

Tammy Rae Carland and Skeater-Kinney, Vivienne Dick and Lorraine O'Grady, Gayatri Spivak and Angela Davis, Lauri

# Suburban Blight



Every day, we are bombarded with a plethora of words, images, news reports, advertisements, and all types of media telling us what to buy, how to act, and what to think about. These messages that we are constantly receiving come in varying levels of obviousness. It is often difficult to discern whether something is real information or just product placement.

http://www.eden.rutgers.edu/~whiel  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

This is why it is important to think critically and evaluate information before we accept it as true. One way of doing this is by rejecting the simple binaries our society harps on. Either/or thinking makes it easy to divide us and pit us against each other, but most issues are more complex than to simply have two isolated sides. We are only interested in asking "Are you for or against this?" Why not also ask, "How do you feel about this? How can we address it?" Of course it's good to have positions on things, but to stop there is to limit yourself. It's easy to spout out simple phrases and display them on cars, but that shouldn't be all we're doing. Can you further elaborate on that bumper sticker, that t-shirt, that poster on your wall? These snippets obviously don't capture the fullness of the issue, but sometimes I come across people who really don't seem to be able to look any further than a catchy saying. Don't let anyone reduce all your thoughts, all your hopes and dreams, into a neatly packaged stereotype. Dig deeper.

We are not just black or white, yes or no, red or blue. We are thinking human beings and we are capable of changing, learning, and growing at every moment of our lives.

Steph

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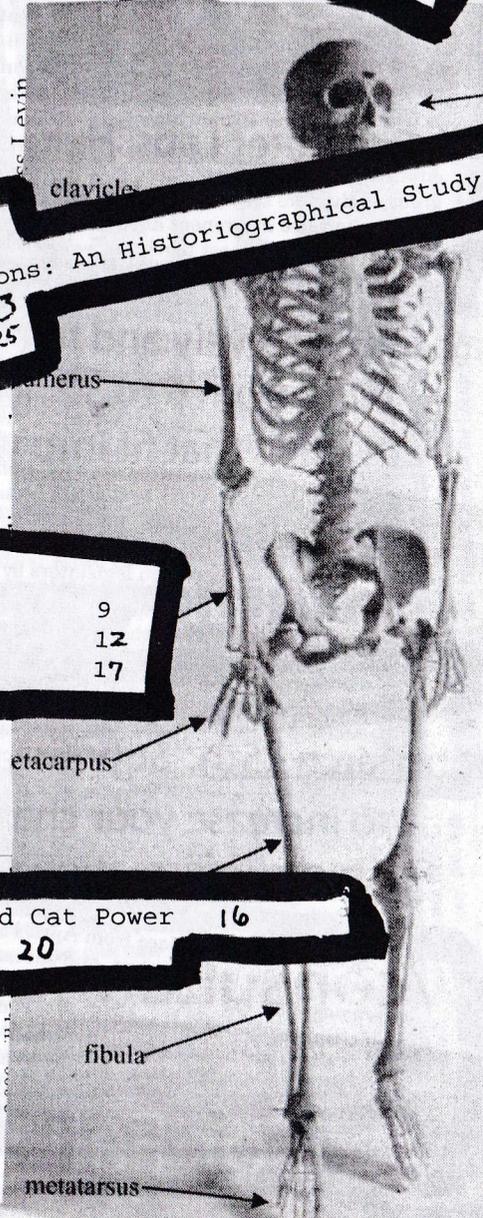
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TENT

STATE

UNIVERSITY

S. BASILE

During the week of April 18<sup>th</sup>, students, alumni, professors, and activists from in and around New Brunswick, NJ will be taking part in the third annual Tent State University. Participants will set up tents along the Voorhees mall at Rutgers University as a form of protest against the high increases in tuition costs.

The idea of having a tent city was first conceived in February 2003, when Governor James McGreevey proposed to cut state funding for New Jersey higher education by an unprecedented \$143 million. The announced budget cut urged a group of Rutgers students and alumni to create a tent city. The 48-hour tent city's aim was to raise awareness about the governor's budget cuts, encourage students to call legislators, and host teach-ins, workshops, discussions, and various other events.

When they first descended on the Voorhees mall, a lawn located amidst academic buildings on the College Avenue campus, they were unsure if anyone would come. Graduate student Tom DeGloma recalls hoping people would show up. "We expected 50 to 100 people," he says. Not only did several hundreds of people wind up coming, but the event ended up being extended well beyond the initial two days and received media attention spanning from Philadelphia to New York City. Newspapers such as Central Jersey's *Home News Tribune* and North Jersey's *The Star-Ledger* covered the event, as well as channels 2, 4, and 12. The budget cut ended up being reduced by \$43 million to \$100 million that year, largely in part to the pressure put on legislators by Tent State participants.

Now in its third run, Tent State University is expected to be one of the biggest activist events at Rutgers this semester. Students are currently holding organizational meetings as well as contacting other schools across the nation and encouraging them to hold similar events.

Scheduled to take place from April 18-22, there are already teach-ins being put together, bands being booked, and several other events in the works. Other groups on campus are eager to participate. The university's Women's Center has announced it will move to Tent State for the week, so that various feminist groups will meet there instead of its regular location on the Douglass campus. New Brunswick Food Not Bombs, as well as some local restaurants, will be donating food to feed the hundreds of students expected to flood the mall. Also, professors are being encouraged to move their classes outside during Tent State.

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Symbolically, Tent State represents an alternative university for those who are being displaced and ignored by the massive budget cuts. Those involved with organizing Tent State put an emphasis on non-hierarchical decision-making. Rutgers alumnus Xavier Hansen calls it a "university open to everyone," in which every member has a voice. "If for any reason someone can't be fully involved, we're not doing our job right." As was done in the previous Tent States, discussions will occur at the end of each day in which everyone can discuss how the day went, what went well and what didn't, and what should be done the next day.

