

# Third Rail

The Award-Winning Political Arts Magazine of the College of Staten Island :: 2005, Issue 2



# To a Gabonese Mask

Georges Rawiri

Oh, Bakota mask, your deep orbits  
Look at the present, mask of faded color  
That has resisted time and termites  
Impassive witness of a bygone era.  
Your serious air, your powerful, high forehead shelters  
The mysterious shadow where survives your thought  
You are the closed book where the old rites sleep,  
And you watch over us, austere and stiff  
You are the beloved ancestor, the supreme symbol  
Of an entire family today dispersed,  
But which each season brings back around you.  
You are the vital spirit, exempted by the gods,  
The distant messenger of an African history  
Of which the present will never forget the past.



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# THIRD RAIL

2005 :: ISSUE 2

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## TERRI SCHIAVO

by P. Melissa Fisher,  
Editor-in-Chief



I am sick to death of the religious right trying to dictate to the rest of us how we choose to live or not to live. Sick to death—doesn't that just about sum up the recent events surrounding the death of Terry Schiavo? This woman was brain-dead for a decade and a half, why should she have been forced to live like that if, as her husband stated, it was against her wishes? How many of us would want to be kept alive by artificial means if it meant a life that only fit the biological definition? In that vegetative state, the best Terri Schiavo could hope for was to be a financial and emotional burden on her family until her body caught up with her brain. Her husband, Michael, simply did what he felt would carry out his wife's wishes and finally restore peace to her family.

In a statement released by Mr. Schiavo he said, "I never wanted Terri to die. I still don't. After more than seven years of desperately searching for a cure for Terri, the death of my own mother helped me realize that I was fooling myself. More important, I was hiding behind my hope, and selfishly ignoring Terri's wishes. I wanted my wife to be with me so much that I denied her true condition. Terri told me on several occasions before this happened that she would not want to live in her current condition." These are not the words of a callous man who didn't truly care for his wife. It's not like he needed to make appearances; the law was on his side.

It was the Schindlers, Terri Schiavo's family of origin, that did the grandstanding. Earlier in his statement, Mr. Schiavo stated that he wished that the videos that his in-laws were showing were true, but they weren't. The truth is that she was completely unresponsive.

Mrs. Schiavo's family is using this as a means to move the agenda of the conservative right, by claiming that Mr. Schiavo was only interested in killing Mrs. Schiavo so that he could marry another woman, they portrayed him as an uncaring and unfeeling man who just wanted to be rid of his responsibility to his wife. However, according to Wikipedia, a free online encyclopedia, "Hospice staff [caring for Mrs. Schiavo] describe Mr. Schiavo as a very supportive husband who berated nurses for not taking better care of his wife; in 1994 the hospice attempted (unsuccessfully) to get a restraining order against him because he was demanding more attention for his wife at the expense of other patients' care." The article goes on to say that, thanks to Mr. Schiavo's diligence, after fifteen bed-ridden years, she had not suffered a single bedsore. Many perfectly cognizant people

in nursing homes do not receive the level of loving attention from their families that this comatose woman did.

The religious right has determined that euthanasia is fine for healthy unwanted animals, but not for brain-dead people lingering in hospitals with no hope for recovery. They are to exist as long as an imaginary being whose rules were outdated long ago deems fit. This is strange because if this being wanted these unfortunate people to live, they would go on with or without the aid of machinery (I believe it's called a miracle). Mrs. Schiavo's family, being devout Catholics, are firmly planted in this foolish ideology. They have taken their case to the current ultra-conservative government and actually gotten congress to reconvene just to rule on this case. Congress is too busy and/or unconcerned with such



Terri Schiavo

Bob Schindler



trivialities as an insane and unnecessary war in Iraq, an education system that constantly fails to educate, air barely fit to breathe and skyrocketing energy costs to name but a few of the issues our government is supposed to handle. Yet they had no problem with reconvening just to de-

termine what power they could exert to overrule a woman's final wish, burning the midnight oil to spare the life of this one woman who only wants to die.

The problem boils down to the fact that Mrs. Schiavo did not have a living will. Too many of us don't. I know that it's one of the things that people mean to do; it's on my list, too. But let this be a public record that if I am ever in the condition that Terri Schiavo is in—PULL THE PLUG—I DON'T WANT TO LIVE LIKE THAT! This is something my husband and I have talked about many times. This is not to say that either of us is at any risk of it happening; it's just something that couples talk about. We have also discussed who should raise our daughter, should we both die at the same time and she is too young to be on her own. Responsible people do think of such things and want to make sure that their chosen course of action is known, at least to each other. I don't think that my husband and I are unusual in that, so isn't it

possible that Michael and Terri Schiavo had similar discussions and that he knew that this would be what she would want? Like me, I believe that Terri Schiavo would have discussed these things with her husband, but not necessarily her family. Given the vigor with which her family fought Mrs. Schiavo's right to die, it probably would have just led to unnecessary arguments that would have proved irrelevant anyway.

As a wife and mother, I understand the severity of the pain that all of Mrs. Schiavo's family is going through, both her husband and her family of origin. I know just how deeply a parent's love runs and how hard it is to let go in even the most routine situations. I have experienced the loss of young people I have loved and watched a child almost as dear to me as my own suffer terribly to regain her health. But I also understand that we do have to let go, and that, in a very real sense, Terri Schiavo was gone for years before she died. All her loved ones have my deepest sympathy and condolences, but it is time for the suffering to end for all of you. The government, on the other hand, needs to learn to take care of what their constituents need for them to legislate and let personal decisions remain just that—personal.

IN MEMORIAM

PROFESSOR  
FRANÇOIS

*Ngolet*  
1961-2005



This past April saw the untimely and surprising passing of one of the most beloved faculty members on campus, Professor François Ngolet. Years ago, as vice-president of the African Studies club, I had the unique opportunity of working closely with Professor Ngolet and of appreciating both his love of scholarship and his joy and gift for teaching; with the latter *never* taking precedence over the former. Oftentimes, one would find Professor Ngolet at 10:30 pm in his office conducting research for an article or a book. But he would always gladly set aside research for conversation with students such as myself, even at such a late hour. Through the years, Professor Ngolet became much more than a teacher or mentor, he became a friend, both to myself and to all those who have had the pleasure of experiencing any of his courses.

*-Neil Schuldiner*

THE FOLLOWING IS THE EULOGY PRESENTED BY HISTORY PROFESSOR MICHAEL S. FOLEY  
AT THE FUNERAL FOR PROFESSOR FRANÇOIS NGOLET.

I have been asked to speak on behalf of the history department at the College of Staten Island, to offer some of our collective memories of our colleague and friend, François.

(It's worth pointing out that he would have hated the very idea of such a thing. Despite his natural charisma, he did not crave the spotlight and shied away from being the center of attention).

But I suspect that, like most of you, while our department has struggled to come to terms with our sudden loss, we have spent much of the week trying to prop each other up by recalling the best of the times we have spent with François.

We could, of course, spend a week or more telling stories and recounting all of François's wonderful qualities -- but I will try not to go on too long, and limit myself to

some of the essentials as we were lucky enough to experience them at the College.

First, for those of us who knew him as a scholar, it is maybe easiest to remember François as a man who possessed incredible intellectual gifts and brought them to bear not only on important scholarly issues but also on his teaching. As our department chairman, Howard Weiner, reminded us yesterday, François was a man who lived and breathed what he wrote about and what he taught.

Delivered into this world by Dr. Albert Schweitzer, he grew up in Gabon, was educated in France, and built a career in New York:

He was uniquely qualified to teach global history, don't you think?

And he built a reputation in the city and beyond as an intellectual

star, committed to radical scholarship that fundamentally changed the way historians and other scholars looked at the world -- (i.e., not only Africa).

But even more casually, as we knew him, on a day-to-day basis, François reveled in the life of the mind.

He devoured books and articles not only on subjects related to his work, but on other wide-ranging topics. His office is an obstacle course of stacks -- books and papers that only the most capacious mind could absorb.

And when he took a break from his own work -- which was rare -- he delighted in New York's museums and cultural institutions.

And I daresay that the one thing he liked to watch on television -- soccer (especially during the World Cup) he saw as an intellectual and





artistic prize to be cherished. (I was working on him with baseball).

That broad intellectual grounding branched off into several other facets of his personality: that of hallway philosopher, comic, and colleague.

François, more than any of us, claimed not only his office but also the hallway as his extended territory.

If you were to stand in our corridor, always, day and night, during the semester or breaks, you could count on hearing National Public Radio blaring from his office. (This only subsidized for passionate discussions between François and his students in English or French). Sometimes, both of our office doors would be closed (my office is across the hall) and I could still hear that radio.

In the volatile political times in which we live, the radio did not often bring news François liked and we knew this because we would often hear a loud "Awwwww.....Unbelievable!" from behind the door followed by François bounding out of the office to tell anyone nearby about the outrage of the day. This inevitably included, after explaining something ridiculous or appalling he had heard, an exclamation of "Oh, please!"

By contrast, on those few occasions when he heard something he liked, usually a witty retort or some political misdeed exposed, there would be this rolling series of laughs -- like chimes from a bell tower -- followed by the same familiar opening of the door and a burst of conversation.

I will miss those conversations, standing in the corridor, solving the problems of the world: not only for the intellectual give and take, but for the experience of seeing François, literally in action.

The sheer physicality of the way he expressed himself in these discussions, so animated (with hands and

arms flying), so enthusiastic, but always respectful of all views -- this is one of the things we will remember most, I think. In these discussions, as you spoke, he seemed to hang on your every word, never averting his gaze (and often looking over his glasses). And when you made a good point, he rewarded you with an "Absolutely!" and slapped his hands together.

It's clear, too, that that physicality extended to the classroom where he paced back and forth, swirling arms like windmills, touching the maps and especially the chalkboard -- so much so that when we would see him return to his office, it was as though he'd emerged from battle, only he was splattered in chalk dust: it would be all over his crisp suit, his hands, face, and hair.

If you pointed this out to him, he would laugh and sort of shake his head, like he didn't know how it happened.

It's that laugh, too, that lingers with us, right?

That big, bright smile, followed by that utterly musical laugh. Jazz musicians, I am convinced, spend a lifetime trying to come up with something as original as that laugh. But François always had it, and put it to good use as one of the best comics in the department.

Recently, following the last presidential election (which you no doubt know did NOT go the way François wanted it to), Rich Lufrano and I were standing in the department dissecting it when François bounded out of his office, dressed impeccably (as always), only, uncharacteristically, he had on a bow tie. And when Rich and I looked at him a little quizzically, he burst, "Look! I am a Republican! Ah-ha, ha, ha." On another occasion,

when Rich Lufrano and Dick Powers saw François on campus, he was wearing a new cap (like an English driving cap or golf cap).

Dick: Oh, François, do you play golf?

François: Oh, no, no: too bourgeois.

It was a reasonable question, though. François was the best dressed Marxist I've ever met. (American Marxists, you know, go out of their way to look disheveled).

And Cathy Lavender likes to tell the story of when François and others from the department went to Seattle for a conference. During a break from interviewing job candidates, Cathy, François, and Warrick (Cathy's husband) went to the Seattle Aquarium where they had a special exhibition on exotic African fish. As they moved through the exhibit, looking at the tanks amid hushed tones usually reserved for art museums, François looked intently at the fish, and pointed to one apparently rare species and said, "you know, that one tastes very good in a butter sauce." (The staff did not find this amusing).

He could also be hilarious without intending it, but in an endearing way, such as the one time I made the mistake of showing up in the office one summer day without a beard. We spoke for a few minutes, and I could see the puzzled look on his face, before he said, "so, what has happened, my friend? You have suddenly put on a lot of weight?" I said, "no, I just don't have a beard hiding my weight anymore."

He felt a little bad, but the next week, when the beard had started to come back in, he said, "ah, yes, that

looks much better."

