

# Third Rail

The Award-Winning Political Arts Magazine of the College of Staten Island  
Volume 2006 :: Issue 6

# CSI ON SALE!



# ATTENTION QUAIN'T NATIVES OF DARFUR



*Take two aspirin and  
call us when you're  
white, Christian, and  
swimming in oil!*

**Third Rail** is pleased to announce that we have been honored by two prestigious organizations. Firstly, *Third Rail* has been named one of the ten best collegiate publications by *The Nation*, America's premiere progressive news magazine. Secondly, *Third Rail* has been awarded the Campus Alternative Journalism Award for Best Reporting by the *Independent Press Association*. For more details logon to [www.ThirdRailMag.com](http://www.ThirdRailMag.com)

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Ten Papers  
We Like



**Third Rail**

**PICKS**

**The Nation.**

STILL CLINTON'S SHOW?  
BY WILLIAM GREIDER

# THIRD RAIL

VOLUME 2006 :: ISSUE 6

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by P. Melissa Fisher,  
Editor-in-Chief

## THE PRIVATIZATION OF The College of Staten Island

**I**T'S BAD ENOUGH THAT THE COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND (CSI) HAS A 1.2 MILLION DOLLAR BUDGET DEFICIT WHICH IT TRIED TO CLOSE WITH STUDENT FUNDS. It's bad enough that CSI only backs off from taking \$100,000 from the Children's Center, an urgent necessity for several CSI students, after facing bad press in *The Staten Island Advance* (thank you Arishna Ramphal, Student Government President), but to add insult to injury, CSI has been selling parts of the campus to the general public for years. And if you think that this has not affected student life at CSI—think again.

The most obvious ongoing example of this would be the children's plays which are regularly staged in the Williamson Theater in 1P. These productions not only bring hordes of elementary schoolchildren to the building but also fill our campus with the busses necessary to transport them from their own schools to ours. These busses drop the children off and pick them up at the Great Lawn entrance to the building, tying up traffic and blocking students' passage all over campus. It has been so bad that the Loop Bus, whose specific purpose is to transport CSI students and faculty around campus, has been blocked from passing 1P by these bus loads of children who are obviously not CSI students or faculty. The students on the delayed Loop Busses still face penalties for lateness clearly beyond their control.

It's even worse if you actually have to enter 1P during one of these exchanges. It at least appears that Public Safety has been told to put these children ahead of actual members of the CSI community, and students attempting to access the Great Lawn entrance of 1P, especially by car, can be delayed as long as ten minutes. What makes this worse is that this is also the entrance used for many handicapped students. At one time, I was taking a class in that building, and I was also using crutches. When my husband tried to drop me off for class, Public Safety tried to tell him that he could not drive to the entrance because of the school busses. We politely explained that we were *actual* CSI students who needed to get to class, and this is how we needed to get there. We were allowed about ten feet from the entrance, but not actually in front of it. How many times must this have happened to students who use Access-a-ride?

This is, however, just one of the latest inconveniences in a long line of past and present ones. One of the worst, although it is not as bad anymore, had to be the temporary Staten Island Yankee stadium. Not only were dozens of precious parking spaces lost to the stadium, but the noise of its construction went on during the semester. Students all over the North Quad, especially 3N found it nearly impossible to hear their lectures thanks to the sounds of bulldozers, jackhammers and various trucks. They were asked to be patient as the construction would be completed soon. And it was, so the construction noise did stop—only to be replaced by an even louder PA system that would not stop for months. I'm sure the money that the SI Yankees paid did wonders for CSI, but what about the tuition the students paid for those classes? The complaints of both the affected students and faculty were ignored as the public once again took priority over the students.

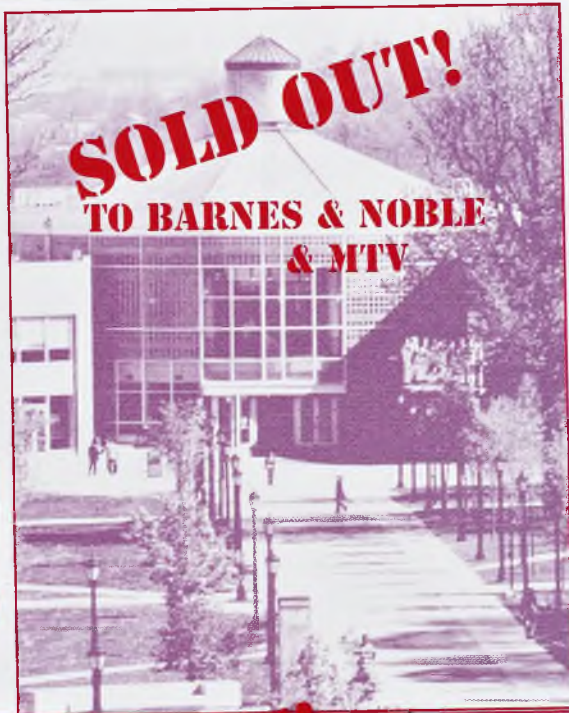
This stadium was and is not the only time that students had to fight for space on their own campus. The Green Dolphin Lounge in 1C is supposed to be a space for student events, but is often given over to paying outsiders. The students, who have no choice but to hold club related and other events on campus, either have to take a less appropriate space or reschedule. *THIRD RAIL* has been told on more than one occasion that we could not have a date we wanted for our open-mic events, and once even had a date approved and then taken away in favor of a paying outsider. Although this was an error on the part of *CSI Student Life*, the error was still in favor of the paying outsider over the students.

But it isn't just special events that cause students to have to vie for space with the paying public. CSI sells memberships to our gym. This taxes the already limited facilities, and takes the access to the equipment away from the students. In addition to that, it has had a profound effect on physical education at CSI. Few remember, but at one time, CSI had a variety of PhysEd class options for its students. Somehow, over the years, the choices of golf, swimming, gymnastics, cycling, scuba diving and more gave way to the glorified hygiene class known as PED 190, which at least had the physical requirement of the student needing to spend twenty hours in the gym the semester (s)he was registered for the



# CSI CIRCULAR

(Prices Good For  
Fall 2006 Only!)



# ON SALE!



The City  
University  
of  
New York

**Is On Sale!**

**Hurry Before Students Are Completely Sold Out!**

# EDITORIAL

## THE PRIVATIZATION OF CSI



**During construction of the stadium and during SI Yankee games, students repeatedly complained to the CSI Administration about extraneous noise, making it impossible to learn.**

class. I guess outside membership must be up, because that requirement was recently removed from the class.

It's clear that all of these situations are detrimental to student life on campus, but it does have other bad side effects as well. CSI students have been complaining about the lack of parking on campus for years. Well, when these paying outsiders come to campus, they have to park. And where do they park? In our spaces. Additionally, Public Safety is often tapped to patrol the shows and events of these paying outsiders. Now, we enjoy a very safe campus, but if these officers are guarding the paying outsiders, who's protecting us?

And now we have yet another, and perhaps even more invasive inconvenience in the form of the new high school on campus. This high school joins a long list of programs for children at CSI besides the shows mentioned earlier. CSI has long housed an alternative high school that spends a good deal of time in the west dining area of the cafeteria, and a summer camp that can turn the entire rotunda into a zoo, and does on a nearly daily basis during the summer. But this new high school is potentially far worse. In the one year this school has existed, it has already proved that its students have no intention of following the rules for its own safety or ours.

The students of the CSI high school are supposed to be wearing specially colored ID cards to identify themselves as high school students and distinguish them from the college students. I have never seen one of these IDs. Vandalism has increased over the past year; they gravitate to the bookstore,

where they are disruptive and, at times criminal—as shoplifting has gone up. And greater dangers are yet to come, as there were only freshmen on campus this year.

As the student body of the new CSI High increases and gets older they could actually pose a danger to the CSI college community. The high school students are supposed to stay in 5N, unless escorted elsewhere on campus by high school faculty, but they have already been ignoring that rule. Since they have, as previously stated, also been ignoring the fact that they are supposed to identify themselves as high school students, how are the college students supposed to be able to tell the difference?

And yes, the high school does come back to that old favorite—parking. See, not only do the high school's staff, faculty and administration need places to park, but in three years, there will be seniors with licenses and cars that will want to park in our lots.

As CSI students, we already have to deal with enough inconveniences to our college life. We already have to face being considered trivial to the Administration of the school that we pay to attend. It is wholly unfair for that Administration to turn around and expect us to vote to give them money intended to make our lives better, to bail them out of a crisis of their own design. If they need money, let them charge non-students to park on campus (why not, they already overcharge us for the privilege), let them raise the membership price for the gym, let them charge the productions that tie up 1P for the use of the space, etc. But don't continue to balance the CUNY budget, the CSI budget and any other budget on our backs!



**The CSI gym floor; more preoccupied by the general public than CSI students whose tuition helps pay for the upkeep and maintenance.**



**Attention**  
**Come watch your**  
**Student Government**  
**in action!**

*Summer '06*

June 9  
June 23  
July TBD  
August 31

*Fall '06*

September 7  
September 21  
October 5  
October 19  
November 2  
November 16  
November 30  
December 7

*Spring '07*

February 1  
February 8  
February 22  
March 8  
March 22  
April 12  
April 26  
May 10

*College of Staten Island*

## RE: FORGOTTEN SOULS

DEAR THIRD RAIL,

Shawn Fisher's article *Forgotten Souls* once again displays his one-sided coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. There are many facts regarding the Rachel Corrie incident that he completely ignores. Mr. Fisher provides nothing of the Israeli account of the events leading up to Corrie's death. According to the Israeli investigation, Corrie entered an area that was restricted to non-military personal due to safety concerns. Furthermore, the Israeli military made announcements warning those who did enter the restricted area to leave at once, because the military was in the process of bulldozing homes that were used by terrorists to attack innocent Israeli citizens (they were not homes owned by innocent Palestinian citizens as Fisher claims). The bulldozer operator did not mean to kill Corrie, but rather he was not able to see Corrie under the bulldozer.

Shame on you Mr. Fisher for writing a one sided report on the Rachel Corrie incident. You should apologize to you readers, Israelis, and the bulldozer operator you improperly accuse of murder.