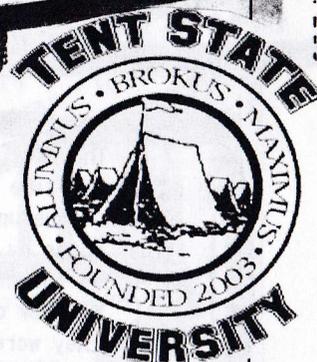
Following a year in which the Federal Government allocated \$53.1 billion to the Department of Education and \$365.3 billion to the Department of Defense, Tent State is combining their affordable higher education message with an anti-war message. Part of their mission statement reads, "We demand full funding for our public institutions of higher learning and oppose the reckless squander of life and resources through the militarization of our national agenda."

On the state level, Rutgers University is receiving less funding from New Jersey than it used to. "Right now, Rutgers is half a public institution," says junior Lena Posner, who is in charge of Rutgers outreach for Tent State. She notes that in 1992 Rutgers received 64% of its funds from New Jersey and now receives about 50% of its funding from the state. In addition, tuition has risen over 150% in the past ten years.

So far, things are looking up. Dozens of students have been attending organizational meetings, and schools around the country have plans of holding similar events. There are already plans for teach-ins, bands, and a variety of theme tents.

For further info:

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



CD

# Review

DON HANDY

NIRVANA: *With the Lights Out*. Geffen.

Of the three CDs in this boxed-set, there is one excellent one, one good one, and the last one superfluous. For instance, the song "Polly" has already appeared on *Nevermind*, in a "New Wave" version on *Incesticide*, in an acoustic version on *Unplugged in NY*, and a relatively regular version on the live CD *From the Muddy Banks of the Wishkah*. There are two additional versions on *With the Lights Out*: a "solo acoustic" version as well as a "demo." Both could instead be listed as "overkill."

This boxed-set will probably be appreciated the most by people who don't already have the *Hormoaning* CD or any of the rare singles or compilation albums. As it is, perhaps this will drive the final nail into Kurt Cobain's coffin, in a commercial sense. There simply can't be much more to dredge up, aside from the single that Kurt did with William S. Burroughs.

The fact that this set was released with the live DVD as a "limited-time only" extra also leaves a bad taste in my mouth. (Quick - cue up The Smiths' "Paint a Vulgar Picture.") The liner notes by Thurston Moore read like stoned rambling, although the archival photos and memorabilia are great.

Whether one enjoys this collection depends on how much of a fan they were to begin with. Those unfamiliar with the group would do better to start with *Nevermind* and *Unplugged*.

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# FEMINISM

# ALTERNATIVE

# RELIGIONS:

# AN HISTORIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

CHRISTINE KRAEMER

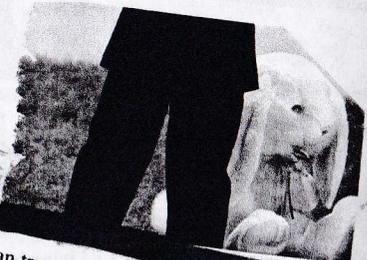
Cynthia Eller's *Living in the Lap of the Goddess* (1993) is a primarily anthropological examination of the late twentieth-century feminist spirituality movement, as expressed in workshops, retreats, mail-order courses, books and pamphlets, and small groups. Eller's aim is primarily descriptive. She charts feminist spirituality's similarities to, differences from, and borrowings from non-Western traditions. In addition to chapters on ritual practice and unique theology, Eller examines the myth of a matriarchal prehistory as a touchstone of spiritual feminist belief, particularly as it grounds the movement's utopian politics. It is in the concluding chapters that Eller switches from description to argument. Feminist spirituality has a clear political agenda: environmentalism, nonviolence, feminism, and community (191). Eller argues, however, that with the growth of the spiritual feminist movement over the past three decades, spiritual feminism has grown apart from political feminism. Unlike in *Radical Spirits*, where Braude describes radical politics and radical religion as going hand-in-hand, particularly at both spiritual and political conventions, Eller writes:

*Jeanne Garawitz remembers that in the late 1970s conflict between spiritual and political feminists shook up the women's community in the city where she lived. She reports: "There were some women that were very, very, very political, who were like, 'This is bullshit! We need a Take Back the Night march, we need legislation, we need more police protection, and you guys are sitting there going "om, om, om, om,"' [ . . . ] Spiritual and political feminists no longer need to argue with one another because they are no longer best friends. Most political feminists do not meet spiritual feminists as they go about their political business. [ . . . ] When the National Organization for Women holds its annual conference, it does not include a special session on introducing goddess worship in the elementary schools or an opening ritual in which participants are smudged with cedar and sage. And when the Re-formed Covenant of the Goddess holds its annual conference, it does not include a keynote speech on recent Supreme Court challenges to Roe v. Wade or a workshop on strategies for ensuring that Title IX legislation is respected in the local schools. The two worlds have grown apart. (189-191)*

Despite this breach, Eller feels that there is a genuine political dimension to spiritual feminism. She points to the community's use and interpretation of the word "witch" as a way of standing in solidarity with women throughout history who have been persecuted or even killed partially on the basis of gender. She argues that spirituality can empower women for activism such as lobbying Congress in the same way that psychoanalysis may empower a purely political feminist. Her most unusual argument for the legitimate political dimension of spiritual feminism is based on its utopian vision. Spiritual feminists, she suggests, engage in political activity invigorated by the vision of a just society, an entirely new order not based on the patriarchal structures of the present. Eller writes:

*Lest this be perceived as a tyranny of the dreamable over the achievable, it is worth considering that a reverse tyranny may obtain in political feminism: that of the achievable over the dreamable. [ . . . ] For [political feminists], it is most important to keep their eye on the hurdle immediately in front of them: get abortion rights signed into law, for example [ . . . ] Political feminism sometimes looks to [spiritual feminists] like digging the same ditch every day and waiting for the patriarchy to fill it back in overnight. (206-207)*

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Although Eller observes that a heady utopian vision can translate into ineffective political action on the part of feminists as they fail to focus enough on the immediate issues, she argues that spiritual feminists as a group are alive to this danger. Although she offers no predictions about the future political significance of feminist spirituality, she strongly asserts its success in empowering women to achieve their personal goals.



