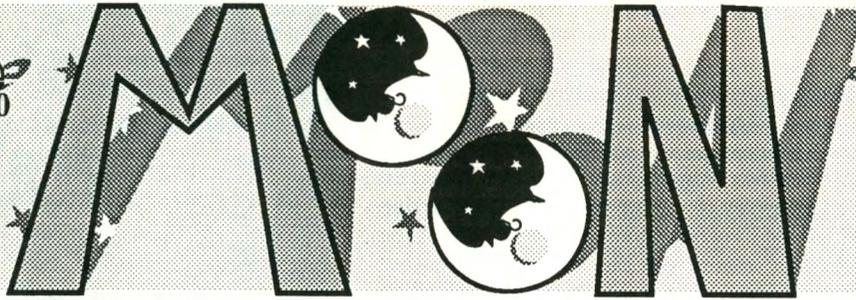
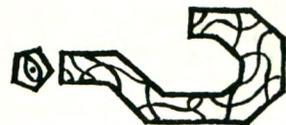
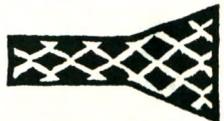
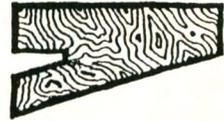
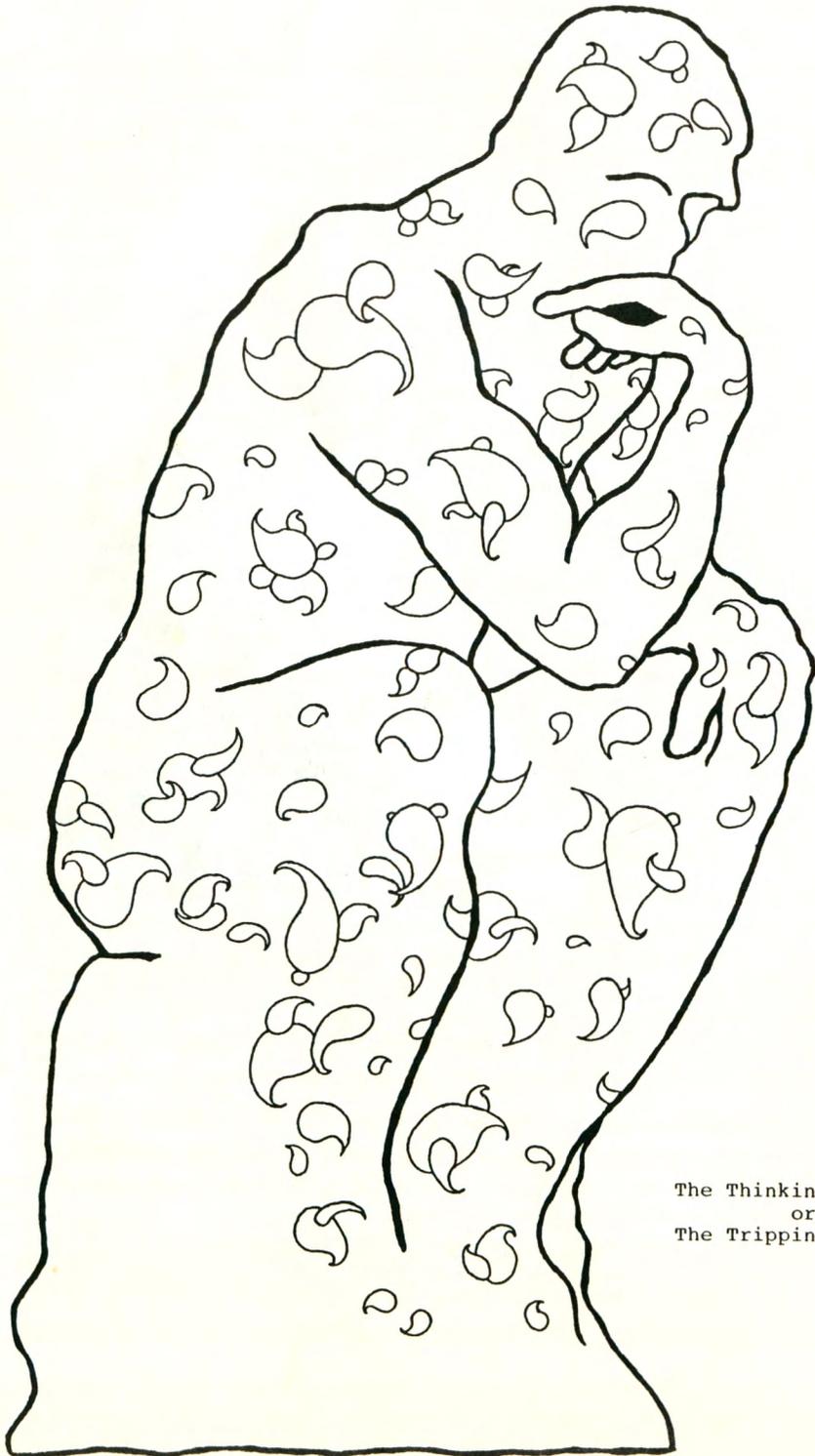


Reality Schedule Pages 6 & 7

The  
Friday, May 10



St. John's College  
Santa Fe  
Independent  
Student  
Weekly



The Thinking Tripper  
or  
The Tripping Thinker



To the Editor:

Peter Hraber discussed a problem with recovering books in his letter in the April 26 issue of *The Moon*.. I am glad he pointed out a problem I was not aware of. I do not have the book on classical and contemporary dynamics Hraber refers to (what are classical and contemporary dynamics?) but I do have a few books I keep renewing every month or so when I get overdue notices in the mail. The way public library systems work, or at least the New York Public Library system; if a borrower has a book that another person wants, the borrower is not allowed to renew the book or record. If it is requested by another person after the book has already been renewed, the borrower is informed by a letter in the mail and is required to return it. I had no idea that borrowers with books other people needed weren't informed of the matter or required to return the books. The overdue notices Catherine Visot refers to give borrowers the option to renew by checking a white box and returning the notice in the mail. So I never knew I was doing anything wrong by renewing my books and records, but I hope I can do something to help me a note if anyone else wants any of these library items.