Shlomo Silverman,  
Willowbrook resident

### SHAWN FISHER, AUTHOR OF FORGOTTEN SOULS RESPONDS

Dear Mr. Silverman

*There is an old saying that the truth is a three-edged sword, with the edges representing the two sides to a story and ultimately, hopefully, the unbiased truth. Unfortunately for the people of Palestine there has only been one side truly covered over the last fifty-plus years, that side being Israel's. Imagine if you will, Mr. Silverman, if*



Rachel Corrie, after being run over by an Israeli bulldozer

*the Jewish side of the Concentration Camps Story was never told. Imagine if today the only record of the conflict between Nazi Germany and European Jews came exclusively from the Nazis; would that be fair Mr. Silverman? Would that be just? The sword of truth is unbalanced in the conflict between Israel and Palestine. For half a century only the Israeli's story had been told. As such, history cannot fairly judge; what is the truth? It needs the second edge to be forged before the third and final edge may be forged. I write for the Palestinians because no one else in the West will; I give their side because the line is too long to give Israel's side. Would it surprise you, Mr. Silverman, that every December my family places a Menorah in our window? Because it surprises me every time a gentleman such as yourself, someone who probably knows firsthand what it is like to watch innocents die for want of wealth, for want of land, for want of power*

*and out of a glut of hate by another group of people. To watch them die and have all those who bear witness say nothing, it surprises me, Mr. Silverman, because of all the peoples on our world a Jew should know better! That is why I write as I do for Palestine Mr. Silverman.*

## RE: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DEAR THIRD RAIL,

I happen to believe that to say the Pledge of Allegiance with "Under God" in it is not a statement of religious proclamation, but rather what it says it is. It is a pledge to fulfill an duty to protect and uphold the foundations of this great American society. If you have a problem with saying god in the Pledge of Allegiance, then do the simple, still patriotic thing and just skip it without causing a big to do. And it is kind of sad how everyone claims "separation of church and state". I hate saying this but, this nation was pretty much founded by religious

pilgrims, and to take anything out of historical documents would be like trying to change history and everything that our founding fathers stood for. Hence, not only do we need god in the Pledge, but to take god out of our society would be telling people it is alright not to believe in god. And to add insult to injury, that would mean that we would not have freedom of speech. So please, do not go and try to change the past and worsen the future.

William,  
CSI Student

### P. MELISSA FISHER, AUTHOR OF PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE RESPONDS

Dear William:

*I sincerely hope that you are not a history major, because you seem to have the facts only half right. Yes, this nation was founded by religious pilgrims, but they were seeking religious freedom. It was the founding fathers, at the very beginning of this nation's history, who decided that separation of church and state would be a good idea. They were the ones who decreed that "Congress shall make no law governing religion." In fact, if you truly read my editorial, you would have seen that the "under god" in the pledge was not originally there, but added nearly two hundred years later--well after the First Amendment. So, which do you think is more in keeping with those religious pilgrims?*

*The First Amendment has no truer friends than the staff of THIRD RAIL. We believe religiously, if you will, in freedom of speech, press and religion. We also believe, as the founding fathers did, that the most patriotic thing we can do is to question our government and make sure that it is truly and fairly representing the wishes of the American public. America is made up by people of a multitude of religions and spiritual backgrounds and that includes people with none at all. To make them swear to a god they don't believe exists is far more un-American than to sit idly by and do nothing about it.*

*No one is trying to take religious rights away from anyone. If you want to pray, by all means, pray, but don't try to make me do it. See, I don't believe in god, at least not the way you do, and I will keep my spirituality where it's appropriate. And it is my belief that the founding fathers would agree with me when I say that it is not appropriate in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

## RE: BREAKING THE SILENCE

TO THE EDITORS,

Thank you so much for an issue focusing on Woman's issues. *Breaking the Silence* was a wonderful piece for women like myself who have lived in abusive situations. To all the women living under these conditions: you can leave and create a better life. Once again, thank you **THIRD RAIL**.

Brenda Peters  
Alumna

### P. MELISSA FISHER, AUTHOR OF BREAKING THE SILENCE RESPONDS

Dear Ms. Peters:

*Thank you so much for your kind words about my work. I try to make a difference with every issue I choose to take on in my editorials, but this one was particularly close to my heart. I have seen first-hand the damage that spousal abuse can do, not only to the victim, but also to the children involved. I have observed a media that, until recently has simply ignored the problem, and has rarely given it the attention it really needs, and finally decided I could not remain--silent, if you will. So, I spoke out. I spoke for all the women who couldn't and all the women who can't.*

*In this issue, there is a photo spread of T-shirts designed by victims of various forms of abuse. Again, these speak for those who can't. They are a visible reminder that this is a problem. They scream out, "We're here! Don't ignore us!" Abuse is a very private problem, and I feel that one of the best ways to end it is to expose it. I have exposed my history with domestic violence to show how easily one can get sucked into it, and to show that one can climb out of it. I also wanted to show the price of remaining silent.*

*Another key point in BREAKING THE SILENCE is that others knew I was being abused but did nothing to help. As I said, abuse is a private problem, so people often feel that to say or do anything would be a violation of privacy. That way of thinking is very dangerous to the victims. It might be embarrassing to all involved to say or do something to try to help, but those who do are saving lives. So, to borrow a phrase from the government, if you see something, say something.*

*Thank you, Ms. Peters, for allowing me to give yet another public voice to this horrible private hell that so many suffer through. I applaud your ability to move on. I know all too well just how much strength that takes. I just hope that others will follow your lead to a good life.*

The opinions expressed in responses by Third Rail members are solely representing their own opinions and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Third Rail Magazine or the magazine staff.

## The Foretelling of my Death

To the stupid little fucks,  
That write in hysterics,  
Sandwiched in between a  
Dull black and white  
Marble covered book—  
I hope you choke on a bouquet of  
cigarette butts.

TJ Riley

# Can you imagine?

Not being able to visit your spouse in the hospital?

Living with your spouse 25 years, and then losing everything - house, children, benefits

Being told you can't depend on your spouse's social security benefits, despite a lifetime of commitment?

## Is it hard to imagine?

It shouldn't be - this is the reality for same-sex couples all across America. It's simply not fair, and it's not American. Stand up for what's right, and join **Third Rail** in signing the Million Marriage Petition today.

[www.thirdrailmag.com](http://www.thirdrailmag.com)

[www.millionmarriage.org](http://www.millionmarriage.org)

# NEWS BRIEFS

## STARBUCKS 01 GEORGE WASHINGTON 00

Starbucks has been given the go ahead to convert an old historic inn in Annapolis, Maryland into one of their drone stores. Originally known as the *King of France Tavern* the inn has survived four centuries of American history. Once a favorite haunt of George Washington, he and other patriots of the American Revolution would gather there to relax and discuss the politics of the day, the very same political ideology that resulted in the founding of the United States. This is, of course, irrelevant to corporate giant Starbucks who seems to place one of their stores in any empty commercial space that Wal-Mart hasn't already gotten to.



## GROUND CONTROL TO MAJOR TOM

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has green-lighted the building of a commercial Space Port in Oklahoma right along side of where the deer and the antelope play. The Oklahoma Space Industry Development Authority will be (OSIDA) allowed to oversee the takeoff and landing of "suborbital, reusable launch vehicles" or in simpler terms they will manage Space Shuttles for commercial and private use. The FAA granted license for such an operation is only the second ever given. The OSIDA will have no military airspace restrictions be able to operate much like a normal airport, hopefully though without the same delays or stale bags of peanuts.



## BILL OF RIGHTS, WHAT BILL OF RIGHTS?

Immigrants in Newport, RI are outraged and concerned over aggressive and illegal behavior by law enforcement agents. In a recent incident six officers broke into the home of legal immigrant Jose Salazar demanding information on the whereabouts of a friend of his who is also an immigrant, but his immigration status is in question. The weapon brandishing



men did not have a warrant nor were they easily identifiable as law officers (plainclothes cops). They only left upon complaints from Jose's roommate who is a U.S. Citizen. The Immigrants in Action Committee remind Newport immigrants that due process and civil rights apply in cases of criminal investigations regardless of their citizenship status.

## PINK ELEPHANTS ON PARADE?

Staten's Islands Gay Pride Parade went off without a hitch for the second straight year in a row. With minimal protest both gay and straight residents from around the Island gathered together in support and celebration of gay community and their rights to civil liberties. The parade started at the Ocean Beach fishing pier and followed a route along the Midland Beach promenade. One marcher of note was Vickie Fossella, sister to Congressman Vito Fossella, a member of the Republican Party. Vickie was there with her mother, sister, life-partner and their children. Vickie expressed a desire for her brother's political views to change so that he could join her in the annual march; however, she will always have love for him anyway.



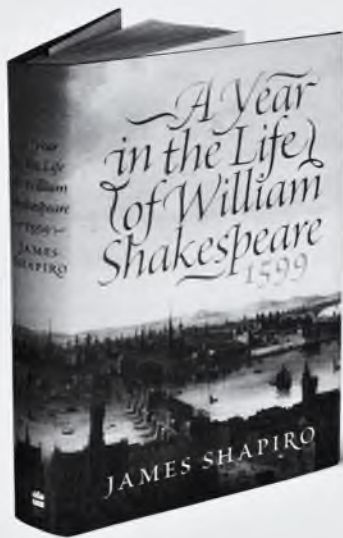
## WORLD PEACE THREATENED BY UNITED STATES

In a recent poll the United States and the Bush administration were listed as the biggest threat to global peace at the moment. The Pew Research Group has released its latest worldwide survey and the behavior of the U.S. seemed to be on the minds of many. The company surveyed 17000 individuals throughout 15 countries. Among the results was an increased belief that the U.S. war on terror was destabilizing global peace and made the world a more dangerous place. Confidence in the Bush administration has sunk and most people don't believe that the U.S. can win its war on terror.



## SHAKESPEARE IS STILL A WINNER

Writer and Columbia University Professor James Shapiro has won an award for his partial biography of William Shakespeare. His book entitled *1599 A Year in the life of William Shakespeare* takes a detailed look at the events in one of the most critical years in Shakespeare's professional life. Shapiro's work has earned the BBC Four's Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction, a 30,000 British-Pound prize. Talking to the BBC one of the Judges said that Shapiro's book was "a remarkable contribution to the understanding of our greatest cultural figure."



## PRESIDENT BUSH ATTACKS BLIND MAN

At a recent outdoor White House press conference President Bush made despairing remarks to a reporter who was wearing sunglasses. The reporter in question, Peter Wallsten of the *Los Angeles Times* wears the glasses for medical reasons. Peter has been suffering from Stargardt's disease, a form of macular degeneration that causes progressive vision loss. This makes Peter very sensitive to light and must wear the glasses even on overcast days. Later on that same day the President would apologize for the slight only after the incident would end up in the press.

## CONGRESS GRANTS ITSELF A RAISE

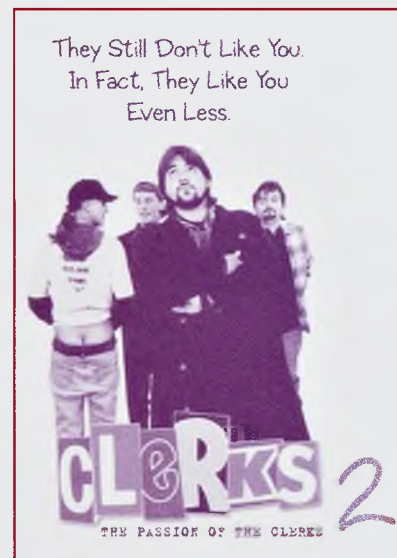
Having solved all other problems with the nation the House and Senate took the time in June to give themselves a raise. Since a 1989 law took effect the Legislator receives an annual cost of living raise of 2% which translates to an additional 3,300 annual and



raising their pay to \$168,500. In order not to accept the raise Congress must take active steps to hold a vote; something that Utah Representative Jim Matheson attempted. However the lone Democrat's effort was quickly shot down in the GOP controlled Congress. Along with Congress, Vice-President Dick Cheney will also receive a raise as he serves as President to the Senate.

