1996

The College News 1996-3-5 Vol. 18 No.6

Students of Bryn Mawr College


Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: http://repository.brynmawr.edu/bmc_collegenews

Citation


http://repository.brynmawr.edu/bmc_collegenews/1489

This paper is posted at Scholarship, Research, and Creative Work at Bryn Mawr College. http://repository.brynmawr.edu/bmc_collegenews/1489

For more information, please contact repository@brynmawr.edu.
FIGHT THE POWER WOMYN!!!

Our efforts were disipinted, somehow, we were failing to grasp the big picture. Instead of feeling confident in the feminist future, I felt alarmed at the inadequacies of “the moment.”

One of the workshops, “Framing the Debate for Feminism,” highlighted the absence of a unified and realistic vision. Half of the panelists were from pro-choice organizations and focused their remarks around the abortion debate. I kept flipping through the program booklet—had I missed a pro-choice for feminism? One speaker envisioned strategies to defeat attacks on abortion in a way that would make the army proud.

There was a speaker from a Latina health organization who stood up and reminded the audience that women are not only victims but an entire body, that women’s health and does not stop at abortion but includes her whole being, her mental health, and the quality of the environment around her. When the speaker finished and sat back down next to the woman from the pro-choice organization. I can’t remember if they even looked at each other.

What would they say anyway? Their remarks were almost in complete contradiction of one another. While the Latina speaker did support abortion rights, she had just called on the women in the room to move beyond their narrow scope of activism to address the many issues important to women. This workshop didn’t provide vision, only revealed our inability to talk to each other.

Thankfully, my Latina sister also dared to comment on the homogeneous composition of conference attendees. The organizers of Expo ’96 chose to go mainstream and hope that diversity would be embraced on the web. Maybe this was their chance to prove that feminism today is inclusive. The rhetoric of diversity oozed out of people’s mouths. In truth, however, at Expo ’96 women of color, poor women, and lesbians were near invisible. Not a single workshop and only a few speakers specifically addressed issues unique to their perspectives.

To me it appears that the straight middle class white feminists who dominate the movement must ask themselves two very important questions: (1) why do they single desire and seek diversity in their organization and environment aside from a politically correct understanding that it is “right” and (2) how might the “mainstream” agenda fail to reflect what is important in the lives of the very women that they wish to attract? These questions are not easy to answer. Yet it is my feeling that the answer will lead to a much more holistic movement, that not only cares for the well-being of the entire women, but also listens to the diverse needs of many different women.

Sometimes concern arises over what constitutes being a feminist, and what should be left for others as a race or class.

---

by Emily Hughes

Expo ’96, February 2-4 in Washington D.C. was to be the feminist gathering of the year, a time to envision a feminist future and rally together in the face of conservative attacks on women. Frankly, all I expected was a feminist feel-good event, a well-organized core where we would congratulate ourselves on our activities, and a couple Feminist Activism 101 workshops.

Expo ’96 was a much more complex conference than I had anticipated. I was impressed by the organization, materials, and facilities. The energy of 3,000 women gathered to create change pulsed through the building.

Yet gradually, I began to feel as if all

MULTICULTURALISM AND LITERATURE: A RESPONSE

by Kathryn Kingbury

The publication in the Bi-College News a couple of weeks back of “Education Slain at Hand of Multiculturalism” by Sara Greenstein gave me, and I’m sure many others in the bi-co community, a chance to discuss and reassert what it is we value in literature and education. Greenstein argued that the multicultural curriculum of her Freshman Writing class at Harvard ignored the Western literary canon in favor of works “by lesser known authors” that “were shallow and, more importantly, represented one (liberal) political point of view.” We were no longer learning an array of literary perspectives chosen by merit.” She also argues that “multicultural authors often refuse to build on Western authors’ theories and ideas,” and that it is important to read Western works both.

Greenstein, however, fails to clearly define in her article how one is to judge literary merit, though she does offer a few criteria: a work has merit, states Greenstein, if it contains “timeless literary and ideological perspectives” and if it “stands the test of time and become(s) classic.”

Greenstein’s first statement is problematic. She claims that “in a literature class, diversity is essential, but the diversity should be embodied in a wide range of timeless literary and ideological perspectives;” but what, exactly, does she mean by “timeless?” I ask the question because the first thing I was taught by my political (and socially conservative) twelfth-grade English teacher was that the works of Shakespeare, Euclid, and John Donne—indeed, of any author—are not timeless; I.e., they cannot be well

---

FIGHT THE POWER WOMYN!!!

---

by Ellen Herr and Sarah Wakefield

Traditions Mistresses

As usual, the College News has featured a variety of articles asking for changes in or the abolition of Hell Week. We, as the Traditions Mistresses, feel obligated to reply to a few of the complaints aired.

One writer compared Hell Week to other Traditions, like Lantern Night, and said that Hell Week singles out fresh and subjects them to embarrassing behavior. Gee, for Lantern Night, fresh are asked to come to several rehearsals so they can perform a song in front of many people, to wear funny-looking robes, and to receive lanterns in a color which distinguishes them from everyone else. Sound divisive to anyone? Sound vaguely like a Hell Week performance in Ermdan? Everyone is so concerned about division in the community, why don’t we just dump everything that differentiates between the classes? Have one color for lanterns, abolish the Senior Steps, let everyone yell the college cheer, and put an end to all those different Maypoles.

That would be truly egalitarian. It wouldn’t be much fun, either.

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

CROSSTRACTIONS ARE A RESPONSE TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND INTELLIGENCE.

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996

---

by BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

March 5, 1996
A Mother Responds to Anonymous

To the College News Editors:
As I read the article "Why My Name Does Not Appear Under This Handline" in your February 13th issue, I was brought to tears by the young woman's plight and felt that I was unable to respond in any way. I don't know if you have any way of getting in touch with her...please do so.