And likewise, the time he told Cathy just because she's a feminist didn't mean she couldn't wear make-up. In France, he said, all the feminists are comfortable wearing make-up; you know, it doesn't affect their politics.

These last two stories, while funny, came from his genuine concern for us as colleagues and friends. He wanted the best for us. He was completely selfless.

In every way, as a colleague, this was the way he operated. As the first professor hired in our department after a 20 year hiring freeze, he took it upon himself to welcome all of us who came after him, to take us under his wing and help us negotiate our way through the otherwise daunting CUNYverse. He pushed us, gently, to work steadily on our research, and he ran interference for us, taking committee assignments and other administrative jobs, so we wouldn't have to (and even though it slowed the progress he made on his own research and writing).

Recently, he and I openly disagreed for, I think, the first time in a department meeting. I thought he was wrong; he thought I was wrong; and I felt terrible. After the weekend passed, and when I next saw him in the department, I told him I wanted to be sure that there were no hard feelings (academics have been known to hold grudges for 30 or 40 years). He laughed and hugged me -- a big hug. "We will never be like that" he said.

That compassionate, loving side is what I will cling to. In particular, I will cling to my memories of François as a devoted, loving husband, as a father to two beautiful children, and as

my dear friend.

These three are all connected for me. When I came to CSI, François and I had both just come through a similar experience through which we had become long-distance fathers. Our friendship deepened as we spent many hours discussing the challenges of balancing work and family life. He worked so hard to support his family, and although the circumstances were sometimes difficult, and he sometimes worked himself to the point of exhaustion, he never complained. Instead our discussions focused on the children. When I would ask about Tristane and Malina, that trademark smile would light up -- he was so proud of them. And nothing pleased him as much as visiting with his kids or having them visit him. Whenever I struggled with my own situation, François's example never failed to inspire me. It was a gift for me to meet him when I did.

Finally, all of us in the department (and, I'm sure, most of you here), will most remember François as our friend and more -- as our brother. When we left the hospital on Sunday, I told my wife that "François is the best friend I have in the department; I can't imagine life without him." On Monday, when I went into the office, though, I realized that that was true for many people; there are a number of us who could make that claim. How many people can you say that about?

It was the way he made each of us feel, that we not only had a best friend, but, really, a brother. He would invite you -- literally -- he would ask you to unload your burden on him, but rarely allowed us to return the fa-

vor. When he did let down his guard, on few occasions, and let on that he was exasperated or worried or struggling in any way, he wouldn't let us take it on like he would for us.

He would, instead, stand, looking at the ground, rubbing his hand over his head (I can't do it the same because we have different hair styles). And he would shake his head, and just say, "Ah.....Life" as if to say, "Ah, what can we do? It's all a mystery...."

But as we have talked all week, one of the most persistent memories for all of us is one that best conveys his gift for making us feel comfortable, like family, like we were his brothers and sisters -- it is the way he would end conversations. He would shake your hand, or hold your hand, smile, and direct his gaze straight into your eyes, and say "OK, my friend. We speak." It was the same for everyone. And it made us all one in some communal, family kind of way. (I know this seems trite, to say that co-workers make up a family, but it's the only way I can describe it, and, more important, it was pure François -- he really made us feel this way).

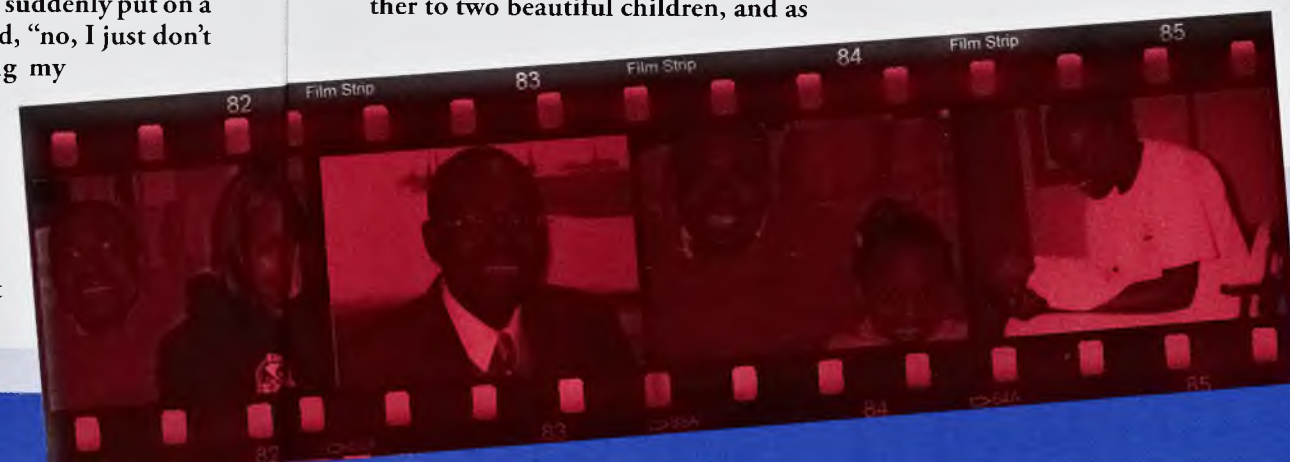
And that parting comment also told us there would be more. "We speak": We would speak again. It was hopeful.

So, François, Mon Ami, I say to you, on behalf of your brothers and sisters at CSI, and, if I may, on behalf of everyone here: OK, my friend. We speak.

Thank you.



PROFESSOR MICHAEL S. FOLEY





They do not know  
What to do with us.  
They know not  
How to neutralize  
Our acid tongues  
And basic creative liberties.  
In a society  
Where dissent is criminal  
And thought is dictated,  
We the poets  
Prevail  
And unite  
With artists of all disciplines  
And those  
With enough courage  
And curiosity  
To see through our lenses.  
We bear the emotions of every man.  
All the while  
Living the lives  
We see fit for ourselves.  
Through our collective brooding,  
We try to improve the world

One community  
At a time.  
The minute an artist  
Admits defeat  
Is the day  
He or she  
Becomes uninspired.  
Soulless.  
Possessing the insight of fungus.  
We the poets  
Bite back.  
Ripping into the status quo  
Like pit bulls.  
Our bites:  
Equally as damaging as our barks.  
Barks usually suffice.  
I wish,  
However,  
That we can rise against  
Enemies of art.  
The rapists  
Of minds.  
And immerse ourselves  
With the inner peace  
We seek to find  
And pass it on  
So we may build foundations  
For better lives.  
May we not interpret arms  
Extended in embrace  
As one-two punches  
To the face.  
May we be as open  
As the wounds  
And trauma within  
So that hatred, angst, and bitterness

Surely  
Can be granulated  
And distilled  
Into the purest  
Elixir of love.  
May we truly  
Be united.  
May our unity  
Be true.  
We can not afford  
To waste our words  
Like sperm  
Jacked off  
Into a toilet.  
Silence is blasphemy.

Not sharing is cruelty.  
Not growing is counter-productivity.  
For many of us,  
We had to die.  
Kill ourselves exponentially.  
Mourn the loss  
Of our collective naïveté  
Before we straddled these ballpoints,  
Unleashing their wrath  
Above and behind  
Thin blue lines.  
Sometimes,  
They are overshadowed  
By ivory battlefields  
With serif land mines.

We the poets  
Must not surrender  
To our subliminal  
And self-imposed limitations,  
For artists have few boundaries.  
If not,  
None whatsoever.  
Our metaphoric mêlées  
And alliterative altercations  
Shall result in an inner-conflict resolution  
For the purpose of initiating  
A revolution.  
With our senses and our sensibilities  
As our shields  
And our weapons of mass production  
Of ideas outside the box.  
Never to be mass-manufactured  
Or sold in jewel cases  
Courtesy of Columbia House.  
We the poets  
Must aim to detach our beings  
From ourselves  
On occasion.  
We must aim  
Not to alienate  
On purpose  
Or turn against each other  
With razors  
Embedded within tongues  
With which we  
Repeatedly slit limbs.  
Nor must we verbally masturbate  
To our own reflections  
Upon metal tripods.  
We the poets  
Must speak of substance  
Bleeding from open wounds.  
Riddled with these letters:

N  
a  
c  
i  
A.K.A.  
S  
A  
L  
T

We the poets  
Must display the deference  
That we so often lack  
From external stimuli.  
We the poets  
Will remove the daggers from our backs,  
Twisted and scourging  
Folded skin.  
We the poets  
Feel pain but manage to carry on.  
We the poets  
Will someday rule the world.

# WE THE POETS

JACK FREEDMAN

## GHOST POETRY

College hikes tuition starts going up  
Next thing you know financial aid slowing up  
minorities soon be the majority growing up  
The uncle sam find another way to fuck up  
my math teacher teach quick out of her folder  
won't slow it up for this GED Soldier

BY ANONYMOUS

FOUND THIS ON A  
CHALK BOARD IN  
15-111 ON  
DECEMBER 11, 2003;



# May-day

(formerly weaponry)

C'mon, if that was the objective  
Why not just use a gun?  
There is the fear that bullets ricochet  
But there are at least 1000 other ways  
If the aim was really to maim me!

Put a knife in my black back  
Till the red rages out in orchestra  
And I lie in shambles on the floor.  
Alternately, avoid violence,  
Just inject me with the poison now.

Lace it through my liquor  
With one of your corner stores,  
Then wait while my ignorant pupils dilate  
And my emotional heart flutters,  
While I hand in my resume.

*words. . . . Dwight Dunkley*



# Requiem For Arafat

By Shawn Fisher

In November of 2004 passed a man known by many labels: president, statesman, and terrorist to cite a few; but his name was Yasser Arafat. To most in the western world he was a rogue yet to many people of the Middle East, and most especially to the peoples of Palestine, he was their hero. Although this fact may seem incomprehensible to most in the United States, we should pause and consider that during the struggle for our own independence General Washington, then leader of the colonial army, was looked upon as a terrorist and a rogue by England. Washington fought for independence in a land where England had declared its sovereignty and Washington had violated the rules of war as it was practiced by the British Redcoats. While General Washington's enemy fought with state of the art equipment and had unlimited resources and wealth, the General and his patriots were often short of supplies and at times unable to pay his soldiers, yet they continued to follow him into battle, on the hope that one day they would be free of English tyranny. Sound familiar, it should, as a similar conflict has been playing out for the last fifty years in the Middle East with Yasser Arafat no different in his beliefs and convictions than that of Washington. The only thing that separates the past from the present battle against tyranny is the media and most importantly, who controls it. They say that history is written by the victors, but in an age of global information, history is written before it happens and often by those who would treat the media as a tool of propaganda and not as a magnifying glass of objectivity. If the BBC had existed in 1776 how would Washington have been portrayed? Not as a hero rather more likely he too would have been branded a terrorist— just like Arafat.

Arafat was born in 1929 and went on to study at the University of Cairo, as a student he was one of the first of the Palestinians (a name assigned to the people of the region by the British Empire in 1918) to recognize that the creation of a new state in the region known as Palestine by the western powers would be the precursor to the oppression of his people. Prior to the later half of the twentieth century, the peoples of Palestine

had coexisted for thousands of years within various foreign empires such as the Egyptians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Turks and even the first Hebrew nation (if biblical history can be considered accurate). It was not until the creation of this new western state within the region known as the Fertile Crescent in 1948 that the Palestinians began to experience true oppression. This new state encroached upon the homes, businesses and farms of Palestinians many of whom had known no other lands for thousands of years. Unwilling to sit idly by as his people suffered, much like the Native Americans (who were slowly forced out of existence under the guise of the United States' Manifest Destiny) Arafat chose to answer the call of his fellow patriots. During the late 1950's and 1960's Arafat helped to found and went on to lead the guerilla group Al Fatah to fight for the independence of Palestine which was now under the tyrannical rule of the new western state.