## INDEPENDENT FILM DIRECTOR RETURNS TO ROOTS

Writer and director Kevin Smith returns to the film that started his career with a sequel. *Clerks 2* debuted this Summer in theaters across the nation. The original *Clerks* film was a breakout hit at the Cannes film festival in 1994 and *Clerks 2* received the same admiration at this year's Cannes with an eight minute standing ovation by viewers. Kevin, who remains amazingly humble, has become a cult icon amongst college students as he explores his life and that of his friends through both the dramatic and comedic fiction of his films. In *Clerks*, Kevin explored the working life of the young adult; *Chasing Amy* took on his beliefs, confusions and experiences of sexuality and *Dogma* tackled his questions of faith and his relationship with Catholicism. While many of his films have been set in the same fictional universe often known as the Askewniverse, *Clerks 2* is Kevin's first true sequel.

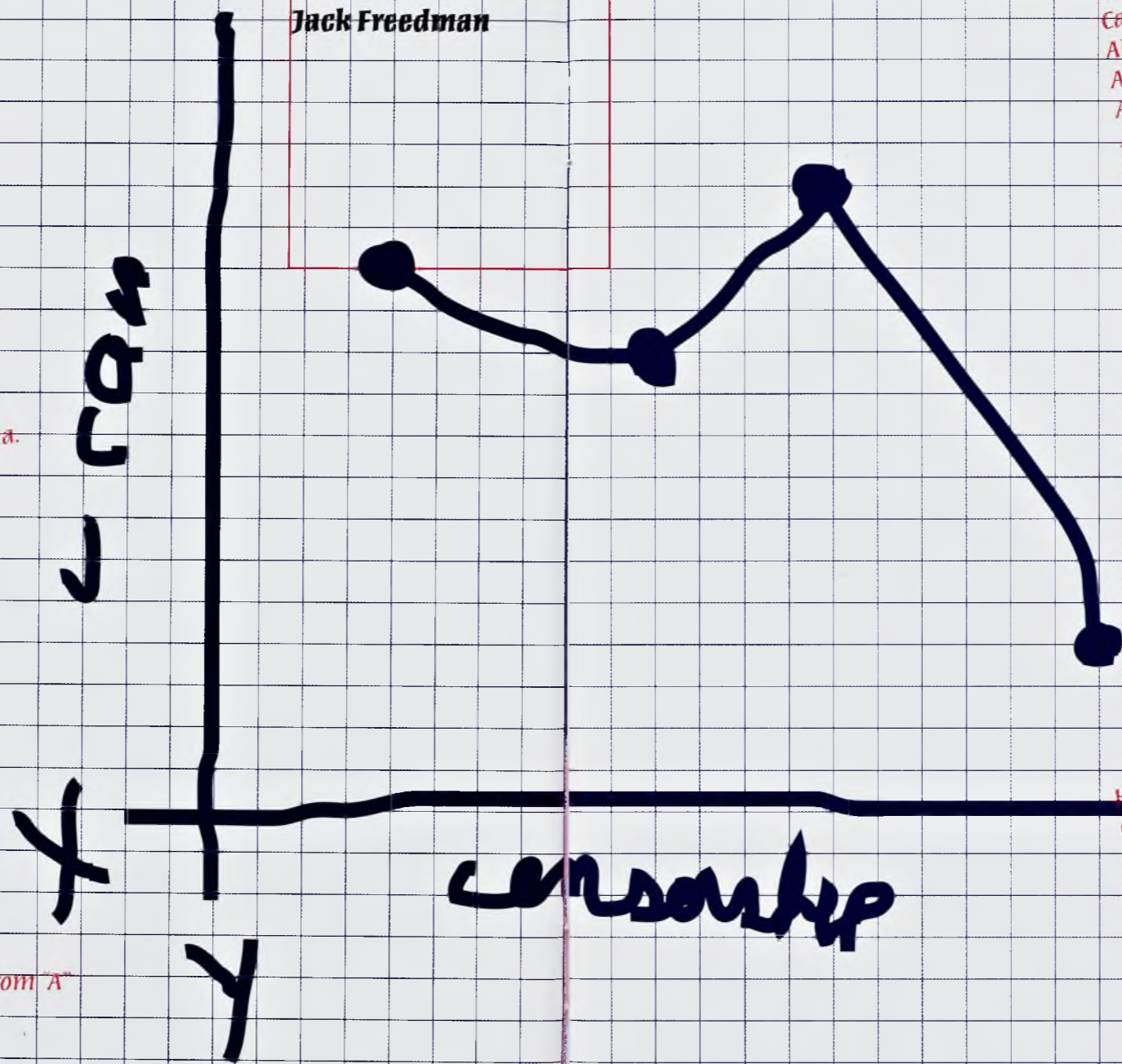


## ISRAEL ACCUSED OF TERRORISM

The nation of Palestine has accused Israel of State Terrorism after nine civilians were killed by an Israeli air-strike on the Gaza Strip. Their were 42 additional casualties and two of the killed were four and five years old, their father was also killed in the unprovoked attack. A second location was also attacked though casualties have yet to be reported. "What Israel is doing is called state terrorism," said President Mahmud Abbas in response to Israel's aggression.

# Calculations

By  
Jack Freedman



Allow me to add my two cents to the situation.  
In return, I would like you to subtract the rhetoric  
That exits your lips  
And assist me in keeping divisions from multiplying.  
Before I go off on a tangent,  
Let me tell you about the problem I have evaluated.  
You see, it seems as if every move you make is calculated.

I have tried to mind my Ps and Qs regarding this issue,  
But I can not help myself from arriving at the solution  
That your ego-induced pollution  
Is planned out like a logic proof  
Or an algebraic matrix  
Or a quadratic equation  
Or a manic locomotive.

From Day 1, I was able to graph the main points in my brain  
To the axes labeled "X" and "Y".  
"X" signifies your attempts to censor others.  
"Y," because you can  
My rage is the product of your strategy to further an agenda.  
It is merely a fraction of this anger being portrayed.  
That's right, just a percentage.  
Your position on the number scale of aggravation  
Can not be located with mortal eyes.  
It stretches out to an infinite number of miles.  
There is no final integer.

You see, a range of things bother and depress me,  
And my mood not only swings  
Like a pendulum in a grandfather clock,  
But also descends and ascends like a parabola.  
Therefore, I must dig within my brain  
And use prior knowledge obtained  
To plot the path across the map  
On the way to a poem marked with a black "X"  
For the most part, I think I do a damn good job at getting from "A"  
to "B"...

WITHOUT the help of a tutor.  
I am comfortable with what I know  
And I embrace it.  
Whatever "knowledge" I may lack is on me,  
But I know  
That you don't know squat  
If you think you know  
What little I know.  
Do you think I care?  
HELL NO!

I mean not for this writing to encompass a circular  
argument,  
But like a 180° angle,  
Let's get something straight  
And settle this score.  
I am neither a letter nor a number nor a remedial  
student.

I am just a man with a voice  
That some may consider noise that triggers violent waves.  
That is my right.

Aren't we supposed to be equal?  
Shouldn't symbols resembling more than and less than  
Not be applied or be crossed out?  
Can't we eliminate all unnecessary variables?  
All unnecessary formulas?  
All unnecessary postulates?  
All unnecessary theorems?  
All unnecessary programs?

Diagrams?  
Anagrams?  
Acrostics?  
Diagnostics?  
Cross multiples?  
This long division has gone on for too long,  
Repeating multiple times like 1/5 written as a decimal.  
Statistics do not reject this claim,  
Although some want it to be a syntax error  
Or want to believe  
That I forgot to carry the "2" in my calculation,  
But the remainder of my tolerance  
Hangs by an unraveling thread.  
I proudly sign my name on this thesis  
And my colleagues would proudly cosign,  
Given that they possess research on this behavior,  
So we pooled our data together.  
We share a very reciprocal relationship.

However, it does not take Fibonacci  
Or Pascal  
Or Apollonius  
Or Euclid  
Or Euler  
Or Eristophanes  
Or Archimedes  
Or Maimonides  
Or Gematria  
Or even the Nation of Islam to deduce this verbal dilemma

Your calculations are wrong.  
The atmosphere provided is negative.  
The agenda can not be defined,  
For it does not compute.  
Not by any means.  
Not by any modes.  
Not by any standard deviations  
How do you like those applications?

## INTERVIEW with LOCAL STATEN ISLAND POET

Many people wonder about the workings of the mind of a poet. Well, I was lucky enough to sit down with my favorite local poet, **Jack Freedman**, and talk to him about: his life; his work; his book, **Serotonin Seas**, and his hosting of open-mic poetry. Jack is the host of a weekly open-mic night that was held on Tuesdays at *The Muddy Cup*, but has moved slightly up the block to *Martini Reds* on Wednesdays.

**Serotonin Seas** is available directly from Jack at the open-mics at *Martini Reds*. It can also be purchased at the gift shop of the Snug Harbor Cultural Center or from any of the major .com bookstores.



**P. MELISSA FISHER:** Jack, we did an article several months ago on *The Muddy Cup*, and, at the time you were not hosting, but you were a frequent visitor. I believe you were there every week, but since then you've taken over hosting duties?

**JACK FREEDMAN:** Uh, yes, I have.

**PMF:** How would you say your hosting style differs from Jeremy's [Jeremy Condit is the former open-mic host profiled in a previous issue.]

**JF:** My hosting style differs in that I try to put myself out of it more, and make it more about the people who read rather than about myself. I don't want to put a lot of the spotlight on myself. I want to become one with the crowd rather than stand out as a host. That's my method.

**PMF:** Jeremy was also, from what I can recall, far more agitated. You are very much more laid-back.

**JF:** There was a time where I was a lot more agitated and could relate to Jeremy in that respect. Um...back when he started hosting there were a lot of younger people coming. We referred to them as fetuses. Um...they were basically not respectful of the proceedings of open-mic and were terrorizing the neighborhood; bringing in outside food; getting

hopped up on power bars, yadda, yadda, yadda. Jeremy could not put up with it, and there would be plenty of times where I would stop reading what I was reading, because I would hear outside voices being mentioned, and I would go completely ballistic.

**PMF:** Open-mic at *The Cup* was even cancelled for a while; was it not?

**JF:** Yeah, yes, it was, and uh, I was pretty annoyed by it. And...uh...from a personal standpoint, it damn near killed me. Um...it was around that time when it was cancelled that there was a lot of happening in my personal life and, as a result, I wound up having to be put away into a psych ward. And...uh...during that time, I, you know, I recuperated. You know...um...open-mic returned, and that represented a completely different era for open-mic. It didn't have the fetuses anymore, and we had more qualified poets reading.

**PMF:** Now, I haven't been there in a while, but I've seen that now you're not the only host. There's a trio?

**JF:** Yes, we are the poetic firm of Freedman, Rubenschneider, and DiMaria. Um...my co-co-host, Mike, he wound up taking the route that Jeremy took and is now taking courses

as an emergency medical technician.