I am not Anonymous. Your letter in The College News touched me deeply and I wanted to write you and express some of my thoughts. I am writing as a middle-aged, Catholic, heterosexual wife and mother and as the mother of a gay son. My son came out to my husband and I a few years ago and I'd like to share with you some of my thoughts in light of these events.
First of all, I'd like you to know that I am praying for you to become comfortable with the fact that you are a gay man and there is absolutely nothing wrong in the world with that.
There is nothing wrong with being homosexual—that is just the way that God, or genie, or something made you and even if it may not be as usual in society it is just as real and normal and good. Second, please don't blame yourself in any way for the space and trepidation you have about coming out. The problem is not you—the problem is a homophobic society. Anyone one of us as a finite amount of strength and energy with which to face the world.
Sometimes some things have to be put on the "brace face" while we deal with other things. That doesn't mean that you are a coward or dishonest, just human. I know that my son has come to terms with his sexual orientation in a way that amazes me for it's maturity and wisdom, but there are other areas of his life that he is not dealing with at all or in any area near as mature a manner. This seems to me to be totally normal and the natural consequence of all of the things that need to be managed in all of our lives. You can take in your letter of not wanting to ask for so great an amount of understanding from people. Two responses that I heard after my son started to come out to people may help. My best friend's response was "I'm surprised but he is still the very same person he has always been." She is totally right. My son is still has all of the wonderful qualities that he has always had and the same traits that drive me crazy as well. My son's best friend is a young woman who is very conservative—politically, socially, religiously, personally. Her response to me after he told her was, "Yesterday I would have said that gay was immoral and horrible, but then when I realized that someone I love is gay I had to keep saying how very wrong I would be to keep that view about any gay." You said that your father would cry. She might but that is okay. By the time our son came out to my husband and I, we had suspected it for quite a while. Many years before when my husband and I first started to share with each other our fears, I did cry. I think that I cried mostly because like every other parent I had certain dreams and aspirations for my children and they did not include having him live a life that would put him on the outside of society.
I was terrified that his life could be in danger from homophobic hate; that he would be treated with disdain, disliked, or putty by some people, that he would not have all of the freedoms of choice I thought he would have were he straight, and frankly I was sorry that he would never father children with his partner but with a great father. Some of these things still worry me; other things have either gone away or I learned to deal with because I have done much reading on what it means to be gay in this society, because I have found that by trying to make this world a more accepting one for anyone who does not fit the narrow molds that we think people ought to fit that my son and his friends were dried up, however, when he came out and we could talk honestly and reasonably about how difficult it was to come out to you and give yourself the parents the same gift of time to deal with their own feelings that we have something to share. We don't know what, if any, religious affiliation you have but the way I have come to know ours and others, I believe that she would in any way disapprove of any love that is positive, joyous, and other-oriented. We would be too relieved to have enough of that kind of love in this world—we can't afford to turn away from love in any way. And I think that your son's life will not necessarily be as trouble-free as my son with his effortless acceptance. I do know that my son's life will not necessarily be as trouble-free as my son with his effortless acceptance. I do hope that your son finds some of his progress is being made and I believe that the heterosexual world will see that homosexuals are normal people leading normal lives and this will hopefully make the prejudice harder to maintain. You might want to contact the local chapter of F-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays). They are some wonderful people there who might be able to offer you some insight or to help your parents if you choose to come out to them...what I really just wanted to say to you is that I don't judge you harshly and I hope and pray that you will find a way not to judge yourself too much and to be at one with yourself. If you ever feel the need to talk to someone there is someone with me who just may be able to help you. I'd be happy to hear from you and if positive thoughts and caring help at all, I'd also be pleased that my husband and I are both keeping you in our thoughts and prayers. You are cared about.

Anonymous, If you would like to be in contact with the woman who wrote this letter, address an envelope to Megan Hugon, Box 0-MAB, with handwritten back or instructions on how to return the info.)

Hell Week Rocks!

To the College News:
Upon reading the latest College News and finding it full of only negative articles on Hell Week, I became very concerned. I realized that not everyone enjoys Hell Week experience and that it can actually give a negative twist to Bryn Mawr, but I also saw within the intent truly is that and that February could use something unusual to spice it up.
As a fresh of, countryside, I was not unsure about what to expect from Hell Week. But, even though I knew it might be silly or even sometimes frustrating, I went looking for a way to give a try and also remember that my participation was optional. So I went into the week ready to experience the odd and actually looking forward to meeting new people through Hell Week activities.

At first, I was shocked by the excitement of the upper-classmen, afraid that it might be something that was stopping them from wanting to do so in their desire to torture me and my friends. But, even though I was embarrassed to watch and appreciate the thought of school work, I felt a closer bond to freshmen and my own Heller. We would sway through Hell, with music, noise and excitement. My co-Heller, my Heller, and I actually spent the day together, not feeling too bad last night's experience, our work, what this year was like, and just getting to know each other better. I don't feel overloaded with continued on page 3

The College News does not accept any advertising. Free announcements from or for the community are welcome.

The next deadline in Friday, March 13 at Midnight. Letters and articles should be sent to our mailbox (C-1716), or placed outside our DESIGN, office (C-704). All submissions will be treated as MAC Does not ask hard copy. They will be returned via campus mail. All opinions expressed in articles or letters are not necessarily the opinions of the editors or the College News. All reviews are the opinions of the writers. The content of these reviews may differ from those of the editorial board; all pictures are the work of the artist, and do not necessarily represent the views of the College News. The content of these reviews may differ from those of the editorial board. All pictures are the work of the artist, and do not necessarily represent the views of the College News. The content of these reviews may differ from those of the editorial board; all pictures are the work of the artist, and do not necessarily represent the views of the College News.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The College News is a feminist, surreal journal which serves as a source of information and entertainment for its readers. It is produced by members of the community. Recognizing that feminism is a collective process, we attempt to explore issues of ethics, aesthetics, and politics as they affect lives of women of this world both as members 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.

Editors
Heather Barton, x5345
Jennifer Hogan, x5861

Co-News Editors
Elizabeth Hill
Megan Munson

Arts & Entertainment
Hendi Delamore

Graphic Editors
Rachel Solomon
Reka Prasad
Maria Barbo

Editorial Board
Bela August Walton, Kim Schult, Kathryn Kingsbury, Kari Goggin, Eliza Lysaght, Stacy Carwood, Beth Howzec, Rachel Shahin, Reka Prasad, Julia Alexander
Traditions

continued from page 1

study time for exams should have approached her Heller, her Sympatric Junior. I was surprised that no one seemed to notice. Anyone who worried about lizards was told, if she bothered to ask, that she would have to take a small pill under her door. We got only one phone call regarding Hell Week problems.

Friday—Their—everyone is weacted at six o’clock Friday on her facts exact. In the May, by example, my morning music started at around 7:45 a.m.; this did not mean that people got out of bed. Many were still up until one a.m. in winter, from dorm to dorm. Everything, in fact, varied from dorm to dorm (all three articles in the Feb 13 issue, it should be noted, were written by Rock residents). Were some fresh unappreciable? Probably. As nice as 100% satisfaction would be, that’s not a likely scenario. It’s not likely for Parade Night, Lantern Night, May Day, or life in general.

We’re at loss. We did what we could, and so did the sophs we. We would refrain from getting and energy to work out the problems people still see in Hell Week rather than abolish it. Getting rid of all objections is not something to be taken lightly.

All we really would like to say is that we cannot make women have fun, no matter how hard we try. We can only ask women to give this tradition a try, and then to speak to the individual. Hell Week is an optional, community-building, female bonding event. It is a rite of initiation. That’s how we see it, and we welcome your constructive comments about Hell Week.

A History of Hell Week in 3\(\frac{1}{2}\) chapters

by Julia Alexander

Well, there’s something to be said for slacking off. I had been going to write this article for the last issue of the News (which was supposed to come out the Tuesday after Hell Week, but was delayed due to mechanical problems). This would have been the third, since it can now serve as a frame for the current debate over the status of Hell Week. So here goes...

As a history major, I have been interested not only in the discussions about Hell Week itself, but also in the way that Hell Week was viewed in the past. Several years ago, I went into the miming room, where anyone had complained about Hell Week before I was a sophomore, from the heated debate at Parnassus over abolishing Hell

Hell Week Rocks

continued from page 2

reasure to perform or complete activities. All the things that I did were suggestions, but also a part of we answered to do them. During those days, I learned that I did have a choice about my autonomy and enjoyed knowing that slight unemployment was something I should not fear. I did those things so that I could say to myself, “I did something silly. I don’t regret behaving silly sometimes. And I am comfortable enough with myself to not worry about whether other people think I am silly.”

Hell Week this happened both my fresh and sophomore years—93 and 94 didn’t seem like something the Bryn Mawr community would sustain more than once. It was true.

Hell Week has existed in various forms since the early part of this century, and debates have raged and dissipated over it ever since. I don’t think that Hell Week increases in intensity until it gets badly out of hand. At that point, we can return to the normal forms of Hell Week. We can see that Hell Week that major reforms are made that will make the experience less miserable for everyone. People will make the experiences feel better about their roles in the tradition (since most of the protests seem to have begun with sophomores, not freshmen). It remains at this stage for a year or two, and then people get frustrated with the way that the tradition has been “watered down” and the cycle begins again.