From leading Al Fatah, Arafat went on to help form the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) during the late 1960's with a coalition of dedicated men and women intent

## 1929—2004



on stemming back the attritional takeover of Palestine by its domineering western neighbor. Gaining the confidence of the Arab world during the 1970's and being named as the leader of the PLO, Arafat would also gain an equally notorious reputation in the western world where the media had accepted the label of terrorist slapped upon him by his enemies at face value. This label was applied to him and his soldiers for using military tactics deemed unconventional to the western world, but as the axiom goes "one man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter."

What was this tactic that so monsterized Arafat in the eyes of the west, well it was as divine as the wind? Kamikaze, the Japanese named given to those soldiers in the Japanese Imperial Military during World War Two who sacrificed their own life in defense for their Emperor and nation was considered by the Bushido Code to be a perfectly acceptable practice of warfare by Japan. Even the United States has always considered self sacrifice to be honorable in war. Though never instituted like in Japan or Palestine, the effort would always be rewarded post-sacrifice. However when Arafat and the PLO began the same practice to save their own nation they were shunned and viewed as criminals and terrorists by the west. Yet when Palestine's invaders launch a missile from miles away into a populated area it only viewed as a necessity of war that may have collateral damage. Collateral damage is a word used often to describe dead women and children by an oppressing power, although when Arafat struck back in similar fashion against he enemies civilian population using his divine wind suddenly the enemies' dead were victims. If killing civilians is to be considered a criminal act by the west then perhaps they should first

# POLITICAL DISCOURSE

## Requiem For Arafat



apologize to France whose civilian population was bombed relentlessly during World War II by the very Allied forces who were suppose to be its saviors.

Not deterred by the propaganda war against him Arafat went from soldier to statesman during the 1980's as he began negotiation with his nation's oppressors. As the western media-now a fully global entity-would unintentionally undo its own attempts to bend the true nature of Palestine's occupation. As images of massacred Palestinians fed the hunger of the western populace for blood and violent images, soon many western nations began to condemn the war crimes committed against Palestine. Such as American citizen Rachel Corrie who fought for Palestinian rights until she was murdered with a bulldozer in 2003 as she stood unarmed in defense of Palestinian homes being destroyed by the tyrannical western state.

Arafat, now a statesman and general, made great strides on the world stage through a combination of both the sword and the pen he won limited independent rule for part of Palestine in Jericho and the Gaza Strip. This 1993/94 accord would lead to the formation of the Palestine National Authority. It would also lead Arafat to share the Noble Peace Prize with Shimon Peres, and Yitzhak Rabin, who were both noted leaders of the tyrannical western state. Ironically Yitzhak Rabin would be murdered in cold blood by one of



his countrymen for daring to want peace with Palestine. But not even the murderous populace of Palestine's enemy could stem the tide of Arafat's efforts at this point, as Arafat became the first president of the Palestine National Authority.

In his final years Arafat would be unjustly imprisoned by his nation's enemies and yet he would continue to work towards fully establishing the sovereignty of Palestine and finally freeing it from its imperial neighbor. Arafat passed on before finishing the work he had started so many decades ago, and never seeing his dream come to fruition. Yet he has accomplished one thing that no nation will ever be able to take away, because even if it should take another hundred years before Palestine has been freed from oppression Arafat has already achieved a more profound victory. He has shown Palestinians that one man can make a difference even when faced with overwhelming odds. For all the 'haves' that Palestine's oppressor has; money, media favoritism, superior weapons technology there is one thing Arafat has instilled in his nation, one thing that the push button Empire has never had and sadly may never understand and that gift Arafat gave Palestine is honor.

**Agree or Disagree?  
Send us your responses to:**

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Room 1C-207  
Staten Island, NY 10314-4811

I also do not know how to use a period in speech I just keep going and going... you might want to think about that.



I'm just mad cause none of my pants fit my anorexic ass... you might want to think of that as well...  
That's a joke  
Professor Jordan

I would not know a good piece of art if it stepped me in the face "you might want to think about that!" I could not draw a straight line with a ruler so I don't actually know much about art but, I do have my very own opinion, you however, may not, you might want to think about that before you register for my class...

HA HA HA  
I don't know the difference of a C or an A. I give everyone the same grade unless they Kiss my Ass!!  
You might want to think about that... blah blah

Posted around the Performance Arts Center in May 2004

Sharing is caring,  
But what is it that we have?  
All that we are doing is swearing.

We are so strong,  
Yet we use it for bad.  
We maim others to save ourselves.  
How savage we are  
And how sad.

The warriors mistake war for reality.  
For them, it may be a necessity.  
But what about for us?  
We should not have to fuss  
About whether or not  
We should place our trust  
In those that might send  
Us around the next bend.

We have families here  
That have plenty of fear  
For what might happen  
If we are to leave this place  
And maybe never see our face  
Again in this life.

They die inside.  
Between you and I,  
Can you even imagine  
the hurt they must feel?  
Losing their loved ones  
is not a great deal.

The power is not ours.  
Decisions are not ours.  
We are victims,  
By and large



Today, everyone is a soldier.  
We all deal with pain.

All that we can hope for  
Is that it will drain

Somewhere other than here

But that will just mean

That someone else will suffer.

Can war really help us

To bring good back to us?

Or will it just cause more bad things

To make our ears ring?

Will our names be revered  
In the history books?

Will they construct great statues

That will get plenty of looks?

Or will we just be names,

Someone to be blamed

For continuing war

And trying to settle a score?

There have been times  
of peace and rest.

They were the best.

Now all we can think about

Is war

And we cannot figure out

How to stop it

Or drop it.

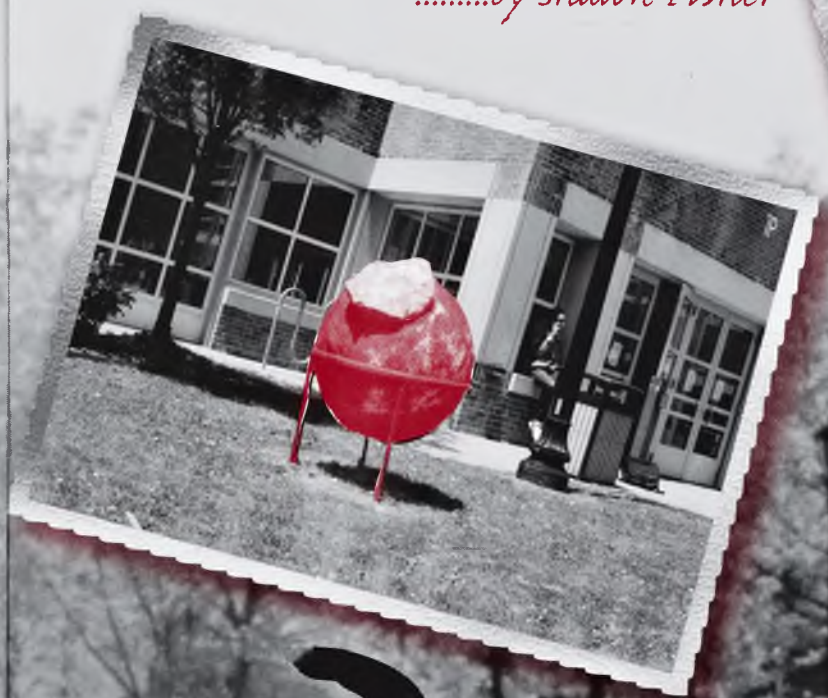
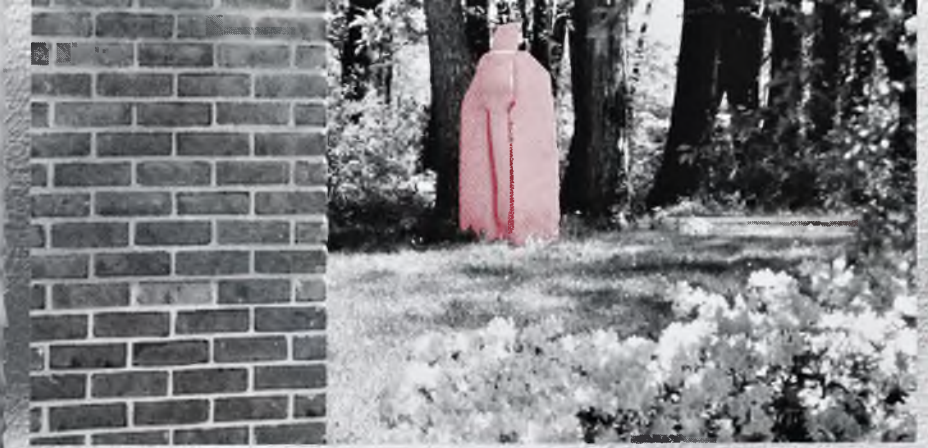
There are plenty of soldiers  
Up in the sky  
Watching us fight,  
Watching us die.

They now wear white  
Instead of the red.

We can wear white, too  
When we're dead.

# CSI CAMPUS SCULPTURES

*A pictorial of "art" donated by some of the college's wealthiest donors  
.....by Shawn Fisher*





# If You Only Knew

By Kara Donnelly

You think I don't care  
You believe I am uninterested  
You guess I am unconcerned

But you're wrong

I listen to your problems  
I listen to your pleas  
I listen to your crying

\*Oh... you are crying...\*

You don't know how much I want you  
to just  
hold me,  
comfort me,  
and embrace me

You don't know how much I love you  
How much I want to be with you

My heart racks with emotions

I want to tell you  
I don't want to tell you

I'm afraid  
I'm happy  
I'm sad  
I'm glad

I feel so alive when  
you're near me  
and so dead  
when you are not

It causes me so much pain  
to keep this big secret a secret  
And I know you would listen to me  
You would try and help me  
But I know that  
you would also keep your  
true feelings hidden

You would act as if  
what I said meant nothing  
But inside,  
you would be uncomfortable  
Uneasy  
And I don't want to do that  
to you  
So I keep all my feelings  
inside of me,  
inside my heart

If you knew...  
I'm afraid that would ruin our  
friendship  
Oh, but only if you knew...  
I want to let those three little  
words out..  
I want you to hear them  
But it's so hard to say

I  
Love  
You

Small words,  
but they hold so much...  
I want to tell you  
I want for you to know  
I want you to tell me  
But I would rather keep my secret,  
than destroy the relationship  
we have  
But if only you knew...

If only you knew...

## The Miseducation of Kara Donnelly

Kara Donnelly is a second-year student at the College of Staten Island. She is an open lesbian who is active with NYPIRG and has recently joined the staff of *Third Rail Magazine*. What makes Kara's story even more interesting is the fact that she was once president of the Young Republicans, Staten Island chapter. She was gracious enough to sit down with me and talk about her journey and the ramifications her sexuality and politics have had on her life. The following is part 1 of that interview; part 2 will be in the August, 2005 issue of *Third Rail Magazine*.

**Third Rail (TR):** What lead you, in the first place, to join the Young Republicans (YRs), and lead that kind of life?

**Kara Donnelly (KD):** Back in my sophomore year, of high school, I went through St. Joseph Hill Academy here on Staten Island, my religion 2 teacher, Miss Nolan, put my name into...to go on the national leadership conference which would be in Washington DC for two weeks. Then I got chosen to go, and I was ecstatic about that. I hadn't decided what my political affiliations were at that time. My mother was Republican; my father, and at that time, my father was Conservative. And living on Staten Island, where the majority of everyone is Right Wing, you know, it's kind of hard. And when I went down the only one who took even the most remote time to see me was Congressman Fosella. And Schumer wasn't there; I think Moynihan was out playing golf with a friend of his. So when I came back, uh, this was back in 2000, I was in American history and we were gonna get extra credit if we brought in things for some of the campaigns to put up. So I was like, you know, let me call them up. I called the Demo-

crats first, and they never got back to me. So I called up the Republicans, and I get put in touch with the treasurer of the Republican committee on Staten Island. And he told me the address of the campaign headquarters up on the North Shore on Castleton. And I went there, I started talking to them, I figured I'd get volunteer hours for it. When I met the president of the YRs at the time, Sean O'Sullivan, and uh, I figured that these guys seem to be okay; they're not completely what I agree with, but, you know, I can still get volunteer hours out of it. And it's kind of like a black hole where you really can't get out of it. It was hard to get out of it. I met someone through them who I dated on-and-off for three years. I finally got out of that relationship in February of this year, which was actually my last time with the Republican Party. That's when I finally got out.