Sincerely,

Hallie Leighton '92

Last year, a group of women from the Annapolis campus published an anthology of works by females. This inspired another group of women on the Santa Fe campus to begin a similar publication here. Unlike the Annapolis anthology, we would like to initiate discussion about all aspects of women's lives, including, but not limited to the experience of women at St. John's. We intend to present a literary work by and about women to the community with the purpose of exploring the female identity.

The anthology will be published early next year. The deadline for submission is September 30, 1991. This publication is an on-going process

and contributions (art, poetry, fiction, etc.) are being accepted from now until the deadline. Please send contributions through campus mail to the Women's Anthology. For more information speak to J. Huebert, Anne Boynton, Karmen Kohl, Alejandra Garcia, Laura Farley or Laura O'Keefe.

Parent Weekend Next Fall Will  
be October 24-27, 1991.

I need your ideas for an event on  
Saturday evening- a dance, a  
talent show (parents can perform  
too), what would you and your  
parents enjoy?

Any and all ideas welcome.

Come see me.

Susan Friedman

Parent Program Coordinator

x- 226

## HEY LADIES

It seems clear that women are not inferior to men. Whether or not women are treated as equal is another question, one which I will shy away from. Yet our language does not fit the accurate view that our race is composed of two equal halves, women and men. By continuing to use misleading and archaic language our thoughts can only follow our words and become both archaic and misled.

When I hear an intelligent woman say "We as men..." in class I am struck by the absurdity of her statement. To use the words "men" or "man" to mean both men and women is inaccurate and mistaken. Were it simply a harmless mistake I would have no objection except that of another deficiency in our language. However, it is a dangerous mistake.

By using the specific word "man" to mean both men and women, one can not help but be influenced to assume an omission of half of our race in such a conversation. Certainly, everyone means both men and women by the word "man," but then it becomes important to look at the word "man" and why it has come to incorporate both men and women. It is used continually in the books we read, written by men, and perhaps as importantly, by men a long time ago.

It may seem awkward to use the word "human" to mean both men and women. Perhaps this very awkwardness is needed to force us to pause and not take for granted the meanings of such terms such as "mankind" or "men."

If the word "white" were used to mean all races, it would be considered inaccurate and unacceptable. If one used the word "Chevy" to imply all cars, their meaning would not be understood. If Aristotle were taken to mean all Greek philosophers, the speaker would be lynched by the Plato preceptorial. Perhaps these examples seem absurd, but yet can not we look at them and see a comparable absurdity in using "man" to mean both women and men?

We should no longer pander to a tradition which linguistically omits half of the human race. In our words and our thoughts we should clearly support both the two-fold and singular nature of our race. By using the phrase "men and women" or the word "human" we can do just that.

-Siofra Rucker '92

## Willingly Grounded

To the Editor:

In her editorial regarding the faculty resolution to ban parties on "school-nights" ("grounded on weekdays," *Maz*, 4-26-91), Ms. Leighton seemed eager to review the decision in a most unfavorable light. She appeared unwilling to acknowledge any positive motives for the resolution, as if the faculty spent their time moralizing to each other on students' behavior or contriving ways to offend the rights of students. She claims that the faculty fell into "a moral morass to avoid a legal one." Yet, with regard to matters like this, instructional concerns begin to resemble a dense marsh, difficult to navigate.

Ms. Leighton claims, "Absences in class can't be blamed on parties. And the faculty has no right to regulate what we do outside of class and barge in on our private lives anyway." (I'd like to set aside for now, the *in loco parentis* debate as well as questions of certainty.) Mightn't we make a reasonable guess that one's activity the night before has some bearing on one's participation in class? True, the effect is not usually absences, since the absence policy is enforced. But there is the more common story.

You know, the one about the drunken sophomore, who had five hours of sleep the night before, and reeked of tequila, but was still able to volunteer his demonstrations to his 10:30 math class—because he is "brilliant." Or the silent student, who though bright enough to change and influence the table discussion, gets drunk before the seminar he has bad-mouthed all year. More usually, however, the story runs something like this: the responsible student-drinker who went to a speakeasy the night before in order to relieve stress is once again thrown into distress in language tutorial because he can not clearly explain the translation he prepared the day before. He did the work, but just wasn't up to thinking about prepositions.

I am not suggesting that parties during the week are the only occasion for any of us feeling a bit under. I am suggesting that weeknight parties are generally not the best way to prepare for class.

If under the circumstances the faculty has resolved to ban parties in their effort to provide the best they can for the success of tutorials, why harangue them? It is difficult enough to make a class work when the members are present, well-prepared, and clear-headed. Wouldn't we do better to find ways of relieving stress which are more conducive to the life of the College? If students believe that parties during the week are necessary to live and learn at SJC that's OK. But the faculty is not obliged to support that view. Moreover, the age of a student does not entitle him to speakeasies which are messy, smelly, loud and sometimes a hindrance to our class-work.

It would be nice to think that the faculty could leave us to our own devices once out of the classroom. But apparently we have

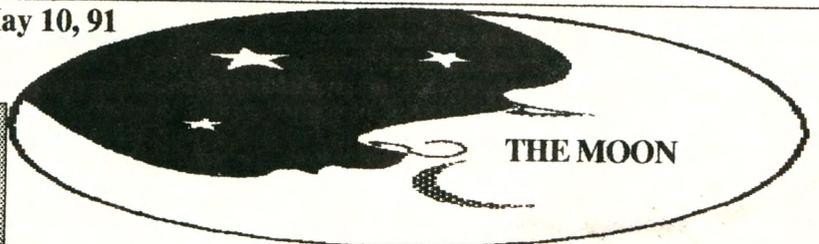
## THE SWENTZELL NOTES

Tutor Ralph Swentzell has been selected as a winner of a 1990-91 Sears-Roebuck Foundation Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award. This award recognizes resourcefulness and leadership in an independent college educator. Each award winner receives \$1,000 and the institution receives a grant ranging from \$500 to \$1,500, based on student enrollment.