**PMF:** So you're afraid you're going to lose him, too?

**JF:** Uh, yeah, maybe. Well, he said that he's going to be back in about three months or four months. We'll see what happens. Until then, I have a new co-host, Amy. She's been helping me quite a bit. Um, she usually hosts the second round, but I host the first round, and I'm just grateful to have extra help, and she's like the third co-host that I've been through since I started hosting this.

**PMF:** How would you say the ethnic diversity works at *The Cup*?

**JF:** Uh, I would say that there's always been a good amount of diversity at *The Cup*. I would say that in the past, there was much more diversity not only among racial lines, but among age demographics. We had older people and younger people alike. Nowadays, we

people who have wanted to stone me to death.

**PMF:** But isn't the purpose of poetry to spark thought and debate?

**JF:** Yes, absolutely, and that was my original intention. My original intention wasn't to bash any specific side of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, but really to just point out the errors in both sides and try and find some kind of a happy medium in that conflict.

**PMF:** In all honesty, one of my favorite of *The Cup* open-mics is the way that poetry seems to come from poetry, right on the spot. Uh, do you do "challenges" the way that Jeremy used to? Like all of a sudden he'll say write a poem about...what was it...how your angel will kill you?

**JF:** Yes, that was a popular one. Um...Amy is the one who throws out the "challenges." Occasionally, I will. In all honesty, the "challenges" don't really

to be politically correct here, to a poem about based math workings, to poems on depression, where would you say most of your work comes from?

**JF:** That's a pretty interesting question. Uh, I suppose it kind of varies from each era in which I've written. Um, when I first started writing I wrote mostly morbid stuff. Uh, I remember that my first poem was a very graphic detail of childbirth being brought up into a world filled with greed and terror and artifice and pretty much every single deadly sin that you can think of. Next came the more political poems that I've written. Most recently I've written a lot of poems that deal with depression. Um... I'd say last year that was the bulk of what I wrote. As of recently, though, I've been writing a lot of poems are sentimental.

**PMF:** A lot of poets are criticized, and I know that my work in amongst

have mostly younger people, but we do have some older followers.

**PMF:** Would you say there's ever been an argument or debate that's been brought on by the poetry of any readers?

**JF:** Um, a few times. As you and many of the staff members [of *Third Rail*] know, there was one poem that I am frequently associated with, that has spurred debate among many people—it's called, "Suicide Bomber," and um...(laughs)...it's had people that have supported what I said and it's had

spark me, you know, bring out a poetic spark in me, but they do with a lot of people. And maybe, at some point, I'll try to do a "challenge" and see what comes out of it. But typically, my best work doesn't come out of the "challenges." But I love the "challenges," they're good for a lot of people, so I support them being thrown out.

**PMF:** Your work is very diverse. You've gone from a poem written from the point of view of a Palestinian—some would say terrorist, some would say freedom fighter—I'm trying

this, for not being able to write happy poems. Would you feel your work falls into this category?

**JF:** Well, one of the poems that's in my book, *Serotonin Seas*, actually deals with that subject, and the last line of it is, "Then talk to me about writing happier poetry."

**PMF:** That's actually one of my favorite lines in the book. Which, by the way, is a remarkable book. I, personally, own two copies. Now also, a lot of student poets are interested in seeing their work published. Your book is self-



# CULTURAL DISCOURSE

published.

**JF:** Right

**PMF:** How did that work out for you?

**JF:** Um...it worked out pretty well. Um...there are obstacles that come along with self-publishing. Many times it's frowned upon by the literary community, because they consider anything that's not published by a major publishing house, they consider it to be less qualified writing. But this is poetry and poetry is not an easy thing to market. So I was only left with the choice of going with a print on demand publisher. It went pretty well for me; I sold more copies than I anticipated I would sell, but I've never been in it for the money.

**PMF:** Has it opened any doors to more traditional publishing houses?

**JF:** It has; it has. Um...I have a few projects that I'm working on right now, and I've submitted my poetry book to a few contests that are geared toward self-published authors. First prize is \$3000.

**PMF:** Do you get any feedback from hosting at *The Cup*?

**JF:** Um...many a time there are even people who ask me to write happier poetry or to smile more. While it is very tempting for me to just flip them the bird, I just say, "Look, I can only go by what I feel, and many a time I don't feel that life is a bowl of cherries, ya know?"

**PMF:** More like a bucket of razor blades.

**JF:** More or less

**PMF:** What about the venue itself? Does *The Cup* find open-mics profitable, and does it support them?

**JF:** Well, originally when I started hosting, there was talk about making the open-mic poetry every other week—it never happened, but their motive behind it was they were hoping to get more people in and make more money. It never happened and open-mic has been a part of *The Muddy Cup* since it opened in September of 2001,

and I certainly hope it will remain a part of *The Muddy Cup*. [As of June 2006, open-mic is no longer at *The Muddy Cup*]

**PMF:** Interesting timing for a place to open so close to Downtown, Manhattan.

**JF:** Very.

**PMF:** Did it open before or after the eleventh?

**JF:** Before.

**PMF:** For those who don't know, *The Muddy Cup* is located on Van Duzer Street in Stapleton on Staten Island. Um...have you ever had any poets of any notoriety stop by?

**JF:** Um...a few times. When open-mic first started, we had featured poets all the time.

**PMF:** What do you do when you have regulars whose poetry might not be say...the most popular. Would you encourage them to keep writing? I don't want to out-and-out say that their poetry is not very good but...

**JF:** There have been plenty of times, honestly, that I've been tempted to say, "Look, man, you've got to dig a little deeper. You're only skimming the surface, and the stuff you're writing can't really be construed as poetry. This is either a rant or this is just not the place for your writing."

**PMF:** That's exactly what I was thinking. Everyone, in all honesty, can write poetry. Poetry is a system of organizing feelings into words, and anyone can do that.

**JF:** Right, absolutely

**PMF:** But there is some talent to making poetry more of an art. Would you say that any artists will follow your lead and self-publish work?

**JF:** Um...I don't know. Um...a lot of people that I've talked to have talked about their side projects. I know a few people have worked on novels or are currently working on novels.

**PMF:** I also heard somewhere, I think I might have read it on Myspace, that you're putting together a *Muddy Cup* anthology?

**JF:** Uh...yes. I mean currently, there are only two of us working on it, but the inspiration behind it is taking moments where there was an inspiration for writing, but you never got around to it.

**PMF:** Oh! I hate those!

**JF:** So, this collection is going to be called *The Raven Hospital*. So, the concept behind it is like taking injured pieces of inspiration and making them better. We intend to take these individual moments and flesh them out. Since this is a body of missed inspiration, I'll give one example: one time a homeless person proposed to me at Washington Square Park...

**PMF:** Proposed marriage?

**JF:** Proposed marriage in Washington Square Park. I always wonder what would have happened if I had said, "Yes," to that proposal.

**PMF:** Man, I would love to read that! Um...speaking of marriage proposals...

**JF:** YES...

**PMF:** In the last article, and I wasn't intending on bringing this up, you had proposed to your then-girlfriend.

**JF:** Right

**PMF:** I notice that you're not married.

**JF:** That's correct. Um...a number of things went wrong with the engagement. Um, we both jumped into this a little too quickly, I mean, we were both committed to each other, but there were a lot of things that were going wrong. We had no place to live. Neither one of us was making enough money to try to finance our honeymoon, or the wedding itself, or an apartment in St. George or anywhere on the North Shore where housing is semi-affordable.

**PMF:** You should try living on the South Shore!

**JF:** Excuse me?

**PMF:** I live in Bay Terrace where studios go for about \$800 a month!

**JF:** Would they accept a biracial couple there?

**PMF:** In Bay Terrace [laughs] people

with darker skin than us [both Jack Freedman and P. Melissa Fisher are fair-skinned redheads] are not accepted in Bay Terrace! So the engagement didn't work out?

**JF:** The engagement did not work out. We stayed together for a little while after we broke off the engagement. We were still talking about living together; we were still talking about getting married—possibly eloping. And um...eventually it just became too much for me, and it was taking a very strong strain on me, and as a result, I just couldn't take it anymore. At that point, we broke up.

**PMF:** Does she still come to *The Cup*?

**JF:** For a little while, she did come to the *Muddy Cup*, but she did wind up not going anymore. It was a part of it anymore. I would like to say that it isn't solely based on the fact that we're not together anymore. But there was some tension between us.

**PMF:** You have a son together, though. And your son is beautiful! How old is he now?

**JF:** He's two-and-a-half

**PMF:** What do you seek for him being biracial? Do you feel that it's going to be an area of difficulty for him?

**JF:** Um...among other kids, you know, no matter what you have in you, there's going to be some aspect of ridicule. So, I'm fully expecting that he may run into some barriers, but I have had many people tell me that he's going to be a heartbreaker and whatnot.

**PMF:** The funny thing is that he does look like a black version of you, to me. He definitely looks black, but I see so much of you in him. You know, the shape of your face, the shape of your eyes, I see it in him. There are those that say that the best way to end racism is to breed it out, and we should all be biracial.

**JF:** Right, I agree

**PMF:** Do you feel that you would take up with another person not of your race?

**JF:** Um...I'm an equal opportunity dater. Um...I've dated the rainbow. I've dated white; I've dated black, obviously.

**PMF:** Now, you make no secret of your mental illness, or that you've been hospitalized. How soon after you broke up with Shantell were you hospitalized?

**JF:** Um...I was actually hospitalized on two occasions. On the first occasion, I was at my job, and I wound up just having a panic attack, and I asked somebody in the subway station to take me to the hospital. I was in St. Vincent's in Manhattan for a while. Afterwards, I wound up leaving.

Came home for about a week; that's when Shantell and I broke up. And a lot of things were going wrong between hospitalizations. Along with Shantell and I breaking up, I was on this medication that was making me extremely drowsy, and I was suffering from panic attacks—I felt like I was going to die, if I couldn't relax.

**PMF:** Now a lot of people wouldn't know this but, serotonin, which is in the title of your book, is actually the neurotransmitter that makes people feel uplifted or happy.

**JF:** Correct.

**PMF:** So the medication you were on was to increase serotonin?

**JF:** Uh, yes.

**PMF:** I also find it interesting that *Serotonin Seas*, has very strong implications. Do you feel that the title represents you are sailing and are doing well? Are you sailing on serotonin or drowning in it?

**JF:** I'd say a little of column A and a little of column B. There are poems in that book where I feel like I'm drowning and later poems that I've written have been sailing.

**PMF:** I've noticed also, that your poems have taken on a more relaxed vibe. The ones you put on Myspace, I wouldn't call them "happy," but they're not "I'm going to slit my wrist and drown in the blood," either. They're on a nice, even keel. Would you say that is because of your current mental state?

**JF:** Yes, absolutely. It's been a pretty interesting time trying to write, especially since I don't have misery to inspire me.