**TR:** What about your sexual orientation? Were you aware then that your inclination was lesbian?

**KD:** I knew back when I was in elementary school, probably between sixth or seventh grade, I knew. It was kind of hard



P. Melissa Fisher (l) interviews Kara Donnelly (r).

though, especially when you go to Catholic school your entire life, and then when you go to an all-girls high school... I decided I wasn't ready to tell my mother—Hey Mom, I'm a lesbian...and when I heard her on the phone say to her friend say, "I think my daughter is a lesbian." And I thought, oh shit, I don't need her getting pissed off at me for that. I didn't need that on top of everything else, 'cause she takes things and blows them completely out of proportion. So I was like, let me date a guy, just to at least give the impression...see, she thinks I'm lesbian, let her think I'm bisexual. That relationship started back in 2002; I broke up with that man three times...then officially, back in February of 2005. And then he got pissed off, and he went and told my mother that I was dating a transsexual, which wasn't very...I wanted to tell her myself. He had to be a self-centered prick and go behind my back and pretty much tell her everything that I...we had in confidence for the three years we were together. So it was very hard. But I knew...I knew from when I was eleven-twelve years old.

**TR: How did you deal with hiding it? Did your boyfriend know?**

**KD:** He knew, at least he thought that I was bisexual—I hid it that well. When my mother found out about everything, she was like...she wasn't very happy with it. She was like, "Do whatever you want; just don't broadcast it." 'Cause she only cared about, the family name. This is in high school, still, she didn't want my sister's name being tarnished by my...my preferences. You know, it's not my fault I'm homosexual. You know, I was showing you the thing [a pamphlet for gay rights that attempted to make straight people understand how it feels to be gay and that tries to help gay people accept who they are, as well as one that gave twelve reasons not to legalize gay marriage and then countered each one] earlier, that some people actually think that gay parents will make gay chil-



dren. That is not true. Both my parents are straight, and their parents and their parents, as far as I know, were straight. It's not a genetic thing. It's what; it's what you just are.

**TR: When you were with the Young Republicans, how did you feel about going along with their agenda?**

**KD:** The Young Republican agenda, in all honesty, with the Republican Party on Staten Island there are two sects. There are the Vito Fossella people and then there are the Guy Molinari people. It was very hard to hear everything in regards to how they're saying that gay marriage should be made illegal when I don't think that's right. I mean, it almost came to the point once when I heard that one of them wanted almost make a sexual offenders list. So that if a gay person moved in somewhere, pretty much they wanted to go and get a list of all the gay people on Staten Island, make the list, and have it available online for anyone to know when they move into a certain area, what the ratio of straight to gay is. Which I-I vocally spoke out on that. It's privacy; it's none of their business. If somebody's out, then more power to them. I was hiding. I could not-I was finding it very hard to go to meetings hearing some of the most biased and narrow-minded people being there, I mean, most of them were lawyers or judges or law students or worked in Borough Hall or something along those lines. You know, it was hard—it was really hard. I-I didn't always really believe in the Republican agenda; I just felt like I owed them something for, for letting me, for Vito's taking the ten or fifteen minutes before

he had to go vote on something to speak with me, and I was like, I should pay him back and it was like they start calling you to do more things and more things, they trust in you with more things and the next thing you know, you're the number two person in the campaign headquarters for one of them, and you actually get to run a campaign for three days when the person doing it gets in trouble and gets fired and the new person can't run it and can't do anything, so it was very hard to get out of it.

**TR: Why couldn't you be gay and Republican?**

**KD:** The problem with most of the Republicans on Staten Is-



land is that they're too socially conservative; they're too right-wing. I mean, probably, in Manhattan, I might have been able to get away with it a lot more. Yes, there is a log cabin club, which is the homosexuals, but most of them were also successful business people and were a lot older. When you're seventeen-eighteen-nineteen-years-old and everybody around you is in your age group but they wouldn't have accepted me as much as they did when they assumed I was straight or maybe bisexual. They just accepted me 'cause I was dating a law student that went to St John's and this, that, and the other thing. It was very- it wouldn't have flown well—it would not have flown well at all.

**TR: So what finally made you decide to stop hiding?**

**KD:** I finally decided to take more control over my life, especially after I transferred over to CSI from Baruch in Manhattan. I was a member of their gay and lesbian alliance over there. I had- then I came here. I had gotten back together with my ex-boyfriend again; this was the third time we were dating. We broke it off every February—February of '03, '04, and '05. Then I came here, and one day I had walked into one of the offices here on campus, I was actually going to meet a friend of mine who I had met over the summer, when I was heading into Manhattan, or maybe into September when I was working on voter registration, and I had met someone there that for some reason I couldn't get their image out of

my mind. At the time I thought that person was, you know, I knew the person was homosexual. I assumed the person was gay—a gay male. Then I come into the office, I was waiting for my friend, and this person was there...and I got to see the person again. When I discovered that this person was a transsexual and he was actually as she, I fell; I fell for her hard and simply because, I think that was what really made me come out. I felt so much for her. I had dated females prior to this one...it never really amounted to much, but she, for some reason, I didn't want to hide it anymore. There was something about her...that...made it worth coming out for. I didn't want to hide anymore.

**TR: But she wasn't your first girlfriend?**

**KD:** No, she was not.

**TR: How did you handle relationships with women before that?**

**KD:** It was—different. It was different. My first girlfriend actually came out of the national leadership conference. She was actually my roommate, and we dated on-and-off the two weeks we were down there. But then when I found out she was seeing someone else at the same time—a guy, actually—I swore off dating for a while. Then, let's see, then there was the one that I met while I was dating my ex-boyfriend the time we were separated. I met her through a friend of mine. She ended getting back together with her ex-girlfriend. None of them, now that I think about it, none of them really ended up well prior to the most recent one.

**TR: And you only dated one man?**

**KD:** No. I did date- I did try dating another male but it didn't work out. I'm not ashamed to say that I tried. For my family's sake, I tried.

**TR: And your first sexual experience was it with a male or a female?**

**KD:** Uh...ooh, I hate to say that it was with a male, but that wouldn't be like it was willing...we'll leave it at that.

**TR: Okay, I'll rephrase. Your first willing sexual encounter was with a male or a female?**

**KD:** Female. It was with a female. It was actually during conference. It was interesting, to say the least, and then my first willing male experience was with the on-again-off-again three-year relationship.

**TR: Did sex feel natural to you with a man?**

**KD:** Um, to be honest? No, it didn't. It didn't feel right; it just didn't- it was all- it wasn't...it was something...to have sex with a natural born male...it was colder...there was nothing...I don't know, it just seemed that it just about the sex, and, when I was with everyone else, I got to feel, uh, there

# POLITICAL DISCOURSE



was more emotion in it. There was feeling in it. There was so much love, especially with my last one. She made me feel human; she made me feel that I actually existed; she...it wasn't the sex, that wanted what she wanted; it was amazing.

**TR: Why is it that your sexual self and your political self needed to be so intertwined?**

**KD:** Well, I haven't really met any homosexual that completely agreed with the Republican agenda. I was not happy with a lot of the Republican agenda, especially on the state level, especially when I came here. Having to deal with tuition hikes and cuts to everything else, I didn't like it, but I couldn't really speak out on it. It was difficult, because, you know, they would be like, "Well, we're not raising your taxes." And I was like, "But how do you expect someone who's not working to pay their tuition?" CSI and the other CUNY schools were originally intended to be free, and then when you've [the state] used the schools to pay off debt, you know, they should've returned to the state in which it was. You know, if I wanted to pay tuition, I could've gotten into schools in Jersey, Pennsylvania or anywhere else. I could've went to any of those schools, but I didn't; I didn't have the money, which is why I came here. I don't need my tuition going up every year to balance New York State's budget. Sorry, it's not gonna happen.

**TR: I understand that and agree with it, but again, that's your political self. Now let's also state that you went from very strong and active Republican to a board representative for NYPIRG [New York Public Interest Research Group], which everyone knows is a very liberal organization.**

**KD:** Not necessarily; not necessarily. NYPIRG is non-po-

litical, we do not and non-partisan. We don't back politicians. We are a group of people where you can have liberals, to Democrats to conservatives to Green Party members.

**TR: That's true, but very few Republicans would be on board with the vast majority of NYPIRG issues. But, when you became an open lesbian, your politics did swing from right to left.**

**KD:** Well, yeah, my politics changed; they did and they didn't. I didn't have to hide it anymore, so my problem really was getting rid of the ideals that were forced on me, that were imbedded in my mind for almost five years. I'd been doing work with the Republican Party since before I turned seventeen. Doing all that work, I

was trained to do certain things, and unfortunately, on Staten Island, one of the things they wanted me to do was question was the legitimacy of homosexual marriages. When I was doing the work, when I was in the Young Republicans, I went from being just a regular member, to assistant treasurer to vice president and for a few months I was the president. I really couldn't speak out on Staten Island in favor of gay marriage—I was afraid to. I could probably go to parts of Manhattan and spoken for it. I could've went to, probably parts of Brooklyn, and spoken for it. I couldn't bring myself to speak out against it, and now that I actually came out and my mother knows; everybody knows, 'cause Staten Island is small and everybody knows everybody else's business. Now that pretty much everybody knows—well, now that I'm doing this, everybody knows, um, I feel now that everybody will understand why I refused to speak out against it.

**TR: Would you say that you were a closeted Democrat as well as a closeted lesbian?**

**KD:** Yeah, because I wasn't sure how my mother or my father would deal with the fact that I wasn't as right as they were. I was afraid of what they were going to think in regards to my homosexuality; I was afraid of what they were going to think that I wasn't for cutting money for college students. It was very hard to go in and have the expectations from my friends that I would vote down line A, which is, in the polling booths on Staten Island, the Republican line. It was difficult to keep up the façade, but I had to do it. It's as simple as that. I learned a lot from it. I learned a lot of mistakes from it. I can see both sides of the political spectrum. I don't know if that answers your question.

# Eternal Love... By Kara Donnelly



I sit in my far-off hypnotic daze  
Of everything that has happened,  
    one blurred haze  
She didn't know about the hidden  
    monster inside- how could she tell  
That was released the day  
    that she said farewell

Now my hands are forever stained a deep red  
Is this truly where my life has led?  
Happy memories I wish that grew into more  
We never really knew what was in store  
Could she ever leave me- this I wouldn't allow  
Although her flowing blood surrounds me now  
My love was confused and blindly lost  
She never took into consideration the cost  
I shake my head and take a look around  
Everything becomes clear,  
    every sight, every sound

I look at her corpse and I start to cry  
Once the evil rage and anger subside  
Her body looked so stiff and yet strangely frail  
Her skin is so soft, smooth and pale  
I looked deep into her open cold, blue eye  
And knew suddenly for peace I would have to die  
I take the blade,

    the same that had ended her life  
Whisper my goodbyes to my family and strife  
With one stab,

    the cruel world that we hid from ended  
The only way to have scars mended  
Together forever, but not necessarily above  
Even in death, a girl and her Eternal Love.