Mr. Swentzell received this award for his work in developing special computer lexicon software and preparing several academic manuals. "We are pleased that the

Sears-Roebuck Foundation has maintained its long-standing partnership with continuing this teacher recognition program," President John Agresto said. "Ralph Swentzell has long been regarded by students and his peers as a teacher of exemplary talent."

May 10, 91



Editor: Julia Goldberg

Copy Editors: Hallie Leighton, Simon Bone

Contributors: Hallie Leighton, Randall Rose, James Papiano, Mark Bateman, Siofra Rucker, Annapolis Correspondent

Jennifer Accardo, Don Labenski, Kere Lamphere

Circulation: Kelli MacIver

trouble regulating ourselves. Mr. Povejskil (A '92) writes in the April 16th issue of *the Gaddy* "... I myself have never really observed sane alcohol consumption without some regulating force. For example, my freshman year in Santa Fe (when I lived on campus), it was pretty common to see our youth out cold in puddles of cheap fermented liquid."

It may be unusual for the faculty to ban parties, but I am embarrassed rather than offended by the resolution. If we were more successful in our efforts to encourage each other to be better students, and more careful party-goers, perhaps this matter would not have arisen at all.

Sincerely,  
James Papiano '92

# TO SWIM OR NOT TO SWIM

by Sean Collins, Chairman Campus Planning Committee

As many readers know, the question of what sort of recreation facility we ought to build has been a major preoccupation of Campus Planning for the last year. Although the planning is in some sense still in its initial stages, there are also some important decisions that we have made. We would like to speak about one of these decisions here, because it has been both an important one and in some respects a difficult one.

From the extensive questionnaires about the recreation facility that were used earlier in the school year, there were two quite universal matters of consensus that emerged. One was the recognition that, although a recreation facility might be a very useful addition to the campus, it might also be a considerable expense, and ought therefore to be planned with a sense of proportion and sobriety about expenditure. The second rather common wish that the questionnaires revealed was that we should have a swimming pool.

Readers will no doubt be able to guess what the connection is between the two issues: swimming pools are, alas, very expensive, both for construction and for maintenance. What is more, it has become apparent in the course of deliberation that the cost of a swimming pool leads

essentially to the choice between two fairly clear options. One option is to build a recreation building without a pool. In this case the budget will allow the inclusion of a variety of other facilities in which interest has been expressed, such as a Search and Rescue Facility, an adequate pottery studio, and a photography studio, to name a few. The second option would be to include a pool, while both seriously restricting the size of other athletic facilities, and entirely eliminating non-athletic facilities.

Although the prospect of not having a pool may come as a disappointment to many (including, as it happens, the author of this article) the alternative appears to be even less desirable. In fact it was also clear from the questionnaires that the community as a whole sees it as advantageous to have both athletic and non-athletic facilities.

Having considered the options, the Campus Planning Committee has concluded that the dry alternative is, after all, the best compromise. Plans for the present will not include a pool, although, being optimists, we hope to make the plans in such a way that a pool will be an easy addition, should someone offer us the

money it would require.

Although this involves giving up something, it would be well to say what we still hope to give ourselves in the current plan. Why have a recreation facility in the first place? In true St. John's style, a number of respondents to our questionnaires (and we ourselves also) went right back to fundamental principles by asking questions such as this. Our answer involves many considerations, but principal among them is the hope that through wise planning, we can create a facility that will serve the larger St. John's Community, and help it to be a real community. The center and source of the community is what we study, but the well-being of the community must give heed to bodies as well as brains, doing as well as thinking, families as well as individuals, and social activities as well as solitary ones. The community as a whole has shown sensitivity to these matters in a manner even more striking than we anticipated. Our hope, therefore, is to plan a recreation facility where many and diverse activities will be possible, and where both athletic and non-athletic activity may prove to be diverting, refreshing, and sociable.

## Advance Quotes

### Freshmen:

How do you make use of a literary work that describes a macho young adolescent king who is turned into a transvestite by an angry and vicious god who on one occasion has the effeminate locks of an Apollo-like figure and on another changes into a bull?

—New Yorker

### Sophomores

*Hamlet* is a vulgar and barbarous drama, which would not be tolerated by the vilest populace of France, or Italy...one would imagine this piece to be the work of a drunken savage.

—Voltaire

Othello: pure melodrama. There is not a touch of characterization that goes below the skin.

—George Bernard Shaw

### Juniors

de Tocqueville's book on American Democracy is . . . read with great interest today, but it is certainly not an accurate version of America a the time.

—Allen Tate

[On James Madison:] Oh, poor Jemmy, he is but a withered little applejohn.

—Washington Irving

[On Patrick Henry:] . . . all tongue, without either head or heart.

—Thomas Jefferson

[On the American Constitution:] No constitution was written in better English.

—Winston Churchill

### Seniors


# E P H E M E R A



## Concert Series

Friday, June 21 The Mendelssohn Ensemble

Peggy Abbott, piano Parrice Williams, piano; Suellen Primost-Zepeda, cello; Reinhold Gliere: Six Pieces for Two Pianos, Op. 41, Brahms: Sonata in E for cello and piano, Op. 38 Gershwin: An American in Paris

Sunday, June 30 Nigel Coxe, piano; Oscar Yerburgh, piano. J.S. Bach: arrangements for two pianos, F. Poulenc: Sonata (1953) and Elegie, E. Granados: pieces from "Escenas Romanticas", R.R. Bennett: Four Piece Suite.

