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# THE SPARK

Oct 27 '78

## SGA: AN EVALUATION

Joshua Lyons

It is assumed that without the Student Government Association many student privileges would be lost. Last year, Judiciary Board chairman Jerry Carington threatened the students with a Student Government strike to emphasize its importance to the students. Yet is this really true? It is true that the students need a strong and loud voice on this campus, but is Student Assembly still this voice? These questions, and others, need to be answered in order to begin an evaluation of our student government system in order to strengthen and/or change it.

Perhaps at its conception Student Assembly was a worthy committee with much effectiveness and respect in the College community. It has grown apart from that image. Many people feel that Assembly has lost its effectiveness. As a result of this loss, SGA has lost much of its respect in the College community. Like any organization, it has its problems effectiveness, interest to

the student body, and respect. This writer does not have any answers, but would like to outline some problems for evaluation and initial steps towards improvement.

It seems that there is too much discussion about relatively unimportant matters in Student Assembly. At times, discussion on a motion will go on for up to an hour with representatives just reiterating what the previous speaker has said. After attending many Assembly meetings in the last three years, it is clear that this problem has not happened just a few times, but that it continues to happen week after week. When discussion is just for discussion's sake, and indeed, it seems that many House Presidents like nothing better than to hear their own voices, it goes nowhere and becomes futile, boring, and somewhat of a farce. Discussion needs to be controlled and organized by the moderator and through the use of Parliamentary procedure. Meetings would become less frustrating and perhaps more business could be accomplished. These trite

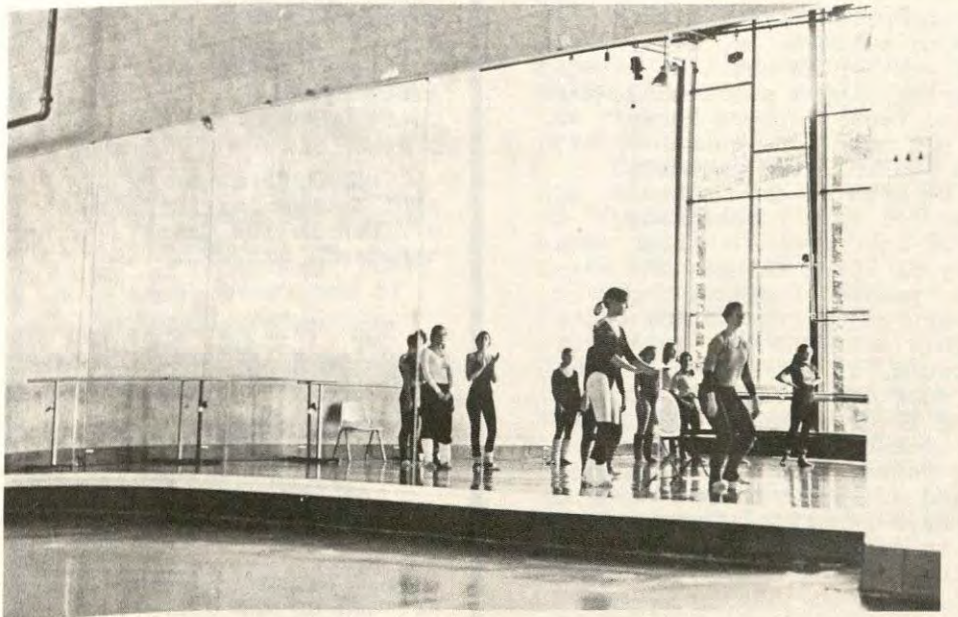
discussions also discourage student participation, and outside attendance has been incredibly low so far this year.

Many people feel that Assembly is not effective. However, they pass much legislation each year. Unfortunately, much of this legislation is very minor to the mind of most students. Also, the administration does not always give Assembly's suggestions enough weight in its decisions. Perhaps if Assembly were given more responsibility by the administration, faculty, and students, it would become more effective.

The other part of ineffectiveness is the problem of red tape and needless steps to follow in order to accomplish many things. Every organization must have red tape, but there is way too much of this in SGA. If a quarter to a half of this could be avoided, Assembly might work more smoothly. Each session of Assembly is too short and infrequent to be bogged down by such procedure.

