

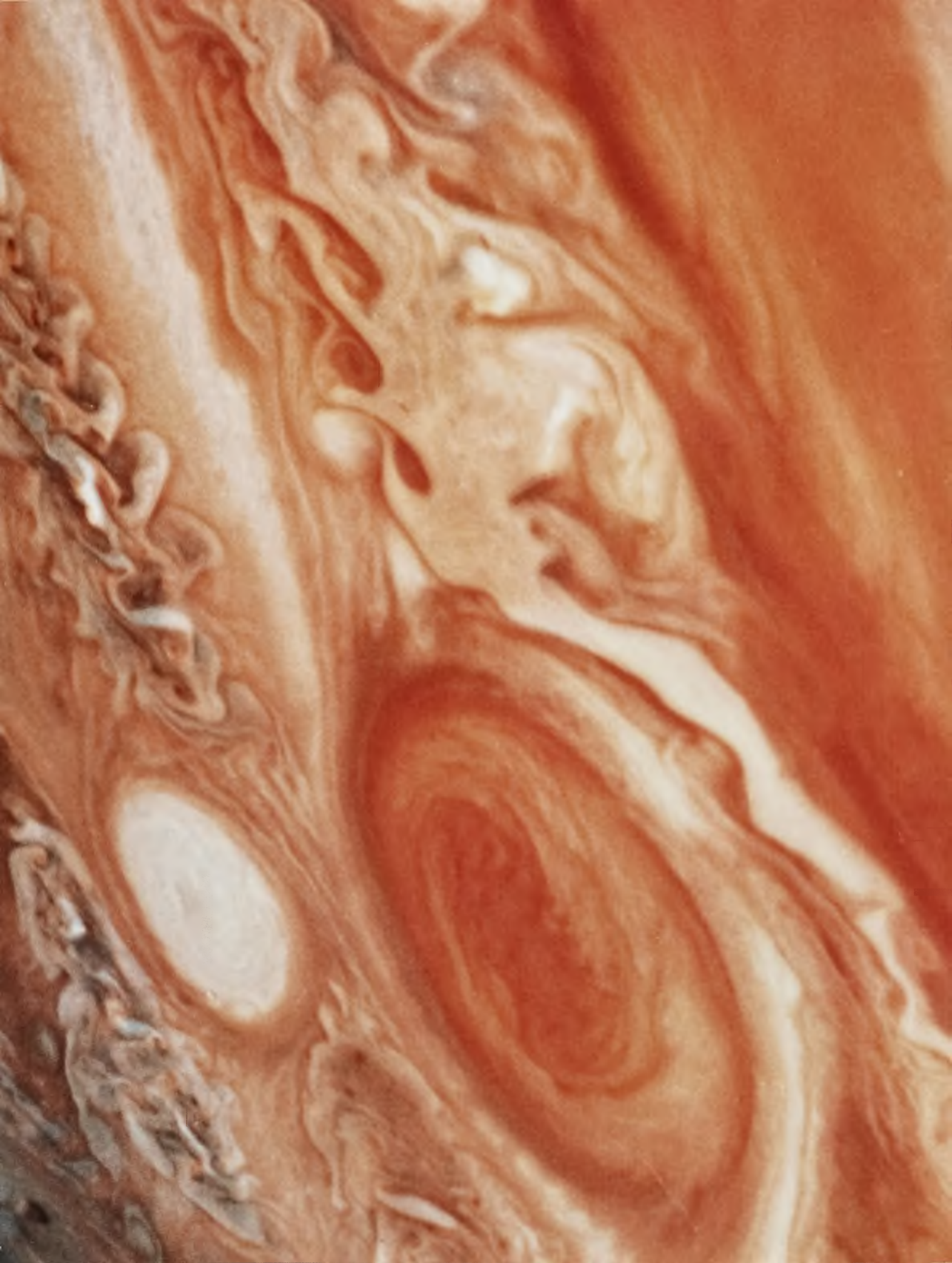
Third Rail

Spring 2000

Art & Culture on the Political Tip!



The Federated Collectives of the Americas



*Elegy
For Rob*

*Every time
Death silences another
Voice
We know,
Their Echoes
Reveal our own
Mortality*

*In time,
Their Voice will just
Be blurred memories
Just like
Our mother's
Songs,
Heard within her womb*

*We long
To savor their presence,
And again touch,
To make certain
That It was really
Them*

*Diane Issacs
d. March 22, 2000*



Robert "Uncle Bob" Lauro

1949 ○ 2000

A TRIBUTE TO ROB LAURO

Rob Lauro was more than a friend, fellow student, and Student Union "founding father," as Rob used to proudly describe himself. Rob was an unforgettable person who touched my life in more ways than I can say.

I first met Rob in Professor Popper's Geo-political class when we were both undergraduates. We sat close to each other and quickly became friends. During this time, Rob, Colleen McGraham, Manjula Wijerama, John Pae, Neil Schuldiner, Bill Wharton and myself met in an empty room in the 2M History building to discuss organizing a student movement which ultimately became known as the STUDENT UNION.

The more time I spent with Rob, whether in class, in front of WSIA, or in the cafeteria, the more I began to realize that there was more to Rob than just a dedicated student activist, journalist and radio personality. Rob was truly the epitome of the word humanist. He truly cared about his staff at WSIA, school issues plaguing CSI students, and other socio-political issues.

For those of you who did not know him, Rob was the type of guy to put a smile on your face if you had a bad day. I can personally attest to the fact that Rob reached out to those who did not know him.

Potentially risking his future, Rob authored several personal commentaries which were published in the College Voice. By sharing his personal struggles in life with the rest of the college community, Rob attempted to raise the consciousness of the CSI community by putting a personal angle on the social ills of society; he did this to help others. Rob was also a staff member of the Banner student newspaper and was a brilliant student who upon graduation, won an award from the History Department. He served as an excellent role model for the younger students.

For those of us who knew and loved Rob, we should keep his memory alive. We should share our experiences and stories with each other. I will never forget Rob Lauro. Rob touched my heart, he was someone I could always turn to. He always had his door open for me to listen to, share jokes with or just talk about astronomy. Rob loved studying astronomy and he encouraged me to go and look at the stars at the CSI Observatory. The next time I gaze towards the skies, perhaps I'll come upon Rob's star in heaven. I have been so blessed to have been his friend. He will be greatly missed. There was only ONE ROB LAURO. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.

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No Small Dream:

The Radical Journey of Martin Luther King Jr.



As a literary figure, Martin Luther King, Jr., stands as possibly the greatest American rhetorician of the 20th century. As a citizen, his singular contributions to the legacy of American democracy helped this nation realize its political and moral aspirations to an arguably greater extent than any other figure. And while much of the literature about King portrays him as a dreamer intent on rhapsodically transforming America through eloquent speech and writing, in reality he was much more. He was a visionary activist whose disturbing words and courageous deeds cost him his life. It is unfortunate that we have largely frozen King in his “I Have a Dream” stage while neglecting the radical evolution of his later years. Perhaps by revisiting the impressive body of literature King left behind we can come to a deeper understanding of his thoughts and his abiding legacy.

One of the more misunderstood and underappreciated features of King’s mature thought is his skepticism about the earlier methods of social change that he advocated. For the first several years of his career, King was quite optimistic about the possibility that racial inequality could be solved through black struggle and white good will. In *The Preacher King*, Richard Lischer captures the civil rights leader’s early views in a revealing quotation by King:

“Maybe God has called us here to this hour. Not merely to free ourselves but to free all of our white brothers and save the soul of this nation—We will not ever allow this struggle to become so polarized that it becomes a struggle between black men and white men. We must see the tension in this nation between injustice and justice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness.”

But during the last three years of his life, King questioned his own understanding of race relations. As King told journalist David Halberstam, “For years I labored with the idea of reforming the existing institutions of the society, a little change here, a little change there. Now I feel quite differently. I think you’ve got to have a reconstruction of the entire society, a revolution of values.” King also told Halberstam something that he argued in his last book, *Trumpet of Conscience*: that “most Americans are unconscious racists.” For King, this recognition was not a source of bitterness but a reason to revise his strategy. If one believed that whites basically desired to do the right thing, then a little moral persuasion was sufficient. But if one believed that whites had to be made to behave in the right way, one had to employ substantially more than moral reasoning.

King’s later views on racism were shaped by his move into northern communities in

MICHAEL ERIC DYSON
DISCUSSES THE
RADICALIZATION OF
KING BETWEEN 1963 &
1968 ON ISSUES OF
RACE, CAPITALISM,
& THE VIETNAM WAR.



cities like Chicago. King's open housing marches in Chicago were greeted with what he characterized as the most "hostile and hateful" demonstration of white racism he had ever witnessed, more violent even than Selma or Birmingham. David Garrow, in his book, *Bearing the Cross*, quotes King as saying that northern whites were practicing "psychological and spiritual genocide," which was a stunning about-face on his earlier beliefs in the inherent goodness of whites. In Chicago, King openly admitted "I'm tired of marching for something that should have been mine at birth," and he lamented the loss of America's will to right its wrongs. In his book *Why We Can't Wait* (1964), King made a remarkable statement:

"Our nation was born in genocide when it embraced the doctrine that the original American, the Indian, was an inferior race. Even before there were large numbers of Negroes on our shores, the scar of racial hatred had already disfigured colonial society. From the 16th century forward, blood flowed in battles over racial supremacy. We are perhaps the only nation which tried



during each holiday celebration. This is certainly not the portrait of King painted by fast-food advertisements that encourage us to recall a

man more interested in dreaming than doing, more interested in keeping the peace than bringing a sword.

If King's later views on persistent, deeply entrenched racism capture his radical legacy, his views on economic inequality are equally challenging. By 1964, King had reached the conclusion that blacks faced "basic social and economic problems that require political reform." But the vicious nature of northern ghetto poverty in particular convinced King that the best hope for America was the redistribution of wealth. In his 1967 presidential address to the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC), entitled "The President's Address to the Tenth Anniversary Convention" (included in *Testament of Hope*, a collection of King's speeches edited by James Washington), King urged his colleagues to fight the problems of the ghetto by organizing their economic and political power. King implored his organization to develop a program that would compel the nation to have a guaranteed annual income and full employment, thus abolishing poverty, and he preached that "the Movement must address itself to the question of restructuring the whole of American society." When such a question was raised, one was really "raising questions about the economic system, about a broader distribution of wealth," and thus, one was "question[ing] the capitalistic economy." These words mark a profound transformation in King's thinking.

While King's radical views on racism and economic inequality were disturbing to many, his views on the Vietnam War were virtually unconscionable to millions of Americans. Although King was initially hesitant about jumping into the fray, his strong anti-war activism proved just how morally

and ideologically independent he was. According to Adam Fairclough's book, *To Redeem the Soul of America*, by 1965 King had concluded that America's policy on Vietnam had been, since 1945, "morally and politically wrong." Despite his views, King's public criticism of the war was hampered by two factors. First, his evolving radicalism called for an independence from mainstream politics that the bulk of his followers were unlikely to



as a matter of national policy to wipe out its indigenous population."

This is not the Martin Luther King, Jr., who is sentimentalized



embrace. Second, his open criticism of foreign policy would alienate officials of the federal government on whom blacks depended to protect and extend their civil rights. This double-bind temporarily silenced King's opposition to the war and made it nearly impossible for him to generate sympathy for anti-war activities in broad segments of the civil rights community, including his own Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

By 1967, King could no longer remain silent about Vietnam. His most famous statement of conscientious objection to the war was entitled *A Time to Break Silence*. That speech, contained in *A Testament of Hope*, was delivered at New York's famed Riverside Church on April 4, 1967, exactly a year before his assassination. After noting the difficulty of "opposing [the] government's policy, especially in a time of war," King argued that Vietnam was stealing precious resources from domestic battles against economic suffering and contended that the "Vietnam War [was] an enemy of the poor."

King's assault on America as the "greatest purveyor of violence in the world today" elicited a predictably furious reaction from the White House. The news media was even harsher. In *Symbols, the News Magazines and Martin Luther King*, Richard Lentz notes that *Time* magazine had, early in King's opposition to the war, characterized him as a "drawling bumpkin, so ignorant that he had not read a newspaper in years, who had wandered out of his native haunts and away from his natural calling." *Newsweek* columnist Kenneth Crawford attacked King for his "demagoguery" and "reckless distortions of the facts." *The Washington Post* said that King's Riverside speech was a "grave injury" to the civil rights struggle and that King had "diminished his usefulness to this cause, to his country, and to his people." *The New York Times* editorialized that King's speech was a "fusing of two public problems that are distinct and separate" and that King had done a "disservice to both."

Of course, King's views would eventually win the day. But King's willingness to risk his reputation within the civil rights community attests to his notable courage and his commitment to principles of justice and nonviolence. He refused to silence his conscience for the sake of gaining in the polls or winning broader popularity. In fact, as David Levering Lewis points out in *King: A Critical Biography*, in 1967, for the first time in nearly a decade, King's name was left off the Gallup Poll's list of

the 10 most admired Americans.

