1996

The College News 1996-2-13 Vol. 18 No.5

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Raising Hell: A Sophomore Responds to Hell

By Rachel Soltis

I approached Hell Week this year with some ambivalence. It was fun last year, when I was a frosh, but I was not so certain that I was comfortable going into the house this year. I had heard stories about and finding myself trapped into perpetrating it. But, as a Customs person, I felt it was more important to try to make sure the frosh on my hall had a good time with it, so I tried to downplay my uncertainties and sound confident when I explained that Hell Week was basically innocent and that it was intended as a way for everyone to have a good time in the middle of the winter blues. That was the way it had been sold to me, and last year it seemed to work.

When Hell Week started, I began to find that I hadn’t entirely anticipated what it meant to live with a lie. I walked into the dimly lit living room Wednesday night to find about fifteen frosh clustered around posters covered with crumpled yellow, pink, and blue writing. I couldn’t even make out the words unless I was less than a foot away, and here were people piled on top of each other trying not only to decipher, but to copy down as well. I wanted to tell them not to bother, that most of that schedule was bogus anyway, but I didn’t want to spoil their fun.

And for the rest of the week, when someone told me quite seriously that she didn’t think she could make the duck pond judgment, when several people worried about tests due Monday and Wednesday, which they didn’t know if they were going to be able to do, being so buoyed up and going into Philly to harass train passengers, etc., I still found myself saying, ‘I didn’t think it was my role to spoil their fun (never mind that they weren’t having fun in the first place), and so I lied to them. They were people I cared about, people I would normally never lie to. I told some outrageous stories.

Perhaps if Hell Week were the fun it was advertised to be, it wouldn’t have bothered me as much. But in many cases, our behavior these past few days has been disturbing. At trials, for example, about a hundred Rock residents crowded into the living rooms, and in the next two hours, about fifty frosh were tried. The trials were rim and almost everybody was in costume. There’s something liberating about costume: Jane Sophomore in sweatspants and a t-shirt can be quite a different person from Jane Sophomore in fishnets and miniskirt. Add that you are hidden in shadows, and it becomes very easy to find yourself doing things you would never consider doing during the day. Nothing hideously out of line happened; two frosh were tried alone, sometimes might have been questionable, suddenly voluntary because of the underlying lies.

centerspread: Hell Week Revisted
also inside... Mrs. Hank, the Feminist Jam, civil society comes to Bryn Mawr, Arts and Entertainment, and more
EDITORIAL

To Ex-significant Others and those who have them

Not that we're bitter here on the College News staff, but up in our small Lenin-clad office, sitting on dinosaur-squeaking computers that grumble louder than we do. The point is we were just chatting about the pros and cons of breaking up with people. The only positive thing we came up with is that if they weren't ready for a relationship it's good to get them out of your life (it's complicated enough without it, right?), the negative around the loss of physical and emotional intimacy. We're through with dating our textbooks (there's only so much that can happen with Virginia Woolf and our lives, we're ready to hit the dating scene (Friday night anyone??). The only problem is that we've got to find our way down and out of this second-floor office, since no prince or princess is going to appear gallantly under our window (we've already discovered that snowballs thrown at the window don't work, now maybe royalty would).

Hmmmm... since St. Valentine's Day is tomorrow or today or yesterday (depending on when you are reading this), and no one should be without a honey to lick chocolate syrup off in mid-February, we decided that maybe we should run some personals. Since we decided this too late to advertise this new service for this issue, here are some samples. Feel free to reply to these, or, for that matter, to send your own requests for someone to share the finer (or messier, or whatever rolls your socks down) things in life with to our box, C-1716, conveniently located in the Campus Center.

Umm... I dunno. I'm not sure exactly what I'm looking for, but, trust me, if you're what I decide is the right thing, I'll be your right thing. Banish your anemic and apathy, baby.

Desperately Seeking Purpose
Could you be her? Busy Maven unable to find fulfillment in her many hours of class and lab and meetings and rehearsals and reserve room readings and the Thomas computing lab, and even believe (or not) the College News office, seeks someone to give her life maximum meaning in the tiny bit of time that remains.

Radical Feminist Chuck
ISO hot baba to help her take over the world... and then frolic in it, on it, over it, under it...

Grrls, all I really want is grrrls
Actually, one really fantastic girl would do me. If you have the Manic Panic, I have the electric reds... and when we're done with those, I've got other handy appliances (electric, as well as some a bit more... primitive) to show you.

THE COLLEGE NEWS
BRYN MAWR COLLEGE VOLUME XVIII, NUMBER 3, February 25, 1992
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The College News does not accept any advertising. Free announcements from or for the community are welcome.

