

Connecticut College

Digital Commons @ Connecticut College

Spark

Student Publications

10-1980

The Spark, Volume 4 Issue 3

Connecticut College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/studentpubs_spark

Recommended Citation

Connecticut College, "The Spark, Volume 4 Issue 3" (1980). *Spark*. 17.
https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/studentpubs_spark/17

This Magazine is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spark by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Connecticut College. For more information, please contact bpancier@conncoll.edu.
The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.

THE SPARK

October 1980
Volume 4
Issue 3

Human Rights in Argentina

Hedy Kalikoff

In the past few years several organizations have investigated and reported on the human rights situation in Argentina: the Organization of American States (OAS), the International Commission of Jurists, and Amnesty International. Now, with the recent awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to an Argentine human rights worker, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, attention has once again been drawn to the political situation in Argentina. What began more than four years ago as the Government's fight against rampant terrorism in Argentina has resulted in massive violations of human rights and a virtual war on its own people.

Background: State of Siege

In March, 1976, the Argentine military staged a 'coup d'etat', ousting

Maria Estela Martinez de Peron, who had been President since her husband's death in 1974. The country had, in recent years, been racked by terrorism, perpetrated by members of both the extreme right and the extreme left. Inflation was excessive, reaching, at one point, 500%. The country was in chaos; Peron declared a State of Siege in 1974.

War on Subversion

When the Military Junta took power it declared a war on "subversion." After dissolving the Congress and establishing itself as the supreme power, the Junta replaced all judges. The State of Siege continued. Thousand of Argentinians labelled as "subversive" or "terrorist" were arrested. The tactics used by the government in rounding up terrorists were

admittedly "dirty". "We have used with the terrorists the same drastic measures that they have employed," said a member of the Junta in 1978. One would think that after thousands of "terrorists" had been arrested these drastic measures would be put to a stop. Instead, thousands more were arrested and have been detained without charge or trial for years. These people are referred to as "detenidos" - the detained.

The official justification for this action is that these people are subversive or are somehow linked to subversion. However, there is no official process through which authorities decide who is dangerous, nor does there need to be evidence of the use of

violence against the government (or even advocacy of the use of violence) in order to be labelled as subversive. In January, 1978, President Rafael Videla announced that "a terrorist is not just someone with a gun or a bomb but also someone who spreads ideas that are contrary to Western and Christian civilization."

The Disappeared

Perhaps even more horrifying than the case of the 'detenidos' is that of the "desaparecidos" - the disappeared. Since March, 1976, armed forces of the military, police, or state security establishment have abducted an estimated 15,000 people. Most of them have been subjected to torture, many have been kill-

continued on p.5

Individual Rights Violations: Noise

J. M. Woody

"We have stereo wars between the dorms!", a prep school freshman told me last weekend. That 9th grader's boast helped me to place the problem of campus noise at Connecticut College in perspective. For although I don't seriously accuse Connecticut students of engaging in stereo warfare, I must say that I've occasionally felt under attack as I tried to work in Fanning despite a 90 decibel assault from across the green - and have even cherished fantasies of counter attack, of pitting Wagner's "Twilight of the Gods" against "The Greatful Dead." And I've heard students describe "reprisals" against similar assaults.

The image of warfare also answers to my many experiences in talking to students who are the victims of such assaults - or to the refugees who flee the campus in search of peace. The victims and refugees are a diverse lot. Some

are slow students trying desperately to keep up with their work who complain of loss of sleep and poor working conditions. Others are excellent, serious students who tell me that the campus is not a fit place to study because, "the dorms are impossible." Still others are just shy, decent students who shrug and roll their eyes about inconsiderate neighbors.

I am concerned and angry about the violations of individual rights which are involved and which I see occurring as I amble about the campus. Surely, every student has a right to a decent night's sleep

continued on p.7



Editorial from the Boiler Room... ConnPIRG: The Questions behind it

Ellen Hennick

Any student who voted in Connecticut College's student elections last spring will also remember voting on a referendum concerning ConnPIRG, Connecticut Public Interest Research Group. For those of you who have difficulty remembering or for those who were not here last semester, this referendum was passed. Eighty percent of the voters agreed that there should be a ConnPIRG on campus, and that it should be funded by a "refundable fee mechanism". At that time over seventy-five faculty members and the Student Government Association also supported this proposal. The constitutional changes on which we voted last spring have taken effect. The executive board has taken their given role. Where is ConnPIRG?