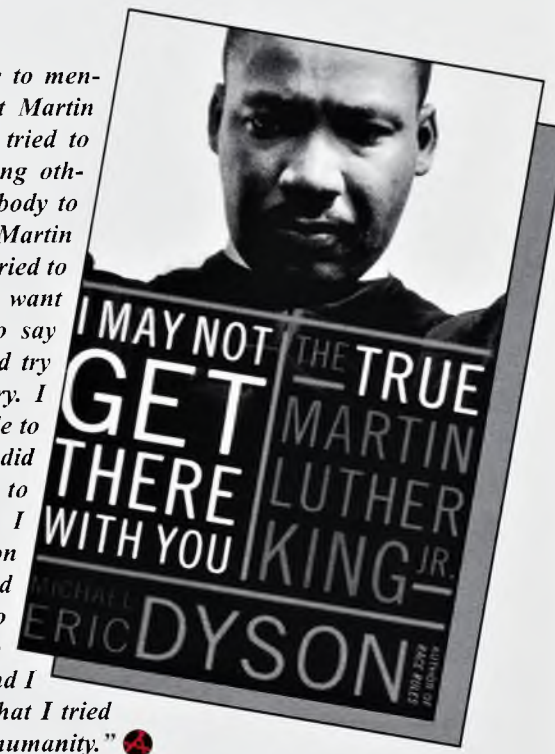
It is easy to



forget that King was only 39 years of age when he died. That he helped spark a racial

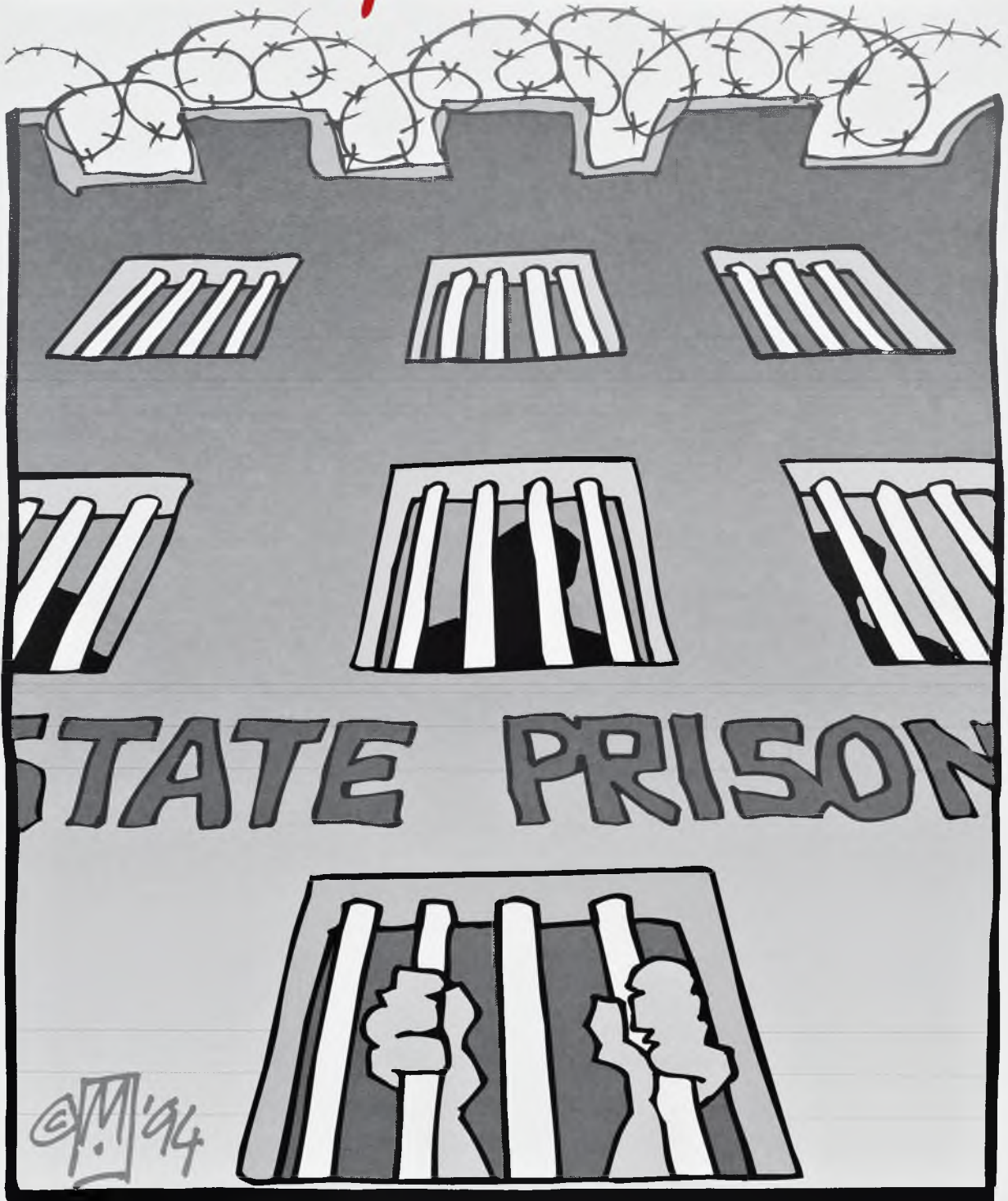
revolution in American society before his assassination in Memphis is a testament to the power of his vision and the grandeur of his words. Not long before he died, King described how he would like to be remembered:

"I'd like someone to mention that day that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to give his life serving others. I'd like somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to love somebody. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try to feed the hungry. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe the naked. I want you to say on that day that I did try in my life to visit those who were in prison. And I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity."



Michael Eric Dyson is an author and a professor of religious studies at DePaul University. His books include, among others, the recently released "I May Not Get There With You: The True Martin Luther King, Jr.", "Race Rules: Navigating the Color Line", and "Making Malcolm: The Myth and Meaning of Malcolm X".

Rudy Giuliani's



LOW- INCOME
HOUSING PROGRAM



STOP

**POLICE
BRUTALITY!**

**POEMS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORIES OF
AMADOU DIALLO, MALCOLM FERGUSON,
PATRICK DORISMOND & ALL VICTIMS
OF POLICE BRUTALITY**

41 SHOTS

And she said last chance for freedom,
Last chance for you to be free.
Put on you shoes and run run run
to a non-racist society.

She said the Diallo verdict is out
And they are telling us this was a tragedy
Man take your hands out your pocket
you don't want to be another black satiate.
And they are telling us this was tragedy?

Man in the Bronx the cops don't call you Mister,
they call you Nigger, Spick, Monkeys, and beast.

He cried on the stand thinking
the people will give him sympathy.
I don't want to see your damn cries
wipe it up and stop your dam lies.
He was nothin but a Nigger to you.
You know that and so does your crew.
And They are telling us this was a tragedy!

Young black male 23 years coming home
from a 9 am to 10 pm hard un liberated
day of work is not a tragedy.
It's the American Dream.
As I look at my young Latino, Asian,
African, Indian brothers I can't see their future
because it's gonna be taken away by Nigger haters.
And they are calling this a tragedy?

My young strong Diallo came to get an education
at the supposed land of the free young and brave.
But it's the land of the oppressed, homeless, imperialist
lies. *And they are calling this a tragedy.*
A young black man on the streets gets murder
for trying to live the American dream.
It's a black man not a target practice.

LESLIEANN CRANBERRY





FOR AMADOU

*Lady Liberty
Did not sing her song for you
Amadou
Her promises of freedom speak
In a language that is not of your own,
Beneath her garments lay hidden
Not so-sure promises;
You have joined with the
Brothers and Sisters for sale
Numbered with the stock
Bearing obscure titles of chattel,
The Slave,
The forgotten Irish,
The Sicilian,
The Jew,
The Immigrant,
The Woman,*

*And others,
Need not apply . . .
For the American Dream
Guarded by All White picket fences
Forty-one times hate bread fear
Blind Justice;
Amadou
You are the darker
Brother,
Your name was not known,
Neither was your face,
Yet they knew that it was you
Forty-one mistakes?
No,
Forty-one messages
Of Seasoned hate.*

DIANE ISAAC

REBELLION



*I hear shots from a glock
down the block
another black person got knocked
the doors of opportunity is locked
the key is in your hands
I see rebellion on these lands
I don't just see rebellion
but hear rebellion
smell and taste rebellion,
feel rebellion, live and seek rebellion
they clamp down with police force, of course
it's too big for the pigs to handle
so they dismantle, but don't wear your sandals
the atmosphere is still cold, but we're bold
and gonna grow ten folds
change this greedy society
and replace it with socialist equality
for the people, by the people
now I see the old order through the peep hole*

*trying to knock on our doors
what for? More war
their system was rotten to the core
corporate monopolies,
stopping us from feeding our families
ignore the media that they're feeding ya
flipping peoples conscience into darkness
no light, no sight
but we got might
it's not even dark at night
darkness lies in the mind, heart and soul
vision lies in the mind, heart and soul
not the eyes
vision through the eyes connects to the mind
without the mind you have no eyes
so, open up your mind and see the connection
the eyes are only a small section
that helps reflect the reflection*

BY AYMAN EL-SAYED

THE PASSION IN THE DESERT:

A Story of the Chelsea Hotel

I called my writer friend Jim at the Chelsea and asked about the typewriter he promised I could use, and felt awkward when she answered. I tried to sound sexless (exhausting work). Yes, of course I could use it, she said, and we fixed an approximate time.

I walked into the lobby (Always that feeling of coming home—nobody notices me, but it's fake—they do notice; it's just punishment for having left them). I called Jim on the lobby phone. No answer. I stuck my head through the hole in the bullet-proof, you-can't see-out-but-you-can-see-in frontispiece at the registration desk, and saw Richard smile at me a little, which is intense stuff for him. He and his troubled-looking little dog live next-door to my old room, in 423. I wanted to check Jim's hotel phone number; maybe I had called the wrong one—not likely.

I went back into the lobby and sat in the big red lion-chair, in the presence of ghosts from the grand old lobby days. The lion chair had huge wooden lion legs and paws for feet. It was where Will used to sit with the rest of the "lobby zombies," those wonderful, reliable hotel regulars. He was the one I wrote secret notes to and stuck them in his hotel mailbox: "Will, I wish you would unzip my veil and eat it." Signed, Narcissa Nonesuch. He was some kind of Indian, or injun, as he liked to put it. I first met him when I was sitting on one of the deep red backless couches one late night when I couldn't sleep. I held this notebook tight against my chest because all the boys were there hanging out, and I was curious. He asked me if I was a writer, and I said I was taking writing classes in school. One of them laughed, so I figured he must be a real writer. A little later, this guy Will with the long black hair and lynx eyes introduced himself, sat down next to me and asked me to have a drink with him in his room. "I don't think so," I said. "Oh, come on, just a little one. Something sweet. I got good stuff upstairs. You'll like it." He stood up to go. "I have a TV. Come on, let's watch some TV. Come on." I got up too. We walked toward the elevator. "I'm in the business, you know. I'm a reporter. Done work on TV, on the radio ..."

I wasn't even listening.

Waiting and waiting ... still no sign of Jim and his

typewriter. In fact, I never saw Jim again; maybe his wife finally threw him out, her patience overextended.

Then Mark appeared and sat down next to me. His hair was tousled, he was half asleep and badly in need of some sunshine—Mark who had made the collage of junk stuck onto canvas and sold it to me for my school performance project, whose room is a painting jungle. I told him my situation.

"Hey, Renee, I know someone with a typewriter on the eighth floor, someone named Joe." Mark had been in the same room in the hotel for a while now and knew people who'd come since I had moved out.

"He's not a drunk, is he?" I asked Mark. I wanted reassurance, since at one time when I used to run into Mark—like when I'd bought the collage from him—he'd been living on the street outside the hotel, and always looked either drunk or on drugs. I trusted him, though, because he had always been kind to me, even when I was not at my best.

Mark didn't say anything. "Well, let's go and see," I said.

As we got into the elevator, Mark waved to a young couple to come up with us. He tried to introduce us, but he gave up mid-stumble since he has somehow forgotten my name. The girl was black and the boy was white from the South. They talked fast back and forth and it seemed that he and Mark were making plans to buy some grass, but first they had to get some cash and this Joe that we were going to see was apparently well endowed in that department. Joe was middle-aged, lived alone and was homosexual, so the boy figured he could trick some cash out of him one way or another.

Joe looked yellow. Outside the door to his room, Mark and I faced Joe, and the two kids crouched behind Mark. While Mark extended a feeble greeting, the couple burst inside past Joe, and leaped wildly around the room making squealing pig-like noises. I flattened myself against the wall and watched in a

weird stupor. But I was inside, and there was the typewriter on the desk, way in the far corner of the room, to the left of the bed.

The two of them were giggling, skipping around Joe and making impish remarks: "Oooh, isn't Joe sexy! Hey, Mark, isn't he just the cutest little thing you could ever want?" They joined hands and danced rings around poor Joe, singing in shrill, singsong voices:

*We'll beat you and kick you
and squat on your face,
Then North we'll go up yer Hershey's Interstate.
Yeah, we'll beat you and kick you,
Land a fork in your dick.
And eat it real slow,
Like a lolly on a stick.*

This had a certain grotesque charm, but I was starting to feel sick, and was wondering what was up with Mark. Had he been a part of this plan? What had happened to him? I looked around and saw that he had left the room.

"Come on, Joe," the boy said in his normal nasal voice. "Let's have some fun." And their little twosome circle knotted tighter around him, only to swing out and then back in again, until the couple slammed their bodies into him, landing him hard against the wall and then onto the floor at their feet.

For some stupid reason, instead of running away, I edged over to the corner of the room and sat down. I touched the typewriter, sliding my fingers over a whole row of keys in a little warming up exercise. They were round black keys with a fine metal rim defining the edge, very delicate, very beautiful, the black background rich against the white lettering. They felt clean and cool to the touch. I forced my attention onto the manuscript I was trying to type, and then I noticed that the top row of letters was all German, Gothic-styled, ancient looking. I started to type, actually getting lost in the story I was working on. And while I was working away in my ivory tower, the Southern kid pinned Joe against the wall.

"Nobody hits me!" the punk kid said, and nobody had. But Joe hadn't come up with the money. So he punched him in the mouth hard, and then a good one to the stomach, which doubled him over.

Joe didn't try to defend himself. He just crumpled up, making horrible weak groans. Then the boy moved toward the window on my side of the room, where I now sat shaking, thinking that I was next, that Mark had set me up too, along with Joe. But the kid just sat down on the edge of the bed and wiped a piece of broken tooth off his hand.

Joe lifted his head up. Blood streamed out of his mouth. He looked like he was crying but without making any noise. The two kids came to life as Joe passed out again, and they seemed as animated as they had in the elevator when they were just two fast talking kids. The girl called to me to come with them, but the boy said, "No, let her stay here with Joe. Let's get out of here." But I tore the paper out of the machine and lit out with them. They went for the elevator. I took the stairs back down to the lobby to get away from those two.