Until fairly recently, Hell Week varied according to the dorm in which it was held, so that freshmen could have something from no Hell Week at all to a full week of hazing and harassment. Although this would be easiest to contribute to the time when everyone was sure of living in the same dorm all four years (and often in the same room), the variable forms of Hell Week may change after Room Draw has been established. We still have some variation, but the high points of scheduling come from the dorm, confinement, bedtimes stories, and calisthenics are common to all dorms, as is the threat of the Duck Pond run and potato lectures.

This history of hell week will be continued to later issues.

One of the reasons I had a great experience was because my Heller was excited about getting to know and building a new friendship. She was very sympathetic to me that college constantly asked me if felt comfortable with the tasks she asked me to do. I believe that her enthusiasm helped me to remember that Hell Week was meant as a bonding experience, in which we can understand each other and show each other without actually feeling completely comfortable. Although I can see where people are upset about privacy being broken, the expectations of fresh being ordered around, and other worries, I think that Hell Week is not meant to belittle, intimidate, or erase last semester’s work.

Friday, was a blast. Most of the people I knew got just really excited with the tasks they had to do, like setting the table nicely for their Heller or writing a poem for their Heller. Putting together a creative costume was fun, and showing off the costume I had put together was one of the most enjoyable parts of Hell Week. The anti-Hell Week articles claimed. And we were willing to do more just than the small tasks we did for our Hellers. I was looking forward to some of the more exciting tasks planned for later in the year.

I feel sad that no everybody had the thrilling experience I did. We really grew to respect and enjoy each other. I feel like a real pressure cooker, and sometimes typing my favorite things about Bryn Mawr, and Flower Day is the best thing about it.

Chillin' in Hell

by Erica A. Dale

I really want to express my concerns regarding this week’s conversation about the Hell Week “controversy.” It seems ludicrous to me that our newspaper would run so many opinion articles with no opposing viewpoints. These few people have managed to denigrate severely an experience that was wonderful for me, and I’m sure for many others.

I feel for the freshmen who were pressured by upperclassmen to participate in the tradition, but I believe that their lack of self-control could be in any way changed by altering Hell Week. It’s true, it’s true that not everyone participate in that some of us was obligated to participate in Hell Week activities. As for the idea that the tradition has to pressure fresh—obviously they were wrong, but the best way to deal with such people is to ignore them. Life will not always be perfect, even at Bryn Mawr, and there are people who will not always behave in the spirit of the Honor Code. Those Mawsters who don’t wish to participate in Hell Week can hold to the strength of their convictions without doing away with this tradition.

The reason for Hell Week is obvious—it makes a family of us all. Just think of the thousands of women who have kept this secret for years. What holds them? Their loyalty. The bond we felt, the bond we had. That’s what it means to be a Mawster. And now we have the chance to be a part of it.

This centerspeak has proven to me how isolated we all become here. I do sympathize with Mawsters who, for whatever reason, did not enjoy Hell Week, but my advice to those who would completely destroy the tradition is—relax a little. There are more important things to worry about in our world.

[Editors' note: The College Board is an equal opportunity employer, and we welcome a diverse perspective and print the articles as received. While, as is too often the case, no articles were submitted for the last issue in favor of Hell Week, such none were printed.]
A Look at Multiculturalism in Education

by Kara Goggin

In high school I had a class called World Literature which was quite exciting because I was able to learn about the classic and downplayed questions that relate to many of the works of Central European literature. I've always been interested in the culture and in other cultures that have developed within the country of her home country. The teacher of world literature included Greek mythology, a few Latin American and Chinese authors, Hermann Hesse, and Dostoevsky. There is certainly nothing wrong with not knowing the authors and many of the works of this genre and have interesting things to say. The problem arises when a class is devoted exclusively to an author largely with no knowledge of the experience of white European men. Again, these are certainly worthwhile subjects for study but I think that the purpose of school has taken a turn for the worse.

Multiculturalism and literature

continued from page 1

wouldn't have understood why Machet's desire for more power is, in Shakespeare's view, intrinsically wrong. They wouldn't have understood why Hamlet's life goes down the tubes when, once he's properly grounded, he should have understood his fault. In addition, he was required to take two years of philosophy courses, and it was an absolute class that was so intellectually stimulating. The history, literature, religion and philosophy courses offered at both of my schools were completely different from the experience of white European men. Again, these are certainly worthwhile subjects for study but I think that the purpose of school has taken a turn for the worse.

Shakespeare's work is not time. It was written in a certain place, in a certain time period, and must be understood from that perspective. With a definition that says Good literature is literature that is timeless, Greeneinstein excludes the works she makes inaccessible to students.

Greeneinstein's second claim—that works with merit are those that "stand the test of time"—is even more intrinsically problematic. Not only does it lack internal contradiction, it also allows for an absolute judgment and would be included in the canon, as long as they have been around for a while. (Greeneinstein does not specify the amount of time it takes for a work to become classic, but one assumes she has a specific length in mind.) If I liked the ending, she argued, students in Freshman Writing might study not only Shakespeare and Genesis, but also Native American, Russian, Vietnamese epics, the Qur'an and the Tao Te Ching.

Greeneinstein goes on to argue that "other cultures were not necessarily as progressive in literature or other matters as the Western ones. Chinese labor camps as an example of non-Western barbarity, and, presumably, the reader is to understand that this is the norm in one area of Chinese government/culture precludes progressive institutions. In this sense, Greeneinstein's view is much more literate tradition than most of the Western cultures do. Chinese literature is a single, overarching body of literature rather than a collection of diverse cultures."

Another claim that Greeneinstein applies to non-Western cultures is that of the Western university of academic study. Western societies have, in practice, been remarkably unprogressive. For example, slavery was legal in the United States until only a century and a quarter ago, and Japanese-Americans were sent to "internment" camps during World War II. African-Americans were legally prevented from registering to vote only three decades back. But I do believe that Western literature should be included; many Western works have been certainly more progressive than the society of which they came from, even though they can't teach us fascinating things about Western culture. Finally, I take issue with Greeneinstein's assumption that, because non-Western works often address similar issues as Western works, non-Western authors take their ideas directly from Western authors. Of Rigoberta Menchu, a Guatemalan Indian woman who fought for human rights and won the Nobel Peace Prize, Greeneinstein says: "Her views are adopted from Marx and other Western philosophers." While Menchu's awareness of Western politics may have influenced the way she articulated her ideas in a book written, in large part, for a Western audience, she did not "adopt" wholesale her views from anyone. Rather, her views developed in response to painful denial of her and her community's basic human rights by the Guatemalan government. The fact that she shares some political views with Marx and other Westerners merely an indication that both she and those Westerners have grappled with issues of oppression from the various points of the oppressed. In this sense, reading Marx may help one to understand Menchu, but only insofar as reading Menchu would help one to understand Marx.

The underlying question in Greeneinstein's essay which unfortunately never surfaces and which is never clearly answered is this: Which is the more important factor when a person considers whether a piece of literature is good or not—that it has without the time, or that it reflects values and cultures that are similar to our own? To which person? To that which I would add: How does the handling of these criteria effect notions of merit?

Making Creative Space at BMC by Anitra Senes

Do you ever feel just the need to jump in a big muddy puddle? To make mud out of leaves and rocks and poisonous ivy and water and dirt and leaves? Do you ever do this with your best friend? Have you ever been in a butterfly garden or order a root beer float just for the hell of it? They don't teach you that in school. They don't even teach you how to be. We have to learn that on our own. But everyone needs to feel free to do this before they can understand what this group is for. I gotta follow my bliss and I know I can't do it alone. We're so happy with creativity and imagination. We can feel that sense of myself; perhaps it's pride, but it's real SATISFACTION, like when you taste the cheese sticks and mozzarella sauce...