## Symbolic History Through Sight and Sound, Charles Bell 8:00 pm Junior Common Room

May 14: Milton: Mind's Dark Glory: Tenebrist and Classical Baroque

June 18: Pascal's Reversal: Baroque antinomies of reason and faith

## Lectures

Wednesday, May 29 David Campbell Director, Center for Nonlinear Studies

Los Alamos National Laboratory

*Nonlinear Phenomena: From Paradigms to Practicalities*

Wednesday, June 19

Donald Glaser

Nobel Laureate and Professor, Molecular Biology,

University of California, Berkeley

*The Human Visual System: Should You Believe What You See?*

## Art Gallery

May: Rebecca Bluestone *Tapestries: The Woven Image*.

June: David Rogers *Contemporary Oil Paintings*. Reception: Sunday, June 7, 3-5 p.m.

## A FINAL NOTE FROM THE ASSISTANT DEAN

Thanks for all the good advice and encouragement I have received this year. You're great! Have a wonderful summer.

-Don Cook


# Friday

3:00- 4:30 pm	Pick up Reality tickets	Placita
4:00- 7:00 pm	Cocktail party	Placita
4:00- 5:00 pm	Jethro Odom's Oral	J.C.R.
7:00-8:00 pm	Mediterranean Dinner	Placita
8:00-8:30 pm	coffee and desert	Dining Hall
8:30-10:30 pm	Sophistry contest and Skit	Dining Hall
9:30-2:00 am	Athena's Place" Cocktails Toga Party/ Anarchist	J.C.R. Meem Patio
10:30 pm	Funk Band	
12:00 pm	Midnight snack	Coffee Shop
1:00-2:30 am	Movie "Blazing Saddles"	Great Hall

# Saturday

9:00-11:00 am	Breakfast bar	Dining Hall
9:00-11:00 am	Cartoons	Great Hall
12:00-4:00 pm	Olympic Games: Olive oil wrestling Odyssey obstacle course Chariot races Sphinx riddle race Trojan war water balloon fight	Field Field

12:00-2:00 pm  
12:00 pm

6:00-7:00 pm  
9:00-12:00 pm  
10:30 pm  
12:00 am  
1:00-2:30 am

2:30-4:00 am

Hercules challenge  
Muse-ical chairs  
...And Much More  
Lunch bar  
Fun and toys, live music,  
etc.  
Indian Dinner  
Waltz party-  
Rock party  
Midnight snack  
Movie "The Blues Brothers"  
Movie "Heavy Metal"

Field

Placita

Dining Hall  
Great Hall  
Dining Hall  
Coffee Shop

Great Hall  
Great Hall

# Sunday

11:00 -12:00 pm  
12:00-2:00 pm  
12:00-4:00 pm  
T.B.A.

2:00-Death  
4:00-5:30 pm

5:30-6:30 pm  
7:00-8:00 pm  
8:00-9:30 pm

Brunch  
Softball Game  
Re-show of movies  
RT.B.A. Mountain bike  
racing  
Spartan Mad Ball  
Uberhippo improv comedy  
Dinner  
Sophrosune  
Video "Rocky Horror  
Picture Show"

Dining Hall  
Field  
Great Hall  
Field

Field  
Great Hall

Dining Hall  
Great Hall  
J.C.R.

## Bar Schedule

### Friday

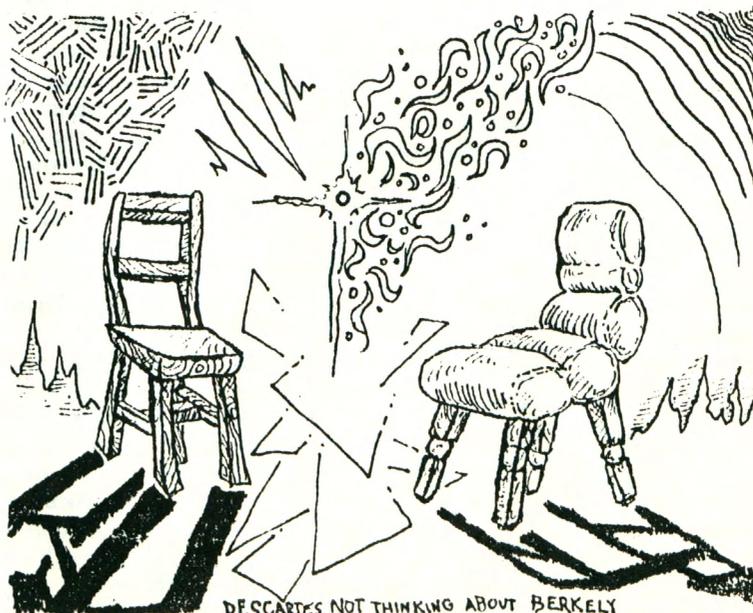
4:00-7:00 pm Placita- Open Bar  
9:30- 2:00 a, Junior Common  
Room 4 tickets, limited seating  
10:00-2:00 am- Coffee Shop 4  
tickets

### Saturday

1:30-5:00 pm Field 5 tickets  
1:30-6:00 pm Coffee shop 5  
tickets  
9:00-2:00 am Great Hall Open Bar  
10:30-2:00 am Coffee shop 4  
tickets

### Sunday

2:00-5:30 pm Field 5 tickets



# Should we study non-European books? (cont)

by Randall Rose '94

The absence of non-European books from the Program is a fairly simple problem to deal with, since it's a policy of the College, the issue is only whether there are any good arguments to support it. The most significant of these were discussed in last week's article. Of course, several other arguments have been put forward; since they shouldn't be left to obscure the essential questions, it seemed best to answer them in this week's issue.

Argument 8. *The college is not forcing students to read anything; they knew what the program was when they came here, and they agreed to participate in it.*

On one level, this is true. The students who come and remain here are quite willing to participate in the program as it now is. In fact, at any college that is doing a good job, students ought to be willing to take part in it. So the acceptance of the current program by its students is a good criterion for approving of it.

But can we assume that this is the only criterion? If we do, we are assuming the converse statement, that "any college whose students have accepted it is all right," which isn't true. Assuming the converse—making one criterion the only criterion—rarely works in the real world; you usually need to consider several criteria to make a fair decision.