Back in the lobby, there was Mark sitting in the red lion chair sipping coffee and eating a buttered roll. The two kids had vanished, probably off to another room to try out another one of their special routines. I went out and brought back some coffee for myself, took the lid off and placed it face down in the long-stemmed, sand-filled ashtray next to the low glass lobby table. Then I told Mark what had happened. "Why," I asked him, "why did you leave me up there with them?"

"I needed some breakfast. Hey, Renee," Mark said, "haven't you ever seen anybody get ripped off?" and he walked out the glass doors of the lobby and headed to the street. ●



Manic Episode #75

I was feeling quite grandiose

Without the need for sleep

I talked and talked and talked about art and politics ceaselessly

I debated anyone, even strangers in the subway, as I traveled to work

"Have you seen the 'Rape of the Sabine Women'?"

My mind raced like a fast forwarded Jackie Chan movie

And even though I moved my feet swiftly and nimbly, I'd often be overwhelmed by a

thought, and my whole body would then jerk and stutter step

Which I found hysterical & laughed out loud..

At my work desk with a stack of chores to do

I could not help but stare at the sweet girls walking by, or the discoloration of the ceiling

"Can you see there are yellow spots all along the edges?"

But I especially wanted to publish a famous book - that is where my mind was at - a wondrous tome about all the world, something I figured I could see before the beginning of tomorrow..

At quitting time I bought a plane ticket to

India a train ticket to Texas & a bus ticket to Alaska,

then decided on a dike I could see the

world just the same in the vagina

of a girl or the asshole - I mean the purple rose - of a boy

I spent all my credit on prostitutes,

lovers I found in advertisements in the back of the

Village Voice and on the streets of the meat packing district

What explorations on the Barbary Coast!

What grand experiments in the same old Times Square!@

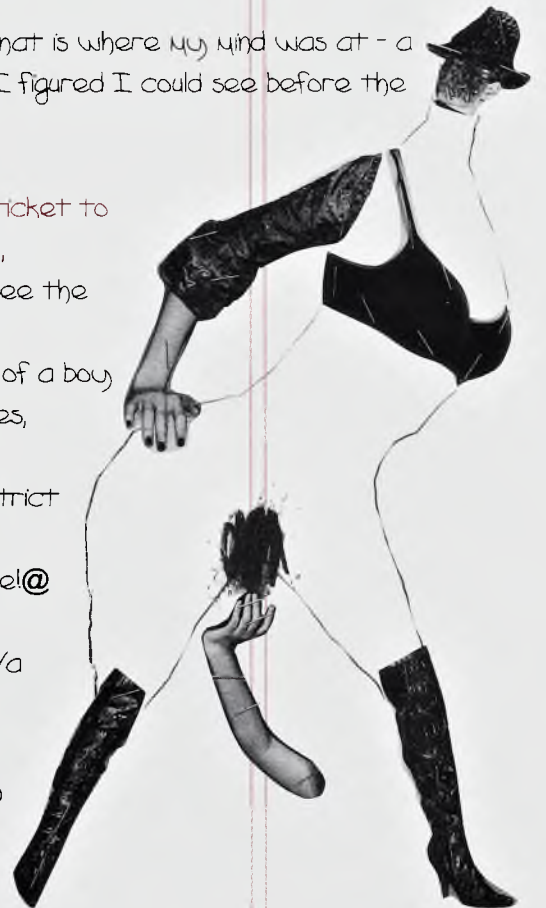
I was the ultimate tourist w/a

camera round my neck & took several action pictures..

Needless to say, I never made it to work the next day

In fact the whiteshirts threw me in a padded room

with other world travelers like myself





They caught me
sometime around dawn soliciting a
pretty police officer -

She was so petite!

I swore to the

doctor on duty,
I was having no
hallucinations, merely
a sustained creative
period - He said my eyes were
a resplendent red and this
marked me as an insomniac
loon

"Yes,
doctor, schizophrenia and manic
depression do run in the family,
' I said. "But
doctor, I'm a great poet!
Better than Lord Byron!

And I'm sober as a judge!"
He looked at me expressionlessly, behind his
rose colored notepad

I wanted to hit him over the head for squelching my muse
But I didn't of course, I am a modern man & keep my impulses to myself

Two days later the hospital let me go: I was a free bird
I immediately went back to jail - I mean work
I wanted to be emasculated - I mean paid in full
I apologized to my boss for my three-day disappearance

He smiled, told me I was fired, and of course I lashed out at him in front of everyone -
called him a horse jockey (My boss is short like Councilman Stephen Fiala)

told him he looked like Toulouse Lautrec, and this offended the jerk..

It should have made him laugh!

I was ushered out the door by two criminals
posing as security guards..

Happy to be on my unemployed way
I had \$5,000 in my pocket and a glorious dilettante's dream

Louis Michael Bardel
February 25, 2000

SATAN GOES TO SENATE



... OR THE LONELINESS OF A PROTESTER

I'M WATCHING THE FILM *"THE EXORCIST"* A FEW WEEKS BACK WHEN A PECULIAR THING HAPPENED: I COULDN'T IGNORE A STRIKING SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE ANTICS OF A DEMONIC ENTITY UPON THE BODY AND SPIRIT OF A YOUNG GIRL AND THE DICTATORIAL ACTIONS OF *Rudolph Giuliani* UPON THE CITIZENS OF THE CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS. WITH "THE EXORCIST," LET'S FACE IT—BEING THE ULTIMATE HORROR FILM, IT'S DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE WILLIAM PETER BLATTY WRITING ANYTHING QUITE AS SCARY AS SATAN PREPARING TO RUN FOR THE UNITED STATES SENATE. TRUTH EVER BEING STRANGER THAN FICTION, THAT'S JUST WHAT'S HAPPENING.

In the film, the first hint of demonic possession is seen when Linda Blair descends the stairs, and before a dozen or so party guests of her mother's, she declares, "You're gonna die up there ..." and then proceeds to urinate on the carpeting.

This is not at all unlike Il Duce Giuliani's most recent display of, if not evil, then plain old mean spiritedness when he ordered that the city's homeless be incarcerated. A couple of thousand homeless locked up on Rikers Island just in time for Thanksgiving. He basically pissed on the head of every New Yorker—and essentially every American—in dictating with that action that it's against the law to be poor. Some measure of justice I suppose can be found in knowing that this law also applies to Donald Trump. But nonetheless, until a plaque is mounted at the entry bridge to Rikers Island which read: "Give

me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning for a baloney and cheese sandwich ...," people must oppose. People need to remember that a great majority of our nation's homeless wouldn't be homeless were it not for Ronald Reagan's slashing of social program funding, that while these diverted funds went into the building of an arsenal, tens of thousands of mental patients in need of care were released and virtually abandoned on the streets of America. People need to know this number, that 16 percent of our current prison population is comprised of those same mental patients.

One of the more memorable scenes in "The Exorcist" is the 180-degree head spin. Now that was scary! And when Giuliani not long ago justified the murder of a New York City businessman by the NYPD by stating, "Hey! Look at all the people we don't kill!" Had it not been real-life, it could've been just as scary a spin. Not being a movie, I find it a hell of a lot scarier.

How vile was the scene where the priest sits on the edge of the child's bed and she nails him in the face with projectile vomit? Being that it was really pea soup, how much more vile then is a political fig-

ure who defends a police department in the wake of a sexual assault of a man with the handle of a toilet plunger by addressing it as job stress? Being a New York City cop can't be too stressful a job when you've got a boss who'll defend any act of violence you might take against a citizen you're hired to protect and serve.

In a time when the U.S. Supreme Court is reassessing the Miranda Decision, and when the cop on the street appears to be making up the law as he goes along, we need to do a little reassessing of our own; we need to remember that Miranda isn't so much meant to protect the guilty as it is to protect the innocent.


Maybe, though, we should allow the police to legislate laws on an individual, head-busting by head-busting basis. After all, we're of a mindset in today's society that if someone does choose to exercise a right, say of wanting an attorney present, then they must be guilty.

In the final scene of the film, upon the violent and desperate urging of Father Karras, the devil departs the body of the child and enters the priest's body. Out the window he goes. Though not, as we would learn in "The Exorcist II", in a plunge to his death, but rather a long, smooth fall into a state of catatonia.

Does this remind anyone of the condition of the American voter? Voting

oh so desperately for the masked evil of new-fascists to lead us to a better and safer world? To take us out the window, to a state of controlled catatonia where we won't have to think for ourselves ... ? As Il Duce recently displayed with his attempt to close the Brooklyn Museum, we won't even have to concern ourselves with the annoying matter of what is art and what is not—he'll take care of it for us.

Imagine all he'll do for us from a throne in the Senate?

The sin in our story isn't so much about demonic possession as about not fighting against it. Whether you fight with a vote or with your close-to-becoming-a-felony First Amendment right to protest—a right that people fought with arms and died for—as Julia Butterfly lived in a tree for two years in protest for its right to life, as Al Meyer drives 300 miles to march in protest for another man's right to justice ... it's our duty to fight against the evil that is possessing the soul of our government. Keeping in mind that we are our government. 

by
Jesse M. Turner
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The Search for Socialism



At the moment, the largest campus-based socialist organization in the United States is the International Socialist Organization, with eight hundred or so members. Over the last few years, the ISO has been successful in recruiting hundreds of students, and has played a significant role (or has at least been noticeably present) in the struggles against the sanctions on and bombing of Iraq, to end the death penalty, and to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

What is this group, and why has it been so effective in attracting members and generating a public presence? More importantly, why have new members often not remained in the organization, and what can the non-sectarian Left learn from its experience? In short, what is the good and the bad about the ISO?

Despite the International Socialist Organization's remarkable success in recruiting young students, we investigate why the ISO and other Trotskyist groupings have a tendency to alienate their own members & other progressives

by Jason Schulman

The ISO is an "unorthodox Trotskyist" grouping, differing with the "orthodox Trotskyist" Left in that while the latter saw Stalinist Russia and its satellites as "bureaucratically deformed workers' states," with social bases more progressive than capitalism and therefore worthy of being defended against imperialist aggression, the ISO and its sister organizations see the Stalinist states as having been "state capitalist" societies unworthy of any sort of political privilege. (While the collapse of Stalinism worldwide might make

this argument irrelevant in the eyes of most rational people, the ISO still maintains theoretical orthodoxy on the matter.)

The group was founded in 1977 as the U.S. branch of the "International Socialist Tendency," the largest branch of which remains the Socialist Workers Party of Britain. Unlike rival campus-based Trotskyist groupings, which had decided to have their members get factory jobs in order to bring revolutionary theory to the blue-collar workforce, the ISO made the conscious decision to focus on its college campus presence. In the conservative 1980s, it hardly seemed as if the working class was open to socialist agitation; hence, the ISO concentrated on building a committed activist cadre from college campuses, who would remain dedicated and ready to recruit workers when the next "upturn in struggle" arose.

Up to a point, this strategy worked. While other far-Left groups stagnated or collapsed, the ISO managed to grow, ever so slightly. Yet many of those who joined the group soon drifted away, realizing that despite the ISO's rhetoric of synthesizing all militant movements for social change, its real priority was - and is - the use of progressive movements merely as recruiting grounds for the group; a process which is seen by the ISO's top officers as defining what it means to "build the socialist alternative." As former ISO member John Lacny has put it: "Then as now, the few who stayed in the group saw the high attrition rate not as a sign that the ISO itself might be doing something wrong, but as proof positive that not everybody was cut out to be part of the would-be Vanguard of the Revolution. The result was the creation of the hardened cadres the group was designed to create, and they were hardened still further by a siege mentality which was far from unjustified in those years of the Grenada invasion, Rambo, Ollie North, Bitburg, and Ketchup-as-Vegetable."

These cadres would begin recruiting in earnest in the 1990s, attracting radical-minded youth with their loud, brash presence and relentless poster-plastering. This frenzied level of activity - the ISO allows for no "part-time revolutionaries" - is largely financed by members going into debt for the sake of the organization. While the group's headquarters in Chicago might take money from the various branches, it never gives out money. (Indeed, the employees for the ISO's bi-weekly paper, *Socialist Worker*, have gone without pay for weeks at a time.) While this intense devotion makes for some fairly stunning successes - the ISO recruited around two hundred people in one week during the UPS strike two years ago - few new recruits stick around for very long. The main



stick around for very long. The main reason is that the group is simply incapable of functioning in a truly democratic fashion.

While there might be an appearance of democratic debate within the group at the branch level, ultimately, everything is pretty much decided by the center in Chicago. One observer has noted that floor discussion at ISO branch meetings is limited to national and local leaders; branch cadres are effectively frozen out from taking the floor. While favorites are selected by the national leadership to give talks, the cadres have to be satisfied with writing questions on "speaker slips" which might - or might not - be addressed from the podium. Such meetings are intended to consolidate members' adherence to the ISO's theoretical "line," which - despite leaders' denials - is fixed in stone. While those who disagree with one aspect of the line or another are not technically unwelcome in the organization, when members voice these disagreements, they are badgered by the leadership, who intend to essentially pound the erroneous thinking out of the deviator.

All of this is par for the course in most "Marxist-Leninist" organizations. And the ISO certainly does romanticize the years of Leninism under Lenin in Russia, just as it condemns the years following Lenin's death and the eventual exile of Leon Trotsky. While the ISO might admit that "mistakes were made" by the Bolsheviks before Stalin's rise to power, they are all said to be purely the result of "objective conditions"; no basic problems with Leninist thought or practice are ever acknowledged. The ISO claims to maintain the "democratic centralist" mode of organization, in which internal debate is ostensibly unrestricted, but once the entire group votes on a particular question, all members are required to defend that position in public as the position of the group. In ISO practice, this means that dissidents must voice a "line" which they do not believe, lest they be denounced as "petit bourgeois dilettantes" by the line-enforcers. Those unable to follow the line either leave or are kicked out with due haste, hence the ISO's high membership turnover rate. (Never mind the fact that the ISO is not actually organized the way that the Bolsheviks were organized. The Bolshevik Party, in fact, carried out its theoretical debates publicly. The ISO actually functions according to the guidelines of Zinoviev's 1924 Comintern organization resolution, which Stalin, Zinoviev and Trotsky alike voted for. This resolution has led to innumerable sectarian formations.)

