardner foolishly throws away his advantage by quarreling furiously with Eliza. The two just cannot seem to get along; the townsfolk and the perceptive reader takes this as a sure sign that they are Made For Each Other. A frustrated Josey swears to win Eliza's hand and betray Gardner to the nice blokes in the British navy.

From now on, events move fast and more furiously. Eliza goes to Boston with Josiah (not realizing that he is a snake in the grass) to demand the release of Nat from the Governor. There she fortuitously bumps into Gardner just in time to be
See Steal The Stars on page 7



other a sympathetic glance, but Eliza feels an instantaneous and unaccountable "tell-tale blush, creeping across her breasts and up to her cheeks." The assembled company, who have been watching the furtive progression of the

raid turns to be a mere easily won skirmish. Nevertheless, some excitement ensues when Gardner unmasks Eliza in the presence of a wounded British officer. The two gasp in surprise, and Gardner feels a sudden desire to kiss her, but

Mississippi Masala lacks the expected spice

By Aparna Mukherjee

"...an exotic and erotic love story about an interracial couple—a black American who has never seen Africa and an African-born Indian who has never seen her nativelyland..." Carrie Rickey, movie critic for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, has this and three-and-a-half stars for Mira Nair's *Mississippi Masala*.

The film sounded fabulous to me (although the terms "exotic" and "erotic" kinda pissed me off—what is this, the *Kama Sutra*?) Finally, a mainstream movie that explores some South Asian American issues, such as relations with the Black American community.

Unfortunately, I got myself psyched up to be disappointed. Although the film touched on some important themes like color hierarchy and racism from both groups, Indian and Black, the plot line and characterizations were poor.

The basic story is based on the Asian expulsion from Uganda by Idi Amin in the early '70s. One family, consisting of a Ugandan-born couple, Jay and Kinnu (Roshan Seth and Sharmila Tagore) and their daughter Mina (Sarita Choudhury), are forced to emigrate to London, and then to a small town in Mississippi. There Kinnu runs a liquor store, Jay tries to find

his way back to Uganda, and Mina works as a chamber maid in an Indian-run motel.

The scenes in the motel setting were among the most ludicrous for me. The Indian characters, specifically male, were underdeveloped with few positive portrayals, excluding Jay. A trio of South Asian men provides comic relief, a modified Three Stooges thing, which is perhaps Nair's purposeful mockery of Indian men.

So the family seems stuck in this hick town with little hope of leaving, especially for Uganda; or in Mina's case—college (which is briefly mentioned). Her future is altered when she first plows into a carpet cleaner's van, owned by Demetrius (Denzel Washington), and then gets picked up by him in an effort to make his ex-girlfriend jealous.

It is the plot line after this point which I have trouble with. Mina and Demetrius then see each other at his father's birthday party, they fuck each other, and suddenly they are In Love. Not that they have to justify a relationship for a movie, but I found it lacking and unrealistic.

Some of the Indian male characters burst in on them in bed, and incredibly, "it" (safe sex between two consenting adults) becomes some kind of crime that scandalizes the whole town and appar-

ently ruins both their lives. When criticizing this aspect of the movie, I was told by a "real Southerner", that an interracial relationship like this would cause a reaction like that in certain areas.

So they go through conflict and deal with negative feedback from both families and communities, and when Jay announces that he is going back to Uganda (another plot line which, although interesting, is vague and not played out enough), Mina declares her love for Demetrius and rides into the sunset with him in a carpet-cleaning chariot. In fact, the last scene is of the couple twirling in the sunset, suddenly dressed in African and Indian garb. A real Hollywood ending.

On the positive side (since basically everyone who has seen it, including the forty-some Mawrters I went with, really liked it...) the cinematography was beautiful. The scenes in Uganda were lush and green and idealistically unreal. Also the soundtrack, which combines a lot of the elements of Indian and African music, is hot.

Other than that, some of the themes the movie touched upon were important and a few of the themes the movie dealt with were classic. For example, "You can be poor and be fair, and you can be rich

and be dark, but you can't be poor and dark." Two Indian mothers (one played by Nair) sit around analyzing that theme which, in their terms, means marrying well.