After the voting last spring, President Oakes Ames and the students for ConnPIRG discussed and negotiated the proposed ConnPIRG chapter. The major point of conflict was the funding mechanism. After several meetings, President Ames decided that Conn College should have a PIRG similar to the one at Trinity College which has this "refundable funding mechanism." At this time, Senior Staff which consists of President Ames, Dean Alice Johnson, Roy Knight, Jeanette Hersey, Francis Johnson, Roger Gross, and Jane Bredeson, was given a full detailed report on the refundable fee and the referendum. Thus, it seems that all problems were settled and only formalities remained to be confirmed.

This September, however, brought new concerns to the students for ConnPIRG. Oakes Ames had reversed his decision and rejected the "refundable fee mechanism"; Senior Staff "adamantly" opposed the funding mechanism and because of these strong feelings, they refused further negotiations. The administration proposed "the negative check-off" method as an alternative. This proposal was flatly refused by the

continued on p.3

SPARK

Volume 4 Issue 3

Editors-In-Chief

Lucia Nunez
Ellen Hennick

Business Manager

Renee Mercaldo

Literary Editor

Patricia Daddona

Faculty Advisor

C. H. Cole

Contributors

Heddy Kalikoff
J Woody
Ellen Hennick
Kathryn Bonn
Liz Sargent
Anthony Iannotti
Linda Haviland
Sally Susmind
Bill Butterly

Staff

Linda Last
Liz Sargent
Kathryn Bonn
Terry Green
Beth Radcliffe
Lee Arthur

THE SPARK welcomes and encourages letters from its readers on any and all subjects which are relevant to the college, or on articles or letters which have appeared within this journal. Letters should be sent to THE SPARK
Box 977
Connecticut College
New London, CT
06320

THE SPARK is a student run journal and editorial newspaper dedicated to presenting student and faculty opinion on campus and non-campus related subjects.

Special thanks for the support of Roxanne, "who cut her teeth in the Undergrounds of old"...

EDITORIAL cont.

Trustees in a recent October meeting. Therefore, the Trustees, with what little information they could have received in a state of closed negotiations, rejected the proposal for ConnPIRG under either condition. The students for ConnPIRG expressed their displeasure at these decisions. At this time they are still hopeful that they will be granted a meeting with Senior Staff and The Board of Trustees so that they may further explain and justify their position: "The refundable fee" is preferred by the students for ConnPIRG because this mechanism leaves the decision to support ConnPIRG to the students the other mechanism, "the negative check-off" allows whoever is paying the bill to merely check off his/her decision. Often it is not the student who pays the bill.

In viewing this course of events, one can easily observe the lack of confidence placed in the student's judgment. The students have given what Oakes Ames termed "an impressive and informative" argument; they have overwhelmingly voted to have a PIRG on campus; they have proven their purpose by completing their

first project, the ride board. Yet still the administration overrules the students' decision. Furthermore, the trustees, with what little information they had, also overruled the students' decision. It cannot be said that students for ConnPIRG have not pursued the forming of the group. SGA, as well as the administration and trustees, have discussed PIRG many times.

Clearly, there is a lack of understanding between the trustees, the administration, and the students. As always, a "misunderstanding" could be cited as the reason for this dispute, and the questioning could end here. However, it is difficult to overlook a outright refusal for negotiations, a refusal caused by a feeling of "adamancy" and nothing else? This justification for refusing negotiations is simply too general. Furthermore, an outright rejection with no discussion whatsoever seems even more unjust. If one is moved to the state of "adamancy", why not continue the negotiations so that both sides could understand these extreme feelings better? Clearly the students for ConnPIRG have plenty more to say on

the subject. Why is it so difficult to be "granted" a meeting with the decision makers of this college?

ConnPIRG is an autonomous student body. Once a funding mechanism is agreed upon, the group would not be directly funded by SGA; therefore, SGA would not have direct control over this group. With enough participants, ConnPIRG could become a powerful organization. Fear not, however, because the PIRG is also designated to be run by students to protect student's rights. The students, then, have nothing to fear. Does, then, the administration fear this group? Is this fear the answer?