Effectively, the ISO considers itself to have a monopoly on radical wisdom in the U.S., and hence it is unwilling to recognize the merits of views outside its particular version of Leninism. This sectarianism manifests itself in the group's view of Black radical organizations, for example; groups

such as the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement and the Black Panther Party are judged solely on how closely they resembled the Bolsheviks, or at least what the ISO thinks the Bolsheviks were. The ISO has no appreciation for the indigenous Black organizations or politics such as those which emerged from Mississippi in the early 1960s, or Montgomery in the late 1950s. These are seen as starting points in the natural progression toward union based Black militancy - which was weakened, in the group's eyes, by Black Nationalist tendencies in both DRUM and the BPP. The line on other movements is identical - the more like the Russian Revolution, the better. Any deviation is not a result of differing conditions, but of "alien class forces" within the movement. (The ISO condemns the whole of feminism, as men don't "really" benefit from sexism under capitalism, just as the solution to racism is simply "Black and White Unite and Fight!!")

Despite the ISO's flaws, on many college campuses it is the only socialist "game in town," and it will doubtless continue to recruit students (and the occasional non-student worker) who have come to radical political conclusions. It is, after all, apparently doing something right, if only by being loud, active and organized. The fact that it seems to have a simple answer to every political question does not necessarily hurt, either - after all, this was also true of Ronald Reagan. Those of us in openly pluralist socialist organizations should not attempt to emulate the ISO's frenzied level of activity, as it leads to "burn-out" for many. But we could stand to have a far greater public presence. (In New York, at least, it is rare that one sees banners or posters proclaiming "Committees of Correspondence" or "Democratic Socialists of America," for example.)

One wishes the non-sectarian Left could emulate the ISO's production of slick literature and appearance of being a national, or really international organization. This, of course, takes money - and the question of how to generate funds without putting members into debt is open to debate. But we should certainly take note of the ISO's focus on local activism around national issues - the death penalty, police brutality, etc. We have to set our agenda nationally, and encourage locals to work on national and international issues (which, of course, are of interest locally).

One ex-ISO member recently suggested to me that we are currently in an era where any radical grouping might achieve explosive growth, thanks to the end of the Communist bogey-man. Given the dire need of our country for a mass, pluralist radical Left, one hopes he's right, lest we leave the fight for socialism in the hands of an organization which - like the solitary man in a empty chamber - will forever hear the echo of its own voice and mistake it for the roar of the masses. ●

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8 QUESTIONS

about

ANARCHISM

WITH NOAM CHOMSKY



QUESTION

1

What are the intellectual roots of anarchist thought and what movements have developed and animated it throughout history?

The currents of anarchist thought that interest me (there are many) have their roots, I think, in the Enlightenment and classical liberalism, and even trace back in interesting ways to the scientific revolution of the 17th century, including aspects that are often considered reactionary, like Cartesian rationalism. There's literature on the topic (historian of ideas Harry Bracken, for one; I've written about it too). Won't try to recapitulate here, except to say that I tend to agree with the important anarcho-sindicalist writer and activist Rudolf Rocker that classical liberal ideas were wrecked on the shoals of industrial capitalism, never to recover (I'm referring to Rocker in the 1930s; decades later, he thought differently). The ideas have been reinvented continually; in my opinion, because they reflect real human needs and perceptions. The Spanish Civil War is perhaps the most important case, though we should recall that the anarchist revolution that swept over a good part of Spain in 1936, taking various forms, was not a spontaneous upsurge, but had been prepared in many decades of education, organization, struggle, defeat, and sometimes victories. It was very significant. Sufficiently so as to call down the wrath of every major power system: Stalinism, fascism, western liberalism, most intellectual currents and their doctrinal institutions — all combined to condemn and destroy the anarchist revolution, as they did; a sign of its significance, in my opinion.

QUESTION

2

Critics complain that anarchism is "formless, utopian." You counter that each stage of history has its own forms of authority and oppression which must be challenged, therefore no fixed doctrine can apply. In your opinion, what specific realization of anarchism is appropriate in this epoch?

I tend to agree that anarchism is formless and utopian, though hardly more so than the inane doctrines of neoliberalism, Marxism-Leninism, and other ideologies that have appealed to the powerful and their intellectual servants over the years, for reasons that are all too easy to explain. The reason for the general formlessness and intellectual vacuity (often disguised in big words, but that is again in the self-interest of intellectuals) is that we do not understand very much about complex systems, such as human societies; and have only intuitions of limited validity as to the ways they should be reshaped and constructed. • Anarchism, in my view, is an expression of the idea that the burden of proof is always on those who argue that authority and domination are necessary. They have to demonstrate, with powerful argument, that that conclusion is correct. If they cannot, then the institutions they defend should be considered illegitimate. How one should react to illegitimate authority depends on circumstances and conditions: there are no formulas. • In the present period, the issues arise across the board, as they commonly do: from personal relations in the family and elsewhere, to the international political/economic order. And anarchist ideas — challenging authority and insisting that it justify itself — are appropriate at all levels.

QUESTION

3

What sort of conception of human nature is anarchism predicated on? Would people have less incentive to work in an egalitarian society? Would an absence of government allow the strong to dominate the weak? Would democratic decision-making result in excessive conflict, indecision and "mob rule"?

As I understand the term "anarchism," it is based on the hope (in our state of ignorance, we cannot go beyond that) that core elements of human nature include sentiments of solidarity, mutual support, sympathy, concern for others, and so on. • Would people work less in an egalitarian society? Yes, insofar as they are driven to work by the need for survival; or by material reward, a kind of pathology, I believe, like the kind of pathology that leads some to take pleasure from torturing others. Those who find reasonable the classical liberal doctrine that the impulse to engage in creative work is at the core of human nature — something we see constantly, I think, from children to the elderly, when circumstances allow — will be very suspicious of these doctrines, which are highly serviceable to power and authority, but seem to have no other merits. • Would an absence of government allow the strong to dominate the weak? We don't know. If so, then forms of social organization would have to be constructed — there are many possibilities — to overcome this crime. • What would be the consequences of democratic decision-making? The answers are unknown. We would have to learn by trial. Let's try it and find out.

“No one owns the term “anarchism.” There are many self-styled anarchists who insist, often with great passion, that theirs is the only right way, and that others do not merit the term (and maybe are criminals of one or another sort). A look at the contemporary anarchist literature, particularly in the West and in intellectual circles (they may not like the term), will quickly show that a large part of it is denunciation of others for their deviations, rather as in the Marxist-Leninist sectarian literature. The ratio of such material to constructive work is depressingly high.”

Anarchism is sometimes called libertarian socialism — How does it differ from other ideologies that are often associated with socialism, such as Leninism?

QUESTION

4

Leninist doctrine holds that a vanguard Party should assume state power and drive the population to economic development, and, by some miracle that is unexplained, to freedom and justice. It is an ideology that naturally appeals greatly to the radical intelligentsia, to whom it affords a justification for their role as state managers. I can't see any reason — either in logic or history — to take it seriously. Libertarian socialism (including a substantial mainstream of Marxism) dismissed all of this with contempt, quite rightly.

Many “anarcho-capitalists” claim that anarchism means the freedom to do what you want with your property and engage in free contract with others. Is capitalism in any way compatible with anarchism as you see it?

QUESTION

5

Anarcho-capitalism, in my opinion, is a doctrinal system which, if ever implemented, would lead to forms of tyranny and oppression that have few counterparts in human history. There isn't the slightest possibility that its (in my view, horrendous) ideas would be implemented, because they would quickly destroy any society that made this colossal error. The idea of “free contract” between the potentate and his starving subject is a sick joke, perhaps worth some moments in an academic seminar exploring the consequences of (in my view, absurd) ideas, but nowhere else.. • I should add, however, that I find myself in substantial agreement with people who consider themselves anarcho-capitalists on a whole range of issues; and for some years, was able to write only in their journals. And I also admire their commitment to rationality — which is rare — though I do not think they see the consequences of the doctrines they espouse, or their profound moral failings.

How do anarchist principles apply to education? Are grades, requirements and exams good things? What sort of environment is most conducive to free thought and intellectual development?

QUESTION

6

My feeling, based in part on personal experience in this case, is that a decent education should seek to provide a thread along which a person will travel in his or her own way; good teaching is more a matter of providing water for a plant, to enable it to grow under its own powers, than of filling a vessel with water (highly unoriginal thoughts I should add, paraphrased from writings of the Enlightenment and classical liberalism). These are general principles, which I think are generally valid. How they apply in particular circumstances has to be evaluated case by case, with due humility, and recognition of how little we really understand.

Depict, if you can, how an ideal anarchist society would function day-to-day. What sorts of economic and political institutions would exist, and how would they function? Would we have money? Would we shop in stores? Would we own our own homes? Would we have laws? How would we prevent crime?

QUESTION

7

I wouldn't dream of trying to do this. These are matters about which we have to learn, by struggle and experiment.

What are the prospects for realizing anarchism in our society? What steps should we take?

QUESTION

8

Prospects for freedom and justice are limitless. The steps we should take depend on what we are trying to achieve. There are, and can be, no general answers. The questions are wrongly put. I am reminded of a nice slogan of the rural workers' movement in Brazil (from which I have just returned): they say that they must expand the floor of the cage, until the point when they can break the bars. At times, that even requires defense of the cage against even worse predators outside: defense of illegitimate state power against predatory private tyranny in the United States today, for example, a point that should be obvious to any person committed to justice and freedom — anyone, for example, who thinks that children should have food to eat — but that seems difficult for many people who regard themselves as libertarians and anarchists to comprehend. That is one of the self-destructive and irrational impulses of decent people who consider themselves to be on the left, in my opinion, separating them in practice from the lives and legitimate aspirations of suffering people. • So it seems to me, I'm happy to discuss the point, and listen to counter-argument, but only in a context that allows us to go beyond shouting of slogans — which, I'm afraid, excludes a good deal of what passes for debate on the left, more's the pity.



OPPRESSION & EXPLOITATION

IMPERIALISM

SAVERS

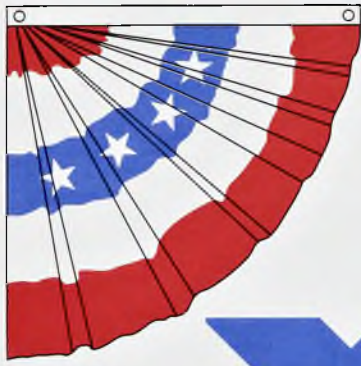
HOMOPHOBIA

EXPLOITATION

MISANTHROPISM

COLONIALISM





USA BRAND



COUPON PAGE

BUY the assertion that in a market economy, science provides only what people want, and **GET FREE**

Bovine Growth Hormone, irradiated vegetables, "non-lethal" crowd control weapons, and smallpox as germ warfare (may be accidental).

Star Wars action figures included.
Non-returnable, half-life of 100,000 years



TRADE IN
your old, obsolete human emotions for **EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY!**

Don't let sentimentality divert you from your important goals of success!

Comes with **\$500 CASH BACK**

and a free 2-liter bottle of cynical aloofness



BUY the fiction that the U.S. invades other countries with "humanitarian" motives, and

GET

U.S. international strategic interests served. Comes with a whole mess o' death.

Deaths mainly will be provided to customers in foreign lands



BUY only five so-called "women's" magazines, and **GET**

constant concern and anxiety about your appearance, body odor and wardrobe...

FREE

Valued, long term customers can register to win an eating disorder or shop-buying addiction!



BUY the notion that the "Effective Death Penalty Act" will deter crime, and

GET state-sponsored murder of a disproportionate number of people of color (which we would call ethnic cleansing if it wasn't here), **PLUS, IF YOU ACT NOW**, a whole new crop o' kids desensitized to killing!



BUY the label "terrorism" and apply it to any attempt to change the system (particularly legitimate people's revolutionary movements), and

GET **THE STATUS QUO!**
24 HOURS, 7 DAYS! FOREVER!



BIG SAVINGS!

EXPIRATION DATE:
Death of the Free Market

INCREDIBLE PRICES!

A THEMATIC COMPARISON OF DARKNESS;

Heart of Darkness and Apocalypse Now

Joseph Conrad died on Sunday, August 3, 1924 at the age of 67. He was born in Poland, and as a teenager took to the sea, where water, fog, clouds and sky blend the borders of dark and light to moods of the spirit, mingling all notions of day and night. Real and metaphoric images of darkness must have crossed his journeys many times, and he seems to have memorized them all, skillfully shaping them into mere words and language.

His life and death were mentioned on the front page of the New York Times the next day, Monday, August 4 under a modest headline which read: "Joseph Conrad Dies; Writer of the Sea". It is an extensive piece, tracing his origins from Poland to England, by way of many of the oceans and waterways of the planet. The article quotes an unnamed source as proclaiming him to be "the greatest living writer of English", a momentous accomplishment for someone whose native language was not English.

As if in tribute to that darkness which he discovered and so astutely came to describe, a strange parallel takes shape in the form of the other headlines which share that front page:

"Lenin is Lifelike as He Lays in His Tomb;
Death's Decay is Checked by New Embalming Process"
"Mexicans Murder Mrs. Rosalie Evans in Feud Over Land;
Body is Dragged By Carriage"
"Vast Berlin Crowds Weep For War Dead; Beat Jeering Reds"
"Mussolini Exhorts Facisti to Stand Firm in Storm"

Conrad implies in Heart of Darkness that darkness is carried in all men's hearts, and one follows the "nightmare of choice". These nightmares are manifested in fact or fiction, as the New York Times' headlines, woven with mentions of Conrad's writing, seem to tell us.