## World Pride 2006: Embarking to the Homosexual Promise Land

By Shawn Fisher

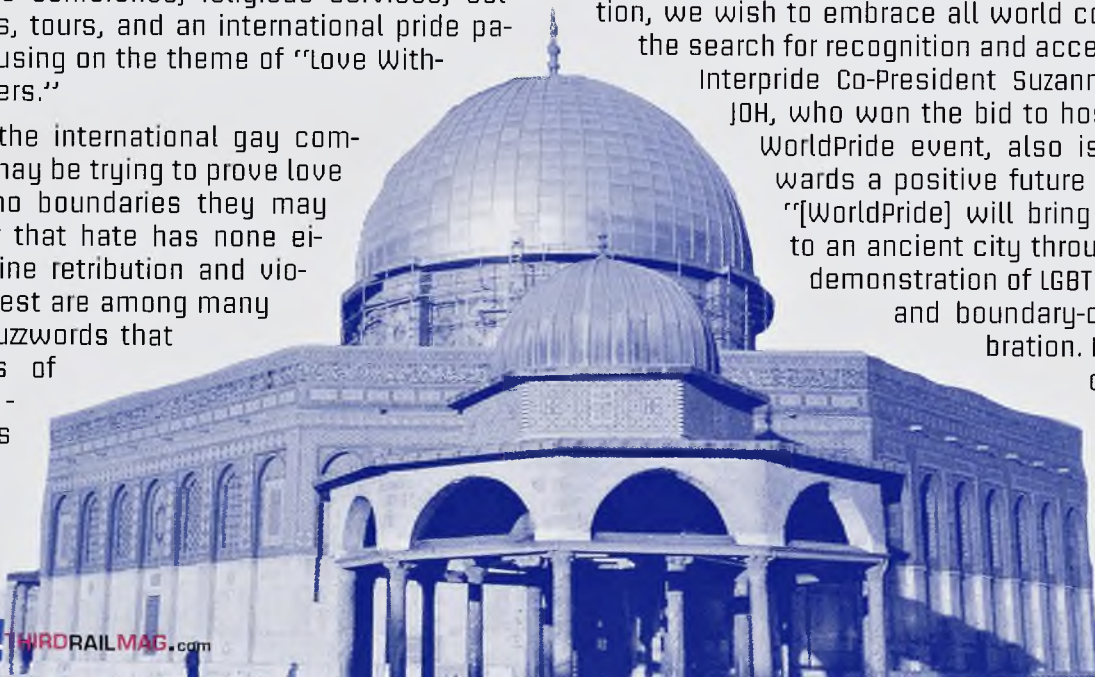
An unprecedented event has occurred in Israel this year, as religious leaders from the three opposing ideologies of Christianity, Islam and Judaism have allied themselves to battle what they perceived as a common threat. What could be so ominous as to bring these three groups together, who have been at odds with one another for thousands of years? The answer is a simple parade and celebration. However, it is the fact that the participants of this festive gathering are homosexual that has prompted the creation of this axis of opposition. Yes, it is a matter of pride or a matter of gay pride versus the pride of certain religious ideologies. The International Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered Pride (Interpride) in conjunction with Jerusalem Open House (JOH) have come together to host World Pride 2006. The 10 day event the second of its kind (the first was held in Rome in 2000) will encompass a lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender (LGBT) film festival, art exhibits, music concerts, an academic conference, religious services, celebrations, tours, and an international pride parade focusing on the theme of "Love Without Borders."

While the international gay community may be trying to prove love knows no boundaries they may discover that hate has none either. Divine retribution and violent protest are among many of the buzzwords that the axis of opposition has

begun swinging at the event organizers since January of 2005. "With demonstrations we never know how they end up...Residents here [in Israel] are enraged. Everything should be done to stop this [event] and not cause people to break the law," said Nissim Zeev an Ultra-Orthodox Israeli lawmaker Zeev would imply that Israeli citizens would act violently towards what has essentially been dubbed a demonstration for peace, tolerance, and coexistence. Even Jerusalem's mayor, Uri Lupolianski, who openly disapproves of this and previous gay rights events referring to the Pride celebration as "ugly, insulting, offensive and provocative," but won't violate city law to prevent it, has previously come under violent threats by groups looking to block the JOH's right to expression.

Hate and violence have not deterred Interpride or the JOH from moving forward with the event. "...WorldPride in Jerusalem is important for the [Gay] Pride movement...We want to send a clear message to the world that our struggle transcends borders and encompasses all faiths. Through this celebration, we wish to embrace all world communities in

the search for recognition and acceptance," said Interpride Co-President Suzanne Girard. And JOH, who won the bid to host the second WorldPride event, also is focusing towards a positive future for the event. "[WorldPride] will bring a new focus to an ancient city through a massive demonstration of LGBT dignity, pride, and boundary-crossing celebration. In these times of intolerance and suspicion, from





# Jerusalem

# WorldPride | August 2005

the home of three of the world's great religions, we will proclaim that love has no borders," says Hagai El-Ad JOH executive director.

The world religious community isn't entirely against the event though. After the axis of opposition came out against WorldPride, leaders of Jerusalem's liberal and conservative Jewish movements replied in support of the event. "I come here in the wake of the strange coalition of leaders that was brought together by intolerance, extremism and fanaticism," said Rabbi Ehud Bandel, President of Israel's Conservative movement. Supported by Rabbi Na'amah Kelman of the Reform Movement's Hebrew Union College, "We protest statements by clergy who spend their time hating, being dismissive and being intolerant...Every person was created in the image of God, independent of race, religion or sexual orientation," said Kelman.

Ironically, one unexpected event in Israel has prompted a postponement of the event by the JOH with approval by Interpride, World Pride was originally scheduled to take place during August of 2005. That date has now been announced to be the same date of the return of the Gaza Strip to the Palestinians from Israel, which was scheduled by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, and has led to the decision to delay. "Tolerance, pluralism and equality are World Pride's guiding principles...Holding World Pride during the Gaza pullout would do in-



**BEFORE HATE CRIME**



**AFTER HATE CRIME**



# CULTURAL DISCOURSE

justice to those values. We have taken this decision out of consideration to the most difficult political climate in Israel this August. As a community we are deeply engaged in the complex reality surrounding us," said Noa Sattath, JOH chairperson. "We are in full support of the JOH in their decision to postpone World Pride," said Interpride in response to the JOH decision to step aside and allow the Israeli community to focus on the peaceful withdrawal from Gaza. The event will still take place during the same week in August just in 2006.

When speculation first began over whether or not the JOH would go through with the event, the axis of opposition was hopeful that their continued effort (including a petition) would dissuade the event from ever happening. They even found support from Israeli Vice Premier Shimon Peres. "It is inappropriate as Jerusalem is the center of three faiths, and such an event could offend the sensibilities of religious people the world over," said Shimon Peres. However, despite this, the JOH has not been deterred. "The religious pressure only gives us more motivation," said Sattath.

Interpride has been through similarly difficult obstacles before with the 2000 World Pride that took place in Rome. During the time leading up to the event many threats were also made and pressure brought to bear by religious extremists who even got the host city to withdraw its support and culminating with a statement by the recently passed Pope John Paul II in which he referred to homosexuality as a "disorder" and condemned it as "intrinsically evil." "...the well known demonstrations which took place in Rome in recent days...In the name of the Church of Rome, I must express sadness for the affront to the Great Jubilee of the year 2000 and the offence to the Christian Values of a city so dear to the hearts of Catholics throughout the world," said Pope John Paul II. The event at Rome which drew

an estimated half-million people, though, went as planned and with out incident.

To counter the worries and accusations of the gay communities' critics, Interpride and JOH are focusing on demonstrating a very mature display of pride and solidarity during the 10 day period of the celebration with a promise to respect the nature of Jerusalem. "Our message is not 'Come to a Party,' but rather 'Come and express your solidarity with Jerusalem,'" said Noa Sattath chair person of JOH. "Come and march here in Jerusalem...but make sure the principles of modesty and tolerance, which you so rightfully deserve, will be directed to the residents of this city," said Bandel.

When WorldPride finally does arrive in Jerusalem the best of humanity and the worst of humanity will come to exhibition. The international gay community and its supporters will put their best foot forward as they try to show the world community that they have a right to coexist as equals within that community. "We must raise our voices, as Jews and as religious people, in support of another approach, based on tolerance, compassion and the dignity of human beings, which are the basis of the Torah," Bandel. It's axis of opposition however will try

to kick a people while they are down, in an attempt to oppress a people whose way of life is different from their own. "Their lives will be in danger," said the axis of opposition. None the less no act of hate can deter hope, "Pride in Jerusalem has already become a symbol for the courage and determination of Jerusalem's diverse LGBT community," said El-Ad.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following sources were utilized in the creation of this article; alawaba.com, cbsnewyork.com, electronicintifada.com, ewtn.com, Florida Baptist Witness, gay.com, gaytoday.com, WCBS-TV, Interpride.org, gay.org.il/joh, Jerusalem Post, pkane-tout.com, religionjournal.com, 375gay.com, Vatican Information Service,.



# LIFE OF CLICHÉS

T J R I L E Y



## *Yr so cool*

With yr Che Guevara action figure -  
Never reading Marx and Engel,  
Maybe Trotsky?

## *Yr so cool*

With yr blasé angst  
As you smoke a cigarette.

## *Yr so cool*

As you break something  
To break it  
And then ask

"Where did it go?"

## *Yr so cool.*

Yr a renegade,  
Such is the nature  
Of the deviation from the rule.

## *Yr so cool*

Being a MTV liberal.

## *Yr so cool*

Listening to an unknown band.

## *Yr so cool*

Eating at McDonalds

While reading Adbusters.

## *Yr so cool*

Walking down the street  
With an air of indifference  
About you like Rimbaud.

## *Yr so cool.*

Yr so damn cool

That you think you don't have  
To spell out "your" words.

## *Yr so cool*

I wish I could be like you.





# ONLY BREATH

JELALUDDIN RUMI

13TH CENTURY



NOT CHRISTIAN OR JEW OR  
MUSLIM, NOT HINDU,  
BUDDHIST, SUFI, OR ZEN.  
NOT ANY RELIGION



OR  
CULTURAL SYSTEM.  
I AM  
NOT FROM THE EAST  
OR THE WEST,  
NOT  
OUT OF THE OCEAN OR UP  
FROM THE GROUND,  
NOT  
NATURAL OR ETHEREAL, NOT  
COMPOSED OF ELEMENTS AT ALL.  
I DO NOT EXIST,  
AM NOT AN ENTITY IN THIS  
WORLD OR THE NEXT,  
DID NOT DESCEND FROM  
ADAM AND EVE OR ANY



ORIGIN STORY.  
MY PLACE IS  
THE PLACELESS, A TRACE  
OF THE TRACELESS.  
NEITHER BODY OR SOUL.  
I BELONG TO THE BELOVED,  
HAVE SEEN THE TWO  
WORLDS AS ONE AND  
THAT ONE  
CALL TO AND KNOW,  
FIRST, LAST, OUTER, INNER  
ONLY THAT BREATH BREATHING  
HUMAN BEING

**in one minute,  
i can lose another friend**

**in one minute,  
i can lose one more brain cell**

**in one minute,  
i can lose my insanity altogether**

**in one minute,  
i can get into a fight with my mom which will mar my whole existence**

**in one minute,  
a suicidal flash can stream through my field of vision**

**in one minute,  
i will give up some more**

**in one minute,  
i can regret a multitude of things**

**in one minute,  
i can wish someone dead**

**in one minute,  
i can be more unsure than when i started**

**in one minute,  
will i still be here**

by erica is shorstone

# in one minute,





Your daughter mine  
 You came and saw her  
 Little body less than forty pounds  
 Frail, skeletal yet smiling at you  
 You promised her love  
 You promised her happiness  
 You promised her you'd be there  
 Your bitch didn't even say "hello"