Do you see? Even just the creation of a group nurtures that empty part of myself. I'm sure that if you do, keep it up! If not, come join us every Friday evening from 7-8 p.m. in the Denhag back smoker. We'll each be working on an individual project which we'll share with one another, gaining strength and courage.

We're also planning on taking field trips to art museums and art centers, or just taking walks or bike rides. We'll start or creating children's stories and skills or writing love letters to ourselves or other groups. We do things that we've never done before and... the list never seems to end. Basically, you get the idea. These things are important tool for getting in touch with things we envision ourselves doing if we don't learn to love ourselves.
Multiculturalism: Musings on Free Speech in the Bi-CO Community

by Leah Coffin

The other day, a freshman on my hall remarked that she had observed that whenever someone voice, in class or in public, a potentially controversial opinion, that person would often as not come under attack by her fellow students. Her statement made me seriously rethink and re-examine my views on how tolerant we should be in the Bi-CO community. Is that a conclusion that opens the Bi-CO community? Is it all the tolerance, liberalism and openness we are willing to listen to? Is that a situation that demands feedback for this claim, that we are acting under and succumb to the use of thoughtless statements and personal attacks. Not disagreements, not controversies. All-out, no-holds-barred attacks. An opposing viewpoint strips down people's minds and opens their mouths. I know that this happens regularly in the real world, and I accept it. What shocked me was to find it in the community I now find myself immersed for four years of my life. As a person who has always been labeled as the class troublemaker, the one who never shut up and always had something to say, I have become used to being looked at for my viewpoints, as well as for expressing them in the first place. Teachers have had to ask me not to answer, or to answer in such a way that others could have a chance to speak. Men and women alike have treated me like I had a social disease for daring to speak out. Having to endure such treatment throughout high school was a key factor in my decision to attend a woman's college. Here, for once, I could finally get respect in the classroom and the opportunity to express my opinions without fear of dismissal, ridicule or worse—attack.

Having been in situations where only men spoke out while women remained silent, I assumed that, given the opportunity, women would speak out more in class without men present. Instead, I found that once the men were gone, not many women spoke out at all. The professor's scarily correct of "Are there any questions?" would be met each time with a stony silence, and the question would begin to sound more and more like a plea. People seemed to be more comfortable for fear of being thought "wrong". Surely, even if others did disagree with their opinions, at least they would be an internal debate in a neutral, objective, non-threatening environment.

I soon found out why people spoke out so little in class: not for fear of being wrong: corrected by the professor, but rather for fear of being under attack by the other students. This is, of course, less true of those who are immersed in discussions based on controversies. Nevertheless, the problem exists, both in and out of the classroom, and must be addressed.

In a class that I took last semester, the question of whether or not objectivity is possible, or even desirable, was brought up from time to time. Although I feel that a certain amount of subjective, personal opinion is an essential component of any argument, it can be carried too far. "Too far" is when people bring their personal and emotional issues into the classroom and use them as the basis for their arguments. The first problem with this approach is that it is effectively dispenses with the even the slightest pretense of, or effort towards, objectivity. Secondly, any calling into question of those "personal" opinions constitutes a personal attack. Call me an idealist, but somehow I thought that college students were above this high-school level of discourse.

Thus, you can imagine my shock when once, having expressed an opinion in class that had been considered controversial for a number of reasons, I was attacked. No effort was made to address my opinions on their own terms, or to attempt to maintain a certain level of mutual respect and decorum. Rather, I was attacked by about five people at once, all of them seemingly shouting out examples that they felt contradicted my argument. The level of tension in the room rose considerably. It was an ugly scene. I don't want to go into the further details of what happened, nor do I want to get bogged down in discussing what the actual argument was about, as I feel that this is neither relevant nor of general interest. But as long as we're getting personal, I want to make a point to this community.

When you respond to someone else's argument in an emotionally charged, confrontational, subjective manner, you automatically polarize the situation. It is no longer the individual opinions, but rather the individuals themselves, who are in conflict. You have the right to disagree with someone's opinion, even if you disagree strongly. You do not have the right to attack them personally. You can, of course, and no one can stop you. But when you do, you are dispensing with the ideas of mutual respect and tolerance that are the basis for the Honor Code that we all hold so dear. You are transforming a dispute over opinions into an attack on someone else's right to have them. And most importantly, when you make a personal attack, a person, and not an idea, you are destroying the firepower.

This is not just a problem in the classroom. I have seen people write opinions on comment boards, only to have more others (often completely) blast them for daring to speak out in contradiction to their own opinions. I have seen articles in newspapers and on comment boards, inside classrooms and outside of them. This is not a problem that lasts for the month, until someone has the temerity to contradict the general consensus of our opinions. It seems like there have otherwise been a serious intellectual discussion degenerates into so much verbal abuse.

Ilan Greenstein has a right to his opinion. Others have a right to disagree with him. It's time, I believe, to question the validity of your arguments. I think we are all agreed on this. However, as members of a community, we cannot allow for mutual respect, people owe it to the community and to her to back up their opinions with careful arguments. The contrary, not with attacks on her intelligence and character and with пароди лimerick. Otherwise, we are being unfair to her, to ourselves, and to our community and its institutions.

Having read about my own experience with having my opinions come under fire, you may feel that I am projecting too much of my own opinions onto a person about Ilana's article. Also, by not focusing on the article's content, I may come across as one of those people that believes in "politics". But if we dismiss what was said as mere verbal sewage and its author as a mindless, raging bigot, then we, in fact, are missing a very important issue: freedom of speech. We claim to hold freedom of speech as one of the most important values in our community, in the country and in the world as a whole. Why is it that if someone cannot express an opinion without fear of retaliation, then the members of this community fail to respect the very freedom that we hold so dear?

One of the most troublesome things about freedom of speech is that if you claim it only for opinions that you agree with. We must behave like mature adults and not twelfth-graders, and respect others and their arguments as we would like them to treat us and ours. To paraphrase Hunter Thompson, we must not pile what others say as rubbish, but we must defend to the death their right to say it. And as long as we're getting personal, that's our own personal belief.
We're all Out... of Labels

by Amy Karen

I have mixed emotions even sitting down to write this article. I am trying to communicate the last two and a half years of coming out to myself and to others. I am trying to contemplate something I have still to make sense of myself. What does it mean, to translate a thing that is central to being, which you have known for years but kept silent about, into an exterior identity, a word that suddenly dominates who you are when people look at you? What does it mean to become comfortable with this, to incorporate yourself this new-ish facet of your identity? I have only begun to ask these questions and think I will be a lifetime in answering them. For now, I can say that for me, coming out is no longer primarily about telling people what I am. Instead it is about living these questions, which are only a part of larger questions that my life is about.

I think it means to be out at Bryn Mawr. I did not come out for the first time here, but I have been coming out, starting first conversations and phone calls, those anguished letters and journal entries, that form this community. I came to Bryn Mawr having been generally out for about a year, yet I had only one or two close non-straight friends. For that reason I hoped very much to find what I roughly defined as a gay community here. In the first weeks I was thrilled to receive cute buttons and buttons, to occasionally see women holding hands. The feeling of not being out and alone was still so new to me.