There is a contemporary film called Hearts of Darkness; a filmmaker's Apocalypse. It is a documentary detailing the production of Apocalypse Now, which the director Francis Ford Coppola fashioned after Conrad's Heart of Darkness. Not only does the plot of the movie shape itself around the Conrad story, the actual filming of the movie snakes along the same dark path.

Joseph Conrad spent time in his life as a captain of a steamboat sailing up the Congo River, sorting through the darkness and catching a fever from which he never fully recovered. It was this experience which outlined Heart of Darkness. A century later the filmmaker Coppola pursued this story with his own visual agenda, and in the process experienced a similar darkness. This brings the relationship between art and life to a full circle; each imitating the other with the infinite images of two mirrors facing each other.

Conrad's tale relates the experiences of a steamboat captain employed by a corporation engaged in exploiting natives and unscrupulously destroying the "uncivilized" earth of the Congo for their own large profit. There are various agents along the way that are immersed to a degree within their own darkness, which is a limited, mediocre shadow of the Corporate Attitude. There is an acceptable madness, shaped in proportion to their own small, legal ambitions. The "hero", Kurtz, overshadows them with his own monstrous shade.

Apocalypse Now portrays a young military officer, in the throes of his own nightmares, given a mission to "terminate the command" of a superior officer who has frustrated the military corporation by going over the edge with his "unsound methods" of waging the war. The war, in this case, was the Vietnam Conflict, which provided many of the nightmares for an era of both profound darkness and collective enlightenment, an era which began with an assassination and ended with the drug deaths of many of its key players, while in the middle authority stood naked under

the lights, like an emperor in new clothes. Coppola recognized the source of these recent nightmares, and drew upon the allegories of that source to accurately describe Conrad's Darkness with that of our own.

Does revealing darkness disperse it or deepen it? During the course of producing *Apocalypse Now*, many of the people involved were led to confront their own darkness, as the documentary reveals. Martin Sheen, who portrays the character of Lt. Willard (Marlow), is described by actor Frederic Forrest as "the sweetest guy you could meet". Yet even he was not immune from the process upon the soul inflicted by this production. In the opening scene of *Apocalypse Now*, Willard is facing some demonic regrets in his Saigon hotel room. He is drunk, naked, weeping rolling, thrashing, bleeding, sweating and sleeping through images of flames and helicopters and strains of distant sanity, while the music and haunting voice of dead poet Jim Morrison amplify the silence with a song called *The End*. The documentary reveals this scene to be a trial by fire of the actor Martin Sheen, drunk and vulnerable to the core, allowing the director to draw the darkness out of him, to do battle with it for the sake of the camera. The result is that of capturing the audience between the two mirrors of life and art. Martin Sheen suffered a heart attack while filming this movie, delaying the production for several weeks. Fortunately he recovered and was able to complete his work in the film. In the Conrad story, we are not given these details of Marlow's torment. We only have a brief glimpse of his tired, drawn face as he lights a cigarette in the darkness.

In an article for *Newsweek Magazine* which appeared on May 28, 1979, journalist Charles Michener describes *Apocalypse Now* as "the ultimate cinematic death trip." He also accurately states that "The closer Willard gets to Colonel Kurtz, the closer the film moves into Conrad country..." This sentiment is echoed by Coppola himself in the documentary. Near the end of filming the movie, after months of delays, disasters and frustrations, and of living in the jungle, spending absurd amounts of money, with hundreds of local extras (including a tribe of headhunters, whose actual ceremony was filmed for the end of the movie) ready to do his bidding, he began to imagine what it must have felt like to be Kurtz, to be isolated in the jungle with no other purpose than his own.

In *The Christian Century*, September 19, 1979 editor James M. Wall concludes that *Apocalypse Now* "...is not the masterpiece Coppola hoped for primarily because in reaching for Joseph Conrad's vision of ultimate evil, he overreaches." This criticism comes from a publication that addresses darkness on a weekly basis in the name of religion. Perhaps in the name of religion he felt uncomfortable with the conversions Coppola was having with these nightmares of choice. He recognizes that the making of this film "...represented something of a private journey into hell for Coppola." He misses, or neglects to address the journeys into hell that are made daily by corporations of military or capitalistic force in the name of religion, greed or worse.

Joseph Conrad recognized these patterns of dark human nature, and described them in detail in *Heart of Darkness*. We see what he names as folly the effects of the harsh exploitation upon the natives as they lie starving, destitute, waiting to die. Coppola shows us the ironic waste of exploited human life in several encounters of Willard's journey. A serene village and its people are destroyed for an irrational desire to surf, as Wagner's *Ride of the Valkyries* booms down from the demonic heavens. Further up the river a girl on a boat is wounded while protecting her puppy, then killed by Willard when her rescue might interfere with his mission.

Conrad relies upon images from Dante's *Inferno* and Greek mythology such as the River Styx, which one crosses over in death, or the two women at the office knitting with black wool as symbolizing the demons at the gates of hell, knitting the traveler's fate with blackness. Coppola also uses this device, sometimes more subtly, in *Apocalypse Now*.

by Vincent Vok

In the Newsweek article Michener points out an interesting irony, noticing that the style of narration of Lt. Willard (Marlow) is reminiscent to that of the old Raymond Chandler movies narrated by the main character, a detective named Philip Marlowe. There are quite a few more ironies within this film that allows it to break free of the realm of "movie" and reach into the social reality which feeds it, operating on a level which invents itself as it goes along. For instance, the casting of the original Ugly American, Marlon Brando, as Kurtz; or Easy Rider Dennis Hopper whose burnt-out character is along for a very uneasy ride; or the ultimate showman of his time Bill Graham as a USO promoter, descending from the sky with Playboy fantasies, and escaping by the excessive skin of their teeth. Even Harrison Ford does not escape his own battle with darkness in the form of cosmic villain Darth Vader in a galaxy long, long ago. Coppola acknowledges his form of symbolism in the documentary Hearts of Darkness; a Filmmaker's Apocalypse, by likening Willard's journey up the river to find Kurtz with Homer's Odyssey, and offering the example of the Playboy bunnies in the aborted USO show as the sirens which tempted Ulysses.

In the documentary Coppola also admits that he was at a loss for an ending. Once he reached the heart of the darkness, it seems he, like Willard, Marlow and Conrad could find no easy way out. Conrad has Marlow leave the jungle behind, but the darkness stays with him to overshadow his thoughts. We are given a glimpse of these thoughts in the final scene with Kurtz's intended. He is requested by her to repeat Kurtz's last words. Of this Conrad writes: "I was on the point of crying at her, 'Don't you hear them?' The dusk was repeating them in a persistent whisper all around us, in a whisper that seemed to swell menacingly like the first whisper of a rising wind. 'The horror! The horror!'"

In the end of Apocalypse Now, Willard is tormented and tortured, but his life is spared, to tell the world of Kurtz's greatness. We are allowed to eavesdrop on the poetic ramblings of a mind turned in on itself, to embrace its own madness. Even more shocking than hearing an officer proclaim that he "loves the smell of napalm in the morning", is the bold, intense way Kurtz proclaims his respect for the demonic efficiency of severing the arms of the inoculated children. He awaits with love his own assassination. During the ritual of slaughtering an ox, the ritual of slaughtering the darkness takes place. In the blank eyes of the sacrificed animal we see what Kurtz, with his last breath, turns into mere words: "The horror! The horror!" Willard, surrounded by darkness, makes his way back down the river. ●

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THE BOOK OF GENESIS ACCORDING TO ST. MIGUELITO

Before the beginning
God created God
In the beginning
God created the ghettos & slums
and God saw this was good.
So God said,
"Let there be more ghettos & slums
and there were more ghetto slums.
But God saw this was plain
to decorate ^{so} it
God created lead-based paint
and then
God commanded the rivers of garbage & filth
to flow gracefully through the ghettos.
On the third day
because on the second day God was out of town
On the third day
God's nose was running
& his jones was coming down and God
in his all knowing wisdom
knew he was sick
he needed a fix
so God
created the backyards of the ghettos
& the alleys of the slums in heroin & cocaine
and with his divine wisdom & grace
God created hepatitis
who begot lockjaw
who begot malaria
who begot degradation
who begot
GENOCIDE
and God knew this was good
in fact God knew things couldn't get better
but he decided to try anyway
On the fourth day
God was riding around Harlem in a gypsy cab
when he created the people
and he created these beings in ethnic proportion
but he saw the people lonely and hungry
and from his eminent rectum
he created a companion for these people
and he called this companion
capitalism
who begot racism
who begot exploitation
who begot male chauvinism
who begot machismo
who begot imperialism
who begot colonialism

who begot wall street
who begot foreign wars
and God knew
and God saw
and God felt this was extra good
and God said
VAYAAAAAAA
On the fifth day
the people kneeled
the people prayed
the people begged
and this manifested itself in a petition
a letter to the editor
to know why? **WHY? WHY?** que pasa babyyyyyy????
and God said,
"My fellow subjects
let me make one thing perfectly clear
by saying this about that:
No COMMENT!"
but on the sixth day God spoke to the people
he said . . . **"PEOPLE!!"**
the ghettos & the slums
& all the other great things I've created
will have dominion over thee
and then
he commanded the ghettos & slums
and all the other great things he created
to multiply
and they multiply
On the seventh day God was tired
so he called in sick
collected his overtime pay
a paid vacation included
But before God got on that twa
for the sunny beaches of Puerto Rico
He noticed his main man Satan
planting the learning tree of consciousness
around his ghetto edens
so God called a news conference
on a state of the heavens address
on a coast to coast national tv hookup
and God told the people
to be
COOL
and the people were cool
and the people kept cool
and the people are cool
and the people stay cool
and God said
Vaya . . .

By Miguel Pinero

I felt simple. Felt tranquil Away from everything inside myself. I was aware of danger. Knew right from wrong. Born in manger. Here my psalm

I felt your lord
Knew you, if
only for a
moment.
I love you
lord
I write this
sonnet



I love the sky
of light.
Love the dark
of night
Incredible
insight.
Unbelievable detail.
I've got nowhere
to go
but down.
Earned my
thorned crown
martyr of sin.
Stuck in this
skin.
A sow lies
within
conscience
created.
Borned equals
dated.
Pupils dilated.
Glimpsed the
unspeakable
God was
emotional!

Poetry by Frank Miello

SOMEONE, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
SOMEWHERE



SOMEHOW, InSIDE the

PILGRIMS bROW, Of FaiTh AND fortune ArOund. Someone
Who sHARES the love AND liFe OF fRuIT, wHen eGO Is
FoRgOttEN.

Thirteen

They were two boys
from the neighborhood.

I never knew their names.

A heavyset white trash one
with bug eyes and a fat dick
who stood idly by
while the other,
the one who'd done this before,
showed me how

His long skinny hairless torso
leaning into me.

I could smell him,
then I could taste him.

The moment of first touch
already a memory,
as time sped by into a new rhythm.

Squeeze and pull
squeeze and pull
and jerk it.

"Let my taste it" I said
I already knew how it seemed
or was I simply remembering?

I found the rhythm right quick

"Watch me come
watch me come."
Bug eyes squealed

Mr-know-it-all's hand
on the back of my neck
pushing my head down
towards his groin

Those full hot lips
whispering in my ear,
"Yes Yes Yes Yes"

And then
the taste of come
on salty virgin lips

Nothing will ever
be the same again.





Celebrations!

*Songs of the Matriarchs
Sooth the Young;
Growing eased
By lessons of Patience,
Visceral Dances
Of the Grandfathers
Initiating seasons
Of change,
Every season,
A celebration
Welcomed; revered; respected;*

Where have they gone?

*The great Predator
Walked with feet of iron
The Vast universe governed
And Devoured;
A time to reap,
To hunt
To Kill,
To steal
To teach,*

*Breastplates of the Knights
And crown Jewels
Sank the Offerings of Ancestors,
Imperial dreams riding high
On the Pyres of Nomadic Truth
Only Dead Sanctity left,*

*But we learn Songs
The echoes of Ancient dead
Blowing with seasonal winds
Their mystical Truths encoded,
A time to be born,
A time To Die,
A time to embrace the Lover ... and
Then refrain,
Then to refrain,
A time,
A time,
To Remember*

Celebrations!

HARLEM

A History of Growth and Change

by Lou Bardel

When the Democratic national debates arrived in Harlem this past March, it put a spotlight on one of New York's most interesting Black neighborhoods. Never before had the Democratic presidential primary debate come to this part of NYC.

Inside the famous Apollo Theater, vice-president Al Gore and his opponent Bill Bradley squared off, bringing out many notable residents and protesters.

Even if the debate was in many ways a charade, it brought some measure of respect and recognition to a beleaguered community that has seen its share of racial and economic problems. Harlem has a rich political and cultural history, but it is often ignored by politicians and the press. It used to be a neighborhood that didn't want Blacks to be there. It has become at once a symbol of Black pride and a tragedy; a place for everyone to embrace Black culture as well as a place for outside investors to exploit.

Observation proves the anti-Black movements were unsuccessful. But starting in the 1910s, the influx of Blacks into what was a White community created a series of hostilities. Groups, like the infamous Hudson Realty Company (White owned), made an effort to buy all the property occupied by "colored" people and evict them. The Harlem Property Owner's Improvement Association asked bankers not to make loans to prospective Black homeowners. But White resistance was steadily broken down. First in 1911 when the Saint Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church moved uptown, bringing its large congregation. Second in 1919 when Blacks bought up many houses on 138th and 139th Streets between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, a section of the neighborhood nicknamed Strivers Row.