Assembly should also adopt a group philosophy or overall goal to work towards at the beginning of each session, or even semester, in order to give it consistency and a direction to follow. An unguided Assembly can result in chaos. One example is when the "room entering policy" came up a few weeks ago. A student and two members of the administration were invited to discuss this policy. The meeting turned out being chaotic, without direction or accomplishment, and a general disgrace, and many people left the meeting somewhat hurt and disillusioned about our student government. Also without a philosophy and a direction, the house presidents run the risk of becoming "yes men", in order to hurry through important but less interesting issues. Last week when the

**Continued on page 8**



Story on page three

# Editorial:

## The Student Budget

Student Assembly voted solidly two weeks ago to postpone approval of the budget until after Fall break with the commendable intent of allowing the students to view the requests and recommendations before SGA would vote. But how much of the budget did the student body actually have a chance to see? The sheets outlining the budget by organization tacked through the dormitories hardly gives any information, save the total amounts requested and recommended. But what about those organization's itemized budgets, which specify each expenditure? Those were not available. For instance, all we know about the Sports Club Council is that it asked for \$7575.00, and were given \$6310.00, even though it had \$864.00 left from last year's \$2400.00 allotment. The students have a right to know why the Sports Club Council was given almost four thousand dollars more than last year, even though they did not spend all they had from last year.

The Student Organizations budget was approved by Student Assembly last week in what had to be a record time of under five minutes. Only one question was even asked which directly concerned the groups asking for money. But while the House Presidents patted themselves on the back for their speedy achievement, THE SPARK questions how seriously this budget was studied by the SGA. \$76,000 were allotted in five minutes, while the Assembly spent the following forty-five minutes debating a proposal to move the pinball machines into the pool room. Maybe the House Presidents have a great deal of confidence in the budget sub-committee's recommendations, or maybe they have pinball as a higher priority, but THE SPARK does not believe that the students share the Assembly's sentiments.

There are numerous other discrepancies in this budget, also, of which to the students no suitable explanation has been given, regardless of whether or not it even exists. Theatre One, after having almost a one thousand dollar balance, has asked for and received more money than they did last year. Would it not make more sense to give this organization less than its inflated request, and then if more were needed, have it granted from a contingency fund? But the reason given for this request was that Theatre One can never be sure of its revenue. This just does not seem like the best way of doing things. SGA should have more control over these "padded" budgets, and the students should be made more aware major expenditures with which they might not agree. This extra money, which could easily amount to thousands, could, if not needed by the end of the year, go towards some other cause, such as expanding the Cro-bar, or putting in more paddle-ball courts. As it stands now, these unused balances go back to the same clubs for the following years; last year this surpluss totaled almost four thousand dollars of money which the students might elsewhere have benefited from. If SGA does not have the foresight to even question such policies, then perhaps new members are needed who will forsake the pinball machines and concentrate instead on important questions.

## THE SPARK

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# Dance floor

Elizabeth Child

It seems that in past years the Dance Department's cries for a new dance floor in the main studio have been muffled in their hands. This year their pleas will be extended to include arms and legs as dance concerts and a benefit disco-dance contest late in the semester will initiate a fund-raising drive for a new floor. Letters are being sent to alumnae dancers, the Friends of New London (an organization connected with the American Dance Festival, of whose fate with this school we are all aware), and other potentially interested persons explaining the plight of the Dance Department and asking for support.

What is this plight? Teachers learn quickly that Connecticut College, an institute with a supposedly fine dance program, lacks even a passible floor in the main studio, and they try to avoid an abundance of turns and leaps in class in an attempt to eliminate any injury caused by the excuse for a floor. Though variables such

as water and powder help to compensate for the surface, they are often troublesome for the unsuspecting dancers who bound onto patches of one or the other. The lack of give in the floor leads to an abundance of shin splints, as well as to knee, foot, and back injuries. The question is, do you send these dance students out into the world with little skill in leaping and turning or with injuries. The obvious answer- you alleviate this ridiculous situation and get a decent floor. But why has this situation not already been corrected? The administration has known about the need of a new floor for at least several years. Yet still the Dance Department feels that the only way to get the floor is by raising the money themselves.