You stayed while I waited  
 1-2-3 hours we waited  
 4-5-6 hours we hugged  
 Out she came, in pain, with tubes  
 Everywhere  
 Scared, frightened you ran  
 She couldn't

Knowing what she was dealing with  
 Knowing what she would go through



At only 4 years young  
 You didn't come back  
 She asked for you  
 She called you  
 You didn't come back  
 I called you you said  
 "I can't handle this"  
 New institution I'm responsible  
 You refused  
 Your bitch wouldn't let you

Sign your name  
 Your daughter suffering  
 The bills coming  
 The checks you cashed

Every surgery that opened her  
 Every round of chemotherapy that made her sick  
 Every blood transfusion that saved her life (dozens)  
 Every day of transplant you weren't there

You and your bitch  
 No worries, No thoughts  
 Of your daughter  
 While she suffered with no complaints  
 I did it alone  
 She counted on me

Bills overflowing my mailbox  
 All in my name  
 You said no checks came  
 The insurance company said  
 "They're all in his name"

You and your bitch  
 "Living large"  
 The blood money you cashed  
 The money all her pain was worth  
 Paid for your luxuries—  
 Your car  
 Your nights out  
 With your bitch  
 Your birthday cake  
 When your daughter didn't even get  
 A card

Despite you or  
 In spite of you and your bitch  
 She fought through  
 All the sick nights  
 And painful days  
 She's strong you're gone

She's my girl only mine  
 She doesn't ask for you  
 Anymore  
 She knows your promises  
 Are hollow  
 She knows who she can depend on

So when your bitch leaves you  
 And you're old  
 And you're sick  
 When you're dying  
 And you ask for her  
 That's when you'll see  
 All the pain  
 She's gone through  
 Because of you  
 All the anger  
 Building for years  
 I'll laugh when  
 She calls you and tells you  
 "I can't handle this"

WINTRY POLAND SURVIVES  
THE BASTARDIZED PROSE OF THE *NEW YORK TIMES*  
WHILE SOWETO IS A QUIANT HEAT TREATMENT  
IN SOME EXOTIC BUT SAFELY CAPITALIZED CITY  
WHERE THE HERO CHILDREN'S MOULDER UNMARKED  
AND THE BLOOD OF MY SISTER IN EXILE WINNIE MANDELA  
SLOWS AND HER STEPS SLOW  
IN A BANNED AND WATERLESS LIVING  
HER YOUNGEST DAUGHTER IS BECOMING A POET.

I AM WRITING THESE WORDS AS A ROUTE MAP  
AN ARTIFACT FOR SURVIVAL  
A CHRONICLE OF BURIED TREASURE  
A MOURNING  
FOR THIS PLACE WE ARE ABOUT TO BE LEAVING  
A RUDDER FOR MY CHILDREN YOUR CHILDREN  
OUR LOVERS OUR HOPES BRAIDED  
FROM THE DULL WHARVES OF THOPKINSVILLE  
TO ZIMBABWE CHAD AZANIA  
OH WILLIE SWEET LITTLE BROTHER WITH THE SNAP IN YOUR EYES  
WHAT WALLS ARE YOU COVERING NOW  
WITH YOUR VERSIONS OF REVOLUTION  
THE PRECISE NEEDS OF OUR MOTHER EARTH  
THE COST OF FALSE BREAD  
AND HAVE YOU LEARNED TO NOURISH YOUR SISTERS AT LAST  
AS WELL AS TO TREASURE THEM?

PAST DARKENED WINDOWS OF A BAY STREET WOMEN'S SHELTER  
LIKE GHOSTS THROUGH THE STREETS OF MARAZAN  
THE NORTHEASTERN ALTARS OF EL SALVADOR  
MOVE THE BELLY-WISE BLONDED CHILDREN OF STARVATION  
THE ONCE-BLACK NOW WASTED OLD PEOPLE  
WHO BUILT PRETORIA  
PHILADELPHIA ATLANTA SAN FRANCISCO  
AND EVEN ANCIENT LONDON—YES, I TELL YOU  
ITALIANS OWNED BRITAIN  
AND HANNIBAL THE EARTH FROM THE ALPS TO THE ADRIATIC  
ROMAN BLOOD SICKLES LIKE THE BLOOD OF AN AFRICAN PEOPLE  
SO WHERE IS TRUE HISTORY WRITTEN  
EXCEPT IN POEMS?

I AM THE INSIDE THE SHADOW DIPPED UPON YOUR HORIZON  
SCANNING A BORROWED NEWSWEEK WHERE AMERICAN SOLDIERS  
TRAIN SEVEN-YEAR-OLD CHILEAN BOYS  
TO DO THEIR KILLING FOR THEM.

PICTURE SMALL-BONED DARK WOMEN  
GUN-BELTS TAUGHT OVER DYED CLOTH  
BETWEEN THE BABY AND A RIFLE  
HOW MANY OF THESE WOMEN  
ACTIVATED PLASTIQUE NEAR THE OIL REFINERIES  
OUTSIDE CAPETOWN  
BURNED THEIR HOUSES BEHIND THEM  
LEFT  
THE FINE-PAINTED OCHRE WALLS  
THE CANNED WATER GOURDS STILL DRYING  
AND THE NEW YAMS NOT YET HARVESTED  
WHICH ONE OF THESE WOMEN  
WAS DRIVEN OUT OF CROSSROADS  
PERCHED ON THE CORRUGATED WALLS OF HER UPROOTED LIFE  
STRAPPED TO A LORRY  
THE COOKING POT BANGING HER ANKLES  
WHICH ONE  
SAW HER TWO-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER'S FACE  
SQUASHED LIKE A MELON  
IN THE PRE-DAWN RAIDS OF NOXOLO  
WHICH ONE WRITES POEMS  
LIES WITH OTHER WOMEN  
IN THE BLOOD'S AFFIRMATION?

HISTORY IS NOT KIND TO US  
WE RESTITCH IT WITH LIVING  
PAST MEMORY FORWARD  
INTO DESIRE  
INTO THE PANIC ARTICULATION  
OF WANT WITHOUT HAVING  
OR EVEN THE PROMISE OF GETTING.

AND I DREAM OF OUR COMING TOGETHER  
ENCIRCLED DRIVEN  
NOT ONLY BY LOVE  
BUT BY LUST FOR A WORKING TOMORROW  
THE FLIGHTS OF THIS JOURNEY  
MAPLESS UNCERTAIN  
AND NECESSARY AS WATER

LEAVING LEAVING  
THE BRIDGED WATER  
BENEATH  
THE RED SANDS OF SOUTH BEACH  
SILHOUETTE HOUSES SLIDING OFF THE HORIZON  
OH LOVE, IF I BECOME ANGER  
FEEL ME  
HOLDING YOU IN MY HEART CIRCLING  
THE CONCRETE PARTICULAR  
ARCS OF THIS JOURNEY  
LANDSCAPE OF TRIALS  
NOT TO BE LOST IN CHOICE NOR DECISION  
IN THE NAPE OF THE BAY  
OUR HOUSE SLIPS UNDER THESE WINGS  
SHUTTLE BETWEEN NIGHTMARE AND THE POSSIBLE.

THE BROAD WATER DREW, AND THE SPACE  
GROWING ENOUGH GREEN TO FEED OURSELVES OVER TWO SEASONS  
NOW SULFUR FUELS BURN IN NEW JERSEY  
AND WHEN I WASH MY HANDS AT THE GARDEN HOSE  
THE EARTH RUNS OFF BRIGHT YELLOW  
THE BRIDGE DISAPPEARS  
ONLY A LOWERING SKY  
IN TRANSIT.

SO DO WE BLOW THE LONGEST SUSPENSION BRIDGE IN THE WORLD  
UP FROM THE MIDDLE  
OR WILL IT BE BOMBS AT THE HYLAN TOLL PLAZA  
MORTARS OVER GRYMES HILL  
FLAK SHRIEKING THROUGH THE STREETS OF ROSEBANK  
THE HOME OF THE STATEN ISLAND KU KLUX KLAN  
WHILE SKY-ROACHES NAPALM THE PARK HILL PROJECTS  
WE LIVE ON THE EDGE  
OF MANUFACTURING  
TOMORROW OR THE UNTHINKABLE  
MADE COMMON AS PLANTAIN-WEED  
BY OUR ACT OF NOT THINKING  
OF TAKING  
ONLY WHAT IS GIVEN.

ON MY WAY OUT I PASSED OVER  
YOU AND THE VERRAZANO BRIDGE

AUDRE LORDE • OUR DEAD BEHIND US • 1980

# Dear

# Dr. Laura



If America has a moral compass, Dr. Laura Schlessinger is it. Her message of integrity, accountability and personal responsibility is eagerly anticipated by nearly 18 million listeners weekly and has made her one of the nation's most popular and talked-about media institutions. A provocative and compassionate champion of common sense, ethics and decency, Dr. Laura gets right to the heart of her questioner's dilemmas, prodding the conscience, and provoking the straight forward reasoning to help people "do the right thing," be better human beings, and live more fulfilling lives. The devotion Dr. Laura's program inspires has earned her true superstar status.

Dear Dr. Laura:

Thank you for doing so much to educate people regarding God's Law. I have learned a great deal from your radio show, and I try to share that knowledge with as many people as I can. When someone tries to defend the homosexual lifestyle, for example, I simply remind them that Leviticus 18:22 clearly states it to be an abomination. End of debate. I do need some advice from you, however, regarding some of the specific Bible laws and how to follow them.

- a) When I burn a bull on the altar as a sacrifice, I know it creates a pleasing odor for the Lord (Lev. 1:9). The problem is my neighbors bitch to the zoning people. They claim the odor is not pleasing to them. Should I smite them?
- b) I would like to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. What do you think would be a fair price for her? She's 18 and starting college. Will the slave buyer be required to continue to pay for her education by law?
- c) I know that I am allowed no contact with a woman while she is in her period of menstrual uncleanness (Lev. 15:19-24). The problem is, how do I tell? I have tried asking, but most women take offense and threaten to call Human Resources.
- d) Lev. 25:44 states that I may indeed possess slaves, both male and female, provided they are purchased from neighboring nations.



A friend of mine claims that this applies to Mexicans, but not Canadians. Can you clarify? ....Why can't I own Canadians? Is there something wrong with them due to the weather?

e) I have a neighbor who insists on working on the Sabbath. Exodus 35:2 clearly states he should be put to death. Am I morally obligated to kill him myself, or should this be a neighborhood improvement project? What is a good day to start? Should we begin with small stones? Kind of lead up to it?

f) A friend of mine feels that even though eating shellfish is an abomination (Lev. 11:10), it is a lesser abomination than homosexuality. I don't agree. I mean, a shrimp just isn't the same as a you-know-what. Can you settle this?

g) Lev. 21:20 states that I may not approach the altar of God if I have a defect in my sight. I have to admit that I wear reading glasses. Does my vision have to be 20/20, or is there some wiggle room here? Would contact lenses fall within some exception?

h) Most of my male friends get their hair trimmed, including the hair around their temples, even though this is expressly forbidden by Lev. 19:27. How should they die? The Mafia once took out Albert Anastasia in a barbershop, but I'm not Catholic; is this ecumenical thing a sign that it's ok?

i) I know from Lev. 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?

j) My uncle has a farm. He violates Lev. 19:19 by planting two different crops in the same field, as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend). He also tends to curse and blaspheme a lot. Is it really necessary that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them? (Lev. 24:10-16) Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws? (Lev. 20:14)

I know you have studied these things extensively, so I am confident you can help. Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging.