Historically Harlem had been a predominantly white community ever since the Dutch arrived and wrestled land from the local Native Americans, establishing Nieuw Haarlem in 1658. Blacks have lived there since the beginning, but as a slave minority. It was these Black folk, as many historians tell it, that sustained the Dutch, and later the British farms that dominated the area. In 1827, when New York State outlawed slavery, the land was soon abandoned. Farmers had lost their cheap source of labor. The land was soon occupied by mainly Irish but also German immigrants, who built what were commonly called shantytowns.

Harlem is divided into two parts geographically. There is the plains area, where all the farms were and is now Central Harlem, and the Heights, where all the rich, like statesman Alexander Hamilton (until Aaron Burr shot him dead in a duel) made their mansions. The Heights are to the west, just north of where Columbia University is now.

The population and housing growth of the area since 1827 has always been connected to public transportation. In 1837 the construction of the New York and Harlem Railroads made access to downtown New York easier. People moved uptown once they had an alternative to the slow horse drawn carriage or omnibus. The real building boom, however, did not occur until the 1880s, when the elevated trains stretched into northern Manhattan along Second, Third and Eighth avenues. It was at this time that Harlem's unique and elegant brownstones and rowhouses were built. They attracted many civil servants, small businessmen, and professionals.

In 1904, construction of the Lenox Avenue subway precipitated more housing. Migrants from the Lower East Side of Manhattan (Eastern European Jews, Italians, Polish, Irish and Blacks) flowed into the Harlem community. It was also at this time that affluent White residents made their flight out of the community to Washington Heights and the suburbs.

By 1914 the Black population was only 50,000. The real growth in this signature Black population did not begin until after World War I. People came escaping from the brutal Deep South, Caribbean Islands and Latin America. They sought the industrial employment of the north. By 1948, Harlem, now predominantly Black and Latin, had a population of 500,000. That is a tenfold population growth of a "minority" community in thirty-four years. To put this in perspective, Staten Island, which saw its population explode after the construction of the Verrazano Bridge (1964), has in forty years grown only threefold (from approximately 150,000 in 1960 to 400,000 presently). And Staten Island is 14 miles long and 7 miles wide, much larger than Harlem.

In the 1920s Harlem was the symbol of the Jazz Age. It was embraced by the downtown White market, weekend bohemians from below 96th street who saw Harlem as a Black exotica. It was the antithesis, so they thought, of Machine Civilization and uniformity. Cabarets, jazz clubs, risqué reviews—like the Cotton

Club, Connie's Inn or the Lafayette Theater – where one might find the dancer Josephine Baker or the blues singer Bessie Smith, were the culture du jour. Flappers and Cake Eaters – as youth were designated back in the day – shook their heineys to the new jazz, doing dances like the Charleston and the Black Bottom.

Harlem had become the town we know it as today, the Black capital of the United States. Some may argue that other Black towns, like Chicago, are more representative of Black success and entrepreneurship, but none can argue against it being the site of the Harlem Renaissance, the cultural, arts and political insurgency of the 1920s. It is by this that we recognize Harlem as the capital, where salon-owner Madame C.J. Walker, poet Langston Hughes, historians James Weldon Johnson and Arthur A. Schomburg, novelist Zora Neale Hurston and political philosopher Marcus Garvey were the sparkplugs of the movement. This movement, following the lead of luminaries like W.E.B. DuBois, redefined Black identity, and positioned themselves fully into the American intellectual community. Also in the 1920s and 30s several Hispanic theater companies sprung up on the east side to serve the growing cultural needs of the Spanish-speaking people; Teatro Compuamore, Teatro Triboro, Teatro Boriqua, & Teatro Hispano. Eastern Harlem is often referred to as Spanish Harlem or El Barrio. Harlem had enclaves of Italians, Irish, Russian-Polish Jews, well into the 1930s. It even had a Little Italy on the east side.

But in 1929, on the day known as Black Thursday, the Dow Jones Industrial Average plummeted, signifying the beginning of a decade long American depression. Half the American population stepped into poverty and onto the bread line. The economic character of Harlem changed forever. Not only was it experiencing drastic overcrowding problems, unemployment and poverty, but its arts and entertainment business collapsed also. Renaissance writers found a less responsive audience; the entire literary magazine industry of the area folded.

Several remedies were tried to fix the broken community. From the redlining policies of the Roosevelt administration to government-sponsored hi-rise apartment buildings north of 135th Street. But Harlem has never been the same since. Writers like Mamadou Chinyelu have come to call it a “third world community” in the middle of New York.

Recently, attempts at stimulating Harlem's economy have been made. In 1994 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development designated Harlem as one of the six sites for an Empowerment Zone. The ten-year designation was accompanied by a federal grant of \$100 million and a \$250 million federal tax credit. Several small businesses exist in Harlem along 125th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard, a good sign for the local community. But there has been in recent years a concurrent corporate invasion. Big name stores like Pathmark, Starbucks, Disney, Burger King and Blockbuster Video dominate the scene. At the same time Mart 125, a group of small independent businessmen and craftsmen in one building are

threatened with eviction by the city, which controls the property.

There is a paradox at work. It appears that the economic revitalization plan helps the community, but does it really? Is the sudden growth of corporate enterprises a coincidence? Surely not. It appears that the Empowerment Zone has proven a financial field day for big business, whose owners don't belong to the community and siphon away its wealth. One notices as well the refurbishment of the beautiful old brownstones that had for decades fallen into a bad state. What will the rents be like? Will the residents now working at Starbucks and Pathmark be able to afford to live in the nice apartments?

Harlem is a dynamic town. One can still walk the streets and in a day hear political lectures and music, see artists and craftsmen displaying their wares. There are several public parks and places to visit. The Apollo Theater, The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Sylvia's Restaurant, to name a few. City College is located there. Night spots and risqué entertainment still exist.

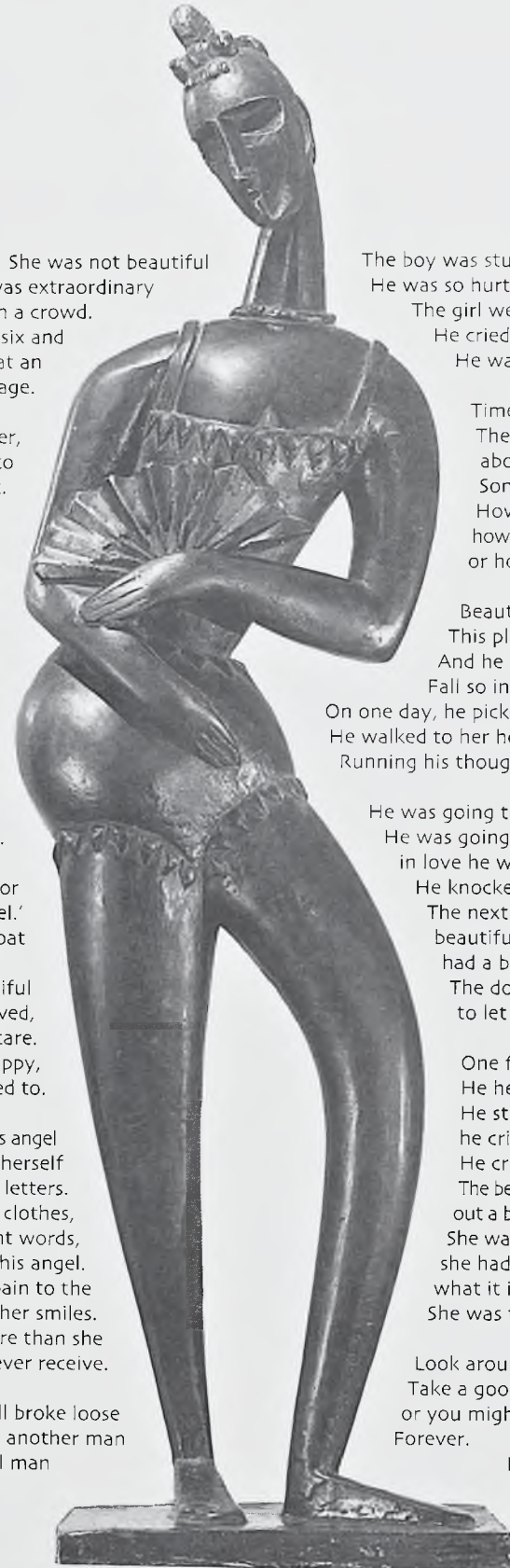
It has been the home to dancer/choreographer Alvin Ailey, writer James Baldwin, artist Romare Bearden, actress Ruby Dee, historian W.E.B. DuBois, musician/composer Duke Ellington, singer Ella Fitzgerald, social activist “Mother” Hale, musician Jimi Hendrix, singer Billie Holiday, magician Harry Houdini, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, African statesman Kwame Nkrumah, musician Charlie Parker, congressman Reverend Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., actor/singer/activist Paul Robeson, dancer/actor Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, boxer Sugar Ray Robinson and Pan African leader Malcolm X.

The Dutch may have settled Harlem, but the Black community put it on the map. Politicians enter the neighborhood and offer solutions, but what do they really know of Harlem? Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. knew of Harlem. Malcolm X knew of Harlem; these were leaders. They lived among the residents. It is not Al Gore's or Bill Bradley's place, or any federal government for that matter, to tell Harlem how to run Harlem. It is up to the community to run itself, and the city council, the state legislature and congress to provide the resources. Harlem knows what it needs.

This is by no means a complete study. To start to learn about the community I recommend reading Mamadou Chinyelu's *Harlem Ain't Nothing But A Third World Country*, visiting the Schomburg on 135th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard, and just walking around the area with a camera. Pick up a copy of *The Amsterdam News* or the Nation of Islam's *The Final Call*. A day touring Harlem is better than doing drugs. ☸

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She was not beautiful



She was not beautiful

Nothing about her was extraordinary

Nothing about her made her stand out in a crowd.

She grew up in a family of six and
being the eldest she learned responsibility at an
early age.

As she grew stronger and brighter,
she instilled a sort of light and cheer to
whomever she met.

She was not beautiful,
but she made others feel better about
themselves.

She meets a rebel boy who thinks he is all man
befriending him, she teaches him.

She teaches him how to read and
a little boost, the 'man' needed to go to college,

They become fast friends and she fell fast in
love with her rugged handsome student.

The 'man' then finds himself in love with a girl
A girl who was so beautiful

Her hair was a hallow of light around her
Her eyes the bluest blue of the ocean.

'Like an angel' he tells his tutor
'like a beautiful angel.'

The girl swallows a lump at her throat

She was not beautiful

She did not possess the heart of the one he loved,
but she did not care.

As long as he was happy,
she would be happy, or so she tried to.

She helped write the most beautiful letters to his angel

All the time visioning it was she herself
receiving those very letters.

And so the girl helped him choose the right clothes,
say the right words,

and buy the right gifts for his angel.

His angel brought him much joy and much pain to the
girl who cried behind her smiles.

But that never stopped her from giving more than she
will ever receive.

Then one day, all of hell broke loose

The angel he loved left him for another man
A richer more successful man

The boy was stunned

He was so hurt, he did not speak for days

The girl went to him

He cried on her shoulder and she cried with him.
He was hurt and she was too.

Time went by and so wounds heal

The boy realizes something
about his friend/tutor

Something he never realized before
How her laughter sounded heavenly and
how her smiles brightened up the darkest days,
or how simply beautiful she looked to him!

Beautiful.

This plain, simple girl was beautiful to him
And he began to fall.

Fall so in love with this beautiful girl

On one day, he picked up all his courage to see her
He walked to her house, nervous, and fidgeting,
Running his thoughts over and over his head.

He was going to tell her how beautiful she was to him

He was going to tell her how wonderfully
in love he was with her.

He knocked. No one was home.

The next day, he found out that the
beautiful girl he fell in love with
had a brain tumor that put her into a coma.

The doctors were grim and the family decided
to let her go.

One final time he got to see her

He held her hand
He stroked her hair and

he cried for this beautiful girl.

He cried, but it was too late.

The beautiful girl was buried and the heavens broke
out a beautiful spring shower, a cry for their loss.

She was the most beautiful girl in the world and
she had taught the rebel boy-man to love and
what it is to be loved.

She was the most beautiful girl in the world.

Look around. Isn't there a lot of plain faces?

Take a good look. A real good look,
or you might just miss out that beautiful person.
Forever.

I should know.... wouldn't I?