The Department is aiming for a quality floor which would cost in the vicinity of \$64,000 according to the Department's co-chairperson Carolyn Coles. The floor that was recently built in the old bowling alley cost a mere \$6,000, and is said to be adequate. Most dancers

feel, however, that if a new floor is going to be put in the main studio then it should be done right. Considering that last year only \$170 was made on dance concerts and the dance contest is no expected to be a major money maker, it looks as though the growth of the fund by these means will be slow. Hopefully the administration will have the insight to divert funds of some sort to this urgent need, if this vital department is to continue being an asset to Connecticut College.

The Dance Department hopes that its efforts will stimulate an active response. People are needed to do publicity work, stuff envelopes, and to help in various other ways. A committee dealing with this problem is also being formed (meetings will be Fridays, 12:15-1:00). Anyone interested in this much needed acquisition should check with the Dance Department to see where help is needed. As Carolyn Coles says, "Support us! Support us!" In this way, maybe even the administration will give a little help.

# D.C. representation

Allie Lyons

On August 26, 1978, the United States Senate, with strong bipartisan support, passed an amendment to the Constitution giving Washington D.C. full representation in Congress. The 28th Amendment, if ratified by 38 states, will finally give Washington D.C. its well deserved representation in the House and two seats in the Senate.

Since 1800 there have been 23 proposals for effective representation for the District of Columbia. Until very recently every one of those proposals has been unsuccessful.

In 1970 Congress gave Washington D.C. a non-voting delegate to sit in the House of Representatives and in 1973 through home-rule legislation, D.C. was granted a mayor and a city council. Then on March 2, 1978, the House passed a milestone victory- HJ Res 554, which is the present amendment calling for D.C. statehood. Later in August 1978 the Senate followed suit. Now

it is up to at least 38 of the state legislatures to ratify it within the next seven years.

The provisions of the amendment will treat the district as a state for congressional purposes and electoral college representation. It will naturally repeal the 23rd Amendment which gives D.C. residents the right to vote only in presidential elections.

Senator Edward Kennedy has said that it is a matter of "fundamental rights and human justice" that D.C. citizens "should have a voice in the decisions of the Senate and the House." A study of the Library of Congress shows that out of the 115 nations in the world having elected legislatures, only Brazil and the United States lack representatives in their capital cities. Washington D.C.'s population of 700,000 is higher than that of seven other states that can vote in Congress and in 1976 its residents paid over 1.2 billion dollars in taxes- more than eleven other states represented in Congress.

The opposition to the amendment has said that the District of Columbia lacks rural areas and therefore cannot qualify to become a state. Some want to link the entire district to the state of Maryland. But more importantly, some senators are afraid that the additional seats will be filled with black, liberal, urban-oriented people who would dilute the conservative forces in the Senate.

The citizens of our capital city have lived long enough in the United States without a legitimate voice in their own government. They fight wars and pay taxes as do other United States citizens, yet they lack the forum to voice their concerns and needs. The rights of these people must come before the objectives of those who are more concerned with the power structure of Congress that with basic democratic procedures. Let us hope that by 1985 every citizen of the U.S., regardless of where he or she lives, shall have unquestionable representation in our government.

# One evening...

Dave Rosenberg

Scene: A cocktail party. Spot light focuses on two men in suits. One man is named Jack, the other is Bob.

Jack: Tell me Bob, are you still in the furniture business?

Bob: No.

Jack: What happened? Did you decide to switch fields?

Bob: Not exactly. (pause) To be quite honest with you, my business went bankrupt.

Jack: Bob, that's nothing to get upset about. That's just fate. By the way, did you see my new Mercedes?

Bob: No, I didn't.

Jack: Its unimportant.

Tellme, how's that lovely wife of yours?

Bob: She's dead.

Jack: Oh...um...I'm sorry, I didn't know (pause) How are your kids taking it?

Bob: (shaking his head)

Dead too. Bus wreck.

Jack: My God, I wasn't aware... Was it that crash in the Tapango Canyon a few months ago? (Bob nods his head in agreement) What a tragedy. (pause) Look Bob, you're a young man, you've got your health...

Bob: (shaking his head) I have sickle cell anemia. The doctor says I have six, maybe eight months.