Since I have not heard any other reason for the administration and trustee's negative decision, I am suggesting it may be. Then through this fear, they have blocked the effects of a majority of the students' opinion; they have thwarted all effects to negotiate with students who care enough to speak; furthermore, they have obstructed the growth of a group whose purpose involves promoting student thought and concern. Are not thought, concern, and action significant facets of education? ■

What If... a House Election ?

Sally Susmind

Considering John Anderson's ability to remain a contender in the polls and the ever widening political gap left by the two major parties, the odds of a House election this fall seem especially high. Consequently, a great many American voters are beginning to ask themselves "What if...?"

Should there be a deadlock, the constitution says the House of Representatives must select from the top three presidential contenders and the Senate from the top two vice-presidential finishers. Presumably Mondale would be readily chosen over Bush in a Senate dominated by Democrats. It could, however, be much more difficult for the House to make up its

collective mind, and this is where the smoke-filled back rooms and old-time wheeling and dealing comes in.

While a refusal, on the part of any candidate, to trade votes may seem noble, it may leave us without an elected President as well. Therefore, some negotiations (trade offs) will have to take place. In this poker game, John Anderson has the card everyone wants. One possibility is that the Anderson camp could offer to spare the nation an election by the House by trading all their votes for president to Jimmy Carter (who is sweating profusely by now) in return for all the Democratic votes for vice-president. Hence a Carter-Anderson administration. Furthermore, the electors chosen on November 4th are free

agents so they can swing to any candidate, changing who is on top in every ballot and making the possibilities endless.

As important as considering the possible outcomes of a House election, one should consider the political significance. Political analyst, Thomas Rollins, explained, "A deadlocked House election is not a sportive daydream; many consider it a nightmare."

For some a House election is frightening because it is so alien. It has been 155 years since the House last chose a President in 1825. Furthermore, Americans have awakened to the prospect that an election that fails to elect illustrates major flaws in our system. Hence

continued on p.5

REAGAN: An Alternative for Academia

Bill Butterly

Recent poll results show significant support for Ronald Reagan on college campuses across the nation. Just six months ago, support for Reagan was unthinkable. At that time, there was a well organized mythology concerning Reagan, i.e. he was a warmonger, a corporate pawn, unconcerned with the needy, etc. Like Docksidiers and Izod's, the chic thing on campus was to toast to the health of "Ripen John Anderson" (of Illinois).

Now that the student's knight in shining armor has fallen from his high horse, some explanation of the reasoning behind the shift of students to Reagan is well deserved.

Support for Reagan has grown for two reasons. First, students view Reagan as the only viable alternative to Jimmy Carter who is consistently viewed as incapable of effectuating a policy which will solve the underlying problems the nation faces, both economic and military. Despite the "Emerald City" atmosphere of the college campus and its sheltering effects, even college students have been effected by Carter's policies which have pushed inflation to 18%. The price of beer and coke, the students' staples, have hit home. Secondly, students do not have a great affinity for a man who has forced them to register for the draft at a time when world peace is crumbling and war has become a real possibility.

That the effects of the worsening economy are far-reaching is easily understood. Since January, 1977 when Carter took office, over \$200 billion has been added to the national debt through deficit spending and over \$300 billion in new and increased taxes have been added on to the burden of the American worker. The total effect on the economy of this "massive" type of government infusion can only be restrictive as the following statistics point out.

1. While Carter promised to reduce inflation to 40%, it is now at 12 to 13% and has gone as high as 18%. Between January, 1977 and August, 1980, prices have risen 42.3%.

continued on p. 6

A New Look at Politics – Commoner & the Citizens' Party

Linda Haviland

Citizens' Party candidate Barry Commoner called the Reagan and Carter campaigns "bullshit" in a recent radio commercial. Such verbiage is rare, and indeed illegal on American airwaves. It is, however, also illegal to deny a candidate for the presidency equal air time. Barry Commoner, as little prone to wasting words as he is to wasting resources, used this time to succinctly state his position.

In an interview with David Moberg, Commoner elaborated on the essential differences between his platform and that of his major opponents. The economic solutions they offered are described by Commoner as "feeding public funds in through the top of the corporate structure to the corporate managers who have caused all the problems. That", says Commoner, "becomes state capitalism, and in its extreme ... verges toward facism."