The point is I am a great deal more than what I look like. Women have been fighting their imprisonment in their image for a very long time and still continue to do so. We began feeling sorry for women, we have learned that our identifying features are what our superficial image and not what is inside our body. Women go to painstaking measures to fulfill the expectations society has formed in the past. We still have to worry about fitting in with these limitations and endure the pressure of the media and society in general to do so. Yet more and more, the ideas and minds of women are being explored and recognized as valid and vital to the world community.

I do not find pressure to be a typical女孩子 problem (whatever that is), so I do not find myself rejected from the feminine chains that society often wraps around women. I am not seen as a woman, but rather as a person. I do not typify this icon with my wheelchair. But I also feel separated from a group of people that I feel a part of, one that can't lose. And even though women in general are being discovered and appreciated, disabled people are not. It is good not to be encumbered by the stereotypes women have to deal with, yet women are more easily recognized as free-thinking and intelligent human beings than people with disabilities. As a disabled person/wheelchair user, I am doubly, talked down to in public, and sometimes humiliated by the way in which disabled people are referred to.

by Reka Prasad

Haverwomen:

by Leah Coffin

As I was passing through the Campus Center the other day, I noticed a poster on a bulletin board for theHaverwomen. These "Haverwomen" appeared to be in the particular class, I couldn't say whether they were just saying dumb things or asking dumb questions. The back of the poster featured a glum looking face that said "I am one of these!"

I must admit that I often have a hard time identifying myself as a person with a disability. It's just that I am. I don't think of myself in that way because my thoughts and ambitions mean more to me than what I cannot physically accomplish. I meet the special needs, but so does everybody else for particular parts of their life. At times I find myself a small group asked questions, not "Why are you here?" but "Why are you here?" or "Why are you here?" That's what it means, to become a label.

Look Ma! Is that a wheelchair?

by Kelly Mack

Sometimes it is difficult for me to understand how people perceive me because it is so utterly different from the way in which I perceive myself. When I look in the mirror, I see a small, brown-haired, blue-eyed, thin person. I don't think she might have a potential to be a doctor, or a psychologist, or maybe even a neurosurgeon. But that is all until the moment when she notices the first impression that people may have when meeting me or bumping into me on the way to the PSB.

Back up from my mirror, I see more physical characteristics that you might recognize. I am short and use an electric wheelchair. To me, it is a tool for getting through the day, as a car would be to a traveling salesman. But to others it is my identifying inequality, what plants me to the earth, and what labels me for life. Unfortunately, I cannot have the same people see me outside of me, except to hope that I am given a chance to prove that I am much more than a motor and some batteries.

It is comical to me to think that my mind is thinking about calculus equations and tests while I am in the psychology lab, but when I go out into a crowded street people pull their friends to the side and say "Look out! He's a cripple!" Or "Let the wheelchair pass," or "Look! A wheelchair!" or various other phrases that indicate my sanity is nonexistent as if the remote possibility that I have normal thoughts does not exist. At times I might be insulted because I am gormless and cannot understand why people would call me a wheelchair instead of a woman or a student. And I wonder: am I controlling sexuality has always been such a confusing thing to me that I have difficulty trying to squish it all into one descriptive term. I have asked myself again and again what these labels mean. What are you saying if you call yourself a lesbian? That you love women? Primarily? Exclusively? That you have never been attracted to a man — or never in the way that you have been to women? And what if you call yourself bisexual? I think I was more comfortable with "bisexual" until I met women who saw themselves that and really meant it — who would date a man as readily as they would a woman. Then I began to feel that neither label really said anything about me. So, at Bryn Mawr, for the first time I did not come out by saying, "I am bisexual," but by simply saying, "I am gay," and then going on to explain what it means to me, a gay community, in the first weeks I was thrilled to receive cute buttons and buttons, to occasionally see women holding hands. The feeling of not being out and alone was still so new to me. I have asked myself again and again what these labels mean. What are you saying if you call yourself a lesbian? That you love women? Primarily? Exclusively? That you have never been attracted to a man — or never in the way that you have been to women? And what if you call yourself bisexual? I think I was more comfortable with "bisexual" until I met women who saw themselves that and really meant it — who would date a man as readily as they would a woman. Then I began to feel that neither label really said anything about me. So, at Bryn Mawr, for the first time I did not come out by saying, "I am bisexual," but by simply saying, "I am gay," and then going on to explain what it means to me, a gay community.
issues of Identity

"So many FREAKS..."? The truth about the 'backsmoker' community

by Shannon Cochran, Jesse Bennett, & Christy Kislieff

We're having a great deal of trouble writing this article. We know it's about identity, and that it might be about politics—it's about who we are, anyway, and what people think about us. Beyond that, though, we get into trouble. We are only three people, but we are attempting to represent the entire backsmoker community—a problematic label that has never really been defined. And as to what people think of us—well, how can we know that for sure? The three of us have always been inclined to believe that most of Bryn Mawr doesn't know who we are at all, and wouldn't care if they did. But recently we've heard (secondhand) some rumors about ourselves that would be morosely flattering if they didn't reflect disturbing misconceptions. The fact that no one is hunting us down and burning us at the stake makes it safe for us to laugh at the utter absurdity of the things that are being said, but it would be truly sinister if these rumors reflected the serious views of larger, more influential groups. Apparently there is some interest in us and what we do.

We're back, then, to Who We Are. The present backsmoker community centers around Erelman Backsmoker, although in the recent past there have been backsmoker cultures in Demgh and Brecon. We're not sure precisely how old it is, although we think it's been around for at least ten years. These days, it encompasses some fifteen people, including a few alumni who remain involved, but it has been much larger in the past. The history of the smokers creates something of a problem in self-definition, because, although there are continuous traditions, student turnover obviously causes constant change in the nature of the community. So what we are, and the public perception of what we are, is hard to separate from what we have been. Also, we are not one unified group; there are several distinct circles of friends who share the smoker, linked only by a few common traits and interests.

Those traits and interests? When we threw out words, we ended up with "fannys/scr6", "pagen", "quar", "punk", "feminist", and "lesbian". Obviously, not all of these labels apply to each of us—but that's the flavor. We're (some of) the ones who wear cloaks and goth black around campus. We're the ones who howl at every full moon. We're mostly responsible for the Robins Hood May Day plays, and, until recently, the King Arthur May Day plays as well. We host High Table (a celebration in Demgh backsmoker which is open to all but especially geared toward returning smokerite alumni) once every semester. We keep Elfinore, the ongoing interactive fantasy novel residing in Erelman backsmoker (by the way, we've always happy to have new writers...), as well as the Erelman backsmoker diary (a collective dorm diary), and the Doublestar Library, the collection of fantasy and science fiction also kept in Erelman (check them out!), Weran pagan rituals and vampire roleplaying games. We don't, contrarily to rumor, drug people, drink blood, feed off hate, sacrifice squirrels for anything else, except for the occasional Vail Street Journal, worship Satan, or plot harm to anyone. A lot of these ideas probably stem from misinformation concerning neo-paganism, the nature-based spirituality that some of us practice. Judith Levine has written an article for the Bi-Co News that explains this religion in much greater detail.

The one word that lies at the heart of the issue, the touchstone of the relationship between the backsmoker community and much of the rest of the campus, is "freak". This word is used both as an insult by others, as in "They're all fucking freaks" (actually said to one of us) or "too many freaks on this campus" (written on the comment board in the Campus Center) and as a term of pride in one's individuality, contrasting the "freak" smokerites with the "normal" mainstreamers. Shannon feels that both usages are objectionable; she thinks everybody is, at some level, deeply weird. Jesse, however, sees labels such as "freak" and "normal" as purely a matter of definition (by self or others) and alliance with or separation from a perceived "camp", not as declarations of innate nature. Therefore, although refusing the self-descriptive "freak", she feels that the terms have no innate negative or positive charge.