Jack: Would you like me to freshen that drink? I'm going up for a refill myself.

Bob: No thanks, I've been trying to cut down on my drinking. Bad for the liver you know.

(Jack walks away. Spot light dims.).

(Jack walks away. Spot light dims.).

(Jack walks away. Spot light dims.).

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# Dancing school

Jennifer Johnston

You could tell who of the girls played dress up with their mother's best whenever the ignorant babysitter sat glued to the television. Those girls, with their black patent leather shoes later to be blue alligator with gold chains, and dresses of lace and bows, and dainty white gloves felt so obviously at home in their pretty clothes. They swished their hair and flew their hands with perfect poise and irresistible confidence. Their giggles won them the dances, though. They had the highest and most carefully daring voices. The rest of us, too fat, tall, ugly or distrusted wore our lace like sack cloth, squeaked in our patent leather, and watched the white gloves consume our hands.

# Not dancing school

"I am sick of hearing about ugly ducklings at dancing school. Always the pitiful stories of girls left out, their lives mutilated because of it. Well, I was a pretty one. A flower, not a wall flower. A pretty girl and I knew it. Yes. Why shouldn't I have. My lord, I wanted to have a good time and if girls like Ellen and Jane were going to hide in the ruffles of their skirt, then I was going to flirt and dance and make eyes. I'm a bitch now. A real bitch. But I hold my glass of bubbly to dancing school.".

# And as the days

John Ayers

I wake, directionless, with energy,  
And as the day moves on I slowly change,  
Filled with energy, without purpose, I sleep.

From restless sleep, from dim disturbing dreams,  
Into the hard bright morning light, the day,  
I wake, directionless, with energy.

With beginnings, ideas, waking dreams,  
Thoughts for tomorrows, full of future plans,  
Filled with purpose, without energy, I sleep.

To chaos, filled with vague anxieties  
Of where to go, of what to do, to be,  
I wake, directionless, with energy.

To create, to find some meaning, some peace,  
To fill the emptiness, the loneliness,  
Filled with energy, without purpose, I sleep.

And as the day moves on I slowly change,  
And as the days, the years, remain the same:  
I wake, directionless, with energy,  
Filled with purpose, without energy, I sleep..



# labyrinth

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# Like father...

Kenny Goldstein

The phone rang at 1:12 last night waking me from a calm, dreamless sleep. "Honey, answer that will you mumbled my wife as she shook me gently. Yawning and trying to rattle the sleep out of my head I reached for the phone and answered in a grumbling voice.

"Hello."

"Hello dad..." it was my fifteen year old son Michael, "I'm in some trouble."

"Trouble? What kind of trouble? Where are you?"

"Dad...I...ah...I just smashed up your car."

"You what?!" I screamed continuing my questioning.

"What happened, honey?" my wife asked wearily.

"I'm really sorry dad. It was the stupidest thing I've ever done."

"You smashed up my brand new car! You don't even have a license! Where the hell are you?!"

My wife, suddenly alert to what was happening, switched on the light, covered her mouth with her hands and cried, "Oh my God... Michael!"

"I'm at the police station dad. You gonna come and get me?"

"You stay right where you are because I'm coming right now to give you the beating of your life!" I yelled slamming down the receiver, and jumping out of bed full of furious energy.

"Tom, be gentle with him," pleaded my wife as she got out of bed.

"Gentle...I'll be gentle all right. I'll gently push his nose out through his ears! And you stay here! It's your fault that the kid has no respect for property or authority!" I slammed the door to the bedroom, thundered down the stairs, pulled a coat over my pajamas, grabbed the keys to the station wagon, and charged off into the night.

Alone in the car I surveyed the situation before me. My son had just done the most irresponsible thing imaginable. My new car, seven thousand dollars worth, ruined! And him, the fool,

a child without a license, with no respect for my hard work or the law. He was probably trying to impress his friends. Angrily, I pressed the accelerator to the floor. The sooner I could slap and scream some sense into that boy the better off we would both be. I pictured myself picking him up by the shirt and throwing him down on one of those hard wooden benches they always have in police stations. Police station! Fifteen years old and he's in a police station! Then my anger turned to worry for this juvenile delinquent who I felt could only become an adult delinquent after a stunt like this. Fifteen years old and already in trouble with the police. Why I remember when I was that age. I never so much as... well... come to think of it... I did have one small run in with the police at about that age.