If we want to justify a particular curriculum, we have to show that it is the best possible, and the absence of compulsion is not enough to demonstrate this. The ability to freely decide among packaged choices cannot be relied on to produce the best results; people also need to be able to use their creativity so that the choices themselves can be improved. To rely on the single criterion of acceptance, to then ignore criticism on other grounds, is a near-fallacy and a very bad ideology, like saying "Since students aren't able to find anyplace else they like better than St. John's, the St. John's program must be accepted without question." So, although we've come to St. John's because we consider it the best available program, I think that the St. John's community does understand that we also have to be able to consider changes, because I believe that the only places which are best to study and live in are those which are open to making something better of themselves.

Argument 9. *If you want to read non-European books, you can read them on your own, or in preceptorials, or in "guerilla seminars."* None of these alternatives are really equivalent to seminars, which is why we spend so much of our time in seminars instead, and why students choose to spend time at St. John's instead of in places where these alternatives are more com-

mon. The fact is, seminars are a unique resource of St. John's and a scarce one, and so it really does matter what we choose to discuss in them.

Argument 10. *The writers at St. John's deal with universal human ideas, so it doesn't matter what culture they are from.*

If this is so, then it seems to argue against the policy of excluding non-European books; it is certainly not an argument for it. Besides, although all the authors we read have gone beyond their contemporaries in something (otherwise we wouldn't be reading them), it seems obvious that not all of what they say is independent of their culture; so some of them must have been less successful than others in dealing with universal human ideas. Therefore, if we want to choose books which best express "universal human ideas" or "the best that has been thought and said," we may have to look outside our culture to find some of them.

Argument 11. *Tolerance of other cultures is one of the ideas of European civilization, not of the other cultures themselves; which goes to show that we should study European ideas.*

In the first place, I don't accept the premise. Islamic civilization couldn't have been what it was if it wasn't tolerant of other cultures; if it hadn't been, or if post-Crusades Europe hadn't in turn been tolerant of it, we wouldn't be able to read most of the readings we have in freshman year. Tolerance, or more broadly, cultural open-mindedness, is not an invention of the Enlightenment; it is a "universal human idea," held by the most decent people in any civilization; and, in pursuing the universal human ideas that we know of, it should be encouraged as a part of them, and not used to restrict them.

Argument 12. *European culture is becoming universal; people from other cultures are adapting more and more to it; so it's better to study European culture.*

If this is so, I would feel it is then more important to make sure that the ideas of the other cultures are not lost. People who feel that European culture is greatly superior to others might disagree with this. The question of European culture's superiority can come up in many ways, but there are basically only two cases:

a) *The idea that other cultures' works are intrinsically less worth studying than European culture's.* If so, the European-authors policy is redundant, since even without it no non-European books would make the curriculum. Let's first decide whether the European-authors policy has any value in itself; then we can see what non-European books are worth taking.

b) *The idea that other cultures have their own great books, but they will become irrelevant since European culture will become universal.*

The problem with this argument for me is that it's too fixed-minded about what the future will be. Isn't it better for the student to learn what people have been thinking over the centuries about how to live, and then draw his own conclusions on what to do? The whole point of St. John's is that good ideas remain relevant for approaching the future. If St. John's is complacent about whose good ideas are worth studying and whose aren't, there's something wrong in its approach.

Conclusion. Before presenting my case for admitting non-European books, I will state some basic assumptions. First, I assume that there are universal human ideas, and that great books are to a large extent concerned with them; if this were not so, the books we read at St. John's would be of no value for anything outside our own culture. Also, I assume that the European-books policy is not redundant, and that there are non-European books which are as important in terms of the universal human ideas as most of the books we read at St. John's; if there are no such books, then it makes little difference whether we have a European-books policy or not. It follows that some non-European books are more important in terms of universal human ideas than some of the books we currently read at St. John's. The question is whether to read these non-European books or the less important European books.

In this question, the main advantage that the less important European books have is that they are more accessible, because they express ways of thought that we're used to. But is this advantage significant? To find out, we have to look at the ways in which we find books accessible. Classics, by their nature, make original innovations on existing thought, and some classics are nearly inaccessible without some understanding of the pre-existing thought which the writer worked out his ideas from. But I would think that the most fundamental classics are those which are least dependent on pre-existing thought. It is these classics that I think we can learn most from; and since they deal most directly with the universally human, I think that we can and should study them during our undergraduate education. It's true that the more a book depends on ways of thought we don't share, the less we will get out of it. We should take this problem into account in evaluating non-European books; but the greatest writings can often penetrate our remote interests and still tell us more about the universally human than any book more subservient to our specific tradition.

In other words, I think that the greatest of the non-European classics are as accessible

**continued**

# SOCIETY PAGE

Fifi Leigh reports on the St. John's /Naval Academy Croquet Match in Annapolis

The weekend before the big match there was a croquet waltz—the sound of Ella Fitzgerald blasting from the polity stereo sill echoes softly in my ears. Champagne was sold and spilled. Scott MacLean played a polka version of "People are Strange," which came as a shock to all. Imperial Wicket Louis Elias '91, introduced St. John's very official croquet team, which included himself, Eric Traynor '92, Panos "the Greek" Pappos '93, Andy Pietrus '91, Ann Grabhorn '91, Ed Prud'homme '93, Christine Barber '91, tutor Abe Schoener, Rakesh Brenning '93, and Alex Vallega '93. Later in the evening, several unnamed parties set off the MacDowell fire alarm in an effort to divert attention from their attempt to steal champagne. Waltz Archon Eliza Gilligan '92 was not amused.

Over the week the excitement mounted. The weather was sublime. Croquetters hung out on the front lawn making weird gestures with their mallets, sort of like the squinting that goes along the length of a pool cue to live up a shot, I suppose—and peering out over the not-very-vast expanse of lawn. Maintenance people were observed performing mysterious rites over the croquet grounds. The result: the grass was green and even in preparation for the big game, a great improvement

over its usual drab self.