Your devoted disciple and adoring fan

## The GAY Cartoon Conspiracy

By TJ Riley

Inspired by the news that Spongebob Squarepants is a homosexual, I have set forth to "out" other cartoon characters that have some homosexual tendencies. We should all know by now that being a homosexual is wrong, indecent, and above all, unnatural. I am writing this as a guide for parents that do not want their children to turn into a homosexual by deviant cartoons that pose as children entertainment. In this world, where homosexual influences are everywhere, from men having hair past their ears to women wearing pants, this guide is needed to save our children from the homosexual agenda. The cartoon characters exposed in this essay have undergone a critical analysis, by means of me doing hours of research, by spending

many nights suffering in homosexual bars and clubs; thus, I can "spot" a homosexual a mile away just from the characteristics that the character displays.

The first cartoon character that is obviously a homosexual is Peppermint Patty from the Peanuts comic strip. In my many hours of research, I came upon many female homosexuals that

had a bond with this cartoon character. Many signs point to her being a homosexual, from her playing football to her homosexual lover, Marcie, calling her "Sir." Such play on gender roles is an obvious reference of her being a homosexual.

The next cartoon that I will prove is a homosexual is the bear that is "smarter than the average bear." Yes, that is right, Yogi Bear is a homosexual, along with his homosexual femme partner Boo Boo. Along with these characters, Hanna and Barbera created many homosexual characters (Snagglepuss) that will turn your child into a homosexual with enough exposure. In Yogi Bear's theme song, the lyric "He will sleep till noon but before its dark! He'll have every picnic basket that's in Jellystone Park" is a direct reference to Yogi being out at all hours of the night at homosexual bars and clubs, thus having to "sleep to noon." Also notice how his homosexual lifestyle contributes to other degenerate acts such as stealing picnic baskets, which is probably used to satisfy his hunger caused by his marijuana smoking habit (all homosexuals smoke marijuana)

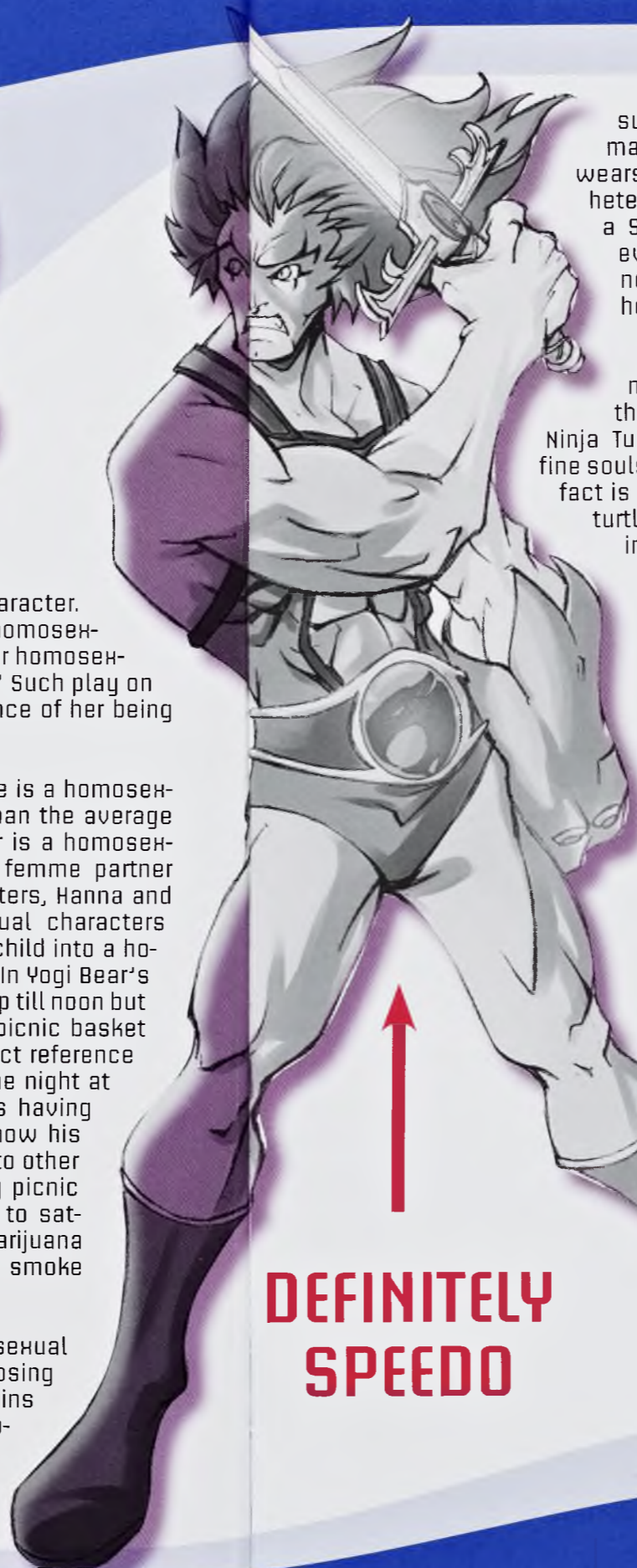
Another character that is homosexual is Lion-O from Thundercats. Exposing this character as a homosexual pains me, but he definitely is a homosexual, and therefore I must put him into this guide. What makes

such a hunky "butch" man a homosexual? He wears a bikini bottom. What heterosexual male wears a Speedo out to work, or even to fight evil? Let's not mention the fact that he wears gaudy jewelry.

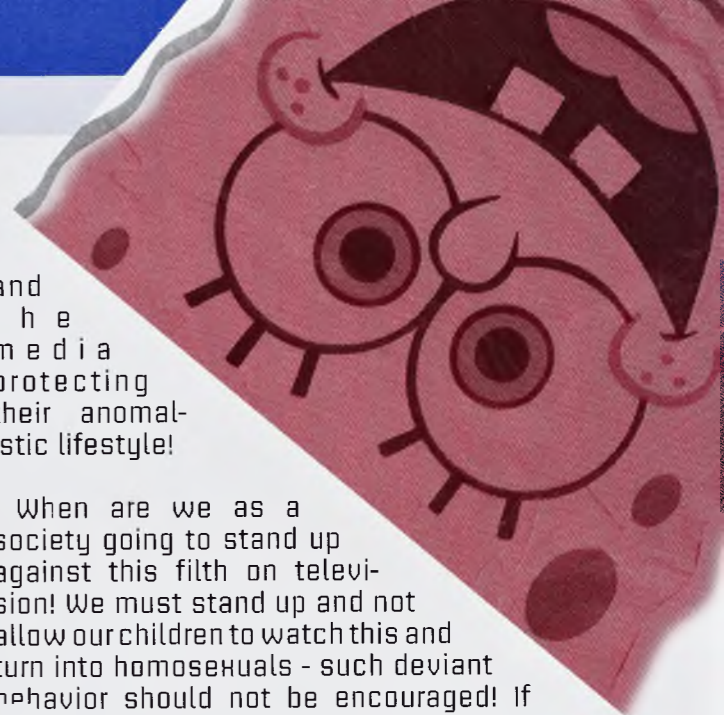
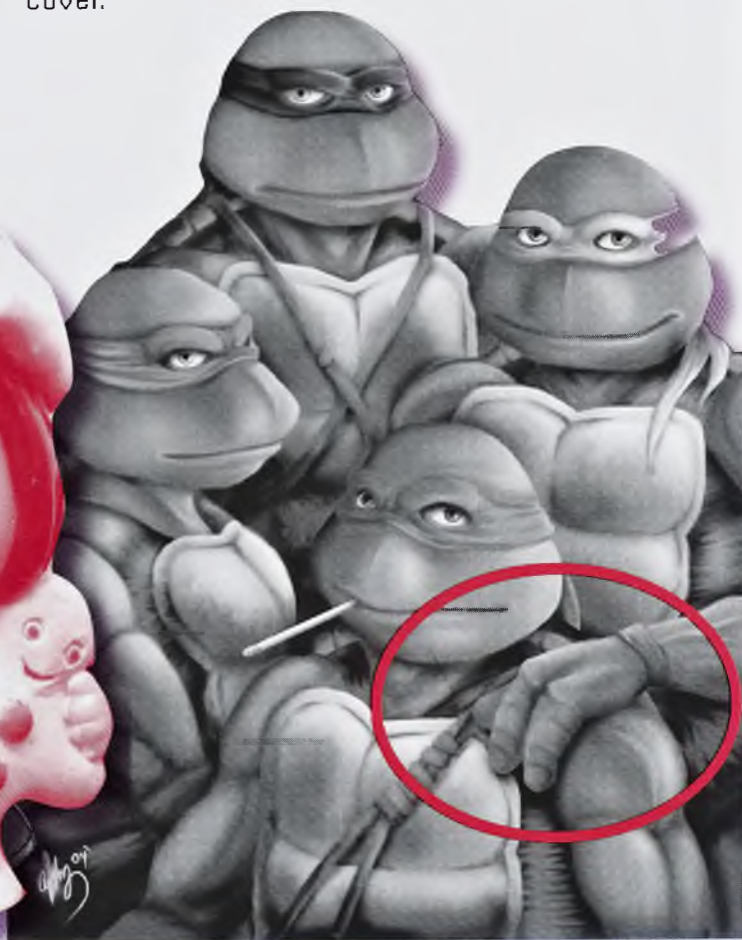
It is rumored in the homosexual community that the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles has turned many fine souls into homosexuals. The fact is that they were all male turtles living together, wearing different colors of the rainbow, and had April O'Neill defend them on television - this can not be more obvious of homosexual behavior. This is symbolic for a group of homosexual men living together,

and the media protecting their anomalous lifestyle!

When are we as a society going to stand up against this filth on television! We must stand up and not allow our children to watch this and turn into homosexuals - such deviant behavior should not be encouraged! If you don't believe me that homosexuals are ruining our society and are planning to take over, go to a gay bar or club on a Saturday night! If you see me there, do not say "hi", you may blow my cover.

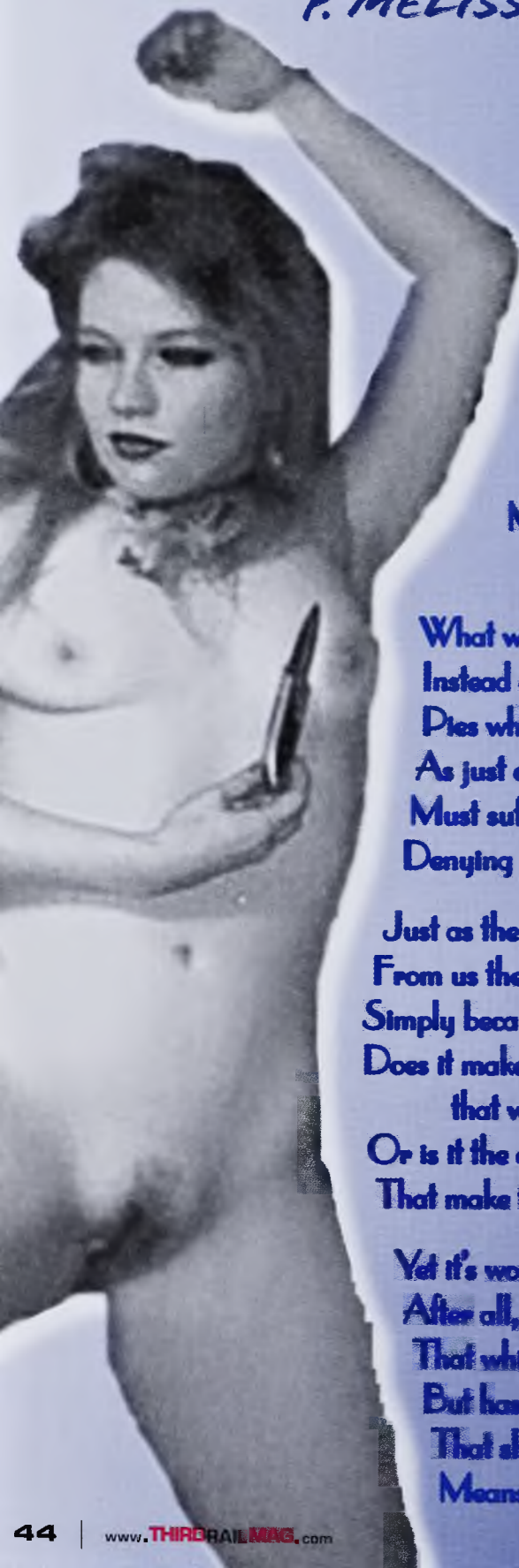


DEFINITELY SPEEDO



# WOMAN SURVIVING AS

P. MELISSA FISHER



Since the serpent tempted Eve to eat the apple,  
Men have told us, "You're just a girl,"  
And relegated us to a role we were forced to take:  
That of the woman forever behind the man.  
But as Lady Macbeth begged to be unsexed,  
Must a woman be something other  
than woman to fit in a man's world?