It's easy to get lost in the world of Bryn Mawr identity politics, the baffling attempt to codify the myriad complex wholes of the Bryn Mawr student body. Often, one can get so bogged down that it becomes difficult even to classify one's self. The glib of the matter for Christy is to plumb all the depths of who she is and "out" them to her heart's content. She believes that college might be the only chance she will get to be so wildly and fully herself, and, although her antics might shock the innocent passer-by, she does nothing out of malice. With apologies to any to whom this does not apply, this seems to be an approximate description of most of the present smokerites.
Masculinity and it Discontents

By Leah Coffin

On Tuesday, February 20th at 4:50 p.m., Chase 104 at Havarder filled up to and beyond capacity as people from both camp-}
The Feminist Face of Poverty: Nicaragua's women and Structural Adjustment

by Amy Karan

Nicaragua’s socio-economic conditions seem an estranged topic, irrelevant to the U.S. problems, Nicaragua’s history is after all, one of incredible poverty, extreme economic and political instability. But on closer examination, the country’s “neoliberal” programs of “stabilization and structural adjustment,” insitituted by the Sandinist government and reinforced during this decade by international economic organizations, are not so far off from the economic agendas currently resounding in this nation’s capital.

Facing a national economy whose instability was exacerbated by wartime conditions, the Sandinistas instituted anti-inflation and stabilization policies in June 1979, that under the U.S.-backed UNO government (or National Opposition Union), were later made even harsher by external pressures like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Goals of the neoliberal policy included privatized industries, an increase in production of exports, decontrolling prices, and vast cuts in public expenditures.

Social scientists are now arguing that this market-oriented, macroeconomic emphasis, which is aimed at economic stabilization, may have secondary effects because it cuts out support for the private and informal sectors of the nation’s economy.

Thus, households and small businesses, which in Nicaragua are often headed by women, are bearing the brunt of the country’s economic stringalining. In 1992 alone, 7,000 small and medium-sized businesses collapsed in Nicaragua; women, who head about half of urban households, have also been forced to offer services through the informal sector that were once provided by the state.

These economic policies... demonstrate a gender bias that is manifesting itself in women’s forced return to a traditional sphere... where domestic violence, depression, alcoholism, and suicide rates are increasing.

You are needed!

Volunteer with the Congreso de Latinos Unidos AIDS project by Amy Karan

Congreso de Latinos Unidos, an organization in northern Philadelphia that provides a wide range of services for the Latino community, is looking for committed volunteers for its HIV/AIDS Program. Program Director Emer Atienza. Volunteers must have a week of training before they begin working. A number of different positions are available including assisting case managers by interviewing new clients, working with the food bank, in the street education program, teaching about STDs and HIV, and others.

If your interested in volunteering with Congress or would like more information, please contact me at (215) 763-8870 and ask for Floyd White. I found the volunteer coordinator to be very flexible about time commitments. Spanish is helpful but not necessary.

The College News, February, 1949

No pink nudes in the niches this year, no melting snowman in front of the Library, no stuffed corpses hanging from trees. By unanimous vote Veritatem Dilexi has been effaced from every fireplace, and our new motto is: "I can’t—haven’t got time"—has been carved on instead. After spring vacation there will be a five dollar fine for smoking, and, starting tonight, anyone who talks about anything but work will be given a loyalty test by the Senate.

The Official Warning
ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

50s Style Fun and Fries

by Julia Alexander

I first saw Ruby's in Suburban Square last fall, when the woman babysitting for us was driving me home one afternoon. She told me how her husband had noticed it recently, and had suggested they go there one night because it looked like it would be good "period food." She had taken offense, it being the time of the month for taking off at comments like that; he had looked bewildered enough that she realized he had meant "time period food," as in the 'fifties.

Well, I was shopping in Ardmore tonight, and we walked past it on our way back to Bryn Mawr, and decided to pop in. I'm in a position to say that it's good food for both kinds of periods.

It was after nine, so we were in the market for snack food. I had a mocha shake, and my friend had a vanilla malted and a hot fudge sundae. We split a small order of fries and a large order of onion rings. The dressings were generous, and we paid under five dollars apiece. My shake was excellent: just the right amounts of coffee and chocolate, thick but not impossible to suck up through the excellent bendy straw provided gratis. For $1.95, I got a supersized order of AMC Tabasco, and my choice of about ten different flavors. My friends were thrilled with their ice cream concoctions as well, although the one with the sundae wished she hadn't eaten hers as quickly as she did.

The onion rings were excellent, just the right combination of greasy and hot (neither too much nor too little of either), and they were tender enough that I mostly didn't need to dip them up with a string of onion and a lot of crumbs when I took a bite. The fries were just a little bit overdone, but for eighty-nine cents, we got half again what we get at the place we brought our lunch to and mustard without our having to ask for either.

Other customers seemed equally happy. The money, although not necessarily strictly from the fifties. The salads I saw people eating were made with the kind of iceberg lettuce, but also romaine, red cabbage, and skinless grilled chicken. There were even salads.

Yes, Ruby's does what it says on the tin. You can come soak up the authentic fifties ambiance with your vegetarian friends. The decor is the traditional four-color Coca-Cola ads, the traditional steel-and-tinanium furniture and walls, and a sing-along suspended over diners' heads. Oldies music was played at just the right level to make conversation audible at our table, but not across the aisle. Our table had all the necessary items, including a napkin dispenser just in case someone thoughtlessly used her original napkin to catch onion ring crumbs and subsequently wanted to wipe it off her fingers.

The service was friendly and prompt, and we were seated immediately even though the place was thoroughly crowded. They didn't even seem to mind seeing the "authentic" fecundities of fifties diner uniforms, and that's saying something. This is worth the money if you're paying for yourself, or if you're taking a friend out for a special occasion.

You Love the Strip, Now Read the Book

Book Review

Unnatural Dykes to Watch Out For (Complete and Unabridged) by Alison Bechdel, Freebird Press, 1995, 840.92

by Julia Alexander

Right at the beginning of each week, last semester, I happened to be downtown, so I bought myself a copy of the latest "comic collection" of Dykes to Watch Out For by Alison Bechdel. I first became acquainted with the strip in the January 1986 edition of my high school yearbook. For these many years ago. My personal collection of the comic collections began sometime last year when I needed to get together some worth of merchandise so I could purchase a forty cent package of Kleenex with my MAC caddy... Obviously, I like the books well enough to pay ten bucks a pop for them, and not return them to the bookstore as soon as I have a receipt.

But on to this particular collection. This one picks up right where the special insert at the end of Spanes of Dykes to Watch Out For left off, which is to say, more hours after Tom Landfcastor and his baby, Rafael, was born. When you aren't familiar with that episode, in DTWOF, gay Tom is wed to a librarian and he requests the book. Despite the cover's promise to give you a "candid look at the tangled uprights and forbidden passions of women who have strayed far beyond the bounds of decent society," we actually get the continuation of the moody mundane, but sometimes exciting in a painfully, wry lives of Mo and her pals.

The big draw for this book was the final mini-series, which told the histories of how all these characters met in the guise of Ginger doing a oral history for the Lesbian Herstory Project. I'm not going to spoil the surprise, since I recommend buying this book to anyone who likes the strip, or thinks she might like it. But to you Dykes to Watch Out For vertebrates, I will comment that there's something very cute about seeing our heroines twenty years ago ("gasp!") when they were just sweet young things like us.