The big day arrived. As I leaned lazily over the Pinkney fire escape I heard a voice cry out, "Evil Dave, get away from that goat!" certainly the quote of the day. And indeed, there was a goat. The Naval Academy mascot was nervous for the game. Word has it that at least two juniors formerly affiliated with Santa Fe (including one with a pickup truck) had kidnapped the wee beastie. It was returned to its (more or less) natural habitat at some point in the afternoon.

The media arrived in droves with video cameras and mikes all over the field while the play was in progress. Perhaps some of the subtlety and ferocity of the sport was lost in the hubbub, but who cares?

Which brings us to what Ron Cadelina '92 called "Critique of Pure Fashion." After all, GQ does cover this event. Eric Traynor, who calls the game "sophistry in motion," was resplendent in flowing purple pants and spats. Men wore suits, sunglasses, and hats, bearing uncanny resemblances to Truman Capote, and women wore classy floral print dresses. Ann Grabhorn wore a form-fitting little polka-dot dress, with requisite pearls. A few men wore kilts. The middies' team uniform was white with red bowties. Dean Eva Brann wore blue jeans. Champagne glasses were the popular

accessory.

You want to hear about the game itself now, I assume? Well, too bad. Except for the croquet team, none of us know all that much about it. There are rumors among the uninitiated, educated guesses about what's going on when the players all get together on the field and consult. I figured out that one team is red and yellow, the other black and blue. A series of wickets and posts is set up, and one wants to knock the ball through the former and hit the latter in whatever the order is, while setting up one's teammate and knocking one's opponents' ball way the hell afield for brownie points (extra strokes, that is). I asked around to find out who was winning and it took me the longest time to find a freshman who could inform me that the first three rounds were "close, close, and really close," but that we'd lost them all. Well we've won almost all these events in the past, by the way. Was it dumb luck? Was it that the middies imported Yale's croquet coach and buckled down this year? Was it a conspicuous lack of slinky senior women (ours) plying team members with alcohol for strategic purposes? Who knows? The trophy is still sitting on the library steps as far as I know. Ta Ta, and I'll bring you more news next year on society events.

## europaen books

as most of the European books we read here. This is because books can be accessible in two ways: by appealing to our traditional ways of thinking, or by appealing to our universally human and original ways of thinking. European books are most accessible in the former way, while the greatest classics are most accessible in the latter way.

The other advantage of studying European books is their importance in the development of our culture; it is more useful to know the basis of the way you think than to know the basis of the way someone else thinks. Therefore, I would be quite willing to include many books on the program simply because they are historically important in our tradition. However, the main purpose of St. John's is to learn from great works, not to retrace their influence. We should read books mostly for their ability to add things to our minds; and since the best works say some things that are relevant to everyone, we should include the greatest non-European classics in our reading.

In fact, I think there's some value in studying non-European books just because they aren't European. European culture has to study the non-European cultures which it is becoming entangled with; in order for a culture to continue to

## RESPONSE TO SHOULD WE READ NON-EURO BOOKS?

by Mark Bullfrog Bateman 9?

In response to Randall Rose's paper, *Should we study non-European books?*, I would like to argue from roughly the point of view which Mr. Rose presents as that of Dean Brann. I really must say, though, that I've never met Ms. Brann, never read her essay, and have no wish to represent Ms. Brann, or her essay; I just recognize the arguments extracted from her paper, and I do not feel that they were refuted, as was the goal of Mr. Rose's ambitious essay.

I was quite forcibly struck by the first quotation from Ms. Brann's work. Don't go off to look for it, I'll quote her again, I like it so much. "We are convinced that the condition of an intelligent respect for other worlds is a thorough assimilation of one's own." When you really take it out and look at it, you see why Mr. Rose just had to quote it. George Bush would be proud of a sentence like this. It commits to nothing, and implies a great deal. Hopefully, Ms. Brann's essay was not simply a pedantic string of these platitudes, but

went on to define and defend a real position. I am forced to provide my own, and it accords with my definitions to concur with Ms. Brann's statement. In keeping with conservationist space-saving protocol, I will fire a volley of one liners at Mr. Rose's specific arguments, and then tell you what I think is at issue. We shall begin, as is only proper, with 1a. (Now would be a good time to go get Mr. Rose's essay for reference.)

1a. In 1a., Mr. Rose suggests that the seniors have come sufficiently close to the present to include the period when the Hellenic tradition became interested in the traditions of other cultures. This really falls under 1c., so I'll save it for then.

1b. It does not seem to me that, "in studying a book, all you should need is the ability to appreciate it rationally." I must also stress, though, that I am once again inferring a point of view, rather than seeing one clearly defined and held. In studying a book, one needs to be able to appreciate the cultural assumptions, and

continued on page 10

## S.I.C. MINUTES

April 28, 1991

Attending: Mary Welliver, Jr., Taeko Onishi, Jr., Ron Scrogam, So.

The S.I.C. wrote a letter to the Dean formally requesting the appointment of two math assistants for the 1991-1992 school year and, a meeting with the Faculty Instruction Committee with the student body as a whole in the autumn of 1991. This meeting would give the F.I.C. an opportunity to announce academic changes for the school year and, allow the student body to discuss those changes with the F.I.C. A copy of the letter is posted on the student polity bulletin board.

This meeting of the S.I.C. was the last for 1990-91. The committee will still be available to assist anyone until the end of the semester. Leave a note at the student tutoring center if you wish to speak with the committee.

## European Books continued from pages 8-9

European classics in our reading. In fact, I think there's some value in studying non-European books just because they aren't European. European culture has to study the non-European cultures which it is becoming entangled with; in order for a culture to continue to grow, it has to intelligently respect and question the major phenomena and issues of its circumstances. The St. John's program, of course, does not itself have to always be directly concerned with such immediate issues; it helps people come to deal with current problems by teaching how to analyze the issues and recognize their origin. However, we have found some readings which are useful not only by being classics but also by having direct relevance to modern problems; and similarly, non-European books which are classics enough to qualify for the program will also directly help us by furthering our understanding of non-European cultures.