The primary weakness of Eller's work is its introductory quality. As a primarily work, it traces spiritual feminism's origins back no further than the 1950's. This inadequate attempt at historical context neglects the similarities between the combination of spiritual feminism and neopaganism with political feminism in the late twentieth century and the combination of Spiritualism and New Thought with the women's rights movement in the nineteenth century. Further, Eller's analysis focuses too heavily on neopaganism as the parent of spiritual feminism, ignoring the arguably equal impact of political feminism. Further, Eller's commitment to accurately describing the spiritual feminist community has left her little room to make judgments about it. This complaint is partially addressed, however, by her 2001 follow up *The Myth of Patriarchal Prehistory: Why an Invented Past Will Not Give Women a Future*.

Jone Salomonsen's *Enchanted Feminism* (2002) is the most theologically sophisticated of the five books. Salomonsen's primary training is as a theologian, and her method is ethnographic; the book is an account of her experiences as a participant-observer (though she problematizes this concept) in the feminist Reclaiming witchcraft community of San Francisco from 1984-1994. Salomonsen examines the community's ritual, anarchistic-feminist politics, immanentist theology, and historical origins in loving detail. She argues that the origins of the groups' immanentism, communalism, and search for ecstatic experience can be found in radical Protestant groups existing from the thirteenth century to the seventeenth century – for example, the Brethren of the Free Spirit. Further, the communalism of Reclaiming witches has significant similarities with groups such as the Shakers; its consensus process was borrowed directly from the Quakers. Ultimately, she argues, Reclaiming witches are continuing the work of the Reformation by finding new sources of spiritual authority and restoring a cosmology in which human beings have a meaningful place, and may be more properly understood as subcultures of the Judeo-Christian tradition, rather than as members of the new religion of Wicca, with its specifically British occult origins.



Oddly, though Salomonsen's book is peppered with references to Reclaiming's political activities, she fails to examine the confluence of religion and political activism in any real depth. What she does succeed in doing, however, is presenting a community in which politics are inseparable from religion. Although she does draw certain lines between what she calls "utopian witches" – practitioners whose religious beliefs are primarily an expression of their pre-existing political beliefs – and "generic witches" – witches who may live outside the community, and whose beliefs stem from personal religious experiences which are often mystical in nature – Salomonsen demonstrates that this community cannot be understood apart from its feminist-anarchistic ethic.

Unsurprisingly, however, *Enchanted Feminism* suffers from the weaknesses of most ethnographies. Although it succeeds in contextualizing Reclaiming within a tradition of religious thought (though, incidentally, a tradition of religious thought many Reclaiming witches explicitly reject due to their situation in patriarchal religions), it does little to contextualize Reclaiming as a religious movement within American culture or even within spiritual feminism. Although Salomonsen does make an attempt to bring Starhawk, the movement's primary theologian, into dialogue with Christian reformers such as Rosemary Radford Ruether, the book in general is very tightly focused on issues internal to the community, which at the time of Salomonsen's writing remained small but internationally growing. The book serves as a powerful snapshot of a community in a certain place and time, but gives the reader few tools to contextualize it in a larger social, political, or religious context.



Ultimately, my complaint about Salomonsen's book can be extended to this subject area as a whole. These works describe the interaction of feminism with particular alternative religious groups very well, but a good survey pulling all of these threads of feminism and alternative religion together is lacking and desperately needed. Further, I was also unable to find an existing survey of American feminism and religion in general; even studies of the impact of nineteenth century evangelicalism on feminism seem to be as tightly focused as these works on alternative religious groups. As demonstrated by these books, however, the connection between feminism, religion, and political activism is complex and vital to the women's movement throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The similarities between the periods at the end of each century are particularly promising ground for additional exploration, especially as such a study might explain the ebb in woman-centered spirituality in the first half of the twentieth century. Students of history who want to fill in the gaps between these tightly focused works in order to account for historical change will find this field still wide open.

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# THE POWER OF WORDS

S. BASILE

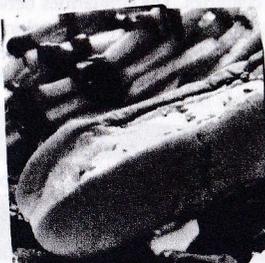
There was a bit of an uproar here at Rutgers University recently. Here's the basic gist of it: Located on a parking lot along a high traffic area of the school sits trucks that sell food and snacks. Dubbed the grease trucks, they are best known for their "fat sandwiches" - big, greasy, sandwiches that combine all types of food, like French fries, mozzarella sticks, etc. Each combination has a different name, such as "Fat Cat" or "Fat Darrell." Now, there are a few sandwich names that not everyone is cool with, such as the Fat Bitch, the Fat Dyke, and the Fat Filipino.