The next deadline is Friday, February 25, at Midnight. Letters and articles should be sent to our mailbox (C-1716), or placed outside our Dunlap office (x7450). All agreements are to be an MAC document copy. They will be returned via campus mail. All opinions expressed in articles or letters are the opinions of the author and not necessarily the opinions of the editors of the editorial board; all pictures are the work of the artist, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the authors of the articles unless noted that they are the to the right of the picture. All comments should be written to the editor in the Office or call one of the editors if you are interested in submitting to the paper.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The College News is a feminist journal which serves as a forum for women's self-expression 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 provide an environment for sharing and to foster self-confidence and independence in expression.

continued from page one

not consider higher education interested in college illegal. The conference facilita-

tors were also careful to discuss how issues like budget cuts for social pro-
grams, and aid to poor Americans are all part of the women's issues. Maria Ann Gillippe gave a rousing and down to earth speech where she denounced the myths put forth by the media that the feminist movement is deeply divided and only attracts "women of a certain age" meaning middle-aged women. She observed that over half of the women at the conference were college-aged. She also warned us against getting into fights about "whose baggage is heavier" in terms of groups having their particular grievances ad-

anced. She reminded us that we all carry heavy baggage, and we need to give equal time to baggage. She also wanted us to remember the many women who are feminists in their own way and are working quietly in their own way. Another part of the conference addressed the question of non-profit feminist and social justice organizations set up booths to educate people about their groups. This exhibition hall also had a career center, an internet station, and a special exhibition on feminist architecture. This conference was a warm-up event for Expo 2000, a huge conference to launch the movement into the next millennium.

It was very inspiring to see so many college and even high school women at the conference. We are often told by the media that the youth are not feminists, but this is not true. Although there was definitely a large contingent from seven sisters schools and other high-achieving institutions, there was an equally large amount of women from various state schools including many small state universities. In fact, there were so many young women there, when Helen Reddy sang "I am woman" the whole audience joined in, and it was very moving, it seemed a bit dated. Some young women organized an impromptu dance around Helen's booth in support of women in welfare, Medicaid, and basically every other Great Society program. This dem-

onstration, which was held on Sunday, was almost entirely comprised of young women, and attracted about 300 demon-

strators. We held signs with slogans like: "No Corporate Welfare" and "People Not Profit" to wake Washington up to the fact that this country is heading down the drain, and we're mad, and we vote! There was also a good deal of ethnic, racial, and diverse pride in "tobacco diversity among the conference participants. Although the vast majority of conference attendees were women, there was a smattering of supportive men.

The conference was very enlightening for me because all too often we see the answers of the republican, anti-women agenda everywhere I look. Hopefully, we will be able to implement some of the ideas learned at the conference on the Bryn Mawr's campus through the Women's Unity and Action Center. Now it is time for all women to mobilize and to join the fight against the Republicans in 1992. In order to make democracy and civil rights that are truly supportive of our issues, as opposed to elephants in the room.

Shannon Geary

The Feminist Jam

by Shannan Geary

Despite the fact that the community did not experience a sequel to the Bliz-

zard of '90 on the weekend of February 2-4, the mere threat of snow was enough to keep most of Bryn Mawer's delegation to Washington D.C.'s Expo '96 at home. Fortunately, thanks to a group of stu-

dents who refused to admit defeat, the energy and excitement many of us had going into the weekend was not wasted. An informal and practically spontaneous meet-

ing took place in the campus center main lounge from 2 to 4:30 pm on Saturday, providing students with an outlet for their enthusiasm, questions and concerns regarding feminism and other related issues.

As an ice-breaker, we opened discus-

sion by going around our comfortable circle of approximately twelve, introduc-

ing ourselves and stating any personal information we wanted to. Many of us mentioned the genesis of our interest in feminism and the not-always- steady progression of its role in our lives. Some women stated that they had begun to call themselves feminists as early as the age of twelve or thirteen. This impressed me and inspired me to ask myself when I began to include the term "feminist" with others in my self-definition as "daughter," "sister," and "student." Thinking about this I began to wonder, "Does one actually jump into feminism?" This makes the term sound so finite. Many of the women in our discussion group voiced a concern with the word "feminist" and a few displayed clear adversity to its cate-

gorization at the beginning of our talk. Understandably, it is not easy to include oneself in a category which is by no means clearly, and is often negatively, defined.

Although the question of "what does it mean to be a feminist?" was by no means answered during our two and a half hour talk, it provided an excellent springboard into dialogue regarding various subjects relevant to feminists, to women, everywhere. These subjects in-

cluded the problem of building an inter-

national, multi-cultural feminist commu-

nity without creating a racial or economic hierarchy, creating support groups for women on a local level with placing individuals of various ethnic back-

ground together, and dealing with the present issues of body-image complicated by certain formidable cul-

tural forces, such as the media, and the challenge of supporting our feminist views enough to transform them into action.

Perhaps this last issue was the most important, for it generated much excite-

ment in our group and provided the most impetus for action. The majority of us agreed that although making plans for a global feminist community was appealing, it is far more practical to start educating people about issues important to us on a grass-roots level. We represented the idea that we had maintained a connection to her high school and returned on a regu-

lar basis to talk to Osheras Hafta said: "Viva las Mujeres!"