My thoughts turned to memories of the night my best friend Joey Mishkin and I floated Mrs. Victory's cow out on Thompson lake. It was a warm summer night when we, fighting to hold our laughter in, broke into the shed behind the old lady's house. We led her frightened cow down to the lake, and laughed so hard we cried once out of ear range. We loaded the animal onto a row boat and set him afloat. "Boy would Mrs. Victory be in for a shock!" Joey and I sat by the shore watching the cow float away. As the occasional moos got fainter and fainter we roared louder and louder. When the cow got out to about the middle of the lake she started snorting and making wild noises and the boat started to rock back

and forth from all the activity. Joey and I thought that we had better get out before somebody woke up, but we then noticed that the boat and cow were sinking. Not stopping to take off our clothes we ran into the water

and tried to save the now screaming cow. We were too late. By the time we got half way out the cow's head disappeared beneath the surface. We swam back to shore shaken and confused. At shore we were greeted by Mrs. Victory, who had been awakened by our muffled giggles, and Lieutenant O'thoridy, our neighborhood cop. Mr. Mishkin and my father payed for the drowned cow and the rowboat. Joey and I worked for a full year in my father's grocery store to pay them back.

I pulled into the parking lot of the police station thinking of the feelings I had watching that cow go down that night. I was sorry, frightened, and suddenly aware of the fact that what seemed like a good idea in the little world of Joey Mishkin and I, was probably the most stupid thing I had ever done. As I walked to the door of the police station I saw a tow truck hauling my precious 1978 Marauder with its options falling out all over the road. Then it struck me: my son had been in an accident! I didn't even know if he was hurt! I ran up the stairs of the police station two at a time and burst through the door. There, sitting on a hard wooden bench, with a wad of wet paper towels pressed up against his forehead was my son. "Michael," I called as he looked up at me with scared and sorry eyes, "are you okay?"

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# "Animal House"

Ira Charleston

This past summer I went to the movies and viewed Animal House for the first time. I enjoyed the film immensely. Noticing an immediate correlation between the attitudes and actions of the movie's principles and that of some of the more colorful characters at Connecticut College, I realized that the film's potential influence on campus was strong. In a brief moment of naivete I anticipated a widespread surge of campus spirit, and as Newsweek put it, "college humor"; massive parties in front of the library, creative collegiate capers and a new era of good feeling and good times.

Upon viewing the film for the second time in late August at the scenic Olde Mystic Village, I was again sidelined by it's biting wit and the stupendous performance of the star, John Belushi. A second viewing revealed subtle jokes which were missed the first time around and exposed the first rate quality of the screenplay. I emerged from the film convinced that it could cure anyone's poor spirit and hoping that it's general

theme might pervade over the normally drab Connecticut College life and thereby put an end to those periodic three week partying dry spells which I know all too well.

When I returned to college in late August rumors of toga parties and food fights filled the air. Windam's toga party was, in my eyes, a grand success and was engulfed by a new and exciting attitude on the part of it's participants. Everyone appeared to be having a hell-of-a-time and the essential ingredient, keg-beer, flowed without interruption until midnight. Later in the school year I went to dinner in Harris and witnessed a food fight of outlandish proportions and unsurpassed mess. I interpreted both of the aforementioned incidents as an indication that a new Connecticut College was in the making! Imagine massive outdoor parties and a sense of togetherness and community spirit which, I insist, is obtainable in a school of our size.

Subsequent dormitory living has demonstrated to me that some negative influences might have seeped into the college from Animal

House. I was distressed to learn of toilet destruction in the basement of Freeman (a senseless act annihilation) and was annoyed by frequent false fire alarms in the wee hours of the morning (obviously precipitated by some poor drunken fool). The fairness of attributing this sort of college "fun" to the influence of the film is questionable, especially in light of the long history of rowdy and potentially destructive activities on campus. However, a slight bit of Animal House vandalism has rubbed off on the students, in my eyes, and resulted in some senseless acts. I just hope that the administration here does not follow the footsteps of Faber College's president, although I'm not convinced that it is not.