**PMF:** Isn't that the poetic way?

**JF:** It was for a long freaking time!

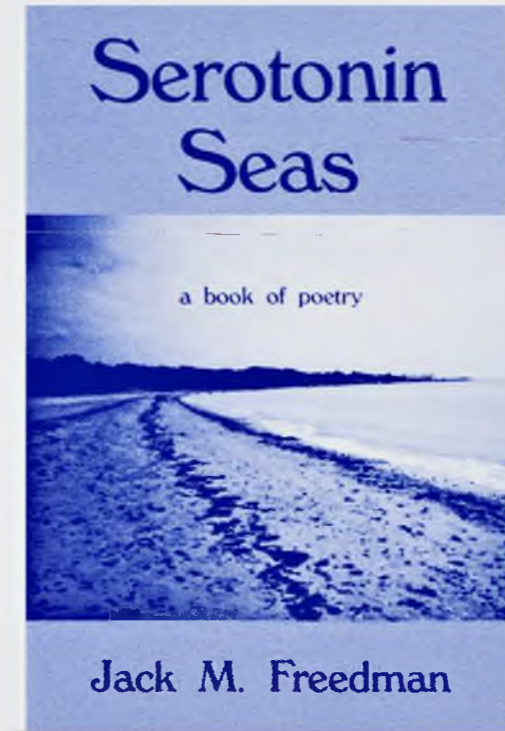
**PMF:** So, now what inspires you?

**JF:** Um...well, I've been having a little bit of writer's block lately, because I haven't been inspired by misery, but um...mostly self-discovery. I've taken a lot of time to myself trying to figure out what I want in life and what has brought me to the current state that I'm in. I've done a lot of reflecting, and most of my poetry reflects that.

**PMF:** Where do you see your poetry going in the future?

**JF:** Right now, I'm just...a...living day by day and seeing where that takes me. When I started writing poetry, I didn't write with the intention of publishing everything, but now I'm concentrating on the sales of my book and working on a novel.

**PMF:** Thanks for coming and talking to us about your life and your work. I know there'll be even greater things in your future!



There is no feeling right now.  
Lost is a sense  
Of spirit  
Bringing forth vitality.  
These words run rampant  
As a rant resurfaces  
Through a ravine of religions  
Engaged in a battle of insignias  
There are no victors.  
Only bloodshed  
Under the guise of piety  
Under the fallacy  
That sacrifice is surely  
A savior from sacrilege.  
Haunting is the Hattori Hanzo  
Inspired upheaval  
Of the celestial symbols.  
I just stand nearby  
Waiting  
Desperately  
For a theological truce to transpire  
And for our trusty abstract friends:  
The star  
The cross  
The moon  
The swirls  
The monk  
Among others  
To serve as our lucky charms  
Rather than charm us out of luck.  
The gods have surely run amok.  
Still I wait.  
Sitting  
Tucked away in the dark corner  
Awaiting that feeling.  
The sound that lets me know  
That there is a god.  
I weep at the wonder  
Of our wandering sense of scruples  
Settled in seminaries  
In true form  
We world emulate the canonized.  
Appreciate the imprisoned.

Reinforce the roaring of vengeance  
As bloodcurdling screams of terror  
Overstep the bounds  
Bringing forth our  
In reality,  
We are all saints  
We are all prisoners  
We are all avengers  
Deep down inside  
Hoping for goodness  
In the recesses of  
Fighting for those who are fortunate,  
Ourselves mostly who are unusually.  
Sometimes as our  
Other times under a banner of faith.  
There is no telling when  
The war of supreme worlds  
Woven with serene words  
Will resolve.  
Surely,  
It will not happen in America,  
Where the likes of  
Simon Templar  
Number Six  
And Emma Peel  
Reside within a racial ghetto  
Neglected by most  
I sit here  
Listening to litany  
Empowered by  
Aiming to objectify  
Other vessels  
Of organized omens  
More and more,



of the  
By Jack Freedman

My mind manifests machinations  
Of magic

Mass-murderers of individuality.  
Multifaceted masquerades of empowerment.  
Mainstream mêlées  
Laid out between ornaments  
In "The O'Reilly Factor".  
All the while,  
Religions realize the reincarnation  
Of their roots  
While the trunks  
Take blows to their hearts  
Yellow stars  
Astardized by movie stars  
Climbing trees of life,  
Ignoring tenements  
And testaments  
Spanning millennia.  
But now Judaism is trivia.  
Answer for a yellow wedge.  
Now await the day  
When my descendants  
Be referred to  
As practitioners  
Of the faith  
Formerly known as Judaism  
And currently known as Kabbalah.  
Deals containing logic  
Bearing the shape of a mandala.  
Firm your beliefs.  
Share your ideas.  
Take traditions to the tunnels  
Of your trachea  
So that you may truly feel the spirit  
Once one aims to cut you  
Where the pain is most intense.  
Don't know what to interpret as truth anymore.  
All I have is a sense of respect  
For my fellow man.  
I believe in my lineage.  
My ancestors  
Untimely ripped from this earth.  
My faith  
Lies within the yellow stars  
Pre-shadowing the establishment  
Of the blue and white banner  
Wave with pride.  
Most importantly,  
I believe in the pen.



# I WANT TO SUCK YOUR BIG, HAIRY

FICTION,  
POETRY,  
PHOTOGRAPHY,  
& POLITICAL  
ESSAYS

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Andrea  
Santiago

It sux to feel worthless  
+ easily pushed aside,  
To be alone all ur life!  
If ur not a dater or a  
Slut, + never can be!  
It makes u pretend ur  
happy + fake when u  
hide the sadness so  
deep cause ur really  
dead inside

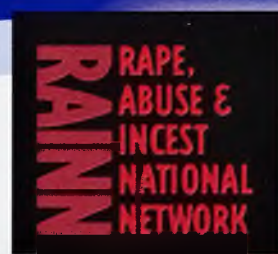
All u can do is be u in  
the end, + hope that's  
good enough!  
Eventually someone will  
luv u for u + ur flaws,  
won't they?

This overrated obsession  
With falling in love will  
Never cure;  
And although it feels as  
Though ur heart was  
ripped out of ur chest,  
In all its fiery glory,  
Brings strength like no  
other, Thanx life.

Love  
+  
Life

# POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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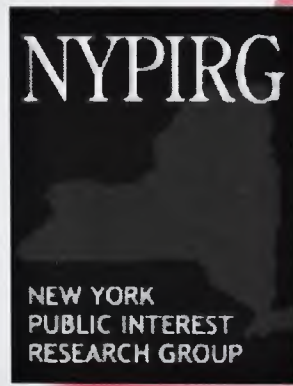
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## FICTION

# *The Slaughter of the Jezebel*



**BY HANNAH JEAN**  
PART ONE

**S**HE WAS NOT A COUNTRY GIRL. IMPORTANTLY SHE WAS HARDLY A GIRL AT ALL, AND WAS MORE SO A THIRTEEN YEAR OLD CHILD TRAPPED IN THE DEVELOPING FORM OF A WOMAN. Also importantly, she came from a city, and not just from a city, but from a city built upon the most clichéd aspects of bustling city life. And though in the peak of an oppressive summer when paint melted into tacky sap

and friends and neighbors fell into annoyed stagnancy, she took moments to appreciate the privilege of being born into a family. Even more so, she was born to an educated mother and father who loved her very much.

**R**aised on the throb of city life, Katherine Duncan should have become a hardened adolescent, but instead she became inquisitive and, in such, endearing. This was inherited; her parents deserted the comfortable monotony of suburbia to open a medical clinic and homeless shelter in the same city in which they now resided. Their

ambitious altruism had been noble if not heroic, but recently the sacrifices that their daughter suffered as a result of their instinctive kindness had manifested in her restlessness. And so their keen perception, which was inspired by overwhelming love and affection for their only child, led to a gift.

**S**eated around a modest table, Katherine toyed with the scattering of peas on her cloudy glass plate. They never ate quietly; there was always friendly bantering conversation to be had, and it was this that was lacking, and it was this that gave away her parents' secret. They did not flinch through the entire meal, and it was only until it be-

random. The peas shifted.

“Outside the city, there is a small farm owned by a man named Joseph Richardson. It’s really beautiful. He raises mostly cows. I’ve asked him if you might be of use to him as the fall harvest approaches. He’s offered you a job there if you’re interested.”

**K**atherine was stunned so as she had just recently accepted the need to stifle her thirst for newness, and now that plight seemed entirely unnecessary. But barring this small annoyance her mood was wholly jovial,

came evident that Katherine’s anxious need to move would have her leaving soon that her mother interjected the excited silence. “Katherine, I have something to tell you.” This was something new; most often the discussion was entirely mutual, with no one telling any one other person anything, and rather all thoughts being heard and received at once and at

and she jumped from her chair, unbalancing it as it crashed to the floor unheard, and threw her thin arms around her mother’s neck and shoulders in a signature embrace that is only used in the most excited of circumstances.

# CULTURAL DISCOURSE

## FICTION

**K**atherine's trip out of the city was only exciting in these specific conditions, as she had been outside its limits several times in her life and in fact had driven past the very farm she was now driving to, though never granting it a second thought or glance in earlier passings. Now she sat with her head craned nearly out the window, asserting that every passing tree was owned by Joseph Richardson, and that all of this was a part of her farm, as it had already become her own in her hungry mind.

**T**he driveway to the Richardson Farm was less a driveway and more a gravel road, and the meandering path of the car threw behind it dancing swirls of dust and dirt so thick that the lumbering sign affixed at the end of the driveway could scarcely been seen through the chalky haze. The end of the dirt driveway that was actually a road opened up to a huge oval of a space, room enough for four trucks each pulling a horse trailer to maneuver. To the left of this vast space was a towering farm house, white with no shutters and a wrap-around porch. The paint chipped and flaked in a most appropriate way, and its commanding presence in the yard was only offset by the powerful shadow of an old wooden barn situated slightly behind the house. To the right of the driveway, and to every other which way in fact, was space: green, swaying space, spotted with careless animals arranged purposefully haphazard, barely noticeable in their distance as the only reason they could be seen at all was the casual flick of a cow's tail and the calm bleat of an unsatisfied ewe.

**K**atherine absorbed these images in such reverence that she hardly remembered kissing her mother goodbye and leaving the car. She walked dazedly to the house, foolishly assuming that the farmer would be inside. Her timid knocks unanswered, she wandered around the back of the house, softly calling, "Hel-

lo? Mister Richardson? Mrs. Richardson? Hello?"

**H**ad Mr. Richardson indeed been in the house to answer the call of the young girl, he certainly would have come to greet her, inspired to be accommodated due to her awkwardness on the big farm. Instead it was that Mr. Richardson was walking back from the barn, dragging behind him an old milking cow named Estella, who was certainly in no mood to go anywhere at all, much less away from the barn.

**I**t was Estella's rumbling moans that made Katherine turn to the old man and his meandering cow that were coming in her general direction. She could not help but be drawn to the pair as she bounded down the little garden path and only slowed when Mr. Richardson finally lifted his head to see the young girl coming toward him. Estella was interested in none of this, though she may have been had she been aware of the absolute reverence bestowed upon her by Katherine.

**"**Hey there," said Mr. Richardson, breathing hard and dripping sweat in the relentless summer heat. "Katherine, right? Well, Katie from now on. Katherine is too pretty a name for this place, isn't it Katie?"

**W**holly unaware of anything Mr. Richardson was saying, Katie nodded and blindly reached a hand to touch the restless cow, who had taken advantage of the pause in moving forward to bend her head and turn mouthfuls of grass into sweet pulp between her teeth.