The Feminist Jam provided us, and hopefully others, with much food for thought. It made me realize that "femi-

nism" is a very personal title, fluid in its meaning, fluctuating from individual to individual and even changing over time. The discussion also inspired me to en-

courage friends and other members of the discussion groups to sit down and draw a picture that we are a member to think about issues that eff-

ect women of the world today, and to use the drawing to represent the situ-

ation that devolves women of all ages. I thoroughly enjoyed The Feminist Jam and would like to thank those who organized it and to those who participated. I would also like to encour-

age a sequel, if not a series, of such inspi-

rational conversation groups.
The Feminist Classroom: accepting a feminist space

megan munson

Imagine this: you walk into a history class on the first day of school expecting to be handed the syllabus and to play a few name games. After receiving a class outline, your male professor sits on his desk looking serious. "Class," he begins, "I think it's important that you understand the lens through which this class will be focused." He takes a measured breath before continuing. This will be a European-American, male-centered class. We will concentrate on the development and maintenance of the patriarchy so that you will be able to recognize and appreciate its structure in your daily lives. Because white men have been the only ones to make any significant contributions to the development of our democracy, we are going to overlook the influences of women, but we will touch on the influences of a few African-American and Native American men." You sigh and think that at least you know what you're getting into.

In the past 16 years of my career as a student, no teacher has willingly recognized (verbally or otherwise) the androcentric curriculum as outlined above, though the majority have subscribed to it. Then two weeks ago, on the first day of class, my literature professor addressed the power structure inherent in a graded course and promised to form the class within a feminist framework, I was incredibly impressed. But the few male students didn't come back. And the irony of their absence shocked me.

Did they feel uncomfortable in the space of feminist discourse? Like intruders? Or did they feel threatened? Though these questions are speculative, they bring up serious and disturbing issues, such as why women have been subjected to an utterly androcentric perspective for centuries, yet when we begin to claim our history and our voices we are met with silence by the men who must listen. Many women are understanding when classes with a feminist twist have low male enrollment or when men claim that they can't relate to a text because of its female voice. When literature classes study James Joyce, Henry David Thoreau, or Herman Melville, they do not focus on the "male experience" per say but address the "human (universal) experience." We are expected to understand. And we do. We have learned (been trained?) to assume the male perspective as our own so that we can enter the exclusive dialogue it has spawned. The result has been two-fold: on one hand, once we begin reading and discussing female-centered texts we have a more complete understanding of the dynamics at work, because we can relate to their counterpart. On the other hand, it is difficult to dismantle the patriarchal education we've received into usable parts and junk to be trashed. Men are told that labels such as "chick flicks" and "it's a woman's thing" are valid excuses for their ignorance.

What do we do then, as a young feminist generation, to bring men into the dialogue? Don't apologize. Encourage male friends, brothers, and fathers to enter the discourse. Understand that theirs may be discomfort-power is a painful privilege to relinquish. Continue the dialogue, getting ideas and words out into verbal space. Words like "feminist" do not deserve the negative connotations they've been given. In middle school I had a button on my book bag that said, "Feminism: the radical notion that women are people." Consider the implications. If this definition of feminism is accepted, then anyone regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, political affiliations, or sexual orientation can be welcomed into the feminist community.

Feminism is not a movement meant only to revise existing canons or to abuse men socially; there is no special group to belong to that dictates physical appearance or social subscriptions. There are, however, committed groups of people working to show the white patriarchal structure aside to create a space for women and men, people of all races, religions, cultures, and sexualities to appreciate and talk about the differences that exist without qualifying, blaming, or categorizing. Perhaps then the men would stay.

Why My Name Does Not Appear Under This Headline

Anonymous

Out. Such a little word, only three letters, but it stabs at me every time I hear it. Out. Out. Out. Because I'm not. I don't mean out to my mother, out to my grandparents, out to my coworkers. I mean out to anyone. And that word damn me every time I hear it because what it really says to me is, "You are not true to yourself. You are deceitful. You are so afraid of the unknown that you can't even live in honesty with the people that you call your friends, who are supposed to love you and accept you as you are, and so you hide yourself from any chance of real relationships with anyone at all."

My background, my upbringing, my family—all conspire against me, urging me one way or another to turn on myself, to stave off my desires, to always think twice when I start to care about someone in a platonic relationship, to find a nice boy and settle down in the suburbs to raise two children.

Why do I do it? Why do I listen to them? Why don't I just get over the facts that certainly everyone feels when they face this dilemma and confide in a few, one at least, trusted friends who would go with me through fire if I asked them? Why do I shrink back and bite my lip hard every time the temptation arises?

Because it is easier to be who people have come to expect me to be than to be true to myself. It's easier not to provoke questions, not to invite incredulous looks, not to ask for so great an amount of understanding from people who I'm not, after all, sure how much I do trust.

Because my mother would cry. Because my father would yell, before not speaking to me ever again.

Because my whole family would then whisper and talk and pray and shake their gray heads and look very solemn, and there I would still be, shivering, and no one offering to actually do anything about it, not even listen.