My overall impression is that this college could benefit substantially from some creative input on the part of the students in an effort to really have a good time here. The Homecoming Weekend is an example of the potential this school has for having a spirited good time. Animal House could definitely be a positive influence on the social life of this school..

## I'm Peter Folk

E.D. ETHERINGTON JR.

He was a friend of my girl friend. My girl had everybody as friends. She was like that. I think this friend worked in a leather shop in Greenwich Village. He was in her room and I was standing in the hall. I could hear my girl's high and excited laugh. I don't think he laughed much. I saw him when he walked past me down the hall on his way to the bathroom. It was a dormitory and he was using the male bathroom on the male side of the floor.

He was about forty years old. He could have been younger and have been through something that made him look older. I wasn't sure but I think he had been through something. He walked slowly and had a bad limp and glaring blue eyes. They were eyes on the verge of anger. He wore a black coat and black

pants and a black derby. His hair was greasy and dark and hung down to his shoulders beneath his hat. He had a long pointed beard. At first I thought he might have been retarded but then I decided that he had just been through something.

He came out of the bathroom walking towards me, knocking his cane against the floor with each step he took. You could close your eyes and tell just when his cane was going to hit. His limp was very bad. When he got next to me he turned quickly and his face was three inches from mine. His eyes fastened upon mine and for a time his mouth didn't move.

"I'm Peter Folk."

Somewhere beneath his eyes he was holding out his hand and I shook it and said it was nice to meet him and let go of his hand but he held onto mine and it startled me and after a time I realized

my hand was limp in his so I tightened my grip.

"I'm Peter Folk." His mouth was hard his hand tight around mine his eyes I nodded.

"Are you Jonie's boy friend?" He pronounced the words seriously.

"Yes." I said feeling the wall against my back.

"I'm Peter Folk." I nodded again and his eyes narrowed at the edges. Then he let go of my hand and walked back into my girl's room, his feet shuffling and the cane thumping and he certainly had been through something.

"What did you think of him, Peter?" she asked him later.

"Oh, nice enough fella. Couldn't get him to tell me his name though."

My girl had everyone as friends..

# I'm a disco experience

Dave Rosenberg

Some people around here just don't understand. You just got to take it the way it comes. These artsy fartsy intellectual types are always putting it down. "Disco sucks," I hear it. Hear it down in Harris. Hear it in the Cro Bar. Even hear it at the speak-easys. There was this one drunk guy, he just sat in the corner all night yelling "Disco sucks." Who's he think he is? Disco is more than just dancing; disco is a way of life. You get on the floor and you know what I'm talking about. Vertical copulation, that's disco. When I get to a party I check out the scene. I don't go for the plushiest bunny, I find one who can get down and boogie. You know what I'm talking about, boogying the night away. I'm not speaking about sex in the sack, although if that comes- its cool. I'm talking about hyped up, hipped up gyration on the floor. That's where it counts in my book.

I'll tell you something else, you can be a flunko when it comes to school, or a regular spaz at sports, but when you're on that floor you can be king. I should know, because anyone that's seen me knows that I excel. Hey, it ain't what you wear, it ain't them John Travolta suits; its how you move and how you look. Some guys, they're sculptors, and some guys they're painters, but me I'm a disco experience. You ask them bunnies on the floor, they'll tell you who the real artist is. Like I said, it ain't the suit and ain't the shoes, its what's inside that counts. And that's me. I hope some of you artsy fartsy types out there are reading this, because now you got an idea on what disco is all about..