Students have been harassed while at the grease trucks, sometimes by grease truck workers, sometimes by drunken students getting a late night snack. In one instance, a few lesbian and transgender students were yelled at and mocked by a grease truck worker. A few days later the Fat Dyke appeared as a sandwich. Finally, some students complained to the university about the harassment, adding that the sandwich names contributed to the hostile environment.

Parking and Transportation Services, who are in charge of the grease trucks since they sit on a parking lot, looked at the issue. It turns out the grease trucks were in violation of a policy that stated all sandwich names must be approved by PATS before being posted. Thus, the grease truck owners were told to cover up certain sandwich names until they renamed them.

Thanks to the school newspaper and lots of rumors, the story that most students heard was that a few queer students found the sandwich names offensive and complained, and then the university changed them because of this. Immediately following, we were met with the tired old rhetoric that would be expected: that everyone is getting too politically correct, that the queer community is ruining a Rutgers tradition, that people should get over it, that "words can never hurt me."

Met with overwhelming backlash, the LGBT students on campus, themselves misinformed of what had happened, were quick to condemn the students who complained and assure everyone else that they, too, thought the "censorship" was ridiculous.



As usual, a potentially productive conversation about language and harassment has been reduced to a **SIMPLISTIC** argument over whether the signs should be covered up.

Clearly, the point is being missed. First off, one would think college students would be intelligent enough to look further into such a situation. Several wrote in saying that part of the greatness of Rutgers was being able to stumble over to the grease trucks at 3 am and scream "Fat Bitch!" I have to say I never realized how many people considered the Fat Bitch to be the staple of university life. Secondly, the term "politically correct," though first used as an empowering term for leftists in the 60s and 70s, was then used by conservatives in the 80s as a way of oversimplifying, misrepresenting, and thus silencing progressive movements. Clearly, it is still doing its job.

I was turned off by the reluctance of progressive groups on campus to get involved in this issue. I saw it as a golden opportunity to educate students on the implications of language, but many just wanted to move on, upset with the backlash they'd received.

Whatever personal views on this issue may be, I think it goes deeper than whether they should have changed the names. Instead let us ask what the implications of these words are. Let us think critically about how language constructs our world. The fact that people are being harassed and that they feel uncomfortable enough to bring up the issue to begin with shows that all is not well. What follows is a statement I prepared and passed around to student organizations for endorsement.

We, the undersigned, recognize a need for progressive dialogue to take place regarding language. We stress that the change in sandwich names was an administrative action taken due to violation of rules, not a protest brought about by any particular group, which is the common misinterpretation. Regardless of our own personal opinions about what happened to the grease trucks, we see ourselves presented with an opportunity to show people how words can perpetuate intolerance of minority groups.

We recognize that sexism, racism, and homophobia are harder to fight today than in the past because they are more covert. We recognize that people may inadvertently perpetuate these problems without even realizing they are doing so. We recognize that words can foster negative attitudes towards certain groups of people, and that these attitudes have led to violence against these groups. We recognize that our words and behaviors, what we choose to condone and what we choose to ignore, are all factors that can either perpetuate or challenge intolerance.

We acknowledge that language not only describes but prescribes a society; in other words that what we say not only reflects our reality but creates it. We acknowledge that the histories of many words are in fact prejudiced by definition. We acknowledge that words do not exist in a vacuum. We acknowledge that words, images, and actions are not isolated entities but rather interrelated aspects of society that combine to create an atmosphere that isn't always safe for everyone.

We are not interested in being the language police but rather raising awareness to the fact that language can, indeed, perpetuate sexism, racism, and homophobia.

Signed,  
Culture Jam  
Lesbians and Bisexuals in Action (LABIA)  
LGBTIQ People of Color Organization at Rutgers University (LLEGO)  
New Jersey Solidarity  
RU National Organization for Women  
Rutgers Hillel  
Women's Center Defense Coalition

# THE FACADE OF DEBATE

S. BASILE

As the perceived political norm gets pushed further to the right, it seems as though the media is still able to give the public the sense that it is covering a wide range of news as well as a wide range of viewpoints to critique that news. As Noam Chomsky writes in "The Manufacture of Consent," a democracy must keep up the illusion of real debate.<sup>1</sup> Within this debate, no viewpoints are ever to be expressed if they would at all endanger the positions of those who hold power. Any information and/or criticisms which would fall outside this limited range of accepted dialogue are not even considered, so that if someone does bring something different up, they are considered un-credible, out of touch, or simply not representative of very many Americans.

In a democracy such as ours, where people theoretically have the freedom to control their own actions, it is important that those in power expose them to a very limited and specific set of ideas from which to base their opinions. Chomsky notes that in a dictatorship, the government is able to control the public's behavior. In a democracy, the government cannot directly control the people's behavior so they must control their thoughts in order to produce the desired behavior. To do this and yet still let people think they have choices, a façade of debate is created.

The average American's main source of current information is the major news networks and newspapers. With any news source, the public is being presented with what journalists choose to show them. Reporters go out and find stories they deem newsworthy. They discuss it with colleagues and then get their story approved. The editors then choose which stories will run and edit those before they go to print. Clearly, it takes a lot for an event to reach the public. This is before even considering political bias of the journalists plus the fact that they have to keep their sponsors happy.

Speaking of sponsors, it is important to remember that companies are paying to keep news sources available to the public. Americans seem to forget that mainstream media companies are for-profit organizations. Amy Goodman, of the independent news program Democracy Now!, puts it best when she says, "In the old Soviet Union, people knew that they had to read between the lines of state-sponsored news to get to the truth, but in this country there is the illusion that there is great diversity in the media because of all the channels that are available. But who owns the media?"<sup>2</sup>

A major source of sponsorship for the nightly news is car companies. What powers cars? Oil. Now, realistically, would a nightly news program sponsored by car companies really want Americans to oppose the Iraq war? Once in a while, an anti-war pundit is brought on to make a case, but that person is often made out to look unpatriotic or like a crazy leftist.