This book brought back memories, since it covers most of the comics that have come out in the years that I've been here at BMC, ending right where the last comics we've received from Mac Bechdel for the College News also end.

This one of the few remaining really excellent comic strips available, Bechdel took the time to develop her characters, so they have definite personalities, and she takes the time to make them change, so that they never get boring. What's more important, she draws complete panels, placing her characters in a changing, three-dimensional world. The Madonna mons Books sign on the window is reversed from inside the store. The books have titles written on their spines. And there is nothing deducing about this book. You haven't heard of other comic strips? She changes the headlines on newspapers and books in each panel, so that she offers a running commentary on the state of the world. It's the detail that makes these books worth buying. You can read them half a dozen times, and still not catch all the little things, like the double-woman symbol on a jar of pencils in the background.

The best way to show all of this is to offer some strips up for examination, so take a while to look at all the fine details of the two pages I have located somewhere around this article.

KIDS: sexuality and silence in the streets

by Reka Prasad

I remember when I first heard about KIDS, and all the controversy that surrounded this nineteen-year-old twit writing a script about New York City teenagers, Gus Van Sant sees an opening, and everyone reacts it a wake-up call to our society or the most disgusting thing they had ever seen. Well, they both get what they wanted, but I was one of those kids once, and as I sat in Thomas 110 I felt sick to my stomach. Over the summer my best friend took out our city bible, The Village Voice, and showed me an article. It was a review of KIDS. The article said that the movie dehumanized and objectified the females in the film. In Kentucky's terms it was a teenage boy's dream. Why did they all react to that? Isn't real life enough? So I told myself it wasn't worth my sweet fifty, and I swore I would not see it. I thought back to the sign recently put up at the Australian, "The world famous non-mainstream theatres in New York, that read "NO REFUNDS FOR KIDS." It seems people were walking out in the middle of the film and demanding their money back.

Finally, my best friend broke down and saw it. She said she thought I should see it because it was about our lives, where we hung out, the things we did, as it is. When I am not at school or in my dorm, I thought if a documentary film about my life back in high school was making people walk out of a theatre in New York City, I might as well check it out. Thomas 110 was packed well before the previews started (we all knew we have to get there twenty minutes early to put as much clothing on as many seats as we can), and after all the horror previews (I think we can all agree that a psychotic Brett Reynolds in a movie titled The Undead is a straight to home video release), Kids finally began. The first image is darkness, the first words; saliva. The second image is of two half-naked teenagers on a bed, tongues down each other's throats. The film begins with a fairly graphic scene of the twelve-year-old girl's "disfiguring" and, as the title of the film came up, I found myself already in the process of riget my change of mind.

The story follows a group of teenagers through a typical humid New York City summer day. These characters are the quintessential souls Generation X lost children, looking for quick fix and a sustained high to fill the void of their lives. But the difference between the two is that they aren't characters in a fictional novel; their holiness is very real. The only female who is central to the story leaves her cueing that she is HIV positive after having had sex once with Telly, who takes pride in being a virgin, as he did in the continued on page 11
KIDS...

continued from page 10

opening scene. She then proceeds to wan-
der their hangout in search of him before he
fects another girl. Casper, the other
main character, is the ring leader of sorts,
extraordinary in his self-destruction. They wan-
der from place to place doing drugs and
each other. I sat there listening to the
language and seeing the images, and
an old numbness found its way back to
me. It was in self-defense from the film.
I thought back to the article in the 
Voice and looked at the girls on the screen. It
seemed that their only purpose was to be the
physical reference to body parts. They barely
had any dialogue at all. They were just 
"holes" for the boys to use and discard. I
realized that the article in the Voice was
right, they were faceless, but here's where
my version differs. The author of that
article said it was a sexist disservice to all
women and was not a realistic portrayal.
What she does not realize is that this is
reality. The abuse and objectification those
young women went through is reality, and
is a realistic portrayal. It was a representation
of all the girls not found by
our movement, the ones not reached, the
majority of young girls growing up.
Too often in this country we do not bring
up our girls to cherish their bodies and be
comfortable about sexuality. We do not
teach them that they are whole individu-
als and are worthy of being treated as just
as important if not more than someone else's
love. So when we are left with the
stained sheets of that premature loss of inno-
cence, who is there to blame?

My concern is that the whole 
country will remain in denial of this reality be-
cause they do not feel it is theirs. They will
continue to think it is an "urban epidemic" and
not allow it to be shown, or they will
walk out and demand their money back.
The controversy in the end always over-
shadows the actual truth and serves as an ob-
ject to carry the con-
tent. My real fear is that the females of this
country, of my generation, of the past and
future, will remain faceless and mute
without a dialogue of their own. I was a
young girl in New York City and I know
that it is not a warped reality. I sat there in
the darkness preparing myself for the rape
scene I knew was coming up. Nothing ever
does prepare you, does it? As the
credits rolled, the first comment made
was "I'm never having sex again." Granted it
was a tension reliever but it is an all too
often occurrence in this country, in the
world. Make a joke to make it better of it and
forget, don't let yourself absorb what you
really just experienced. People laughed and
everyone started leaving.

The saddest part of the whole film was
when I was walking out and two women
were imitating the noises the young girls
were making while losing their virginity and
said they wished they had done it. I'm still not
clear what to do with that. I suggest seeing the
film if you can handle a lot of overwhelming
images and graphic language. It was
meant to disgust you and make you think,
"my god, what is this country?" I'm not sure
what to think of that. In the end, it is the
imagery that a
viewer is left with, and that is what is most
powerful about Kids.

Dykes To Watch Out For

continued on page 12

The Northwest Corner

by megan munson

So here it is, the first official column that
everyone has been waiting for and I have
been sweating over. What do I write now
that I've committed myself to The College
News and to you? I was thinking about
women climbers, perhaps comparing the
slim deciduous trees of the East Coast to
the majestic canyons of the West, or the
granola-consumption phenomena that has
evolved in liberal western communities
for years (in fact, last Christmas, my sister
and I gave our parents a homemade gran-
ola-making kit, complete with modasses,
dried cranberries, and jars with labels that
read "Momson's All-Natural Granola, or-
ganically made with love", pretty cute,
I'd. But I didn't have the time to research
the first two ideas, and granola, while infinite
in variety, just isn't the subject for a capti-
vating article.

Then it hit me. Coffee. It is the culture that
took me to my childhood and from West. It
is more than a craze, it's a way of life.
Downtown Portland (Oregon, not Maine)
has at least three espresso shops per block,
McDonald's, Burger King, Kinko's, and the
majority of gas stations are all serving
espresso. In the yellow pages there are
more coffee shop listings than dentists and
house repair people put together (well...I
haven't looked...yet. I know, I'm sure it's
true) We have tons of "drive-
through espresso" chains, including Mo-
torhead, by Coffee People (I think the best,
just in case you're ever in the area). Motor
Moka has a menu longer than any fast
food chain, hippie coffee, and a radio
station that plays molo-dramatic parodies
of Star Trek: where no coffee bean can
have gone before and beyond. People like
style (imagine drum beats, and a low,
slightly grainy voice chanting "Let's, cup
in my hand, we're going" while I
grinned "oh...man..." (this cat's gotta have his latte).

While home, the number and creativity
of coffee shops amazed me (after the dry
ness of my hometown) and I thought "no one
back at school would believe this...maybe
I'll do a photo essay!" Fortunately, I re-
membered I have no photographic talent
and so had to be content to simply enjoy
the mellow aura espresso shops create.
And that's the thing, it's not so much the
quality of the beans (though it's truly
excellent), it's more the ambiance that
espresso shops create; a laid back atmo-
sphere where people take the time to ask
"for a tall skinny latte with a shot of hazel-
nut on ice." Hanging out, chatting, and
enjoying the infrequent sunbreaks com-
ing through the crazy clouds.