Another significant scene, topic-wise, is when Denzel confronts Mina's father about his biases. Washington points out that "You come in thinking you're better than us... you're only a few shades away from being black." To me those lines imply the fact that in America, ultimately, it does not matter what kind of "colored" you are—only that you are not white. The distinction between light-skinned and dark-skinned is a commonality between South Asians and Blacks.

So, basically, although I was not that enthused by the flick, I think you should still go see it. It is Nair's first film in English and her next is the life story of Buddha (yeah).

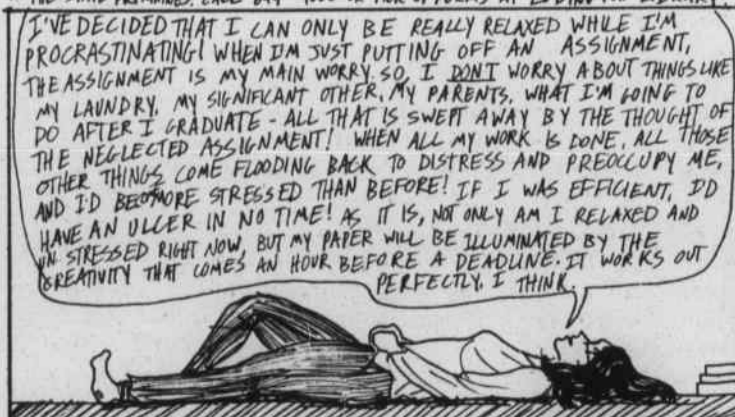
But considering the fact that a young, female South Asian director made a film starring an Oscar-winner (Denzel Washington) that actually deals with intra-race relations, it is worth the price of admission.

Mississippi Masala is playing at the Ritz Five in Philly.

Suffragette City



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"In the name of the mambo, the rhumba, and the cha-cha-cha..."

By Megan Susman

This is how Mambo King Cesar Castillo (Armand Assante) says his prayers. Newly arrived in New York from Cuba, Cesar dreams of making it to the top of the mambo world with his younger brother Nestor (Antonio Banderas). The rise and fall of his American dream is charted in the new movie, *The Mambo Kings*.

Based on Oscar Hijuelos' excellent Pulitzer Prize winning novel, *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*, the movie is the story of the Castillo brothers and their respective dreams. Flamboyant Cesar wants to be a "big shot" in the US, but he wants to succeed on his own; he refuses a Faustian deal with the biggest promoter in town, who subsequently bars him from the best clubs, reducing the Mambo Kings to playing weddings and bar mitzvahs.

Still Cesar persists, until finally they are spotted by Desi Arnaz (played by his own son, Desi, Jr.) and invited to guest star on "I Love Lucy". Cesar thinks it's their big break; Nestor, knowing it does not change anything in New York and wanting to open his own club, goes to the promoter for help. When the Mambo Kings are invited to play at the best club in the city, Cesar thinks it is due to his own persistence, and Nestor does not have the heart to disillusion him.

While Cesar longs for success American-style, Nestor can only dream of the girl he loved in Cuba, Maria. His obsession prompts him to compose the ballad "Beautiful Maria of my Soul," which goes through numerous revisions before being performed on the "I Love Lucy" show. Although the song is responsible for his greatest success, it also ruins his marriage to the lovely Delores Fuentes (Maruschka Detmers), who can never compete with the idealized Maria.

The two brothers present a wonderful contrast. Cesar is wild and fun-loving and thinks he is "the last Coca-Cola in the

desert" to women. As soon as he hits American shores, he is seducing women right and left; one of them, cigarette girl Lanna Lake (Cathy Moriarty) sticks around for the whole movie. Nestor, on the other hand, is shy, romantic, dreamy. He works quietly on his endless versions of "Beautiful Maria of My Soul" and writes letters to Maria even after he marries Delores.

"...the men are gorgeous, the women are beautiful. What more can you ask from a movie?"

There is not much chemistry between the men and the women here. No sparks fly, as in, say, *Bugsy*, with Warren Beatty and Annette Bening. The real chemistry is between the brothers. Assante and Banderas are fantastic together. Assante is excellent as Cesar, who loves his brother so dearly that he'll nearly get himself killed for him. He protects the vulnerable Nestor like a mother.

Spanish heartthrob Antonio Banderas uses his bedroom eyes to good effect as Nestor. Banderas taught himself English and the trumpet simultaneously for this role. It is easy to see why Madonna wanted to meet him in *Truth Or Dare*. He was the director's only choice for the role of Nestor, and he is superb.