Although newspapers are often dubbed liberal and sometimes even left wing, in reality they are centrist at best. Naturally, news stories tend to play up actions taken by the White House while avoiding news that could be detrimental. For example, I recently read a story in NJ's *The Star-Ledger* about the new anti-terrorism bill. The story explained that Bush was trying to push the bill through Congress because it would further protect us from terrorist threats. About halfway into the article, it mentioned that two Democrats opposed the bill because of border patrol issues. What it fails to mention is that the bill initially contained two parts: one narrows our civil liberties, and the other tightens border patrol. Bush got rid of the section on border patrol before he passed the bill, even though research has shown that tightening border security is a much better anti-terrorist tactic than limiting our civil liberties. It seems safe to say that perhaps those passing the bill were thinking about cheap labor when they removed the border patrol section. The story, meanwhile, was skewed to look like a strategic anti-terrorist action taken by the White House.

If information can't be skewed, it simply isn't reported. Ask yourself this: when was the last time you saw a protest on TV? The media either fails to report on protests or gives them just a few minutes of air-time, or a small write up in the middle of the paper. I've spoken to people who actually didn't know that thousands of people marched in protest before we went to war in Iraq. People have tried to convince me that no one opposes this war! But then again, it's not so ludicrous for people to think this if they are never aware of the dissent that goes on around the country.

One recent march, last April's March for Women's Lives, did get coverage, though it was so minimal it was insulting. Approximately 1.3 million people from all over the world came to march in what was one of the largest (arguably the largest) marches in U.S. history, and yet it was no more than a blurb on the nightly news. The newspaper grossly underestimated the number of marchers, and though all newspapers do this, it was still much less than the organizer's estimates. Fredericksburg, VA's *Free-Lance Star* reported 500,000 to 800,000 people, citing police officers as sources. Of course, police officers stopped keeping official counts years ago, so they were relying on a police officer's ability to eyeball one of the hugest crowds to ever hit DC.

Even more powerful than words are images. The newspapers have no problems showing the massive damage caused by the tsunami, but look at war photos and you'll most likely see soldiers walking through streets or a scene of Baghdad from afar, never a mangled child or a guy with his arm blown off. The media isn't even allowed to show pictures of U.S. soldier's coffins being brought back! People deserve to see everything that is going on in Iraq, or else its full impact might never be realized by the American people.

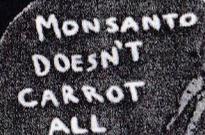
Our failure to see all sides of a story stems from youth. In school, students are taught that there are Republicans and there are Democrats. There are also a bunch of third parties, but we won't bother with them. A teacher might explain that there are unemployed and underemployed workers in the U.S. Then the teacher would tell students that a Republican might argue to let the market fix itself, while a Democrat might argue to offer welfare or increase the minimum wage. We show students how to tend to the surface of problems without ever directing them towards the root. Instead of considering the notion that capitalism doesn't work, we tell students that the only

other option is communism, and communism was a disaster whereas capitalism is synonymous with freedom. If people feel this way, fine, but it is obviously yet is the framework around which we teach our students history. Someone who has been educated in this fashion would consider it laughable to think a system other than capitalism is plausible.

Another great example of narrowing the spectrum of debate is gay marriage. While the conservatives and liberals argue over whether or not gays should marry, radicals are left out of the conversation. What about people, both straight or gay, who don't believe in monogamy and don't believe the state should reward people just for confining themselves to one person for the rest of their lives? Or what about people who believe in monogamous relationships but feel that fighting for heterosexuals to condone gay marriage might result in gay people assimilating to heterosexual lifestyles and gender binaries? Additionally, there are several other gay rights issues, such as hate crimes and job discrimination, that activists feel are more important than gay marriage. At this point, the media has successfully limited gay rights debate to marriage and civil unions.

Because people are raised with such a narrow scope of ideas, it is often hard to explain different ideas on TV and the radio. For example, I recently heard that Amy Goodman would be taking part in a CNN debate over what the U.S. should do in Iraq. I excitedly turned it on only to witness a brief segment in which neither person had the chance to adequately explain themselves. The media does not allow sufficient time for any real discussion to take place. Unless your ideology can fit into an eight-second segment, odds are your ideas will be dismissed by people.

We deserve better. We deserve a fair and balanced media that does not operate on corporate money. We should urge major media outlets to cover issues we find important and also support independent media. Always read a variety of news sources. Even if you think the nightly news is a joke, it's important to tune in once in a while and find out what the majority of people are hearing.



MONSANTO  
DOESN'T  
CARROT  
ALL



CANCER  
THEN I PROFIT  
FROM YOUR CURE

spread independent media and alternative ideas. Contact your local radio stations and public television networks about airing Democracy Now! Distribute free newspapers and zines in libraries, coffee shops, and bookstores around your town. Pass out flyers pointing people to informative websites.

Sometimes good old casual discussion is a great way to get to people. If you hear someone say something fishy ask them where they heard it and explain that it might be biased. Everyone has a right to be informed!