In contrast, the Citizens Party advocates a fundamental change in the economic system. Economic as well as political democracy is their final goal. The party claims, "(D)emocratic control, not just of public money but of the large concentrations of private capital...the planning ought to be done for the people, by the people, rather than the planning groups organized by Wall Street."

"Economic democracy" could be accomplished by "social governance of the instruments of production." As a first step toward this social governance, Commoner would support cooperatives through public funds. Eventually he would hope such cooperatives would create a decentralized economic system and replace large industrial complexes.

Since the new economy the Citizens' Party envisions would be run locally by the people, it would possess a

social consciousness, which is unlike that of our present economy. Commoner foresees that this change would obviate the need for large government bureaucracies which are formed to alleviate social problems. Instead, such problems that would arise would not reach such monumental proportions as to require the intervention of the central government.

Amongst those who agree with Citizens' Party objectives, many are afraid that a vote for Commoner would be wasted. Commoner argues, however, that a vote for himself and his running mate LaDonna Harris will be more effective in defending left, progressive politics (including demilitarization and the implementation of solar power) than a vote against Reagan. He states: "I remind you that even the most viciously reactionary scenario in a president's

continued on p.5

ARGENTINA cont. from p.1

ed, others have been held in secret concentration camps. Their relatives have no way of finding out if they are alive.

These disappearances are common enough to have set a familiar pattern. Armed people in unmarked automobiles and civilian clothes arrive suddenly at the office or home of the person to be abducted and kidnap him/her. People have often been abducted from public places. Husbands and wives have been taken together, sometimes with their children. There is a substantial number of unaccounted for children who have been abducted or born in captivity to pregnant victims. There is evidence that children have been forced to watch their parents being tortured and have themselves been subjected to torture. Sometimes children are released under the care of a different family, without permission of the child's relatives, or any formal adoption procedure.

The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo

Relatives of the disappeared have made continued persistent efforts to obtain information from the authorities. The daily presence of mothers of the disappeared in the Ministry of the Interior led to the spontaneous formation of a group called the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo. (The Plaza is located across from the Ministry of Interior in Buenos Aires). This group of women got together once a week for two years in front of the Government House to peacefully protest. In December, 1978, more than 2,500 people gathered there. Since then, the Government has tried to prevent these meetings. Thirteen members of the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo were abducted and have not been heard from since. But the Mothers still meet, in a different church every week. Adolfo Perez Esquivel, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, has been working closely with them.

The Future for Argentina

The Argentinian officials have recently admitted that perhaps there have been "excesses" in their fight against subversion. They stress that the battle against terrorist violence is a "war" and that there are excesses in every war. There have been excesses on both sides, they say. However, as a report of a Mission of Lawyers to Argentina (New York City Bar Association) points out, one side represents and exercises the powers of state and judiciary.

Although there was a slight decrease in disappearances in the beginning of 1979, anti-terrorist action has recently been on the rise again. In May, 1980, the Military Junta was outraged by an OAS report of human rights violations and a list of recommendations by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR), and decided to crack down once again on "subversive activity."

However, perhaps there is still reason to hope that the situation will get better. If world attention is once again focused on Argentina, international pressure may succeed in forcing some changes. President Videla is planning to step down this spring and turn the presidency over to another member of the Military Junta. Although this doesn't mean any real change in government policy, perhaps it will be an

occasion to grant amnesty to some prisoners. In any case, the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo and Adolfo Perez Esquivel remain examples

WHAT IF cont. from p.3

an election by the House means that somehow we, our politics, and even our constitution, have failed.

For the Americans who are asking "What if..." in 1980, the answers are not becoming more apparent; the questions are becoming more complex.●

COMMONER cont. from p.4

head doesn't necessarily get enacted. The president is not all-powerful." Commoner adds that "a strong vote for the Citizens' Party... will tell whoever is elected that there is an ongoing progressive constituency that will be there the year after at the next election."

Barry Commoner and LaDonna Harris will be on the ballot in Connecticut this November. If the Citizens' Party takes five percent of the total vote in this election, it will receive federal funding for upcoming elections as well as a good deal of legitimacy in the eyes of the incumbent president.●

(Adapted from an interview done by David Moberg for Reader, Friday, August 8, 1980, Chicago, Illinois).