Because as much as Bryn Mawr is the safest place I know of to be gay and out, I still remember the story of the woman who came out in the College News, telling of how hard it was to be out and not be able to tell her parents, and someone anonymously mailed that article to her parents.

Because everything I've learned from the first day of my life adds up to this: It is wrong. You are wrong. You need serious help, and guess what? We have nothing to offer you except condemnation and ugly looks, because people like you don't belong with people like us. And even though my Christian friends tell me that God sees all sin the same, it all comes down a whole lot differently in real life when you have to come face to face with other human beings.

Because most of all, I didn't ask for this heavy burden and I don't want it. Because as politically incorrect as this sounds, I don't want to be gay. I don't want to admit that this fact is irrevocable, that I must come to terms with my attraction to women or be secluded to never never having a close, intimate, fulfilling relationship with anyone for the rest of my life. I don't want to give up the hope that I will get over this as soon as I leave Bryn Mawr, that I just need to meet the right person, the one that is just far enough away into a distant memory. And it is much harder to think that way, much harder for my memory to fade when it is shared with other people. So I am silent.

We have come a long way since Stonewall. Haven't we? Haven't we? My choice is plain. I either alienate everyone I love from myself or alienate myself from myself. Either way I live a life divided, with a heart torn in two. Please do not judge me too harshly.

[The editors of The College News extend their complete support to the women who wrote this essay; you have begun to find your voices.]
Raising Hell

But if it’s not working, you look around and think—do you think you trusted it? Do you think you’ve been lying to yourself, and worse yet, when you express dismay, that they’re disappointed that you’re not having fun and don’t understand why it bothers you so much. They don’t understand why you’re angry at them, and you’re upset by them.

Despite the supposed unifying force of Flower Day, I think Hell Week’s primary effect is to create divisions. Freshmen become separated from upperclassmen. Those who participate become separated from those who don’t participate, and that gets reinforced several times a day. (“Are you coming to copy schedules?” “No, I’m not participating.” “Are you coming to trials?” “No, I’m not participating.” “Are you coming to bedtime stories?” “No, I’m not participating in Hell Week.” “Who’s your Heller?”...). Eventually it becomes personal, and friendships get strained.

The divisions aren’t even all that clear. Because I began uncertain about but not adamantly against Hell Week, I found myself each moment of the day trying to decide whether I was participating at that moment or not, and then having to explain why, even though I went to trials, I didn’t think they were right; why, even though I was yelling, I wasn’t going to go to the dance. In addition, I felt guilty that the freshmen on my hall ended up hating Hell Week did so in part because of my influence, that had I said the package better, they might have had a good time. That is, I felt guilty until I realized that something that must be sold that carefully wasn’t have very much intrinsic good, so why should I have to participate in forcing a bum deal on people I like and care about?

Given the divisions that occur every year because of Hell Week, what should be done? The current approach seems to be to legislate the details—how many freshmen are intrinsically at odds with the Honor Code. Among the people I’ve spoken to, I’ve heard several suggestions. We could keep Hell Week but abolish the lie—say that Hell Week is as long as it really is, and throw a surprise party at the end. We could get rid of it entirely.

Yet Another

Hell Week Polemic...

by Heidi Dolamore

I’ve had a good night’s sleep and woken up of my own volition. There are flowers on my windowsill and sun is shrouding across my floor. Hell Week is over and everyone seems to have calmed down a bit, so why don’t I feel suddenly appeased? Because a school that I respected for its sense of community suddenly made me feel I had to prove myself in order to belong. Because a school that prides itself on tradition supports a ritualistic hazing with as much passion as Lasters Night or May Day. Because at one time or another, everyone has questioned some aspect of Hell Week, and yet the same freshmen who were made to feel uncomfortable begin to become the sophomores, juniors, and seniors who perpetuate it all.

Hell Week, as it currently exists, is not about getting to know more of the campus for a couple of days. It is about forcefully acknowledging your position in a hierarchy. It is about feeling inferior. It is a role of passage which ends with a consenting nod from above saying you are now one of us. But do all the party favors at the finish line really make up for how we are made to feel? Do we welcome them out of gratitude, or because we are pushed to such extremes that we demand for kindness like a starving man for food? The alternatives are few. Even if you choose not to participate, you are still engulfed in the transformation of Bryn Mawr College into one giant sorority. Everyone is woken at six o’clock on Friday morning, which if nothing else is a malicious violation of quiet hours. Classes are disrupted, and the school becomes a circus. Although I think everyone welcomes something to brighten an otherwise dingy February, is this the form we want it to take? Admittedly, some aspects of Hell Week are fun, and make you feel more a part of the community. But quickly it becomes everything we came to Bryn Mawr to avoid. Yes, all the time and effort put in by the upperclassmen—women cannot go unappreciated, but must we be made to feel so horrible for such a wonderful reason?
I have this weird feeling that The News prides itself on being a school newspaper, but in reality, it's just a place where kids who want to be published in a newspaper write about their lives. I'm not sure if it's because I'm not a part of that world, but I feel like I'm missing out on something. I've been trying to get more involved, but it seems like everyone has their own little circle and I don't fit in.