The movie does a good job of presenting both brothers' dreams, but it does not go into very much depth, character-wise. For that, read the novel. The film slows down in parts, but overall is very entertaining. One of the best scenes is the "I Love Lucy" show. Clips of Lucille Ball are taken from an actual show in which Ricky's Cuban cousins come to visit, and spliced together with film of Assante, Banderas and Arnaz, Jr. (who, by the way, has an atrocious accent in both English and Spanish).

The music is wonderful, hip-swinging mambo, the men are gorgeous, the women are beautiful. What more can you ask from a movie?

Rating: 3.0 out of 4.0
Now playing at the Bryn Mawr Theater.

Steal the Stars cont'd from pg. 6

saved from rape at the hands of two British sailors, and accompanies him to the home of Samuel Adams where she refuses to go in, not realizing what a historic opportunity this is. That very night, Gardner engineers Nat's release, although somehow Josiah ends up getting all the credit for it. In spite of her gratitude, Eliza is peculiarly repulsed by Josey, perhaps realizing that he is not only a Peg Leg but also a Stuffed Shirt. The plot thickens when the British announce a manhunt for the perpetrators of the raid on the British boat, and offer a hefty reward for the capture of Gardner and his "brazen red-haired hussy" accomplice—Eliza!

Tragedy strikes when Eliza's father is killed at sea by a British attack. Josey rallies round, trying to be helpful but only getting in the way, and Eliza finally tells him off. She overcomes her dislike of Gardner enough to hire him as a captain for her contraband rum business. Soon, however, the threat of capture makes the two flee to Martinique where they promptly get married, this seeming like the natural thing to do, especially after they share a few moments of passion.

Eliza gets yellow fever and is nursed back to health by Gardner. The couple is apprehended by the British, but Eliza has the resourcefulness to create a disturbance so that Gardner can escape his captors by jumping overboard. (This climax will not strike the imaginative and

generous reader as flimsy.) Josiah's treachery and his hand in the death of Eliza's father is exposed. However Josey turns maniacal and takes a last stand, shooting at Eliza but, luckily, missing. Gardner sustains a flesh wound, but complete rest in bed with Eliza (well, not that complete) effects a marvellous recovery. The happy pair settle down to a life of sea-faring bliss.

The scenes of passion in the novel place a consistent and creative emphasis on sensations involving Gardner's prickly beard and, of course, Eliza's long, loose red hair. This reviewer will not attempt to do justice to them but recommends readers to sample the pleasures of these scenes for themselves.

The novel abounds in psychologically insightful detail. For example, Eliza is said to be "intrigued by how different Gardner's body was from her own," and her inexperience is speedily transformed by Gardner into skill, helped no doubt by this positive and inquiring attitude. Also, Gardner's insecurity and fear of attachment is well-depicted as a result of his early traumas as an unloved and illegitimate child. His overwhelmed response to Eliza's fresh-baked gingerbread, a reminder of one of the few happy incidents of his boyhood, is a master touch. All in all, *Steal the Stars* is a thoroughly satisfying read, one which combines a historical context with characters the reader will intuitively recognize as familiar and real.



Dates Women Make

March 20- April 5
Prints From France. Campus Center Gallery 204, Daily: noon-5pm.

March 26
Who Shall Live and Who Shall Die. Bryn Mawr Film Series, Thomas 110, showing at 7:45pm and 10pm.

March 25- May 6
REALISM, Six Artists from the Netherlands. This exhibition explores how these Dutch artists have taken traditional painting and sculpture techniques and turned them into a modern expression of their own. At the Esther M. Klein Art Gallery, University City Science Center, 3600 Market St. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday, 9am-5pm.

March 27
Sonny Sharrock, "the undisputed originator of free jazz guitar and granddaddy to the early '80s punk and white-noise guitarists," will be "parading around like a drunk Jimi Hendrix in a romantic mood" (*SPIN*) at the Painted Bride, 230 Vine St., 8 and 10 pm. Admission is \$15.

March 27-28
The Opposite Sex . . . Is Neither!, a play about gender expectations by Billy Ehret, with music by Charles Cohen at Try Arts, 623 South St., 592-8393, show times are 8pm and 11pm. Admission is \$10, tickets available through Upstages: 567-0670.