Eagerly await the next issue: Coffee
critiques, the best and worst of the Main
Line, quality, quantity, and foam.
LADY ORACLE: Reading the Leaves

I've found myself a new religion... Seems all I ever feel like doing these days is sitting around in my room drinkin' tea outta my well worn mug... Who would guess it would change the direction of my life? Have you ever noticed those handy aphorisms so many tea companies provide gratis with each and every tea bag? With these firmly in mind and a quick glance at the constellations, I feel I've matched each of your tea-drinking needs with the problems you are currently facing.

ARIES March 21 — April 19
Despite the lingering winter's syrupy remains as feisty as ever. Girl, when it's cold outside, there ain't nowhere to go. Settle down and channel that energy into finding yourself some quiet, indoor entertainment... If you know what I mean... To set the mood, why not pour a hot bottle of Chasselas, an herbal tea whose very special and subtle flavor transcends comparison.

TAURUS April 20 — May 20
One thing you can't afford is to catch a cold. Wrap yourself up in a fuzzy blanket, and find yourself a steaming cup of Misia tea. This one can be enjoyed at any time, but is especially invigorating during wet and cold weather. And while you're at it, why not cover your head up with that blanket and steam your sinuses over your hot cup of tea. Never can be too careful, and why not treat yourself doubly special?

GEMINI May 21 — June 20
Mmm, lumps. Looks like it's your turn to partake of the mug that overfloweth with a Passion fruit Herbal Infusion. Your devoted Oracle has even managed to find a certified Green Shanmum to mumble a few chants over the anxiously awaiting tea leaves. You watch out... Our Shanmum warms that true passion is intoxicating and invigorating, soothing and sennasis, delectable and magical. We just thought you should know what you're in for... And remember—this ain't no sippin' tea.

CANCER June 21 — July 22
Just because it's cold outside doesn't mean you can't transport yourself to a sumptuous realm of scented bubbles. I think I hear a fragrant, sumptuous tea that's full of the refreshing flavor of spiced Strawberries in order. This one provides that much needed pick-me-up you know you can count on again and again, unless of course the company that makes it goes bankrupt.

LEO July 23 — August 22
Let's be honest, you don't get to read this column, let alone sit and wait for a pot of water to boil. But that doesn't mean you can't enjoy your own cup of tea. What do you think they invented instant for, anyway? Settle your roomie to run over to Acme and pick up some Iced Macchiato. Hey, aren't the words 'froo scene inside' enticing? Nothing beats 'natural lemon flavor.' You provide the water, we provide the sugar, citricc acid, triethylamine phosphate, caramel color, maltodextrin, artificial color (red #40) and BHA. It's a drink, it's a cheese exam; no, it's both.

VIRGO August 23 — September 22
Girlfriend, go quickly and grab yourself a sippin' cup of hot, black Coffee. 'Nuf said.

LIBRA September 23 — October 22
Listen up. It's time to go back to basics. Remember how, once upon a time, you used to enjoy the whole tea drinking experience? Back when you were little, and granma would bring you a hot cup of tea, and everything seemed okay again? What can you deduce into that false sense of security again better than County Peaks? If it doesn't work, you haven't added enough honey yet.

SCORPIO October 23 — November 21
Y'know, tea drinking ain't just for wimps. It's not all dillies and raised pinky fingers. Forget everything your granma told you. It's time to reclaim tea drinking and initiate it as an angry geriatric ritual. Two words: Cranberry Crave. Yeah, yeah, okay, I know. Doesn't sound that exciting, does it? But if you brew it real strong, it looks kinda like blood. Think of it as a menstrual metaphor.

SAGITTARIUS November 22 — December 21
We'll all hit by rough times, once in a while. People understand when you reach out for help. Hey, isn't sympathy part of that Bryn Mawr community we all came here for? So grab your travel mug and prepare yourself for a steamin brew of Whatever Tea Your Neighbor Has. Go ahead. You might even make up a good sob story, and maybe she'll offer you tea out of pity, so you won't even have to ask.

CAPRICORN December 22 — January 19
Hey, when it's stripped bare of all the fancy packaging, isn't relaxin' what tea's all about? And what better way to help the soothing powers along by adding a little liqueur to give it the extra punch? Don't worry if you get a bit too much gin in. You'll just get relaxed a bit faster than you'd originally planned. What kind of tea goes best with some added liquor? Who cares? Drink up. Just don't dabble.

AQUARIUS January 20 — February 18
We know how easily frazzled you get these days. Let me suggest a few grounding exercises. Follow the directions carefully (I'll keep the instructions simple), and maybe you'll have better luck getting a cup of tea to turn your right, since you haven't had much luck with anything else lately. 1. Fill kettle. 2. Turn on burner. 3. Wait for water to boil. 4. Find a clean mug. 5. Pour boiling water into mug. 6. Don't forget the tea bag. In keeping with the theme of simplicity, I suggest that trustworthy standby, plain 'Oliever's. Let's face it, you could probably use the caffeine. You can even put it on ice so you won't burn yourself. And heed my warning—stay away from those new-fangled round tea bags. I've a hunch they aren't friendly.

PISCES February 19 — March 20
Bet you didn't realize spicing up your life is as easy as boiling water! Come on, let's be daring and risk it all on a loose leaf tea! None of those confining little tea bags for you, girl! Prepare yourself for an exciting encounter with Cardamom Cinna, Native to the shadier regions of India and Ceylon, cardamom has the gentle, airy taste of the forest itself. Cinna, derived from the bark of a small evergreen, brings to the cardamom a spicy depth and fresh perspective. And if cinnaom can do that for cardamom, just wait until you see what it can do for you!

continued from page 11

The National Institute of Mental Health estimates 17 million people in the U.S. get depressed every year. That's one out of ten people, compared to men, women are twice as likely to be depressed, and more likely not to seek help.

"I'm scared no pain. I lack no pain to be spared me."

-Madras in Euphrates" The Machist

The NIMH also blamed this fact on various things, like hormones, genetics, and psychological factors. Oh, and as an afterthought they threw in the obvious reasons abuse and oppression.

"Would it please you if I strung my tears?
In pearls for you to wear?
Would you like a gift of my hands' endless beating
Against old bars?"

-Naomi Long Madgett, "The Race Question"

What to do, what to do? A dinner conference with a few of my friends led to the realization that we have all experienced depression. This may not sound surprising, but while talking, we all found out that we have all gone through treatment (with or without our absolute consent) to deal with it. We bonded while reminiscing about old doctors, anti-depressant drugs, and our opinion of what the hell depression is anyway.

"It's like a tunnel...like a black pit. You go through the day physically and emotionally sick, angry with people that don't KNOW you're so down, and who can't help you anyway..."

-one of my buddies

Where do we go from here? Up or down or all around? Whatever we do, life keeps coming. Everything keeps moving. There may be no avoiding it. To the "everyday average Jane," the definition of depression may be the same as the definition of life (this does sound very bleak though, doesn't it?). So all of us Mavens will deal. Then again, maybe it is just the weather...but I don't think so.

"And then a strange thing happened. For where the tear had fallen a flower grew out of the ground, a mysterious flower...It was so beautiful that the little Rabbits forgot to cry, and just lay there watching it."

-Margery Williams, The Velveteen Rabbit.