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS PAPER

SHIRLEY'S TYPING SERVICE

4 4 2 - 0 5 1 1

Resumes	Term Papers
Theses	Dissertations
<u>Choice of:</u>	
Pica	Elite
Script	Old English

REASONABLE, EFFICIENT, PROMPT!

(References available upon request)

of exceptional courage and persistence. As long as they continue their fight, there is hope for human rights in Argentina.■

The Women's Vote: A Decisive Factor in 1980

Kathryn Bonn

The last crucial month of the presidential campaign has been dominated by mud-slinging and last minute appeals by the candidates for support. As time runs out on Carter and Reagan, their strategy has been to gain support among groups who have not yet committed themselves to a candidate. The Republican position concerning the ERA and the abortion issue has resulted in Reagan's recent last ditch effort to capture the women's vote. The broad category of women's issues has also raised some questions in terms of the potential judicial appointments of a Reagan administration.

Substantial media attention was given to the so-called "litmos test" for Supreme Court Judges. There is a strong possibility that the next president will appoint one or two Justices to the court because four of the men are over 70 years old. The Republican platform implies that a Justice would be expected to agree with a statement referring to the preservation of "traditional family values." This connects with the party's failure to endorse the ERA in its 1980 platform. The inference is that Justices would be expected to conform to this position. More significant in terms of women's issues is the statement that Justices should have a respect for the innocent human life. Representatives of women's groups have attacked this phrase; the assumption is that this refers directly to the abortion issue. Reagan has denied this allegation, saying that "innocent human life" is a broad term which does not specifically concern the abortion.

Another interesting development which relates both to women's issues and the Supreme Court, was Reagan's promise that he would appoint a woman to the Supreme Court. In

addition to seeking women's votes, this statement was a response to Carter's assertion that he has appointed more women, blacks and other minorities, to the Federal Judiciary than all of his predecessors combined. Carter responded quickly to Reagan's promise. The following day, Carter said that one job for one woman would not solve the problem of women's equality. He reiterated that he and his party wholeheartedly supported the ERA and his opponent did not.

More recently, Reagan sent a letter to NOW requesting that they reconsider their strong opposition to his candidacy. NOW is the largest and most powerful women's interest group in the country. It has had representatives picketing Reagan at every campaign stop. His request for support was a strategic blunder for Reagan in terms of NOW's leadership. Representatives of the organization have called Reagan's views on women's issues "medieval." Eleanor Smeal, NOW's president, referred to Reagan's letter as "shocking and pathetic." In it, Reagan cited his record as governor of California as being strongly pro-woman. He asserted that he signed 14 bills which supported women's rights. Anita Miller, chairperson of the Commission for the Status of Women, denied the strength of this record, saying that the quality of bills was a "minimal response" to the total number introduced. In the last session of the California legislature, 92 pieces of legislation were passed which Miller considers relevant to women's issues.

The most recent development in the quest for the women's vote was New York's NOW endorsement of President Carter. Betty Friedman voiced confidence for the administration, saying that she felt the ratification of ERA is seen as a top priority by the incumbent. Kathy Rauch,

president of NOW New York, said, "We believe it is crucial for Ronald Reagan to be defeated and that casting protest votes is a luxury which the women's movement can not afford." Spokesman for the organization said that Chapters in Philadelphia, LA, Boston, Florida, Detroit, Cleveland, Wisconsin and others had or would endorse Carter's reelection. NOW New York representatives also called the Republican platform "anti-woman."

These developments suggest that Reagan's position on certain issues may have a strong effect on the women's vote. NOW is a feminist organization, however, and it is difficult to determine the positions of women, as a whole, on abortion and the ERA. The negative reaction to parts of the Republican platform have been intense, especially among feminists. Like the rest of the country, feminist organizations have expressed dissatisfaction with the Carter administration. However, in the final few weeks of the campaign, feminist leaders have decided that the incumbent may be the lesser of evils. Casting a protest vote seems dangerous to those whose fear of a Reagan victory is paramount. The women's vote could be a decisive factor in the 1980 election if the majority of women agree with NOW's perception of the Republican party platform and its candidate as "anti-woman." ●

REAGAN cont. from p.4

2. When Carter took office in January, 1977, the prime rate was only 6½% and now stands at 14% and rising. Now only one in eleven young families is capable of purchasing a home.