• Sculpture: *Horsewoman with Fan*
by Jacques Lipchitz, 1913 • Poem by Anonymous

Italian Romance

*I live in Aversa degli Abruzzi
a village at the foot of the Apennines*

*Where the summer nights are cool and the springs eternally beautiful
And in the chestnut fall, when hunting is best, the grape birds sing...*

*I've eaten several meals with the peasants of the woods
Had fine suppers accompanied by wondrous histories
told to me near the hearth by pleasant old women*

*I think it was when I descended into town from the top of the mountain
— It was torturous and ripped my lungs —
That I fell in love with Abruzzi*

*The shining site of her, as the warm wind and warm women soothed me
— Spring had bloomed and the pollen was thick in my nose —
Was the best medicine, was almost a panacea
And it did not hurt that Hemingway had written all about this place in *A Farewell to Arms**

*Here the strange woods, filled with shy animals which seem to want your touch, offer up delights
It has been many times that I caressed the live pelt of an Abruzzi deer as it licked my face*

*I befriended one
And we walked to these remains of three Roman temples
Before my eyes I saw the ancient festival of Molise
My animal friend, charmed by the dancing rhinoceri, hippos, bison and bear, ran off with them
While I entered a high ceilinged church
And decided to leave all labor to Venice*

*On the pew I fell asleep, dreamt of this hamlet's golden age
How I was truly in the queen's theater, in such love with Aversa degli Abruzzi and her arcadian comforts*

Louis Bardel



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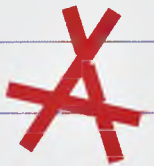
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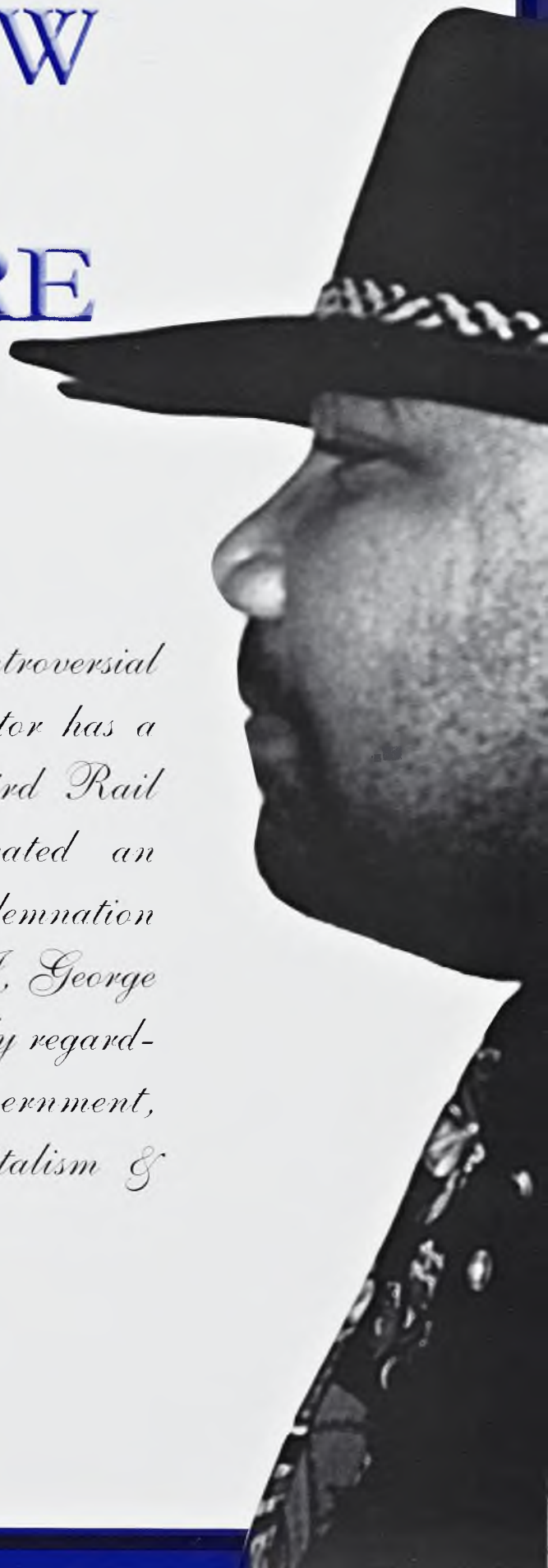
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INTERVIEW with HELL FIRE

George Springer, the most controversial Student Government Senator has a sit down to talk with Third Rail Magazine. Having defeated an impeachment attempt and condemnation from the President of C.S.I., George Springer waxes philosophically regarding C.S.I., Student Government, President Springer, Capitalism & World Revolution.



THIRD RAIL: George, in light of the fact that you've been condemned by CSI President Marlene Springer and have been accused of being racist towards Student Government senators, how does it feel to be one of the most controversial and outspoken students on campus?

GEORGE SPRINGER: To be honest with you, I do not think that I am one of the most controversial or outspoken students on campus. I will in no way steal the lime light from the very effective student leaders here on campus. For instance, Timothy Jenkins was bold enough to endure a psychological demotion in his job at CSI. He did this for the sake of defending the rights of CSI students. And Neil Schuldiner leads the forefront in making sure that students' legal rights are protected, not only on this campus but throughout the CUNY system. Then there is Bill (Willy) Wharton, one of the most outspoken critics of the CSI Administration and its anti-student policies - a true student advocate.

THIRD RAIL: But you must admit you have created your share of enemies with your own brand of student activism?

GEORGE SPRINGER: I must agree with you. I remember writing an article for the College Voice political journal, where I was highly critical of the CSI Student Government and its senators. The President of our college, who seemed to have nothing better to do, apologized to the Student Government for the article which I had written. She said that I should be ashamed of myself for writing the article.

THIRD RAIL: What in the article did she object to?

GEORGE SPRINGER: In the article, I referred to then-Student Government senator Andre Woods as an "Uncle Tom" and a "House Negro", and all hell broke loose. However, I stood my ground and I still hold the same views today. Mr. Woods is still an Uncle Tom and a House Nigger!!

THIRD RAIL: Those are some very strong and nasty characterizations. Why did you refer to Andre Woods in that manner?

GEORGE SPRINGER: Any student who ties their self-perception and respect to kissing the asses of the CSI Administration has sold out. Anyone who goes along with the racist CSI Administration and their policies is a sellout. But he neutralized himself. He forgot a few important points- you are here at CSI to educate yourself, not to be a slave for the Administration. He forgot his true reason for being here, so he placed himself in academic jeopardy. He is no longer able to function as a bureaucrat in this college,

because he is now on academic probation due to his GPA falling below 2.0. As *the Banner* [CSI's student newspaper] once reported on its cover two years ago, "GPA Below 2.0? Your Ass May Have To Go!" In addition, Mr. Woods, seems to be obsessed with pleasing certain minority groups of students here on campus. In fact, I cannot think of a more gratifying and self fulfilling role for Mr. Woods than to work as a Shamas [someone who cleans a synagogue].

THIRD RAIL: Because of your characterization of Andre Woods and other Student Government senators, there was an attempt to impeach you from Student Government. They alleged that you were being racist towards your fellow Student Government senators, correct?

GEORGE SPRINGER: YES, those were the allegations, and the attempt to impeach failed miserably. Let me state emphatically that I am not a racist.

TR: In a political commentary that was published on the website of the *Third Rail* (www.ThirdRailMag.com/sellouts.html), you accused Student Government senator Joanne Gallo of being a "Cracker". Is that why there was an attempt to impeach you?

“THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT IS RUN BY JOANNE GALLO, A VERY FRUSTRATED, MENOPAUSAL OLD WOMAN AND HER MUCH YOUNGER BOYTOY, MORGAN HEALY [STUDENT GOVERNMENT PRESIDENT]. THIS IS A WOMAN WHO OVER THE COURSE OF THREE YEARS HAS MANAGED TO OFFEND NEARLY EVERY MINORITY GROUP HERE ON CAMPUS WITH HER BLATANT AND SOMETIMES NOT SO BLATANT COMMENTS.”

GS: Yes, Joanne Gallo and her crew attempted to impeach me because I was highly critical of their inactions and their anti-student policies. After the *Third Rail* website published my editorial, which was highly critical of Joanne Gallo and Andre Woods, Student Government responded by first trying to shut down the *Third Rail* magazine and then they attempted to impeach me! Their attempts to destroy the first amendment rights of students by censoring the *Third Rail* failed. And their reasons for attempting to impeach me were ludicrous. They argued that I had made "racist" comments against Joanne Gallo and Andre Woods. But as I explained to them and to anyone who would listen, I am not a racist because I lack the institutional power to oppress others. What I am is a Black man who is not afraid to speak his mind. The Student Government is run by Joanne Gallo, a very frustrated, menopausal old woman and her

much younger boytoy, Morgan Healy [Student Government President]. This is a woman who over the course of three years has managed to offend nearly every minority group here on campus with her blatant and sometimes not so blatant comments.

TR: Joanne Gallo contended that the term "Cracker" is racist against whites. How do you respond to that line of reasoning?

GS: The fact of the matter is that when I used the term "Cracker"



it was not utilized in a racist context. Back in the days of slavery, the person that used to be the overseer and who whipped the slaves and kept them in line with the use of the whip, was referred to as the "cracker" - because he cracked the whips on the backs of the slaves. Whether the foreman was African-American or a white European, the slaves use to refer to him or her as a "cracker". And if you have ever attended any meeting of the present Student Government, you would have witnessed Joanne Gallo "cracking" her whip on the backs of her Student Government cronies, in particular her boytoy Morgan Healy, and her anti-intellectual comrades, Andre Woods, Melanie Goldstein and the rest of her ilk.

TR: From your remarks I see that you have no respect for your fellow Student Government senators?

GS: Ah, but I do. I have respect for a few, not many - just a few. I have respect for Avman El-Sayed, Renee Marhong, Teresa Williams, Thomas Healy and a few others. Despite the fact that Thomas Healy is the father of that slivering, spineless snake, Morgan Healy, Thomas seems progressive and could make a fine Student Government President. Of course, I would be a better Student Government President, because I could and would do a better job. Nevertheless, at this time the Presidency of Student Government is in a vacuum. We have a president who's afraid to make decisions. In fact, when he [Morgan Healy] was on the jury in the Alicia Parker case he was so afraid, he begged to be removed, fearing pending litigation.

TR: What's the "Alycia Parker situation"?

GS: Alycia Parker is an African American student who was almost expelled from school because she was defending herself against a racist student. Student Government President Morgan Healy was a juror on the committee that decided whether or not to expel Alycia Parker. On the last day of deliberations, Morgan was absent because he didn't want to be bothered and didn't want to get involved in the situation. Here we have an African American student who was defending herself against a racist student and the Student Government President didn't want to be bothered! It's shameful and disgusting!

TR: What are your other criticisms of Student Government President Morgan Healy?

GS: In addition to Morgan Healy abandoning Alycia Parker, he is so weak as a president that he had to bring along his daddy to give him support on Student Government. This president could not even organize a retreat for the student body here on campus. Instead he pads his resume, trying to hobnob with CUNY chancellor Leonard Goldstein and then returns

to talk about how "great the salad was". This is inept student leadership at its worse. These so-called student leaders are close to spending more money on food and snacks for themselves, than any other Student Government before them.

TR: What do you think of the new *Banner* and its staff?

GS: *The Banner* is suppose to be the official student newspaper of CSI, yet if you look at the debut issue of the new *Banner*, there isn't one single news story! In fact, if you look at the issue, with the exception of a couple of sports articles, almost the entire issue was a rehash of articles that have already appeared in the *CSI Gazetteer*. The only difference is that the *Gazetteer* has grammatically correct articles - something which the *Banner* lacks. If you look at the *Banner*, there was an article about

what Student Government does by Andre Woods. This article was sub-par compared to the article about Student Government that appeared in the *Gazetteer*. In addition, the interview conducted by Jimmy Haynes was not an objective interview with Administration, but was a propaganda piece written in favor of

Administration. The cover story, "HERSTORY", written by Morgan Healy, wasn't a news article, but was a puff piece designed to kiss the ass of Sandy Cooper, who is Morgan Healy's Women's History professor. In the article, Healy

revealed his true colors. His true male chauvinistic colors.

TR: Are you saying Morgan Healy, President of Student Government is sexist?

GS: I'm not saying that - Mr. Healy says that in his article. Healy approaches the article from a very paternalistic viewpoint. He basically takes a high handed, male chauvinistic attitude and tells women "this is what you need to do to solve your problems". Healy in no way seems to realize that he is part of the problem. He in no way identifies the fact that as a white European male in this country, *he* is the problem. He perpetuates the problem. He writes, "I write this article as a tribute to and as a wake-up call to women." He, the man, is giving women a wake-up call? Nowhere in the article does he say that he will in any way alleviate the problem. It's like telling the Jews, Hitler wasn't the problem but you Jews were. He argues that we should blame the victim. He tells woman that they should "pick up the proverbial reigns and resume where your mothers and grandmothers left off." Where is his call for men? Where are the men who will help solve the problem? Where is the call for men to cease their sexist ways?

TR: How did you feel about the rest of the *Banner*?

GS: The rest of the paper was filled with

“THE BANNER IS SUPPOSE TO BE THE OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF CSI, YET IF YOU LOOK AT THE DEBUT ISSUE OF THE NEW BANNER, THERE ISN'T ONE SINGLE NEWS STORY!”



Arts & Entertainment articles which were written decently by Christopher Bligh. About the only thing relating to news in the issue, was Tom Healy's editorial about the necessity of a bus going from Brooklyn directly to Staten Island. And from an aesthetic point of view, the issue hurt my eyes. The layout was disgusting and boring. The fonts they utilized were pathetic. Every single article or commentary in the *Banner* had at least 20 grammatical errors. It was embarrassing to read it. The issue was a total waste of the student activity fee. And if you look at the staff members, you can see that it is made up of the reactionary forces that are on Student Government. The only thing I expect from the *Banner* is a diatribe of conservative, right wing ranting.

TR: What is your view on the *College Voice* political journal?

GS: Well, as you know I was "purged" from the *College Voice*. By "purge", I mean that I was censored, my articles were not printed, and I was given many excuses, none of which held any truth. However, I do think the *College Voice* is one of the most progressive publications on campus. Sadly, our student body is far too reactionary to appreciate it.

TR: Why did you join the *College Voice* Liberation Organization?

GS: The *College Voice* Liberation Organization was a group of progressive students who felt that the *College Voice* was being run in a very Vanguardist fashion. Basically we felt that they were going to lead the struggle rather than have the masses of people leading the revolutionary struggle. I felt the *College Voice* was out of touch with the needs of the masses of the student body. They were militant, but not radical enough.

TR: What are your opinions of Marlene Springer, President of the College of Staten Island?

GS: No pun intended, but I don't think much of Springer. Basically, her ancestors might have been a mistress or slave master to an ancestor of mine. All we share is the same last name that slave masters gave my family. Our southern bell has done a damn good job of helping CUNY roll back and dismantle the educational opportunities of minorities in this city. And I must complement her passion in doing this. At the same time, I must denounce her right-wing rantings. I must take her to task on

her passion on destroying the rights of minorities in New York City and in CSI and CUNY. But now that we're on the topic of Marlene Springer, let me mention something that has been getting under my skin for the last couple of years. During a Student Government meeting with the her, Neil Schuldiner asked Marlene Springer, how she could award the Staten Island Borough President Guy Molinari, who is a known homophobe and racist, with the CSI President's Medal. Marlene responded that she didn't care what his political views were as long as he supported the college. So he asked her if she would award the President's medal to an explicitly racist, anti-Black politician and she responded that she would still award them her President's medal, as long as they supported the college. Dammit! Thank god, Hitler isn't alive to support and contribute to CSI, because she would take it and award her President's medal to Hitler. Marlene Springer has taken my college and lowered it to that of an institution of prostitution. She's pimping the college away to the highest monetary and political bidder. And I take umbrage with that! First Guy V. Molinari, and now the Yankees!