I want to be a part of something bigger, like a club or a team, but I don't know how to join one. I feel like I'm not good enough or smart enough to be a part of anything important. It's frustrating, and I feel like I'm missing out on all the fun.

I wish I had more friends, but I don't know how to make new ones. I feel like everyone else has their own little group, and I'm just on the outside looking in. It's lonely, and I wish there was someone who could understand how I feel.

I've tried to talk to some of the teachers, but they just brush me off and tell me to join clubs or things like that. It's not that simple, though. It's not just about joining a club; it's about finding somewhere I feel welcome and accepted.

I wish I could talk to someone who understood, but I don't know how to talk about it. I feel like I'm missing out on something important, and I don't know what to do about it.
Taking America to the Doctor

Liz Lincoln BMC '98

Last week was Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Yet being back in the Bryn Mawr community did not have a chance to celebrate the birthday of our great leader and his life, because we did not for us did not yet to stop and honor the Reverend. Unfortunately, too many of us prefer to pretend that this man and his cause, we remember the Doctor, thank God for all he did for race relations in our country, and move in with us. In our times, we forget that it is our duty to continue King's dream in the actions of our everyday lives.

I was able to attend a program at U. Penn in honor of Doctor King. It was sponsored by their Interfaith Council on Thursday, January eighteenth. Readings were given from works of many religion: the Buddhist Dhammapada, the Christian Bible, the Hindu Vedas, the Jewish Talmud, and others. Follow the readings, a student representing that tradition delivered a reflection on the reading. Each of these readings came from different religions across the world, but each of their messages were the same: we have a duty to love our fellow humans and to work together to do everything possible to achieve their visions.

I am not a strongly religious person. I go to church on Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving. Sundays when my boyfriends can talk me into it. But I could feel the spiritual meaning in all of what was being said. I feel very strong about the duty to free our country from what is wrong in our country today.

After the readings came the main part of the program. Reverend Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr. spoke. Dr. Forbes is a senior minister at Riverside Interfaith Church in New York City. He is also one of the most powerful speakers I have ever heard. An idea that has pulled me in was that he held my attention for the entire hour he spoke.

He talked about two main things in his address. The first was race. Dr. Forbes is the first Black senior minister of his church in this country. When he spoke he worked hard to make people's spirits from the evils of racism. He believes that the only way all races can co-exist is the realization that there is no race except the human race. "Race is a lie. Race is a dangerous lie. Race is an inhuman lie," he told us in his intense preaching voice. He says that whites need to be willing to give up their power and their assumptions that they are the superior race, and that blacks need to be willing to let go of their varying feelings that they have been cheated even if they have been, and we all need to start working on the one and live as one race of human beings.

Dr. Forbes also spoke about what is aliening our country. Forbes started college in a pre-med program, so he has a strong background in physiology. He referred to the United States as a human body and said that it is very diseased. The first metaphorical disease we are plagued with is heart disease. We are forgetting where we came from and how we got there. The officials in Washington are regarding the disease and are not duty to help the general public. Once upon a time someone helped them so they could be where they are, and it is time to pay back the favor. But they have become confused, disjointed, and forgetful. So have many other privileged people.

The second disease that ails this country is the dreaded HIV virus. At first, this seemed to be a ridiculous statement. But the more he elaborated, the more sense it made. He explained that the body has an immune system that heals it, just as every healthy country works to heal the social problems within. But if the body is overcome by an immune-deficiency disease, like HIV, it cannot heal itself. The United States, however, is not doing anything. Forbes, is not healing itself and is headed for certain destruction if things do not change. "AIDS," he reminded us, "is a deadly disease."

The last disease we are suffering from is addiction. "Do not mean the typical addiction we talk about," Dr. Forbes told us. "Do not mean crack, heroin, alcohol or nicotine. The addiction I am talking about is GREED." We are addicted to power and material things. We spend too much time working for selfish things to gain power over others and material wealth. Instead, we need to work to help people who do not have the means to help themselves.

I ask you, students of Bryn Mawr College, to help us cure our country of these diseases. It's no fun to be sick. We all know that. We have to learn to lose control of our brain, the ability, and the ambition. I like to think that Bryn Mawr Women are not addicted to greed (extremely expensive education making lots of money to get power and things). Take Dr. King's advice: Be big enough, and make them realities. As an individual, you have the power to make a difference in a few lives, but it is the power to make a difference in many lives.

And one provider takes reasonable actions to prevent the use of addicted materials, said provider is defended from being charged with knowingly allowing users to transmit prohibited content. Thus, especially for large companies, it is safest for them to initiate their own content, and even if the organization is not, it is safest from prosecution.