What would change if women ran the world?  
Instead of sitting chained to a home, baking apple  
Pies while pretending to think of sex  
As just one of the duties that a girl  
Must suffer through to please her man,  
Denying the pleasure that should be ours to take?

Just as they have tried to take  
From us the rights that are due all people of the world  
Simply because we were born women  
Does it make that big a difference  
that we have no Adam's apple?  
Or is it the other parts unique to a girl  
That make them so frightened of our sex?

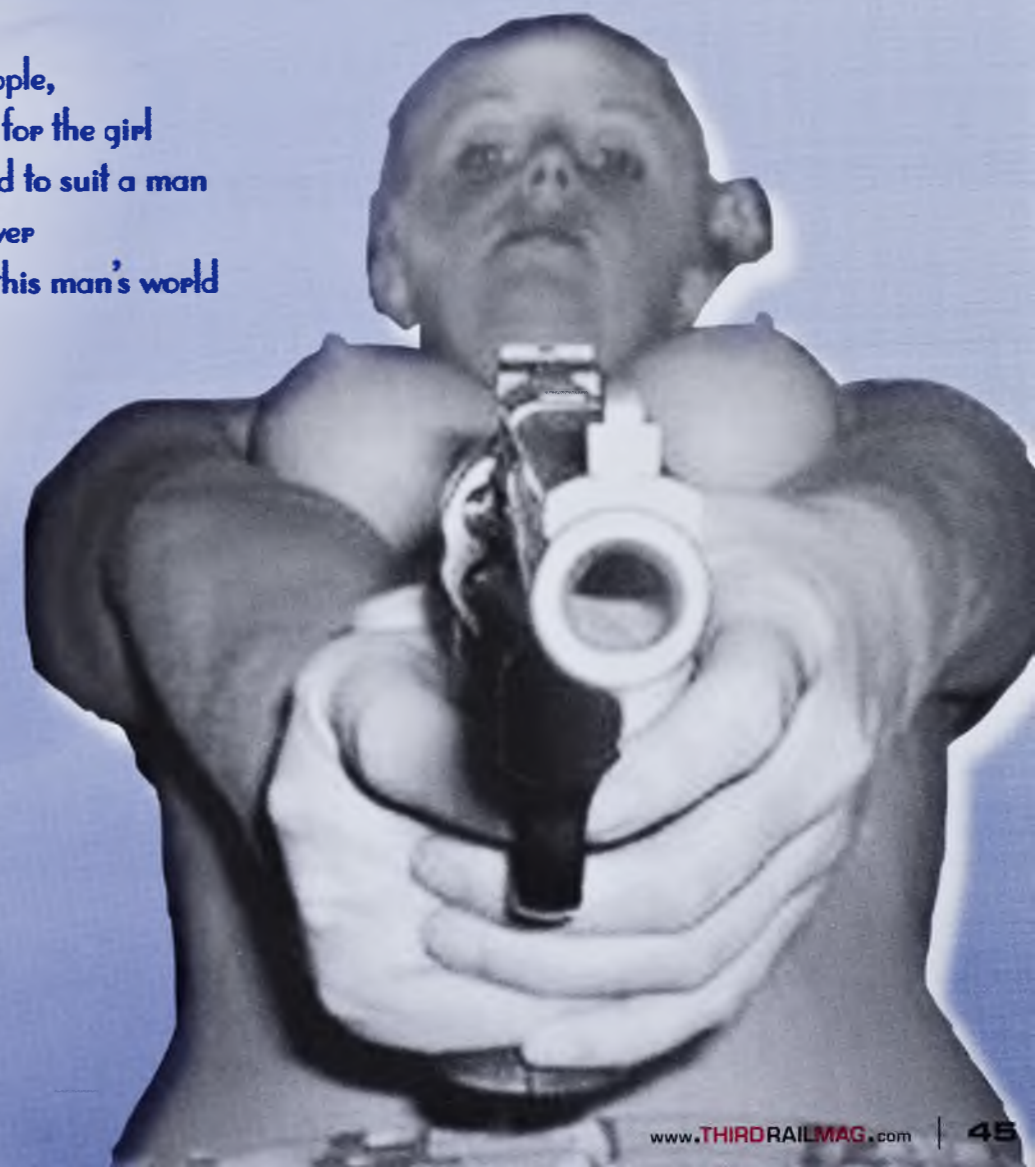
Yet it's women who have reason to fear sex.  
After all, it's men who, if not given freely, will just take  
That which is ingrained to be held most precious by a girl.  
But hasn't that always been the way of the world?  
That she should be blamed for not using the ample  
Means of protection from men given to her by men



Never go anywhere unescorted by a man,  
And never dress to entice a man to think of sex,  
Especially in a place like the Big Apple.  
Should these rules fail and she is taken  
It is her mistakes that will be flaunted to the world  
As begins the trial of the victim—the girl.

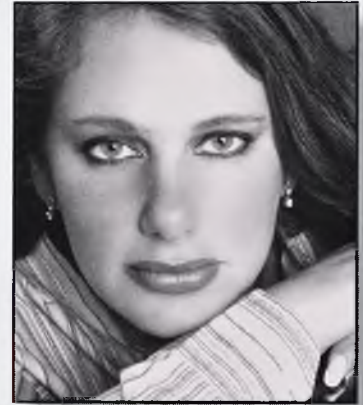
Of course she is lying, one can never trust a girl  
But "My word is my bond," claims every man  
She was drunk her head in a whirl  
It wasn't his fault a man needs sex  
It was offered and he accepted, but he didn't take  
That's what Adam said about the apple

The serpent offered Eve the apple,  
but that was no excuse for the girl  
The rules are taken and revised to suit a man  
Thus proving that sex and power  
are all that matters in this man's world



# BULLPEN

**P. MELISSA FISHER** is an award-winning journalist; she was honored by the *New York Association of Black Journalists* in recognition of her work with *The Black Reign*. She holds an AA in Liberal Arts and a BA in English with a concentration in writing and a minor in journalism, both from the College of Staten Island where she is currently pursuing an MA in English rhetoric. As an active student, she has contributed to *Always a Woman*, a campus feminist arts magazine and been editor-in-chief of *The Banner*, CSI's official student newspaper. Currently, in addition to being editor-in-chief of *Third Rail*, she is the graduate representative to CSI Student Government and sits on several committees and commissions at CSI.



**“Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself,  
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)”**

**–Walt Whitman**



**DWIGHT DUNKLEY** is currently pursuing a degree in Marketing at the College of Staten Island. As the current CSI Student Government president, Dwight is a member of the CSI Association, Auxiliary Services, College Council and is president of the CSI Marketing Club. A self-professed libertarian, Dwight recently traveled to Havana, Cuba on assignment for *Third Rail* to investigate the island-nation's unique form of socialism (*article forthcoming*).

**“You need people like me. You need people like me so you can point your fucking fingerz and say, that’s the bad guy! So, what [does] that make you? Good?”**

**–Al Pacino playing Tony Montana**

**SHAWN FISHER** is a decorated veteran of the *United States Naval Reserve* who majors in Communications at the College of Staten Island, with a specialization in Journalism. He holds an Associates of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences and has received two *Presidential Commendations* from the University for his activities on Campus. He has also worked professionally for *The Black Reign*, a newspaper dedicated to providing important content to Black New Yorkers. Credits extend to *Photics*, an online and print magazine founded by a CSI Alumnus and *The Sci-Fi Guys*, a webzine covering the world of science-fiction and fantasy.

**Muhammad my friend it’s time to tell the world we both know it was a girl  
back in Bethlehem,”**

**–Tori Amos**



**JEFF MCGRAHAM** is *STILL* on a quest to find Nirvana. Consequently, he is attempting to suppress his id, ego and superego and so refuses to participate in self promotion.



**“I dream of the intellectual destroyer of evidence and universalities, the one who, in the inertias and constraints of the present, locates and marks the weak points, the openings, the lines of power, who incessantly displaces himself, doesn’t know exactly where he is heading nor what he’ll think tomorrow because he is too attentive to the present.”** **–Michel Foucault**

**TJ RILEY:** I like to read philosophy, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, etc. I like to listen to music and noise in general. I tend to be introverted but sometimes break out of my shell when the need arises. At parties, I am the guy that sits in the corner, drinking away, looking as if I am thinking something important, but then after awhile I say something out loud, proving my complete utter idiocy. I also like being in supermarkets, which, I am told, is quite strange. I think it's like being in one huge Warhol painting, which, I am told, is also quite strange. I also am the only person, that I know of, that wears corporation t-shirts on stupid bloody Tuesdays, consciously. I do this, to try to be ironic or maybe, definitely sometimes, iconic. I also love it when people mistake my silence for stupidity - just talk to me and find out for yourself instead of coming to general conclusions based on some illogical inference.



**“The limits of my language means the limits of my world” –Ludwig Wittgenstein**



**KARA DONNELLY** is a recent transfer student to the College of Staten Island. She is happy to find family through the *Third Rail* and the NYPIRG chapter where she has just been elected to the Board of Directors. Although Kara is only 21 years of age, her wisdom extends beyond her biological years. Be wary of her excellence in poker, as her skills are second only (according to her anyway) to Kate Freitag in the NYPIRG office. As Kara has no life beyond school, one can often find her in the offices of NYPIRG, *Third Rail*, or anywhere else on the second floor of the Campus Center. Just as Jeff is trying to reach Nirvana, she is trying to discover her better half.

**“It is clear that I must find my other half. But is it a he or a she? What does this person look like? Identical to me? Or somehow complimentary. Does my other half have what I don't? Did he get the looks? The luck? The love? Were**

**we really separated forceably or did he just run off with the good stuff? Or did I? Will this person embarrass me? What about sex? Is that how we put ourselves back together again? Or can two people actually become one again?”**

**-Hedwig, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch***



**NEIL SCHULDINER** is also on a quest for physical and mental Nirvana, but is much farther along than Mr. McGraham.

**“The United States is the biggest terrorist nation on the planet.”**

**-Noam Chomsky**



**BULLPEN**



# I WANT TO SUCK YOUR BIG, HAIRY

**FICTION,  
POETRY,  
PHOTOGRAPHY,  
& POLITICAL  
ESSAYS**

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Room 231 in the Campus  
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## À UN MASQUE GABONAIS

Georges Rawiri

Ô masque Bakota, tes profondes orbites  
Regarde le présent, masque au teint effacé,  
Qui a su résister au temps comme aux termites,  
Impassible témoins d'une ère dépassée.  
Ton air grave, ton font haut et puisant abritent  
L'ombre mystérieuse où survit ta pensée,  
Tu es le livre clos où dormant les vieux rites,  
Et tu veilles sur nous, austère et compasse.  
Tu es l'ancêtre aimé, le symbole suprême  
De toute une famille aujourd'hui dispersé,  
Mais que chaque saison autout de toi ramène.  
    Tu es l'élan vital, par les dieux dispensé,  
    Le messager lointain d'une histoire africaine  
    Dont le présent jamais n'oubliera le passé