The sum total of these economic chasms, for the student, is the inability to continue the American tradition of upward socio-economic mobility. For the first time, the present generation's standard of living will be less than that of the parents.

continued on p.7

REAGAN cont. from p.6

Combine this deteriorating economic picture with a collapse of world stability. Americans have received a rude awakening of the nation's inability to protect legitimate interests abroad due to the decline of United States military capability.

Unlike the average "anti-defense" spokesman for the liberal intelligentsia on campus, who speaks only in terms of nuclear weaponry and the ability to "destroy the world a million times over", the critics of the Carter defense commitment speak in terms of conventional weaponry. The decline of the American Navy from two-oceans to one-ocean, the lack of pilots, and men with enough knowledge and experience to accurately operate expensive equipment, concerns our ability to defend Americans abroad against a modern day Hitler like the Ayatollah. Not having to use the nuclear alternative is much more important to the Carter critics than the ability to detonate the world.

Now, it is understandable that students brimming with youthful idealism would be naturally uninclined to vote for Republicans or not to vote for Reagan, a conservative Republican. Students want candidates who have an image of progressivism and an ability to solve the world's problems in a new and innovative method. The Republicans over the course of the past forty years have been guilty of fostering an image of defending corporate America and relying on "Hoover" politics.

Republicans can never be totally "progressive", nor do they want to be, for it is the wild-eyed ill-considerent progressivism of the liberal Democratic majority that has dominated government for the past forty years which has gotten the United States into this economic and military morass.

Republicans do defend certain traditional values in American society that are considered transient. This is not to say that the Republicans cannot present an innovative program to the voters. In fact,

this is what Ronald Reagan has put forth, the most innovative set of ideas by a Republican in more than a decade. This is the second factor that has brought not only students but older voters as well to the Reagan camp, people such as Dr. Ralph Abernathy and Eugene McCarthy, much to the liberals' chagrin.

The most innovative part of the Reagan platform is his economic strategy. Reagan refuses to support the cyclical variation policies of the past 40 years of solving inflation with recession and visa versa. This produced a continuous pattern of hard times for the American family and the inability to plan for the future. Reagan supports the Kemp-Roth Tax Cut Bill which will reduce federal income taxes across the board by 10% per year for 3 years, as well as indexing of tax brackets. This was used in 1962/63 to set off a strong economic boom lasting at least five years and generating increasing amounts of budget revenues.

The ultimate effect of this central plank in the Reagan economic platform is to provide stable economic growth which will provide for jobs and productive expansion, and restore upward social mobility to American life. This is a factor which students considering their future are likely to value highly and which their parents also value for them.

Reagan combines his support of the Kemp-Roth tax cut with indexing tax brackets so that tax burdens will not be affected by inflation. He supports a balanced budget to eliminate inflationary deficit spending. He also supports a reduction of government spending, not programs, but waste and inefficiency which has been estimated in the neighborhood of \$40 to \$50 billion, or a 7% reduction in governmental spending by 1984.

A stable international situation is Reagan's goal. He supports the upgrading of the nation's conventional defense capability, long neglected by Carter, to

protect United States interests abroad, especially a new strategic bomber and an increased naval capability.

The ideological 'tour de force' for a Reagan candidacy will be a defense that is a two way street, and the determination to protect freedom from terrorism and aggression. Viewing the long picture in foreign policy will provide stability instead of the short term fluctuations of the Carter Administration.

The real question which students have begun to answer is "Can Reagan do any worse than Carter?" It would be hard. There's room for improvement, and Reagan, unlike Goldwater in '64, has benefited from the predicted collapse of liberal ideology in the ensuing sixteen years and has presented conservative Republicanism as a plausible alternative not just for senior citizens, but for young and old alike. (1)

NOISE cont. from p.1

and even to an afternoon nap when it's needed. And every individual has a right to decent working conditions. Some students go deeply into debt in order to study at Connecticut College, and it costs someone a great deal to finance the studies of every student. I don't expect every student to be deep in inquiry at every waking moment, but I do think every student has a right to study when he or she wants or needs to do so and that others should respect that right and govern their conduct accordingly. Yet every year, I hear of at least one dorm which has refused to govern itself at all, where the majority refuses to set up any laws to protect the rights of individual residents, or to enforce those that are set up. This strikes me as a clear case of tyranny of the majority.