**M**r. Richardson began again. "This is Estella, and she's one huge pain in the ass, I tell ya."

**T**here was more after this, to be sure, but Katie was too engrossed with Estella to pay much attention to the poor old farmer. In fact she had discovered a particular fascination with the lovely cow's eyes, which glistened like huge chocolate marbles, flanked with enormous and extending eye lashes, pupils so large they filled the space like pools of very deep thought, and Katie found herself swimming within their warm depths; it was assuredly an established affinity.



# *Some people find happiness*

*By Earl Gatchalian*

*Some people find love,*

*I just compromise.*

*Some people find success,*

*I just compromise.*

*Some people find themselves,*

*I just compromise.*

*Some people find God,*

*I just compromise.*

*Some people find Death,*

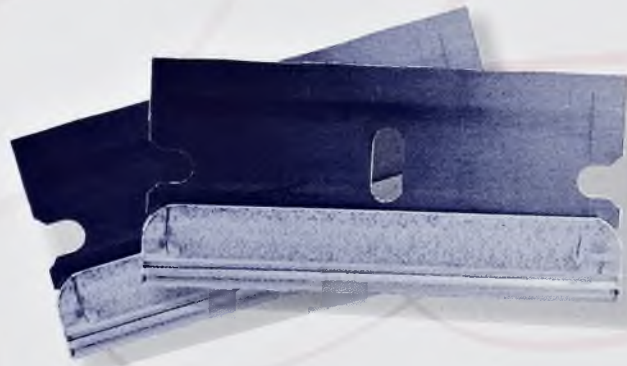
*I just compromise.*

*Some people find solutions to their problems,*

*I just compromise.*

*Some people find creative outlets in useful ways,*

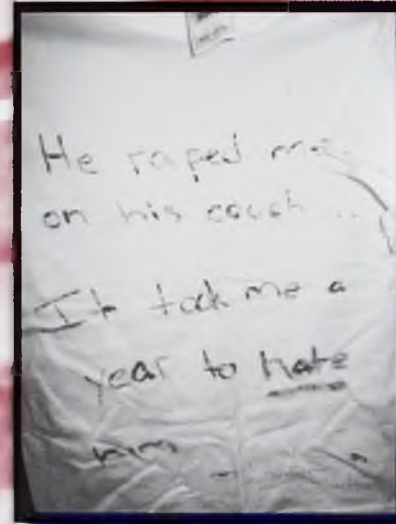
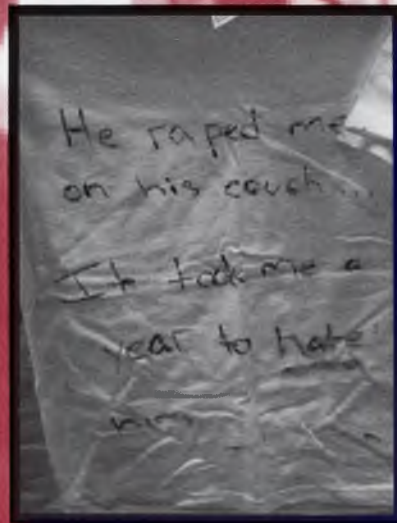
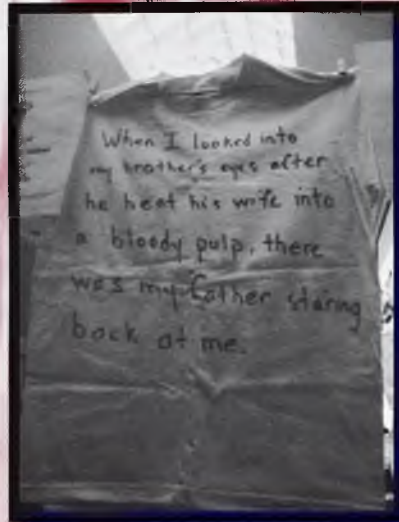
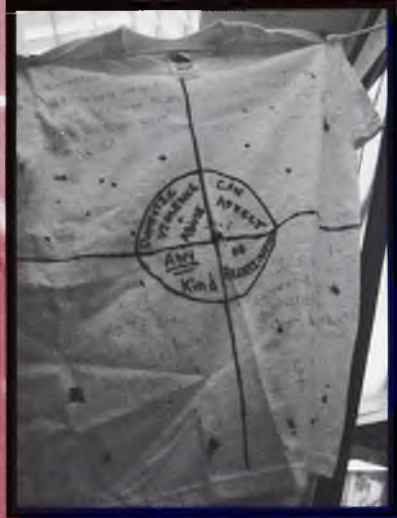
*I just write bad poetry.*





# PHOTOGRAPHY

## SPOUSAL ABUSE



## SPOUSAL ABUSE

# CSI Association Meeting Schedule

## Fall 2006

August 30th  
September 06th  
September 20th  
October 04th  
October 18th  
November 01st  
November 15th  
November 29th  
December 06th

## Summer 2007

June 13th  
June 27th

## Spring 2007

January 31st  
February 07th  
February 21st  
March 07th  
March 21st  
April 11th  
April 25th  
May 09th  
May 23rd

Come see how your Student-Activity-Fee is managed.

Wednesdays

2:30 - 4 p.m.

1C-227

# Raindance

1

*Before it comes  
Comes the warning  
Wind growing in intensity  
Imagining myself as Comfort  
As her palm-fronds of hair is pulled back  
Her eyes to slits*

*It comes singly  
Soft warning drops  
It will wait until I am home Goes the thought  
Afternoon windbrushes into evening  
I am the sketch before the canvas' next color*

*But it waits not without growl*

*At home a spectator in time for the window show  
As the electric light yields to its greater other  
Switches on and off  
In roars of half thoughts*

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# The Trope of the Writer

Hannah Jean



The fallacy is coffee houses,  
Sticky tables covered with napkins,  
Scribbles incoherent beautiful,  
Schizophrenic wonderment,  
Invalid in crisp notebook pages.

Stains of ink are battle scars,  
Pens in overabundance,  
Lips asphyxiated blue,  
Suffocated barren pages,  
Impregnated with false words.

No breath independent of the pen,  
A purple histamine burn,  
Shadows of hollow eyes,  
Bruise enough for poetry.

Inspiration hums unique,  
Filtered through a lens of conformity,  
Inducing Ritalin genius,  
Bodies aching empty,  
Ignorance dormant under a guise of apathy.



# THE ATROCITIES OF WAR

FROM MY LAI TO HADITHA

BY CINDY SHEEHAN

**THIS IS THE MOST DIFFICULT ARTICLE THAT I HAVE EVER HAD TO WRITE, BUT I HAVE TO WRITE IT ANYWAY, UNFORTUNATELY.**

I, and just about anyone and everyone who criticizes George Bush and this war are accused of “not supporting the troops.” Since my son, Casey, was killed in Iraq because of lies and to actually make that country safe for our corporate interests, I have been saying the only way we can support our troops at this point is to get them the hell out of this illegal and immoral war.

The massacre in Haditha on November, 19, 2005, is just another way to underscore the fact that our troops are being turned into war criminals in what one article called: “The Worst War Crime of the Iraq War.” (Sydney Morning Herald; May 28, 2006). In a stunning display of shameless hypocrisy George Bush said of the (not uncommon) butchering of innocent civilians in Haditha:

“Our troops have been trained on core values throughout their training, but obviously there was an incident that took place in Iraq,”

Bush also said this following a meeting of his cabinet: the world will see a “full and complete” investigation.

Another false piece of propaganda that we are fed is that we need to support the president, especially when we are “at war.” I say, “No, way!” Our kids know the difference between right and wrong before they are sucked into a military system that dehumanizes our soldiers and forces them to dehumanize the “enemy” to the point where it is apparently acceptable behavior to kill children and to cover up the murders. Can we all assume that little Georgie was never told that cold-blooded murder is wrong seeing that his family has supported wars and their inherent crimes for at least three generations?

The double standard that our leaders have set for themselves and the troops is amoral and corrupt. I have not seen anywhere in the discussion of this topic that, not only is Haditha not the worse war crime

# POLITICAL DISCOURSE



committed by American or coalition troops, but the entire war is a war crime. The Pentagon needs to be dismantled, cleansed with holy water and purified by incense and left to lie fallow for generations in atonement for all of the crimes that have been planned and committed within its walls.

The following list of illegal, immoral, and atrocious behavior is obvious and not all inclusive by any means:

\* 12 years of devastating sanctions that were responsible for killing over 500,000 Iraqi children.

\* Destroying antiquities and culture is a war crime and prohibited under Geneva Conventions.

\*The invasion of Iraq is a preventive war of aggression against a country that was no threat to the USA or the world and was expressly prohibited by the Geneva Conventions.

\*The invasion was not sanctioned or approved of by the United Nations .

\*\*Shock and awe “ targeted civilian centers and killed many innocent people.

\*Abu Ghraib.

\*Guantanamo.

\*\*“Extreme rendition.”

\*Use of chemical weapons, especially white phosphorous enhanced with napalm, particularly in the second siege of Fallujah.

\*Targeting hospitals, clinics, and threatening Medical Doctors with execution if one treats “insurgents” (which can apparently include babies and pregnant women).

\*Using highly compensated mercenaries to carry out executions and torture.

\*Forcing a style of government on the citizens and manipulating the outcome of the elections.

\*Dishonoring the Constitution of the United States by invading Iraq without a declaration of war by Congress and by breaking our treaties with the United Nations and the ratified Geneva Conventions.

George Bush is correct. A “full and complete” investigation needs to be made into the crimes against humanity in Iraq, and if justice prevails, this would in turn lead to the trial and conviction of George and the rest of the neocon purveyors of torture and murder, for which the maximum penalties should be applied.

The level of accountability needs to rise higher than Specialist or Private and should reach up down the very blackest bowels of an administration that lied through its teeth to get our country into a war of aggression and occupation. The commander in chief needs to be prosecuted: NOW!

The most difficult part of this writing is in trying to reconcile the fact that our soldiers, for one example, in Haditha, could not show conscience and restraint, qualities which may have prevented a murderous rampage. When one sees the pictures of bodies burned beyond human recognition; hears of 2 year old children being killed out of revenge; women being shot for failing to stop at a checkpoint that is in the middle of THEIR country; prisoners being tortured in despicably inhumane ways; ad immoral infinitum: one should be appalled and ashamed to call oneself an American. That some of our soldiers would stoop to the level of their leaders to commit such atrocities is unspeakable. Bush says our troops have been trained in “core values” when he as a so-called born again Christian can claim that God told him to invade Iraq and it’s okay to spy on American citizens like he is some kind of sick voyeur with a penchant for death and destruction.

War, under any circumstance, is not a “core value” of humanity; in fact, it is the ultimate failure of humanity. War turns our mostly normal American youth into wanton murderers who have lost their own humanity and love of others. Haditha in this war and My Lai in another disgusting war were unfortunately not aberrations. War is the abominable aberration.

Under the Uniform Code of Military Justice , our troops are forbidden from obeying unlawful orders and Iraq was unlawful before it ever began. Our soldiers need to start disobeying the unlawful order to even be deployed to Iraq and

not raise their weapons in appeasement to the Bush Regime and say: "This war is the criminal, I am not. Threaten me if you will, but I am not going to be an accomplice in your crimes against humanity."