TR: Who are some professors that you admire and who are some professors that you consider to be sellouts?

GS: Jesus Christ, I'm not committing academic suicide! But what I will say is that we do have some great professors like Professor Calvin Holder, Charles Thomas and George Rozos.

TR: You quote Malcolm X a lot. Are you a Black Nationalist? Some have called you a racist and a hate monger, how do you perceive yourself?

GS: I am a humanist, with a special interest in Black Nationalism. I am a devout follower of Malcolm X and his legacy. I do not believe that Blacks will find genuine equality in capitalist America, alongside of

whites - that is the foundation of my nationalism. I speak of racial pride, while denouncing Blacks that have false consciousness; I criticize white America and their racist policies. Every time I look around here in New York my nationalism is heightened. I am also a humanist. I identify with all oppressed peoples, but before you can help others, you have to help your own people first. Blacks in this country and espe-



cially in this college have a false sense of consciousness.

TR: Do not you think that the NAACP is a strong civil rights organization? Many professors and Administrators on this campus are members. In fact, your fellow col-

“MARLENE SPRINGER HAS TAKEN MY COLLEGE AND LOWERED IT TO THAT OF AN INSTITUTION OF PROSTITUTION. SHE'S PIMPING THE COLLEGE AWAY TO THE HIGHEST MONETARY AND POLITICAL BIDDER.”

league and student T a r a M a r t i n received an award f r o m t h e m . How do y o u e x p l a i n t h a t ?

GS: Yes, t h e N A A C P was the

first and most influential civil rights organization. They were influential in striking down "the separate but equal" laws of segregation in education. But, is the NAACP a true Black civil rights organization? No! The NAACP has a number of whites serving on its board of directors. That is great for integration, but it also limits their independence. In fact, in some nationalist circles, it is argued that the NAACP cannot be a strong revolutionary force in the Black

revolution because its leadership is so dependent on whites. In fact, Marcus Garvey said, "no man will do as much for you as you will do for yourself". Garvey believed that the Blacks in the NAACP suffered from a sense of inferiority because they depended on whites so much. Regarding the issue that any academics are in the NAACP, that is nothing. Just because you have a college degree or Ph.D., does not mean you know who you are. Being an academic, does not mean one is educated. It could mean you have been well trained. Sadly, in our college, few professors teach critical thinking, they teach trained responses, they create watchdogs. Watchdogs who make empty defense of the state. In fact you have lots of Blacks who will attack you more brutally than their masters. This is the type of person who delights in the NAACP. I abhor the Black middle class. Give me the grassroots organizations, not the petty bourgeoisie reactionaries, who recline with their cognac after a "hard" day in the classroom, and philosophize about the Black

struggle, while having utopian dreams of integration.

TR: As a Black nationalist, what is your view on the Amadou Diallo situation?

GS: A very sad state of affairs. Personally, if I was on the prosecution, I would have tried to nullify the impact of the judge. I would have tried to explain the difference between the law and justice. I would have urged the jury to ignore the instructions of the judge and to

vote with their consciences. Law and justice, especially in this country are in conflict. What was done instead is that the powers that be sent a message to Blacks. The message was that you can be killed with impunity. This was done to instill a sense of fear and crush the spirits of Blacks. A sad day in the history of mankind and an eternal smear on the face of justice here in America.

TR: As a Black nationalist, do you support other forms of nationalism? Specifically, do you support the Jewish national liberation movement, a.k.a. Zionism?

GS: Personally, I support Zionism. I am all for a people wanting to master their own destiny. But you must be careful that in the quest for self-determination you do not in any way violate or trespass on the rights of others. Having said that though, I have

to say that I support the existence of the state of Israel, but I do not support any imperialist acts that may be taken against the Palestinian people. I am a humanist.

TR: Exactly, what imperialist acts are you talking about?

GS: I did not specifically mention any imperialist acts, but if any are undertaken against the Palestinian people I would never support it. However, to reiterate, I do support the state of Israel.

TR: What are your views of the Holocaust?

GS: Which Holocaust? There have been many, and all are or were unique. But it is wrong to take one holocaust and place it above any other. Individuals, must be careful not to think that they have experienced or have the only holocaust.

TR: What about the Jews and their Holocaust?

GS: What about my holocaust? Those with the means need to take their pain and anger which they feel about the past and make sure that it never happens to anyone ever again. Apply their pain to helping those people in places like Rwanda, Kosovo, and even Austria. Help those who are dying for no reason, stop economic exploitation, help all those who now face their own holocausts. In fact, Blacks had their own holocaust and are still going through it today. Just take a look at the executions of Dorismond Ferguson and Diallo by the NYPD, the US legal system, the prison institutions and the application of the death penalty, plus the capitalistic exploitation of third world countries. What is really shameful, is that Christopher Columbus, was actually more of a mass murderer than Hitler. If you combine the amount of people killed by Columbus and the Conquistadors, Hitler pales in comparison. Yet Columbus has states and locations named after him. He should be disgraced just like Hitler.

TR: Wait a minute. Two years ago, you wrote an article that was published in the College Voice, where you supported the death penalty. Have you changed your position on the death penalty?

GS: It's funny you should mention that. Basically every week I have to comment on that article. The fact of the matter is that I wrote that article when I was just becoming socially conscious and beginning my journalistic endeavors. Since then, I have revised and rethought my positions on the death penalty. Today

“ BUT I’LL SAY THIS, IF I WROTE THAT ARTICLE IN MY EARLIER YEARS, AND AFTER GOING THROUGH ALL THESE YEARS IN COLLEGE AND NOT REVISING SOME OF THE ARGUMENTS OR RETHINKING SOME OF MY POSITIONS, IT MEANS I LEARNED NOTHING! ”

I can say that I am ashamed to associate my name with that article. But I'll say this, if I wrote that article in my earlier years, and after going through all these years in college and not revising some of the arguments or rethinking some of my positions, it means I learned nothing! One thing I have always done, which many Black leaders have failed to do is to be critical of myself and to be able to accept criticism

and enact change. You see, that is the problem with leadership in the Black community today. People are demagogues. They hang onto a point and go on and on and on in the face of overwhelming evidence that they are wrong.

TR: What are your feelings on Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam?

GS: Farrakhan? A modern day version of Booker T. Washington. Farrakhan espouses his views on Black capitalism. He addresses issues like moral upliftment in the Black community while skillfully neglecting the more general problems of society like the inequalities and disenfranchisement that Blacks face. It's one thing to talk about "Blacks need to be more responsible and take care of their kids," but what Farrakhan needs to do is to look at the societal factors which cause Black men not to want to stay home with their families.

Let's address the problem of inequality. Let's address the problems of justice. Let's talk about how the US government mistreats African-Americans.

TR: Do you support the Black Capitalism espoused by Louis Gherkin, Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton?

GS: I think Malcolm said it best, "show me a Black capitalist and I'll show you a Black bloodsucker." Capitalism is a system based on exploitation. Sharpton, Farrakhan, and Jackson just eagerly await the opportunity to join their capitalist masters and the US government in exploiting the Black underclass of our society.

TR: It seems that you are arguing that agencies of the US have declared war against Blacks. What should the response from Blacks be?

GS: Personally, the most basic life forms occupying the face of this planet would defend themselves against attack. Other minorities have been systematically oppressed and exterminated by numerous nations. Blacks in this country need to arm themselves. They need to take direct action. If you're not willing to die for freedom and equality--

TR: Are you armed?

GS: I am always armed, I am armed with the power of the people. I am armed with the power of the truth! But am I armed with a weapon with what the NYPD uses? If anyone wants to know the answer to that, then they should threaten my existence or any of my Black brothers and sisters when I'm around. Then we will see who is armed with what.

TR: What direct actions have you taken recently?

GS: In most wars, you have blatant action, direct action and covert actions. I have worked with young people in my community building up my

community, being a role model for what a Black man should be, and letting them know that Blacks in this country should be non-violent until threatened with violence. I have been spreading the word.

TR: To bring the interview back to you, here is a question: you have stated publicly that you were homophobic, have you changed?

GS: Have I changed? Yes and no!. I realized that you cannot hate someone because of their sexual preferences. Gay people have a right to live and to be treated fairly like everyone else. I have befriended gay students and I enjoy their company as much as I do my other friends. But I am not bisexual or gay, and that is just my preference.

TR: Sure. Whatever you say. Do you support radical gay groups uprising against a homophobic, heterosexual society?

GS: Of course I do.

TR: How do you view the future of the College of Staten Island?

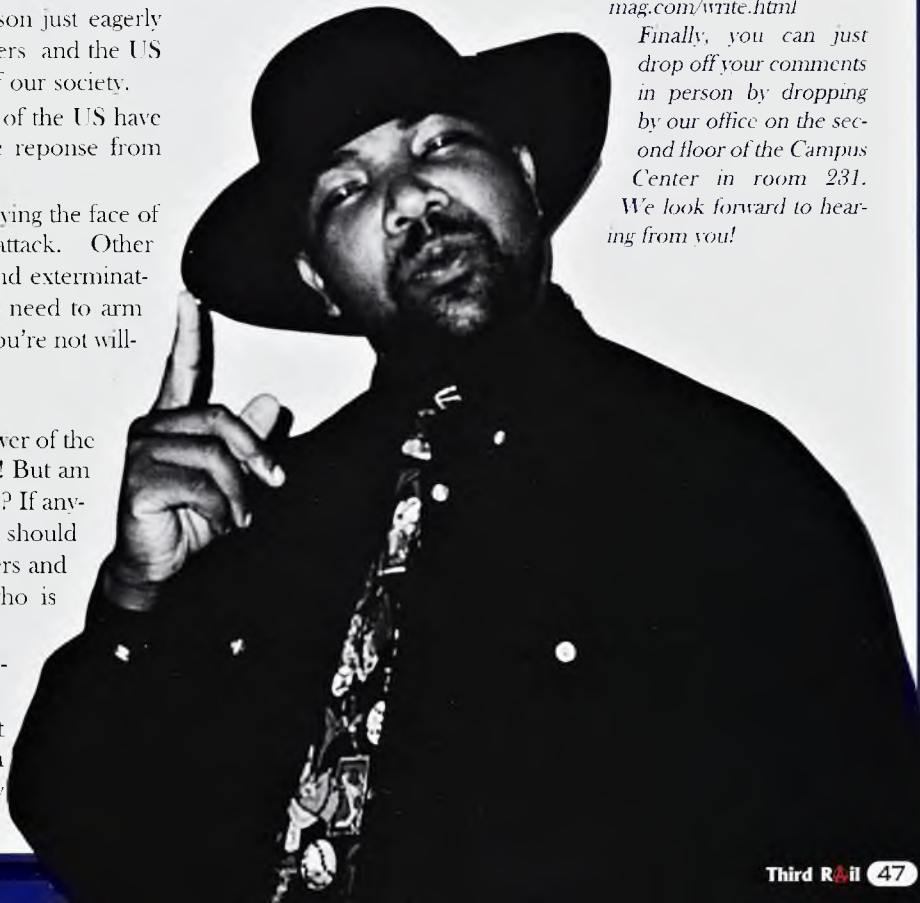
GS: Cloudy skies today, with the possibility of a hurricane approaching with a monsoon of ignorance.

TR: And for yourself?

GS: Hair today, gone tomorrow! ●

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Finally, you can just drop off your comments in person by dropping by our office on the second floor of the Campus Center in room 231. We look forward to hearing from you!



Please don't take my Air Jordans

my Air Jordans cost a hundred with tax
my suede starters jacket says raiders on the back
i'm stylin ... smilin ... lookin real mean cuz
it ain't about bein heard, just bein seen

my leather adidas baseball cap
matches my fake gucci backpack
there's nobody out there looks good as me
but the gear costs money it sure ain't free

and i got's no job no money at all
but it's easy to steal fresh gear from the mall
parents say i shouldn't but i know i should
gots ta do what I can to make sure i look
good

and the reason i have to look real fly
well to tell you the truth man i don't know why
i guess it makes me feel special inside
when i'm wearing fresh gear i don't have to
hide

but i really must get some new gear soon
or my ego will pop like a ten cent balloon
but security's tight at all the shops
every day there are more and more cops

my crew's laughing at me cuz i'm wearing old gear
schools almost over summer is near
and i'm sportin torn jordans and need some-
thing new
there's only one thing left to do

cut school Friday catch the subway downtown
check out my victims hanging around
maybe i'll get lucky and find easy prey
gots to get some new gear there's no other
way

i'm ready and willin i'm packing my gun
this is serious bizness it sure ain't no fun
but i can't have my posse laughing at me
i'll cop something dope just wait you'll see

come out a station west 4th near the park
brothers shootin hoops and someone remarks
HEY HOMES ... WHERE'D YOU GET
THOSE DEF NIKES
as i said to myself ... i likes em ... i likes

they were q-tip white bright and blinded my eyes
the red emblem of michael looked as if it could fly
not one spot of dirt the airs were brand new
had my pistol knew just what to do

Followed him very closely behind
waited until it was just the right time
made a left turn on houston pulled out my gun
and screamed
GIMME THEM JORDANS ... and he tried
ta run

took off fast but didn't get far
i fired (POW) he fell between two parked cars
he was caught/cryin/blood dripped on the street
and i snatched them Air Jordans off a his feet

while layin there dyin all he could say was
please ... don't take my Air Jordans away ...
you think he'd be worried about stayin alive
as i took off with the jordans there were
tears in his eyes

the very next day i bopped into school
with my brand new Air Jordans man i was cool
i killed to get them but hey ... i don't care
cuz now ... i needs a new jacket to wear

By reg e. gaines