Finally, every individual has a right to privacy. Yet I see that right violated frequently, when some Yahoo jams his speakers in a window in the Quad or Complex and turns them to full blast without so much as an "if you please", thereby shatter-

continued on p.8

The Right to Life or The Right to Live

Liz Sargent

According to many psychologists, the environment which a child encounters during his or her early years has a profound effect on his or her personality and subsequent actions as an adult. Surroundings which are healthy and happy tend to provide a basis of stability for a child which will be lacking in a child who feels unwanted, neglected and unloved. Our large cities of today reflect this trend; the atmosphere is one of over-population and an unwillingness to regard co-inhabitants with kindness and respect. The poor in the cities are the hardest hit as they are shunned, pushed around, and unhappy with their surroundings. They realize how difficult it is for them to move up in the world and therefore tend to face the future with apathy. The young people must grow up quickly to help out the family, so they attempt to attack life at an early age and experience all the thrills they can. Crime, sex and destruction are common to the inner-city adolescent living in the poorer sections. Many young women become the victims of this situation. This is manifested in the dramatic increase of unwanted pregnancies especially among lower income women.

A fifteen or sixteen year old girl who has followed the ways of the street and becomes pregnant will not be able to provide the kind of home setting necessary to the well-being of her child. In most cases, an income may also not be available and the mother will find herself in an even more frenzied and frustrated position. She may abuse her children. The rise in crime rates in our poverty-stricken and over populated cities may be linked directly to the problems of family life. Too many young women become pregnant at an early age. Some have two or more children by age eighteen. Their right to end the nightmare of poverty and

to attempt to break the chains of motherhood rests in the possibility of abortion.

At this time, a growing faction of conservatives wish to abolish the right to abortion. Already, a bill, the Hyde Amendment, has been passed cutting all federal funding of abortions under Medicaid plans and further movements are under way to propose a new amendment to the constitution outlawing abortion. Three court justices responded negatively to the Hyde Amendment. Justice Thurgood Marshall felt that the bill would have "a devastating affect on the lives and health of poor women" stressing self abortion as a possible risk. Justice Brennan added that it would "coerce indigent pregnant women to bear children that they would otherwise elect not to have." After assailing the government for "punitively impressing upon a needy minority its own concepts of the socially desirable, the publicly acceptable and the morally sound," Justice Blackmun further stated that the amendment is "tantamount to the severe punishment of poor women."

The conservatives oppose abortion as a usurpation of life. One may not argue against this fact even though the state of life of the fetus is as yet undefined. However, one must consider the outcome of the proposed amendment if passed. At the present rate of growth, the world's population will double to an insupportable number by the year 2000. Large cities will become much more common and the problems they face more prevalent. "Black market" abortions will undoubtedly rise if abortions are declared illegal.

Perhaps the idea of abortion is morally wrong to some, but if the world becomes unliveable with the dangers of overpopulation and crime, what will be the point of procreation? The mental instability caused by the mothers and children of unwanted pregnancies alone will create huge

societal problems. The government should not be seeking to outlaw abortion; they should be providing more available means of contraception and perhaps even sanctioning abortion to help alleviate the problems of the city and even the severe danger of self-abortion. If women, now finally beginning to achieve equality and independence are once again chained down by restrictive abortion laws, won't this country lose a great deal of its new creative impetus?●

NOISE cont. from p.7

ing the peace and privacy of two or three hundred people. I'm told that when criticized for such violations of the peace, some students claim a "right" to make noise. But if there is such a right, it is very limited, for it ends as soon as that noise violates any single neighbor's right to sleep, to privacy and to decent working conditions.

I think that my exasperation is shared by many other members of the faculty. Many that I have talked to are concerned lest residential conditions begin to threaten the primary purpose of the college. Most of us have watched earnest and interesting students leave the campus and the college because they found living conditions intolerable. They may not have much better luck in the next place, but that is not the point. We cannot excuse our own failings on grounds that they are widely shared.

At the noise forum last week, I was pleased to hear of the various avenues of redress available to individuals whose rights are abused by noisy neighbors. But redress places the onus on the victim of the crime, and many students tell me that turning someone in to house council or honor court only sours the air and makes life more difficult, if not downright dangerous. I believe that individual rights deserve the protection of legislation and institutions which place the onus upon those who break the peace and violate the rights of others.●