March 28
Wellness Seminar: "Well Woman Care" in Schwartz Gymnasium, 10am-noon.

PREGONES Theater's "Voices of Steel," a bi-lingual (Spanish and English) musical, departing from a typical dance form of the Puerto Rican highlands ("Seis Chorro") and coastal musical patterns ("y Plena"), about five prisoners who experience isolation and sensory deprivation. The performance, a part of the Latin Theater Project, will take place at the Painted Bride, 230 Vine St., at 8pm. Admission is \$12.

March 28-29
Beginners Workshop on Shiatsu. Two female certified Shiatsu practitioners will lead this weekend-long exploration of the Japanese acupressure technique for relaxation, stress release and revitalization. At Penguin Place, 10am-4pm, both days. Preregistration fee is \$50, call 732-3220.

March 29
Women's History Month Grand Finale Celebration. Honoring 500 years of unique resistance and courage in the Americas. Speakers include: Julia Lopez, Lilli Perez, Magda Enriquez and Elena Ixcot. At Christ Church and St. Ambrose, corner of 6th and Venango, 1:30-5pm

Lesbian Community of Delaware County's monthly covered dish pot-luck at the Media Fellowship House, 302 S. Jackson St. Starts at 6pm Call 247-4385 for info.

PREGONES Theater's "And Your Grandmother, Where Is She?". Another performance sponsored by the Latin Theater Project. The bi-lingual musical centers on images of Afro-Caribbean slavery. It will take place at the Painted Bride, 230 Vine St., at 3pm. Admission is \$5.

April 1
Open Mike Night, at the Wednesday Night Coffeehouse. Contact Aruni John for details.

Cold Feet . . . Hot Tracks, at the Community Education Center, 3500 Lancaster Ave. Starts at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$6. Call Philadelphia Dance Alliance for reservations: 545-6344.

April 2
Swimming to Cambodia. Bryn Mawr Film Series, Thomas 110, showing at 7:45 and 10pm.

April 3
Ustad Alla Rakha, Ustad Sultan Khan, and Zakir Hussain. Tabla player Zakir Hussain will perform a special benefit concert for one night only at the Painted Bride, 7:30pm. Appearing with him will be the world-renowned tabla master Ustad Alla Rakha and sarangi "genius" Ustad Sultan Khan. The admission price is \$25 for the concert only or \$50 for concert plus reception and an Indian buffet. Call for more info at 925-9914.

April 4
Community Service Day: sign up to volunteer at housing renovations, park clean-ups, or work with the elderly. Contact Elizabeth Sapp for details at 645-9503.

Mingus Dynasty Band. The band which brings "its special vitality and... spirit" to Charles Mingus' music will play at the Painted Bride 8 and 10pm. Admission is \$15.



AIDS Panel continued from page 1

Leonard believes that much has changed since the early 80's when scientists knew virtually nothing about the virus, and doctors knew nothing about how to handle people with AIDS. When Leonard was told that he was infected, he received no counseling or help. Actually, when he found out that he was positive, he was so busy trying to prevent his lover from committing suicide that he had little time or energy to think about himself.

Once Leonard emerged from his two-year denial he began to "read widely about living long with AIDS." With balanced therapies— drug, vitamin, and alternative— and education, Leonard believes that HIV-positive people can live longer, happier lives. However, he laments, AIDS is hitting poorer communities with no access to good doctors or even the proper medication because of a lack of adequate, or any, medical insurance.

After their personal narratives, they answered questions from the audience. This informal gathering of people seemed to be a very effective way of disseminating information as well as educating people with all levels of background knowledge. If you are interested in volunteering or would like to have more information, please call We the People, write or stop by 425 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19147.