For years, the internet has been unique for its lack of regulation and lack of enforced borders. Anyone with a computer could log on and communicate with people from different states and different countries, limited only by the limits of technology. Restricted access sites were rare compared with the wealth of information openness available. The Communications Decency Act transforms (at least in the United States) one of the fastest media into one of the most restricted. Access providers will censor their users; users will not even know if someone wants to see an increased number of sites will ask for proof of ID and credit card numbers before allowing access.

The CDA was passed without public discussion, about a day after the committee that came up with the final version of the bill released it. Congress did not speak to internet experts about the technical issues.
ani draws grrls to the keswick

Rachel Solis

Wynona Lee Difrancesco played at the Keswick on Saturday, February 10, the crowd's first reaction, just as she walked out onto stage, was roaring from her psestressed seats and squished together right in front of the stage. They stacked the chairs that weren't bolted down. They shoved closer, turned on hidden tape recors, and laughed indisputably as she forgot some of the words to her first song. It seems to be Ani's rhythm to begin her shows nervously and hastily, making mistakes and telling disjointed stories. After a few songs, she gets warmed up, and after the intermission she has hit her stride, telling the crowd between songs that she loves her job and responding to a Bryn Mawr "Aniwaan" with Laverne and Shirley's "Schemied, Schlemied, innubable mumble" incorporated?

Practically half of Bryn Mawr attended the concert, pulling cars out of their asses, driving in groups of five or seven, getting lost, and arriving just early enough to wait in the ten-foot line in a psychological penance in the cafe next door to the Keswick. There were also several alumnae, students from other nearby colleges, high school students, and some other people—but mostly the crowd was young, a majority of women, and sporting hundreds of crewcuts and dyed heads. Before the show the Keswick's Fire and Thread, and if you found your seats and searched the dimly lit theater for friends.

At about eighty then Ani entered the stage with her drummer, Andy, and a new bassist, Sarah. She had a new haircut—this time purple braided extensions halfway down her back—and was decked out in a tank top and vinyl pants. Andy was his usual plaid self, occasionally amazing the audience by pulling solos and tunes from his drum set, but usually lying low and letting Ani keep attention focused on herself. Sarah seemed to try to stare unobtrusively, uncertain what her role was within the band. Throughout the con-

cert Ani shifted her attention between her guitar, the audience, and Andy and Sarah. She kept bringing into play into dialogue with one of the other musicians and then turning back to the audience to continue her lyrics.

She spoke often between songs, apologizing for laryngitis, telling a story about a Mexican bar she found in California, and commenting on the Woodstock movie. In introducing a new song (which will be on her new album, due out in May some time), she told about being interviewed and being told that her message was "in

voyeur" now, that this is the "era of the Angry Woman." She laughed dersively and then added that it was ironic, because this new album wasn't written by an ar-

gly woman, it was written by (skipping into Ani poetry-speak), "a shocked, side-

swiped, heart-broken, love-sick woman." Then she leaped right into an anguished lost-love song.

Ani's songs are difficult to describe, especially during a concert. Her energy built up between singer and crowd take over any conscious thought processes. I'm glad she is still singing to smaller crowds. (The Keswick, although it was packed, isn't a very large theater.) Most of her intensity comes from seeing her interac-

ting with her own songs, the expression of her face and her body and how it all relates to the sound she creates. When she is a tiny blob at the end of a huge auditorium, this impact is lost, and she's just another singer with a good sound and intelligent lyrics.

Throughout the concert I kept getting jerked into and out of the crowd emotion. Most of her songs I know by heart, and they were familiar enough that I could get lost in the sound without using the words. But her words themselves are such a com-

plex mix of politics, individualism, and emotion that I can never just take them as given.

She would sing about the importance of using your own voice, and all of a sudden it was painfully ironic to be another sar-

dine in the crowd, dancing in unison with everyone touching me. The next song would be intensely personal, and I'd have to stand still, listening to her voice. And throughout it all, her guitar kept surpris-

ing, and Andy and Sarah held the flow of music even when she began to lose it.

Throughout the concert, people clamped for "Both Hands" between songs, and throughout the concert, she refused to play it. For her second encore, by the second chord the audience recognized the song and screamed their approval. It wasn't her best performance of "Both Hands," since her voice was a bit strained, but most of the audience was along with her. In the middle of the song, the heard Debra Seltzer, a Bryn Mawr junior, har-

monizing in the front row, and said, "Nice harmony." Then she invited Debra to sing with her on stage. They harmonized for a few lines, and then Ani added back to let Debra sing the chorus by herself. After the song, Debra blushed at the lights and said, "Wow! I had a dream like this once." Ani hugged her, and she climbed back into the audience.

One more encore, and then the lights came up. The audience slowly scattered away from the theater and planned to regroup in diners and coffeehouses, where they would slowly come down off the concert high before heading home.