Here are some groups that will give you free literature to distribute:

Crimethinc  
Crimethinc. Far East  
PO Box 1963  
Olympia, WA 98507-1963  
www.crimethinc.com

Impact  
PMB 361  
10151 University Blvd.  
Orlando, FL 32817  
http://www.impactpress.com/

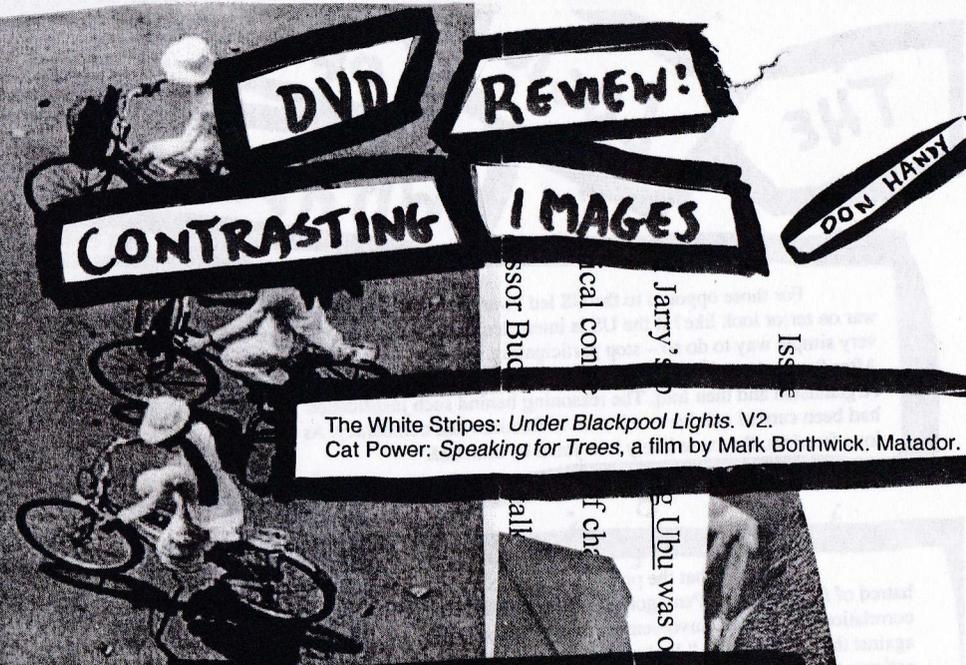
Here are some good media websites:  
www.democracynow.org  
indymedia.us/en/index.shtml  
www.infoshop.org  
www.onepeoplesproject.com  
www.zmag.org/weluser.htm

The Independent  
NYC Independent Media Center  
34 E. 29th Street, 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org

Slingshot  
3124 Shattuck Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94705  
http://slingshot.tao.ca/

<sup>1</sup> Peck, James, ed. *The Chomsky Reader*. Chomsky, Noam. "The Manufacture of Consent." New York: Pantheon Books, 1987: 121-136.

<sup>2</sup> Barrientos, Tanya. "She's taking the watchdog to task." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Democracy Now! Online. 13 May 2004. 10 Jan. 2005. <<http://www.easybib.com/MyBib/step2.php>>.



The White Stripes: *Under Blackpool Lights*. V2.  
Cat Power: *Speaking for Trees*, a film by Mark Borthwick. Matador.

These two DVDs are a study in contrast. The White Stripes' *Under Blackpool Lights* is the dark one. It is, perhaps, filmed too close to the performers. If you've never seen a White Stripes show then you may not know from this one that, for instance, Jack White has a microphone stand next to Meg White's drum kit that he sings into, often facing her with his side to the audience. Nor would you be able to tell that Meg plays in her bare feet. The vocals are unintelligible for the first song, but by "Jolene" Jack has them well under control. While there are 6 songs unavailable on any of their albums on here, making it a necessary purchase for their true fans, it is not a particularly great gig for them.

*Speaking for Trees* was shot with Chan Marshall, aka Cat Power, in a sunny field. Only two of the songs are on any of her albums, although she played most of them on her recent tour in support of *You Are Free*. While shot from a distance, intimacy is provided by the sense that you are privy to a practice session. This sense is reinforced by the fact that all of the songs are repeated, most of them three times. The quirkiness that Chan is infamous for comes through not only in the surrealness of the surroundings, but in her actions, such as shaking her hair between songs inexplicably. Included in the DVD is an 18-minute song, "Willie Deadwider, from the *You Are Free* sessions." It contains one of her most gorgeous melodies, and must be frustrating to her record company. If it were trimmed to three or four minutes it just might provide her with her first radio-friendly hit single.

Don Handy is a self-published poet who lives in Detroit.



# THE LOGIC OF WITHDRAWAL

STEVE MECK

For those opposed to the US led "war on terror," the obvious question arises, what would a real war on terror look like? If the US is interested in reducing the amount of terror in the world, there is a very simple way to do so - stop participating in it. After September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Bush administration tried to justify that military action was necessary in Afghanistan and then Iraq. The reasoning behind such justification was that the attacks against the US had been carried out due to a hatred of freedom and democracy. As Bush's logic went, "the more you love freedom, the more likely it is you'll be attacked."

The truth is that the policies of the US are what instigated the attacks against the US, not a hatred of freedom. As a Pentagon report from 1997 concluded, "Historical data show a strong correlation between US involvement in international situations and an increase in terrorist attacks against the United States." It almost makes sense: the more the US kills and tortures the people of other nations, the more those nations act in retaliation against the US. It's one of those lessons that you're suppose to learn in grade school, but which US policy makers seem to have forgotten.

A pentagon report released in November 2004 has shown that the present war has followed the same deadly policy that has created terrorists in the past. The report explains the US war on terror is seen by Muslims as a "self serving hypocrisy" due to the fact that the US is carrying out terrorist attacks on civilians and not bringing "democracy [to Afghanistan and Iraq], but only more chaos and suffering." The Muslim people do want liberation, but only from the "tyrannies that the U.S. so determinedly promotes and defends." The report concludes, "Muslims do not 'hate our freedom,' but rather they hate our policies."