## G.I. Minutes

May 6, 1991

1) New Officers for Summer Term:  
Chair: Christian Hatfield

Secretary: Karen Gates  
Elections for Vice-Chair and Treasurer will be held at the beginning of Summer Term.

2) Bacchanalia follows last precep/seminar. Everyone is invited, (Get your goat fleece dry-cleaned now)

3) The Graduate Council wishes to express its gratitude to Mr. Miller for his support throughout the year.

## RESPONSE TO WHY WE SHOULD READ NON-EUROPEAN BOOKS, CONT

perhaps the challenge represented to those assumptions in those works. Whether or not this is achieved at St. John's is entirely open to debate, but it is certainly a goal. If these things are all included in "the ability to appreciate it rationally," then I would fervently argue that "the ability to appreciate it rationally" would include an "intelligent respect" for it. I would never say that "everyone should put off studying books until he can attain a deep understanding of them." If you ever go into Diane Trudell's office, though, and look at some of the credits we get in the real world for the work we do here, I think you'll agree that we're getting away with murder, and it's inconceivable that we could get away with adding, say, Asian Studies to the "curriculum" of St. John's. If we tried it, we would only call attention to ourselves, and the accreditation board would come take a real close look, and then they'd shut us down faster than you can say Categorical Imperative; the party would be over, and one more precious shelter from reality would be lost. Many tutors devote some of their copious free time to driving cabs in Albuquerque to feed their kids, but others, usually the ones with poor driving records, conduct meeting groups on topics of interest that won't fit in the program. Although I'm not really sure where I stand on the issue as a whole, I applaud the addition of works from other cultures to the catalog of preceptorials. These seem to me to be obvious arenas for experimentation and topicality, but part of the aristocratic charm of the program itself is its fixation

on the past. The study of books is necessarily the study of the past, and the hope is that language can provide some relative permanence to the ideas in them. Any written work, however, is to a degree a journal of the times in which it is written. Studying a period of *western* thought spanning three thousand years and including the disciplines of history, language, science, religion, mathematics and philosophy seems to me like enough for thirty-six months of classes. I think it admirable to study works from other cultures. I'm not sure that they are appropriate additions to the reading list.

1c. Broadmindedness is more than being able to appreciate the aesthetic beauty of a thing as an object, it's the ability to empathize, and that's occasionally beyond us even now.

2. Considering the level of competition already present amongst potential great books, I think we can safely say that we're either at or over the limit of the human animal's ability to judge merit.

3. It could be argued that European languages are descendants of common ancestors, and therefore share many tacit assumptions. By the way, have you heard the one about the guy in the Shakespeare seminar who said, "My translation reads..."

4. Please refer to sec. 1c. One could easily see one's judgements about current economics, literature, politics, or music as personal issues, and often one finds oneself wishing that a classmate would shut up about theirs. Friendships are often strained by such discussions, and you get to pick your friends.

5. Speaking of math, they're already

talking about taking less time on the Newton, so we can have more time for non-Euclidean math. Considering some math classes I've had on relatively crucial theory, I have no desire to go farther afield than I have to. There's simply a limit to how much can be done, and we're already there.

6a. While it's true that we read the Old Testament, we do so from a decidedly fixed point of view that is represented by its position in the readings. We do not at all seek to understand the Hebrew traditions, we simply study those texts selected for *The Holy Bible* as ground work for the onslaught of Christianity. If this seems poor treatment of a culture that defined the religion of the western world, you're right, but remember, there's only so much time.

6b. The interdependence of our studies is as important as it's made out to be. Personal studies and interests are to be encouraged, but not to the exclusion of the task at hand. When you get down to it, it's a plenty big job already.

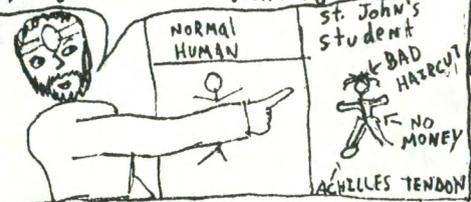
7. I don't think I would have bothered to answer such a specious argument had I been Mr. Rose, but then again, I've never heard it used as a defense for the status quo. If I had a less generous nature, I might suggest that this was nothing more than a cheap attempt to validate Mr. Rose's position by obliterating chimerical, paper-mache arguments. I certainly don't see how it underlies other arguments put out by Ms. Brann's camp. For gods' sake, it's just a school after all. To be honest, I think a lot of people come here just for the basketball thing.

HI THERE! THIS IS DOCTOR DON WITH A FEW TIPS ON...

# HOW TO SURVIVE THE LAST WEEKS OF SCHOOL



ST. John's - the college of 400 people who you would not eat lunch with in high school. At the end of the year tensions run high and people start to snap. Be the first in your dorm to recognize the warning signs.



NUMBER 1 - People begin speaking NONSENSE.

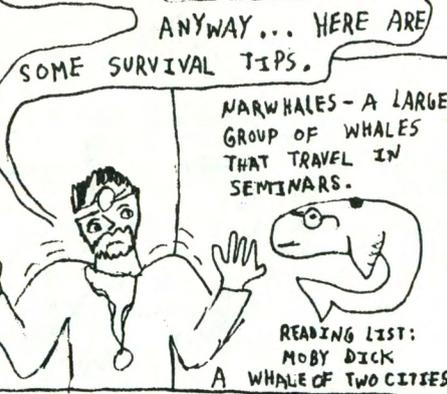


NUMBER 2 - People's skin turns brown and all their hair falls out and...



... they get really short attention....

WHAT WAS IT I WAS SAYING...



NUMBER 1 - If you see someone without a smik...