Cultural Crit with Honor

by Jenn Hogan


We live in a society of increasingly bi-

zarre social conventions, where the in-

sane and often the insane are the bill of fare on the clockwork New York. We are a society that creates celebrations of the Menemdero

Brothers and Amy Fisher, and where the porcine Joe or Jane Average cares more about the latest sensationalism on the Ricki Lake Show than the current American budget crisis. Then it seems fitting that Mark Leyner, author of such cult classics as E.T. Tu, Bebe and My Cousin, My Gastroen-

teritis (and should title his collection of ho-

morous pieces reflecting the pathetic state of the nation, Teeth Imprints on a Corn Dog. Mark Leyner, a columnist for Esquire and

George Magazine, has a warped and hilari-

ous commentary of such issues ranging from the current swirling single state of Princess Diana to the future of the Miss America pageant. Teeth Imprints on a Corn Dog can be described as social criticism of just plain hilarious.

Teeth Imprints on a Corn Dog is comprised of a series of vignettes, each mos-

surreal than the last. One vignette called "Young Serged Golfman Brownie" is a mortal's memory of the kind of Hannah"-

born classic, Young Goodman Brown, where a man descends for golf and furthers the depth of the exclusive Manhattan de-

partment store in search of a sequined Armani evening bag for his 17th month old daughter's haute couture Barbie and en-

counters, among other things, on the way to the gift den. One line is called "Swedes and Plaughleurs." This line of ready-to-wear men's apparel is manufactured by the former in a single season. In another piece in a response to Al Gore's challenge to show their competitiveness in a post-Cold Warorbit, Leyner reveals a bizarre plot involving extra-territorial working in cabotous with the Israeli government in a kind of weapon elimination project. The play ends predictably enough with Mark, the protagonist, being dragged off by Is-

raeli Mossad and then a semi-patriotic, semi-

Joycean reading of the Israeli experience in the Gaza Strip. Leyner's informal yet sophisticated style mocks itself in its own pretension. For

example, in another vignette, he describes a fictional time boiling up in a hotel room to expose "[t]he incessant free verse of the pets madus tradition of Arthur Rim-

bald, but imbued with the obsessional and the esoteric that roughed it in the 1970's", for the German publica-

tion, Der Gummihose, which he de-

scribes as "...the film directed by Mar-

n Stewart Living but with more nudity and

gritty crime."

This prose takes one through a hi-

larious maze of self-conscious pretension and endless flow of CKE words, fascinat-

ing advertising copy, and obscure medical terminologies (betraying Leyner's former vocations as a medical courier and an ad copy writer) to paint his bizarre word world view, including weird pop culture refer-

ences, and more inscrutable grunge band called "Chix with Dux."

Leyner also includes some blatant paro-

dies of modern life. In "Teeth Imprints on a Corn Dog. One vignette called "Oh Brother" is a parody of the Menemdero Brothers in which two brothers kill their parents with uzi, bazookas, and rocket launchers for treating them too well. Their defense was that their parents were so nice to them, so sure they that they would snap any minute from their pas-

sion for eating pasta. In another piece another called "Dangorous Deafies," Leyner gives advice on how to be a better with and is there is nothing you are not able. outedge. He gives suggestions such as "...and another is for all the women wishing to learn to shoot. Leyner is able to write about such topics the cruelness of a cruel passion as well. He is not above sounding contrived or misgiv-

nistic like some other sages like Tim Allen and Phil Hartman, in a sort of combination of a response to Al Gore's challenge to show their competitiveness in a post-Cold War orbit, Leyner reveals a bizarre plot involving extra-territorial working in cabotous with the Israeli government in a kind of weapon elimination project. The play ends predictably enough with Mark, the protagonist, being dragged off by Is-

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Joycean reading of the Israeli experience in the Gaza Strip. Leyner's informal yet sophisticated style mocks itself in its own pretension. For

Making Democracy Work

by Jenn Hogan

These days Americans see the future in a very technologically oriented way. People promote such ideas as tele-commu-

nuting and electronic town halls where eventually, we will be able to live out our entire lives without leaving our homes or having to interact with other people. While this fantasy future might look good to Bill Gates, many political theorists, including Jean Bokha Euler, the new book Making Democracy Work, who spoke at Bryn Mawr. Thow has argued that this view, believes that this lack of human interaction is leading to increasingly polarization between groups in the society. The American people are living in a buzzword in the political theory world (although new is relative since this idea was pioneered in the nineteenth century; French political commentator Alexis de Tocqueville)"is civil society. Thtory is that in the American has become so large that people can only interact with each other by participating in groups ranging from the family, to groups of general interest, such as groups like the Lions Clubs or the Knights of Columbus, church and syn-

agogue groups, and even bowling leagues. The idea is that these groups

allowed us to be more in touch with others in our society and allowed to have public space where dialogue could occur. Shulman points out that these groups, also helped us realize the real character of our neighborhoods or towns, without having to rely on our second-hand reports handed down in the media or listen to the frightened rhetoric of politicians. Shulman argues that as Americans are becoming less and less involved in group activities, they are more isolated into their own group identities such as black or gay or feminist or Muslim, and we don't try to understand other groups. Shulman goes as far as to say that Ameri-

cans no longer speak the same language. Each of these groups is a bubble, creating an atmosphere with no definitions and with no way to engage in discourse. Ellman and other modern theorists fear that the result of going in ever more closed circles is a kind of isolationism, a kind of engaging in dialogue, will only signal the death knell for democracy, for these groups do not engage in a common dialogue, submit to a common authority, and engage in a constant dialogue.