The reason America's policies are hated so much is because they have been based on control of the region at the expense of the civilians. As former Secretary of State Madeline Albright so aptly put it when asked if the economic sanctions on Iraq that had killed 500,000 children were worth it, she replied, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price -- we think the price is worth it."

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Although the American people may have fallen victim to American propaganda, the victims of the suffering have not forgotten the suffering that has been caused. When the Iraqi people were polled on whether the US was there to establish democracy, only one percent thought this to be true. America has become something to be feared and hated and American propaganda has become something to laugh at. As one Iraqi civilian explained, "When we want to scare the kids in my family, we tell them 'Democracy is coming to get you' or 'Freedom is coming to get you.'"

The terrorist attacks against the US showed that something needs to be done, but America's persistent attacks on the Middle Eastern people have shown to only cause more violence against the US. A real war on terror would be one that doesn't actually engage in it. Those responsible for attacks against America need to be prosecuted but attacks against civilians will only cause more terrorist attacks. As a recent CIA report, Mapping our Global Future, points out - the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have only increased the amount of terrorists. If we are at all serious about saving lives from terrorism the US should end the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq to save the lives of the civilians there and provide safety here at home.

Steve Meck is a political science major at Rutgers University.

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US Department of Defense, Defense Science Board 1997 Summer Study Task Force on DOD Responses to Transnational Threats, October 1997, Final Report, Vol.1.  
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- 3.) 2004 Pentagon Report  
"U.S. Fails to Explain Policies to Muslim World, Panel Says," New York Times 11/24/04  
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- 4.) Albright quote:  
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- 5.) Iraqi poll on democracy:  
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- 7.) "Mapping our Future"  
<http://www.foia.cia.gov/2020/2020.pdf> (20/20/20 vision you might say)  
Also see testimony by Goss (CIA) and Mueller (FBI) from 2/16/05 (also available online)

WESTERN

LOGIC

101

S. BASILE

If you attack a sovereign nation, it's terrorism  
If we attack a sovereign nation, it's fighting terrorism

When Europeans kill each other, it's genocide  
When Africans kill each other, it's their usual barbarism

When a woman is murdered, it's a shame  
When a woman is raped, it's because she provoked it

If you steal someone's car, you go to jail  
If you steal someone's land, you get a day named after you

If a man spews his semen on my face, it's sexy  
If I urinate on a man's face, it's gross

Car

19

negie Hall, 134...st 57

Rutgers Symphony Ord

SHOW

REVIEW

Sleater-Kinney  
Mercury Lounge, NYC  
March 2nd

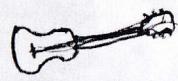
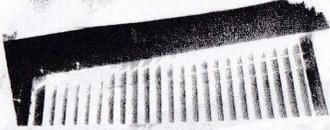
XAVIER TAYO

At Sleater-Kinney's recent show at the Mercury Lounge, the band unveiled their new songs from the upcoming "The Woods," out May 24<sup>th</sup> on Subpop Records. On this cold winter day, the line started forming an hour before doors opened along busy East Houston Street in New York's Lower East Side. The opening band was singer-songwriter Kevin Devine, who played with an occasional violist and co-singer. He had a nice voice and his guitar playing was good, sounding like Bright Eyes a few times but not as wobbly. The next group was a full on rock group, Pela, with an English-accented lead singer. They rocked pretty hard and are a local favorite.

While Sleater-Kinney was setting up, I was able to talk with Carrie Brownstein, the lead guitarist and vocalist. We were talking about books we've read and then she warned me: "It's going to get loud." She had more pedals than ever on her board. All vintage and obscure looking, with one of them named "Super Hard On." While Carrie was untangling all the cables that were spilled around, Janet Weiss was furiously warming up on her drums. Corin Tucker, main vocalist and guitarist, also had more pedals than usual on the Les Paul she has been using.



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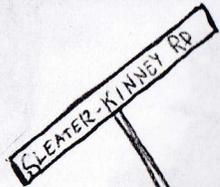


They mentioned that they played their alma matter earlier in the week on the stage in the padded corner of the gym at Evergreen State College. They said how weird it felt to be playing at their old school and that in contrast, the Mercury Lounge was a much nicer place. They played mostly new songs and some old favorites.

Janet was just an incredible force the entire night, whirling away and also playing harmonica during one song. Carrie rocked amazingly hard. She made all sorts of melodies explode from her guitar, while her fingers danced all over the fretboard. As great as she was before, she has actually become a better guitar player. She and Corin both sang slow tempo songs. And Corin looked and sounded beautiful as she sang emotionally, really one of the most beautiful people I have ever seen.

The songs on the new album show off their musical skills and allow them to expand their music. This new record will be a milestone for the band. It sounds distinct from the other albums but has the same great Sleater-Kinney melodies. There was an encore in which they played favorites like "Get Up" and "Step Aside." And then the lights went on and everyone gathered their bearings and stuff. Some stopped to buy Sleater-Kinney's Migrating Geese tees. And carried the noise in their heads into the midnight chill.

You can check out the bands at  
[www.kevindevine.net](http://www.kevindevine.net)  
[www.pelamusic.com](http://www.pelamusic.com)  
[www.sleater-kinney.com](http://www.sleater-kinney.com)



Xavier Tayo is a freelance writer with The Independent who lives in the Bronx.