# The Tavern Window

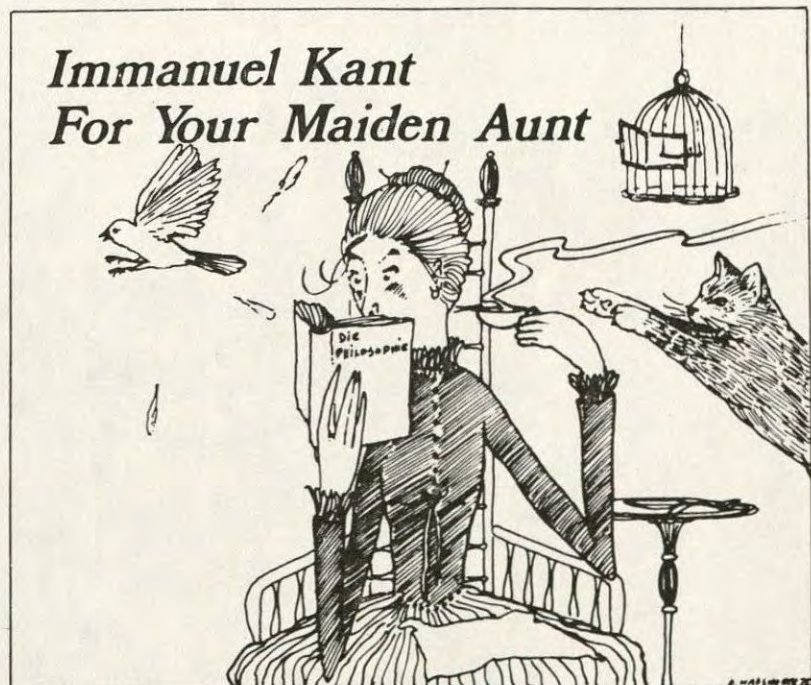
Jake Green

I.

In the night harbor the few fishing boats sturdy enough built for these winters gyre nervously about the moorings. The pier is empty, with an occasional gull clawing the bait cask, wanting fish heads the market discards. Even in this dank, weak-lit tavern over the smells of ale, wet wool and sweat, you taste the town's warm reek of cod. When there should be no more to do than run your calloused hand across the shingles, feeling some rock loose, but tight to handle another year, or to walk after storms claiming what the surf brought in, it reminds you of screaming down the bluff, and Tom Johnson frozen, smiling, broken against the rocks like any stranded, dead-grinning goosefish, and this night may leave our boats fish-empty for weeks.

II.

At the blackened mahogany bar he speaks the stories we have heard the nights before, his comely wife and a strong son who works an old boat with him. "Must be heading back morning's early fishing." Against the shore he walks out to the points lopsided shack, once a rum-runners place, now only inside a tom-cat sleeps on his senile mother's bed. If you see him out at low-tide in a borrowed skiff, with the long-handled rake scraping moss from the rocks, or at daybreak with his shuttle mending nets, you don't say it's a fine day, you should be out in your own boat or, aren't your own nets torn. When he's alone in the stone chapel's back pew on Sunday, no one laughs and taunts, where's your pretty wife and son, who'd ever want you. They are not lies, only his way to justify this life..



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## SGA CONT'D

budgets were discussed, Assembly accepted all of them as recommended by the Finance Sub-Committee. It is true that student activities has more money this year, but some budgets were unaccountably high. All were accepted by SGA with little discussion or debate.

For the past two years this writer has been very involved with the SGA. This year I have chosen not to become involved. I am barely even aware that SGA exists this year. There is something wrong. Many people find that Assembly is invisible. Assembly must, in some way, become more accessible to the students. One possible way is to change the role of the SGA president. The president should be a student or community leader, not just the SGA leader, or an aspiring Housefellow. The president should command respect and should be involved in things not directly pertaining to SGA. He or she should be

outspoken, open-minded, and strong, as well as available to the community. It is a thankless task that could become an important one. If Assembly representatives did more of the dirty work, the president would be free to get involved in other things and would better be able to voice student needs and opinions.

Assembly has done many good things, such as the informal discussion with the faculty which has just been instituted; but many problems remain, such as organizational ones, personnel ones, and confusion with issues. It is time for a committee to be formed to evaluate the SGA, perhaps consisting of seven members, with two house presidents and a non-SGA chairman. It is about time we solved the problem of student government at this school, because at present it is for the few and does not serve the entire community.

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## A taste of "well water"

John Ayers

The child delighted with the drawer of odds and ends is well water, pumped by a rusty pump, from an old abandoned well at the bottom of your mind, that slowly fades into the hard, bright, awakening hours. But this time the pump pumps on, telling you you've since grown up, making you an end to what you once were, pumping over your crying face in the clear cool morning, so fresh and new: you lift your hands and touch the traces of your childhood..

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