OK, you might ask yourself, what does this mean? On page 8.
by Kim Schultz

Sometimes, when my parents needed someone to watch their errant children for a long period of time, usually for hospital stays or occasionally for a weekend trip to Atlantic City, my mother would import her services from the town of Central Square, just outside Syracuse in the heart of New York. It was a six-hour drive from our home to theirs, and it just never occurred to me that Grandma and Grandpa Brown were driving a long way just to baby-sit us. It also never occurred to me that since Grandma and Grandpa Schultz lived twenty minutes from our house, it might have been more logical for them to baby-sit us.

I admit that, even as a child, the idea of Grandpa Schultz looking after us gave me the willies. Grandpa Schultz liked sitting. He liked sitting on the deck in his plastic recliner and sitting in front of the television in his light blue fuzzy recliner. Grandpa Schultz liked us being right, particularly of the ways of the viewing of television. An honest man, he did not pretend to listen to our stories about school and friends as some adults do, but just said, “Hey, get out of the way, there. You go sit on the couch.” It was from Grandpa Schultz that my father inherited the Schultz hearing: he is absolutely deaf when someone is trying to talk to him, especially if it’s something of the magnitude of, “We need to get off the interstate at this exit or we’ll end up in Canada.” Yet suddenly he’s the Six-Million Dollar Man when the television is on: “Goddammit, can’t you guys be quiet? I can hear your world! I can hear your sentances!”

After the inevitable spankings, my brother and I were given our first introduction to psychological sanctions for unacceptable cruelty; the quietly whispered explanation to us was that after raising his own six children and his first five grandchildren, Grandpa’s patience was exhausted. I used to picture Grandpa Schultz’s patience as a huge football quarterback turned cheek potato, sitting back with a cold Bud and muttering about the good old days.

Grandma Schultz was a different story; we understood why Mom and Dad never asked her to baby-sit, because she had previously watched us. Mom and Grandma Schultz have still have very different ideas about what constitutes a clean house. Although Grandma and Grandpa Brown would let us grab out all our toys and games when they visited, Grandma Schultz would begin putting our toys and games away so the house would be clean when my mother got home. My mother always called the Grandmothers the “Guidettes” as my mother was out of the house as much as the vacuum was there. Then she would sort us some ways for cleaning, a bucket of oil wood soap and a spray bottle of Windex, and tell us we were all going to clean the furniture. We didn’t mind this too much; it was like game, and Grandma and Grandma always brought some kind of treat for when the cleaning was finished.

In the end, I think it was Grandma Schultz’s treats which canceled her baby-sitting gig. To this day, I have no idea how my father and his brothers and sisters survived years of Grandma Schultz’s meals. She cooked dinner well; she put out cereals for breakfast, but lunch was always her blind spot. She knew that we loved Spaghettios, so she’d bring us a can to share for lunch, and she knew that I liked raisin bread, so she’d bring a big kaiser dill from John’s Deli in town, and she knew that we loved chocolate, so she’d bring a bag of Hershey’s kisses. However, she would present all these treats at the same time, and usually as a lunchtime meal with a glass of milk on the side.

I don’t know if you’ve ever tried having a milk-dygas-nerines-dill pickle-chocolate lunch, but at least I can advise you against it, because every time I had this concoction for lunch, I threw up, usually in the same place, three feet from the bathroom door. Although people say that mothers become doctors, my mother, after watching body products after a few weeks with their first child, they have not met Grandma Schultz. Anything which violated the purity of her freshly-vacuumed hallway was obviously in alliance with Satan himself; she attacked that vomit like it was the AntiChrist itself, asking for God’s divine intervention all the while. I learned more about the prophecies of the Apocalypse by vomiting around Grandma Schultz than I ever learned in Sunday School. My parents would come home to see my brother and me solemnly sitting on the couch. “Where’s Grandma?” they’d ask.

Hugging myummy and tripping flat out, I’d head for the valley of shadow, cleaning up quick.

Dear Ms. Hank,

I have this bad habit of comparing everyone in my life to “Dykes to Watch Out For.” I really have my best friend is Mof! What should I do? Obsessed

Dear Ms. Hank,

I have a crush on this cute girl since last semester, and finally, at the Flower Day Dance, we kissed. Then I realize we were both really drunk, and I don’t know if she meant it, and now I’m embarrassed to even look her, much less talk to her. Crushed and Confused

Dear Drunk,

Life’s tough, but it’s even tougher, for us. So start a fund to raise money for a new computer and buy all the latest from the College News, and you’ll feel much better.

Death to the Patriarchy!

Grandma

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