We as people working for peace have long held that the people of Iraq did not deserve the treatment that they are getting from BushCo, but it is our troops who are pulling the triggers and pushing the buttons or flushing the Koran or sexually abusing prisoners, and we know about it, so that makes us accessories to the crimes, unless we are actively trying to end the severe breach of compassion and mercy that is being carried out in the Middle East.

Yes, we have to work to end the war and to hold everyone who commits atrocities accountable, from private to president, but we also have to support our soldiers that do not want to kill. It is a tragic dichotomy in this society that one can be executed for killing someone, but also be executed or imprisoned for disobeying an order to go and take the life of another human being in war.

There are several ways that our young men and women can be supported in resisting the evil of BushCo and Iraq. The GI Rights Hotline is there to help soldiers get out of going to an illegal and immoral war and the War Resister's League in Canada needs support to help our soldiers find sanctuary and safety. Counter-recruitment is also a powerful tool to use to prevent our children from being sucked into the evil war machine and being used as cannon fodder/weapons of mass destruction for profit.

Where can the people of Iraq go to find sanctuary and safety? They have no place to run to and they have no voice to end this war of terror that is being waged on them by the USA.



It is up to us to be the voice of the babies of Iraq and of the other people whose only crime was to be born in the wrong place at the wrong time with the additional bad luck of living on top of rich oil reserves.

Support the troops? I support only those who are NOT supporting the exploitation of the Iraqi people, and those who do not allow the war profiteers to carry on with their death and destruction all for the sake of an opulent life-style. I do not support those who are supporting a criminally insane and treacherous foreign policy. However I, as the mother of a slain soldier, will do anything I can to support all of them by working to shorten their stay in an unwelcoming country, and bring them home from the quagmire that their so-called commander in chief forced them into.

Also, when our troops do come home from the war, they need all of the counseling, job training and help they require to transition back to a life where most people don't even recognize that there is a war being waged.

BushCo and the war machine killed my baby. They have killed tens of thousands more.

BushCo need to be prosecuted and punished like the common criminals that they are.

We owe this to the people of Iraq, the world, and our own soldiers.

We owe it to ourselves.

*Cindy Sheehan is the mother of Spc. Casey Austin Sheehan who was KIA in Bush's illegal and immoral war on 04/04/04. Her newest book is Dear President Bush (foreword by Howard Zinn) published in the Open Media Series by City Lights Books. She is also author of Not One More Mother's Child (Koa Books) and Peace Mom, One Mom's Journey from Heartache to Activism forthcoming from Atria Books. Cindy is also founder and president of Gold Star Families for Peace.*





# THE POLITICAL POEM

BY KENNETH J. WOLF (8/12/92)

THE POLITICAL POEM

BY KENNETH J. WOLF (8/12/92)

A CONVERSATION ABOUT POLITICS GETS MOST PEOPLE UPTIGHT,  
WHEN YOU START TALKING ABOUT THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT.  
I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I DISCOVERED THE GAME,  
AND THINKING IT WAS MORE INTERESTING THAN A BEAUTIFUL DAME.

A LIGHTHEARTED STUDY CAN MAKE IT SEEM FUN,  
I'VE ALWAYS PREFERRED THINKING TO SHOOTING A GUN.  
(I SAY THE WORD "GUN" SOFTLY WHEN LIBERALS ARE NEAR,  
CAUSE GUN CONTROL IS AN ISSUE WHICH TO THEM IS VERY DEAR).

A CONSERVATIVE IS A MAN WHO IS HAPPY WITH LIFE,  
AS LONG AS EVERY OTHER MAN HAS SOME KIDS AND A WIFE.  
BUT THE MAN WHO IS DIFFERENT AND DOESN'T HOLD TO HIS VIEW  
IS CONSIDERED A RADICAL WHO BELONGS IN A ZOO.

IT'S EXCITING TO WATCH POLITICAL OPPOSITES CLASH,  
WITHIN FIVE MINUTES, THE TOPIC TURNS TO "WHO HAS THE CASH."  
"SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST" IS THE RIGHT WINGER'S CREED,  
JUST HEARING SUCH TALK MAKES THE LIBERAL'S HEART BLEED.

"THOUGH I'M NOT A SOCIALIST," THE KNEE-JERK LIBERAL WILL SAY,  
"LAISSEZ-FAIRE CAPITALISM' IS NOT THE BEST WAY.

"KARL MARX HAD THE RIGHT IDEA WHEN HE UTTERED HIS CREED,  
FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITIES, TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS NEEDS."

THIS KIND OF CONFLICT GOES ON FOR AWHILE,

UNTIL THE CHARGES AND RHETORIC HAVE CREATED A PILE.  
BUT WHAT SOME, LOOKING ON, FAIL TO UNDERSTAND,  
THIS IS THE TALK OF A FREE PEOPLE IN A FREE LAND.

SECOND TO MONEY, THE SUBJECT WHICH GENERATES THE MOST HEAT  
IS A THREE LETTER WORD PROGRESSIVES WANT TO DO IN THE STREET.

MOST EVERYONE AGREES SEX IS HEALTHY AND FUN:  
THE DIVISIVE QUESTION IS "WITH MANY OR WITH ONE?"

CONSERVATIVES ARGUE, "ONLY HETEROSEXUAL MONOGAMOUS ACTS."  
AS USUAL, LIBERALS DON'T AGREE WITH THE CONSERVATIVES' BIBLICAL FACTS.

THE LIBERAL CRIES OUT, "DO IT WITH ONE OR WITH MANY"  
AND "IT'S MY BUSINESS IF MY PARTNER'S NAME IS PENNY OR BENNY."

OLD-FASHIONED TRADITIONALISTS AREN'T AFRAID TO DECLARE,  
"ACTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES!" WITH A SELF-RIGHTEOUS STARE.

LIBERTINES GET ANGRY WHEN MORAL TYPES STRUT.  
WITH CONTROL OF THE PRESS, THE LIBS VERBALLY KICK BUTT.

CONTROL OF THE PRESS IS A LUXURY OF THE LEFT,  
LEAVING THOSE ON THE RIGHT FORLORN AND BEREFT.  
BUT ASK MOSSBACK CONSERVATIVES WHY THE MEDIA IS NOT THEIRS,  
AND THEY LOOK AT YOU WITH THE MOST DUMBFOUNDED STARES.

OH, I THINK I KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT PARADOX,  
CONSERVATIVES HAVE TO SPEND A LOT OF MONEY FOR LOCKS --  
LOCKS WHICH SAFEGUARD THEIR MATERIAL WEALTH  
WHICH THEY HAVE ACCUMULATED FOR THE INTEREST OF SELF.

I KNOW LIBERALS ALSO LOVE MONEY... DON'T THINK I'M A DING DONG,  
BUT THEY ARE MORE WILLING TO SPEND SOME "TRYING TO RIGHT EVERY WRONG."

THE BENDING OF MINDS AND REALITY IS THEIR STOCK-IN-TRADE;  
THEIR UTOPIAN VISION REQUIRES A PAST WHICH MUST FADE.

IF CONSERVATIVES AND LIBERALS WERE ALL THAT WE HAD,  
THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE WOULD BE FAIRLY WELL CLAD;  
BUT AT LEAST TWO OTHER FACTIONS SHARE THE LAND.  
LIBERTARIAN AND POPULIST ARE THE NAMES ON EACH BRAND.

"TOTAL FREEDOM FROM GOVERNMENT," IS THE LIBERTARIAN'S CRY.

THIS CREED NEARLY MAKES HIM AN ANARCHISTIC GUY.  
FREE MARKETS WITHOUT BIG BROTHER WOULD SATISFY HIM,  
AS LONG AS WE CAN ALSO FULFILL OUR EVERY SEXUAL WHIM.

WHEN A LIBERTARIAN DISCUSSES ECONOMICS, CONSERVATIVES SMILE,  
BUT WHEN OUR BODIES ARE THE ISSUE, HE'S A LIBERAL FOR AWHILE.  
HE CLAIMS, "PURE ANARCHY IS NOT WANTED BY HIS KIND."  
BUT REDUCTION OF GOVERNMENT IN ANY AREA SUITS HIM JUST FINE.

THE POPULIST, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS A SIMPLER BREED.  
"THE LITTLE GUY IS GETTING THE SHAFT", IS THE HEART OF HIS CREED  
"TOO MUCH WEALTH IN THE HANDS OF A FEW," IS HIS CONSTANT PLEA,  
THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN FIXED AGAINST YOU AND AGAINST ME.

MORE GOVERNMENT REGULATION OF THE ECONOMY WOULD SOLVE MANY ILLS.

REDISTRIBUTE THE WEALTH, SO WE CAN ALL PAY OUR BILLS.  
BIGGER GOVERNMENT CAN BE THE PEOPLES' BEST FRIEND,  
THE LIBERALS ARE POLITICAL BROTHERS IN ACHIEVING THIS END,

BUT POPULISTS AND LIBERALS FIGHT LIKE CATS AND DOGS,  
WITH "TRADITIONAL AMERICAN VALUES," THE CONVERSATION BOGS.

THE POPULIST WOULD ALSO USE BIG GOVERNMENT TO DO  
THE REGULATING OF THE INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOR OF ME AND OF YOU.

THIS PUTS POPULISTS AND CONSERVATIVES IN THE SAME BOAT:  
WITH SOCIAL AND MORAL ISSUES, THEY BOTH STAY AFLOAT.

BUT "MORALLY SINKING THE COUNTRY" THEY BOTH AGREE,  
ARE THE LIBERALS AND LIBERTARIANS, AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

NOW THE LAST QUESTION WHICH WE'VE FAILED TO ADDRESS  
IS WHY AMERICANS HATE POLITICS, WHICH MAY BE ANYBODY'S GUESS.

BUT AMERICA HAS TWO PARTIES, NOT FOUR OR EVEN THREE,  
TRYING TO KEEP ALL THESE POLITICAL FACTIONS HAPPY.

CONSERVATIVES AND LIBERTARIANS ARE FIGHTING TO SEE  
WHICH INDIVIDUALISTS WILL CONTROL THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.  
THE COLLECTIVIST DEMOCRATS' INTERNAL STRUGGLE NEVER PASSES.

LIBERALS AND POPULISTS ARE ALWAYS BATTLING FOR THE PARTY OF THE ASSES.

ALL OF THIS POLITICAL FRICTION KEEPS AMERICA HEALTHY:  
WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE THE IMMORAL AS WELL AS THE WEALTHY.  
AS LONG AS WE LIMIT OUR POLITICS TO PARTIES OF TWO,  
IT WILL SEEM A BALL OF CONFUSION TO ME AND TO YOU.

THIS POLITICAL POEM IS NOT MEANT TO SHAME,  
BUT RATHER TO DESCRIBE THE PLAYERS IN THE GAME.  
POLITICS IS A COMPROMISE, IT'S A GAME OF GIVE AND TAKE.  
NO ONE CAN SAY IT IS A SIMPLE PIECE OF CAKE.