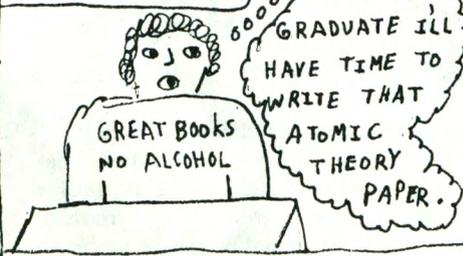


GET THE HELL OUT OF THEIR WAY!!!

NUMBER 2 - HAVE YOUR AURA balanced. (And while you're at it have your Karma rotated, your yin and yang fluids checked and have a complete tune up done on your soul.)

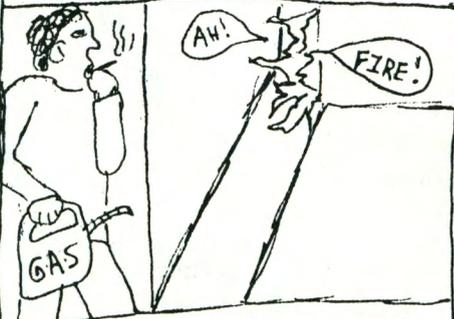


NUMBER 3 - DON'T WORRY ABOUT WRITING ANY PAPERS. YOU CAN DO THAT NEXT YEAR.



(No one reads them anyway.)

NUMBER 4 - MAKE THE WORLD A BRIGHTER place.



SET FIRE TO THE DORM ROOM OF THE PERSON WHO IS THE LOUDEST ON YOUR HALL.

NUMBER 5 - SLEEP... uh... I mean... MEDITATE in The Library.



NUMBER 6 - ASSUME THE FETAL POSITION AND WHIMPER QUIETLY AND EVERYONE WILL LEAVE YOU ALONE.



... REMEMBER JUST BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT YOUR SHIT TOGETHER DOESN'T MEAN THAT IT DON'T STINK.



## THE LAST POLITY MINUTES

I know what you're thinking. Life without polity minutes is not worth living. What can I say? I've been taking a little hiatus from my duties. I probably would have continued to do so, except that with one week left of school forever I thought I should savor it while I could. In the last Polity meeting that you didn't get to read about, we voted for next year's officers. We were in executive session at that time so no minutes were taken anyway. So you get the results, but not the hard-core debate that went along with it. (You know what I mean, stuff like "I guess Josh would be a great Treasurer, but can he count? Corbett for Chair? Well, he's got no experience, but he sure is cute.") Anyway, the results of the elections and thus the officers for the 1991-92 school year are: Chair-Lila Kerns, rising Senior, Vice-Chair: Michelle Griest, Rising Senior, Treasurer: Josh Cohen, Rising Sophomore and Secretary: Karmen Kohl, Rising Sophomore-(assuming she lives through her JFsummer). So, be sure to congratulate these worthy people.

Attending: Chair Matt Kelty, Treasure Greg Brown, Secretary Julia Goldberg, Voting Members and Class Reps: Karmen Kohl, Corbett Riner, Michelle Griest (jr), Josh Cohen (fr), Lila Kerns (jr), Simon Bone, Here: J. Huebert, Laura Farley, Kevin Green Now, for the business at hand. The last meeting of the year.

I AM WOMAN, HEAR ME ROAR

It is certainly not J. Huebert's fault that her request for \$100.00 to cover the copy and mailing costs spurred an hour debate over whether or not The Women's Anthology was a discriminating organization (because they are only taking submissions from women and only women are allowed on the staff), in fact it is actually my fault for bringing up the possibility in the first place. But, I have lots of help in the mouth department and we go on and on and on. Should the Polity Council cover the costs of something that is not open to the entire student body? Yes, because the final product will be educational for the whole student body. No, because it limits student participation and things like this are bad for humanity. We claim that we are arguing about this because next year The Women's Anthology may need money for printing costs and we should begin to consider the Council's position on this. This is probably partly true, although you and I both know that we just like to talk. We finally give them the money to cover their costs: 72 for the mailing, 28 for a positive balance, the vote is 6 in favor and 3 abstaining.

Next, Kevin Green is here. He and some other people (James Holland, I think) threw some non-alcoholic parties. The Polity Stereo was out of commission and they used a student's stereo and blew a speaker. Will we pay for it? \$79.95. We take a brief break from this question to pass a unanimous vote that we are not going to buy a drum set this semester (since they never found one) and then vote 6 in favor 1 opposed and 2 abstaining to help Kevin out.

Michelle has final word for us on the library gift. We have chosen which bench in the catalogue we can't afford, but that we are going to buy "top of the line" lumber for and have the men in Buildings and Grounds build it. We vote unanimously to give the 1,000 dollars reserved for the library gift to the library gift.

Second to last is Matt, using his final words as Chair to suggest that we allot five hundred dollars, in case Reality goes over their budget, which they always do. They can deal with what ordeal the money goes to straightening out. We vote 8 to 1 on this.

And last, Greg Brown says that 500 dollars has been allotted for the seniors to pay their commencement speaker, but no senior has come to him or to a meeting to find out about this. It seems to me probable that no senior actually realizes that we are graduating in a week, but anyway we will hold onto it until they do. Meeting adjourned forever folks, Happy Reality and Good-bye!-J.G.

## One more good-bye.

There are so many people who have helped me with *The Moon* during my two years as Editor that to list them all would take a lot more space than is left in this last issue of *The Moon*.

I had hoped to announce next year's Editor, but unfortunately, elections for next year's Editor will take place after this issue already goes to print. I am confident that next year's Editor will be as fortunate as I have been in receiving support, suggestions and unwanted but helpful criticism, from friends, strangers, tutors and administrators.

I would also like to take the opportunity to ask a question to those people (there really were a lot of them) who said to me throughout the year, "I really like the polity minutes, they're the only thing I read before I throw the paper away." You did realize that was a left-handed compliment, didn't you?

Well, lucky for you, there isn't enough white space for me to grow too sentimental and share with you the trials and tribulations of the past two years. Instead, I think I'll just say good-bye.

Julia Goldberg  
May 8, 1991  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

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