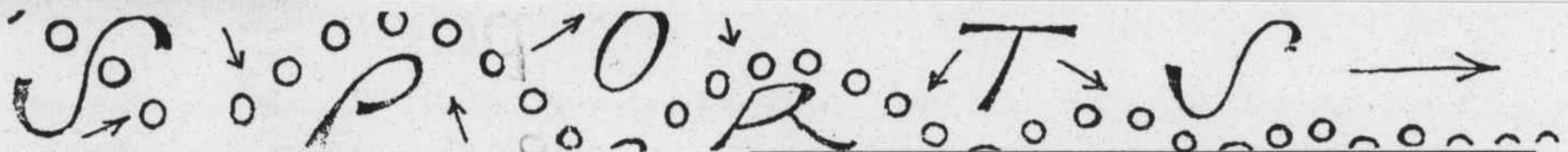
Seniors involved in Feminist and Gender Studies theses who are interested in presenting their research to the college community contact Kalyani Broderick at x5432, c-500

Something interesting we, the News staff, got in

"Female trouble, Philadelphia's Women's S/M and Leather Organization, will hold its 3rd Annual Piercing Clinic in Center City the weekend of April 24 through April 26, 1992. The clinic will feature expert piercer Raelyn Gallina of Oakland, California.

Raelyn will pierce ears, noses, nipples, navels, and genitalia on both women and men. Her prices are reasonable, and she sells her own jewelry. Piercings will take place in individual private sessions. For information and an appointment, call 732-6898."

the mail that we *had* to print.



First Blood

By Monica Farrow

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of foolishness, it was the age of wisdom, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way." -Charles Dickens

With mixed feelings, we set off to Princeton for the first rugby game this season. Frankly, the first game had me shaking in my boots.

Sigh (I wax nostalgic). The first game of the season, the re-awakened... hmmm...titillation? I remember the heebie jeebies that accompanied my first game last spring and I feel for the rookies.

In a sense, my misgivings are leftovers from the EPRU (Eastern Pennsylvania Rugby Union) Championship last fall, and the bestial thugs who opposed us. The only phrase that comes to mind by way of description is oxymoronic: neanderthal mall chicks. Where does Shippenburg recruit, the Jersey pine barrens?

Princeton, however, has chosen a different image than that of mall chick (one adapted by many voguing clubs). I can't picture them in any civilian attire other than that of Eric the Red (the Viking who retired in Greenland). If we were on better terms with them, I would ask them to send me one of those horned hats.

Now, I will set the scene (trumpets please). Setting the scene is a tradition in many stories, one which originates in the lore of... Wait a moment. This is not a story, this is real life: "since brevity is the soul of wit, And tediousness the limbs

and outward flourishes, I will be brief".

The weather was not in anyone's favor, and the location of Princeton's pitch (playing field) was on hard ground smack in the middle of a field that is ideal for collecting and concentrating a breeze. Where does this put us? On sub-zero antarctic (or arctic, take your pick) tundra without seal lined parkas. We had great difficulty taping fingers and ears on after the game...

Our greatest obstacle was not the weather; it was the opposing pack: Kool Aid and the Gang (picture multiple jug shaped women sporting ferociously frozen grins).

When we faced these gals, we were feeling a little "mimsy in the wabe" (at least a portion of us were). After all we had lost our "scud" missile, which we had relied upon as a scare tactic in the past. We didn't have "toast" to throw at them— or is that the Rocky Horror Picture Show? Our "stick" was nowhere to be seen (hey, sometimes "fetch" works).

And "sin" just didn't seem to be on this side of the planet. May I note that there is definitely a calling for sin in this sport. What to do in this tense moment before the game? Thoughtful pause. My name affords no psychological reassurance (it being Yak). We could resort to calling them names.

In the vein of brevity...

Oh my god. A penalty kick! They won on a bloody penalty kick. Well, there wasn't that much blood: a scrape, a scratch, an ear, an arm, a mere flesh wound (we ruggers are prone to exaggeration). Flashes of heroic defeat, of great crescendos, of the climaxes of all those "I did it for Johnnie" movies, one more cry for the Gipper.

And in the end? What says this motley lot of unorthodox heroes? We can still win the party...



The season continues. The Horned Toads have played their second match against U. Penn., on Saturday, March 21, squishing them underfoot with a 37 to 0 win! Not since the armies of Alexander the Great has there been a fighting force of such sleek mechanical grace (I did say we were prone to exaggeration). Modestly understated by Eden Feuer, our deceptively dangerous fullback: "We all just kicked butt". Anyone interested in joining us is welcome. Practices are at Haverford's pitch Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 4:00-6:00pm.

Forays into Fencing.
7 pm Fridays in the gym.
We are planning a
tournament in April.
Interested? call anu at x5870.