# SONG

# QUOTES

EVERY 45 SECONDS A WOMAN IS RAPED  
 OUR SEXIST CULTURE ALLOWS NO ESCAPE  
 THIS VIOLENT CRIME IS FAR FROM OBSCURITY  
 WHEN THE RATE OF VICTIMS IS ONE IN THREE  
 SOCIETY CONDITIONS MEN TO BE RAPISTS  
 AND OUR INDIFFERENCE PERPETUATES IT  
 WITH DEROGATORY LANGUAGE THAT TENDS TO DEHUMANIZE  
 MAKING IT EASIER FOR MEN TO VICTIMIZE  
 AND THE PORNOGRAPHIC IMAGES THAT HELP PORTRAY  
 WOMEN AS LEGITIMATE SEXUAL PREY  
 - "THE SECOND RAPE," AUS-ROTTEN

Think you're controlling the world  
 Cause you're controlling the wealth  
 I don't belong to you, I belong to myself  
 - "Vicious Cycle," Northern State

WOMAN IS A HOLY MYTH  
 A GIFT OF MAN'S EXPRESSION  
 SHE'S SWEET, DEFENSELESS, GOLDEN-EYED  
 A GIFT OF GOD'S REPRESSION.  
 - "SMOTHER LOVE," CRASS

No one should be hungry in this country  
 "Veteran," Ignite

Watch them laugh unashamed as they tear your rights away  
 They're counting on your silence  
 Broken down by the weight of the climate they create  
 Psychological Violence  
 - "File Under: 'Adult Urban Contemporary,'" - Dillinger Four



# GENOCIDE

# IN

# RWANDA

Mass murder in Yugoslavia outraged people around the globe and resulted in aid being sent in from various countries. Mass murder in Rwanda was reduced to just some tribal fighting and received little help.

This was first explained to me by my black literature professor last semester. I must say that I'm ashamed to admit that I knew nothing about the Rwandan genocide until she brought it to my class's attention. It is utterly despicable that this bloody part of our history was virtually ignored.

Though this massive slaughter began on April 6, 1994, the Clinton administration would not publicly use the term genocide until May 25<sup>th</sup>, and even then they would only say "acts of genocide."

This is something that needs to be known, so below is a brief description of what happened. Also, I recommend seeing the movie *Hotel Rwanda*.

## Rwandan Genocide

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

The Rwandan Genocide was the organized murder of 937,000 Rwandans in 1994. It is commonly portrayed as an eruption of ethnic conflict in which militias of the Hutu ethnic majority, with the connivance of the Hutu-dominated government, attempted to carry out an ethnic cleansing of the minority Tutsis, and Hutu moderates that opposed the genocide. Other explanations focus on the role of political elites in mobilizing and arming supporters. Despite warnings both before, and intelligence during, the genocide of the scale of the violence, the international community was largely passive. The failure to act became the focus of bitter recriminations towards the policymakers of the United Nations and nations such as France and the United States.



A Tutsi man who survived a machete attack. From [www.gendecide.org](http://www.gendecide.org)

The genocide ended when a Tutsi Rwandese Patriotic Army invaded from neighboring Uganda and a Tutsi-led government took power. In the aftermath of the genocide hundreds of thousands of Hutu refugees fled into eastern Zaire. The violence, and memory of the violence, continue to impact the country and the region. Both the First and Second Congo Wars trace their origins to the genocide, and it continues to be a reference point for the Burundian Civil War.



This October, more than 1200 business innovators met in New Brunswick to share their insights and experiences on how to create better places to live and work.

## Preparations for genocide

During this period the rhetoric of Hutu nationalism escalated. Radio stations, particularly Radio-Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) and newspapers spewed hatred describing the Tutsi as subhuman, and pushing veiled calls for violence as radical Hutu groups amassed weapons. The nation became increasingly polarized as neighborhoods became exclusively populated by only one group.

According to Linda Melvern,<sup>1</sup> a British investigative reporter who was given access to the official reports, much preparation had been made. By the time the genocide started, the militia in Rwanda was 30,000 strong and organized nationwide with representatives in every neighborhood -- one militia member for every ten families. Some of the militia was given AK-47 assault rifles but only after filling in the required requisition forms. The distribution of grenades did not require paperwork.

In order to finance the genocide money was siphoned from international funding; the funding provided by the World Bank and the IMF under a Structural Adjustment Program. It is estimated that in Rwanda, one of the poorest and most troubled nations on Earth, \$134 million was spent on genocide preparation. Some \$4.6 million were spent on machetes, hoes, axes, razors, and hammers. There was one new machete for every three Hutu males.

The Prime Minister of Rwanda, Jean Kambanda, revealed<sup>2</sup> that the genocide was openly discussed in cabinet meetings. Kambanda described, according to Melvern, how one cabinet minister said she was "personally in favour of getting rid of all Tutsi". "Without the Tutsi," she told ministers, "all of Rwanda's problems would be over."

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# → Cool Bookstore Alert ←

S. BASILE

PANDORA BOOK PEDDLERS  
9 Waverly Place, Madison, NJ

The only self-proclaimed feminist bookstore in the Morris county area, Pandora is a small bookstore located off Main St in downtown Madison.

They carry everything from children's books to a variety of novels to women's studies books mostly dealing with the second wave (1960s-70s). Always happy to help local art and business, the owner, Pam, sells handmade dolls from Brooklyn's "unemployed philosopher's guild," and is open to people leaving notes and pamphlets in the store.

In short, Pandora is a bookstore worth checking out.

Expect to see more on it in future issues.

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Government Conference  
Take The Chat  
NJ Steps up Fight Against Mental Illness

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# YOUR

# THOUGHTS

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Steve Meck - smeck@eden.rutgers.edu

Comic on Page 15 by Stephanie McMillan,  
more at [www.minimumsecurity.net](http://www.minimumsecurity.net)

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Submissions for #5 due May 31