LIBERAL, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERTARIAN AND POPULIST TOO,  
ONE OF THEM IS ME AND ANOTHER IS PROBABLY YOU.

"THE POLITICAL SCALES ARE BALANCED -- IF YOU'RE NOT SURE, DON'T BOTHER IT;  
IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU STAND BY NOW, YOU'RE PROBABLY A MODERATE.



# The **LAST** Riley Factor

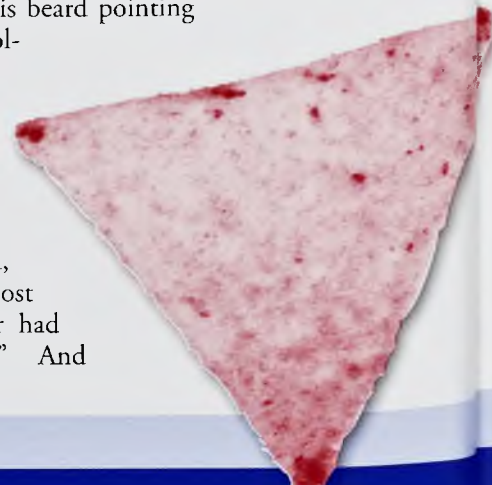
BY TJ RILEY

**I CAN'T DO THIS ANY LONGER.** Not only has this become boring, but I feel that I have changed my political views within the past year or so. Well, mostly within the past couple of weeks. I also feel that I can not satirize political standpoints that I may find myself one day taking. It seems like it would be hypocritical.

I feel like I am in a "changing process." And this changing process is changing the way that I see things, and major things don't seem that major to me. And the minor things seem major, and I want to jump on them to see where the minor things bring me.

What has caused this profound change? Well, I dreamt that I was burning in a fire with charred bodies. I felt my skin blistering with sores and the pain was so great that I was gnashing my own teeth to feel something other than the burning. It seemed to go on forever. It was immensely painful. But then, a little to the right of me, a spring of water started to gush, and it gushed while I was burning, and the water bathed my feet and soothed the burning at my

feet. I was relieved of just a little pain, but being relieved of just a little pain gave me hope for something greater. And the spring of water gushed forth more and more, and it became larger. The spring became so big that the water put the fire out on my body and I was no longer burning. Then, I saw Jesus come out of the spring, wet, and holding an avocado in his right hand, and Walt Whitman appeared with his beard pointing towards Jesus – so I followed the beard. I came up to Jesus, and Jesus stated, "Repent, T.J., for your evil ways, and find me again." And I replied, "But Jesus, I never lost you, because I never had you, but now I do." And



then, Jesus turned into a helium meat balloon and floated away, into the sun, with his fleshed face still intact imprinted around the side of the balloon laughing. And I laughed at the situation. And then I woke up. I took this dream as a sign that I shouldn't give up on Jesus or religion just yet - I was burning in hell and Jesus saved me, he washed my feet, and he forgave my sins.

But the main reason that I can't do this any longer is that it is too easy and I am bored of doing it. All you have to do is just take any mundane view point, exploit the dichotomy, and spin. Here, this is off the top of my head, the difference between tampons and pads:

The evil Bolsheviks would have you believe that tampons are just as good to use as pads, but the truth is that is a liberal lie. Tampons are a liberal device to get our children to become masturbating deviants. We all know that "good girls" use pads, and the tramps use tampons. The reason that tampons are so bad is because you insert it into the vagina which may cause masturbation tendencies...

Or, the difference between hip-hop and any type of rock:

The boorish Bolsheviks would have you believe that hip-hop is just as good as our rock and roll. But the traditional American way is of rock and roll, and why end sixty years of tradition... (You should notice Michael Cordi that I didn't use the typical "rock 'n' roll" due to a preference of style of the character that I am writing in.)

Or the difference between eating Doritos and any type of potato chip:

A civilized American person would never eat Doritos knowing what they represent in the mind of the consumer. When a person buys Doritos, they buy into America supporting illegal immigration. Does "Doritos" sound like an American name? The Bolsheviks would have you believe that Doritos are as American as pie, but the truth of the matter is that any word that ends in "o" is Spanish and that is not American.

Or the difference between liking cats or dogs: A real American likes Dogs better than cats. Dogs are the American ideal, as cats sit by idly like the communists that they are. Dogs are the full representatives of what America should be, while cats are evil liberal lazy Bolsheviks, laying in a bed of hippy catnip getting stoned to avoid reality.

It's really that easy. Find a dichotomy, exploit it with some absurd spin, and watch whatever happens.

So, I must end.



# Kicking Gnostic

(sort of prose—poem)

I closed my eyes and I saw with the eyes of blue angels that drifted into a suicide sea which changed colors with each dead hit. Metallic cobalt feathers were everywhere and they floated with the sun behind them, swaying with the sisters of air. I stood and stared.

Dissillation of bloodied wings. Screams dawn the horizon with each kamikaze crash. Tears held back with the cold wind rioting about chaotically. Holy limbs thrown on a crazy canvass of blue—green fluidity, representing scientific validity.

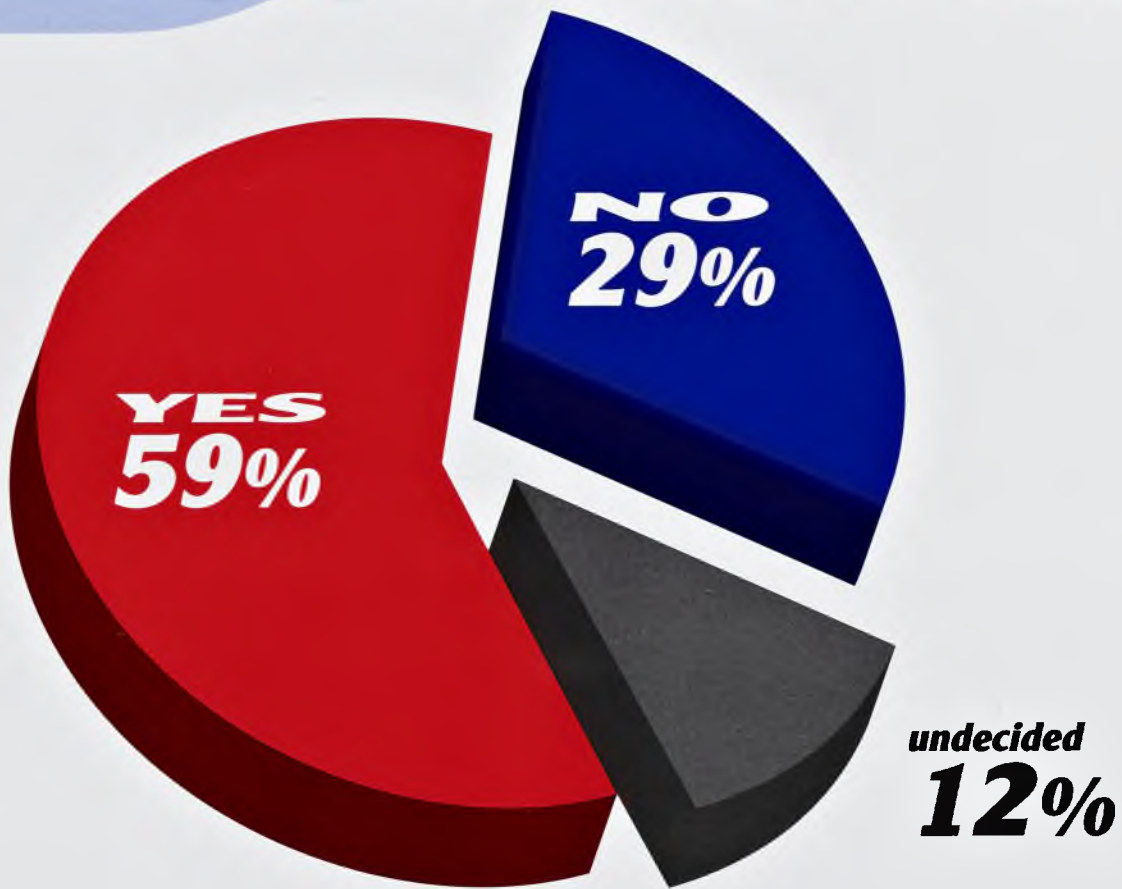
The sneer of the Libra is the guffaw of the Pisces.

The sky turned orange, with white streaks. No angels left. Just a bunch of floating bodies with scattered feathers stuck on the sea as if ornamental.



# POLL

## Should Women be required to sign up for Selective Service?



### OPINIONS INCLUDED:

“Women should have to sign up for the service just like us. They don’t necessarily have to fight on the battle lines, but they could go over for nursing, cooking, maintaining camps, fixing vehicles, and cleaning guns, purifying water and many other things as well. Why should men be the only ones to get drafted?” – *Bigg Mike*

“Yes, if men will be required to sign up. Regardless of ethical dilemmas, equality means men and women should be treated equally, not one group superior or exempt.” – *The Poor One*

“The day will come when it’s okay to put women in the selective service will come when: For every dollar a man makes I will make the same amount too. For every dollar a man makes a woman will receive 72 cents. When the stories women are told when it comes to learning history. Because let’s face it Textbooks for fill with facts about dead old white men.

When they stop calling men ‘Ladies’ in the army, because being female is associated with weakness. When any woman’s right to do with her body is no longer at risk. When women are treated equally among men then maybe you can make us go into the selective service.” – *Bazooka Julez*

“I also don’t believe that men and women are equal, because we were created differently. I know there are exceptions, but I do not believe (generally) that women are as strong as men (physically and emotionally).” – *Emily*

“Yes, same punishments for the same crimes, same pay for the same work, and same responsibilities of society. True equality.” – *S. Spazz*

“Being able to carry and deliver children has just about nothing to do with war. Equality is equality, nothing more, nothing less. Straight across the boards. Same standards for both. Let the best PERSON win the job.” – *S. Magus*

# BULLPEN



P. Melissa Fisher



TJ Riley



Dwight Dunkley



John Elliot



Jeff McGraham



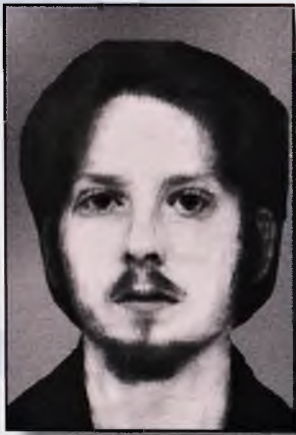
Dolcy Dempsey



Joseph Brush



Shawn Fisher



Jack Freedman



Hannah Jean



Andrea Santiago



Dude, Where's My Kosher Food?

# ADVENTURE AHEAD BOYS!



**PINT-SIZED PATRIOTS EVERYWHERE  
ARE ENLISTING EARLY FOR VIETRAQ!**

**VISIT YOUR SCHOOL'S FRIENDLY  
PLAYGROUND RECRUITER TODAY**







**"I don't want to alarm anyone that  
New Orleans is filling up like a  
bowl. That isn't happening."**

**- Michael Brown 9/1/2005**

**FEMA**  
**Help is on  
the way!**

**(After we're done with  
the white folks.)**