

## Questions of radiation

brenda h. brown

Wesley Chapel seemed like foreign territory last Thursday night when the NYS Department of health came to deliver their presentation. Tombstones placed in front of the chapel reminded everyone of what is at stake. Inside, a huge banner was flung over the side of the balcony proclaiming: *There are risks! No consent. No dump.* Concerned citizens roamed the aisles passing out anti-dump paraphernalia while elevator music eased the atmosphere.

One man, wearing fluorescent green cowboy boots, came over to shake my hand

and introduced himself as "Wild Bill" Curie. While I chuckled at his name, he handed me an "Adopt-a-Drum" form and moved on. The form stated that if I phoned in, they would give me legal title to a drum of low-level radioactive waste. Experienced technicians would build a repository in my basement or backyard guaranteed for 100 years. It urged me to "Take on your fair share of the problem," and to "Do it for your state, your country."

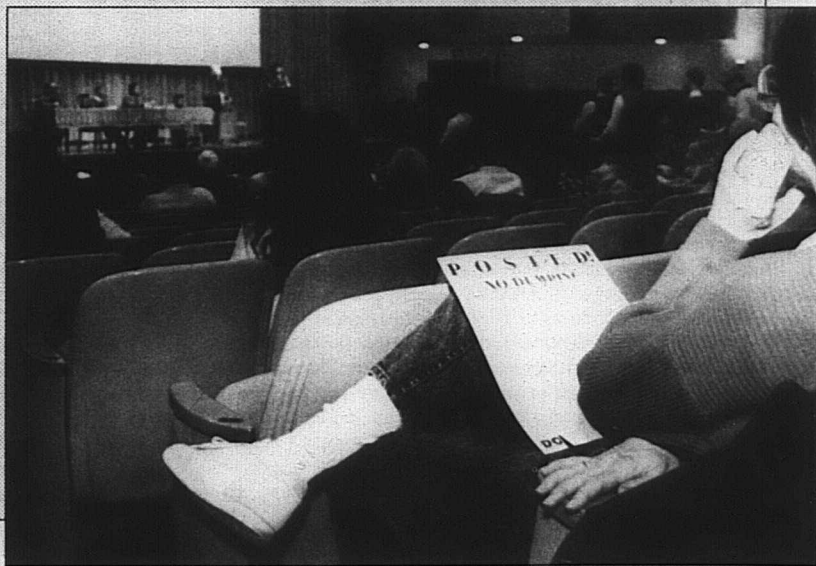
Around 800 people filled the main floor of the chapel. Wayne Macbeth opened the

meeting and Mr. James Raptis, chairman of the county legislature, followed with a statement of the county's concerns. He then encouraged us to ask intelligent questions and to "show them who we are."

The Department of Health representatives gave a half-hour presentation, covering the health aspects of radiation exposure, what the waste was and who produced it, and radiation protection procedures. But the main purpose was to define health and safety aspects.

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**An Allegany County resident listens as the state health panel answers questions asked by members of the audience. Fewer people than expected attended the meeting.**



# News

## "Why beat a dead horse?"

natalia king

Last Tuesday, March 7, the Student Protest Committee, accompanied by approximately 100 supporters, gathered on the steps of Wesley Chapel to indicate their dissatisfaction with Dr. David Meade's tenure denial. Both students and faculty gathered to try to persuade the Board of Trustees to re-examine their decision on Dr. Meade's future at Houghton.

Although the Dr. Meade situation was the primary concern among the protesters, their signs

and comments suggested that there was more at stake than the possible loss of a faculty member. Signs held by both students and faculty stated such messages as: *We demand academic freedom; Liberal arts: critical thinking or blind acceptance???* and *Tenure denial: the ball has started to roll... where will it stop?*

One sign suggested that decisions concerning the college should include faculty and student input,

saying: *Objectivity of information [does not equal] selectivity of sources — next time get student and faculty opinion.*

Because of the severe cold, the group met in the campus center shortly after chapel began. I spoke to some members of the faculty, who joined the students in expressing their objection to the fate of

The series of senior essays continues with...

### Pete Hise

To Question or not to Question?  
That is the Question!

Reflecting upon my four years at Houghton, I cannot ignore one of the impressions this bittersweet period has left upon me. While I have thoroughly enjoyed my Houghton experience, I am nonetheless puzzled.

I recall an insecurity I had before coming to Houghton. I feared, that compared to most students, I would be paled when it came to critical thinking and intellectual ping pong. I envisioned two sorts of people: those who had chosen values, opinions and beliefs after critical evaluation, and those who hadn't yet engaged in this process but were eager to do so.

Instead of these passionate critical thinkers, I have typically encountered an apathetic, stolid and incurious mob. They are generally content to have their minds filled by others (who have often chosen

the same mindless route).

That is why I am puzzled! Why settle for this? Where is the concern to think for oneself? Hmmmm.

Passive acceptance is obvious in the classroom and with religious belief. In class, mum is the word. With uninterrupted freedom, the teachers spit out their ideas, while we process the data into the appropriate memory banks to be retrieved for an exam at a later date.

This apathy is even more troublesome in the area of Religion. Among the many people with whom I have discussed faith and Christianity, it is all too common that they *know* the answers to tough questions. Their *knowing* doesn't disturb me. The way they came to this *knowledge* is what bothers me: "My parents told me. My pastor said it. My teachers taught it. I've always believed it."

Don't question, challenge, or interact with what you are told! Don't press the teachers to back up what they are

teaching! Don't put your parents', pastor's, or traditions' ideas to the test before making them your own.

This is the passive, uninformed acceptance that seems to be a prevailing attitude.

I would like to encourage people to be concerned about critical thinking, making one's own decisions, and apprehending a faith of their own. But in the face of my observations, I am doubtful that this encouragement will serve its purpose.

Although I am not without hope, it is with pain and puzzlement that I share Ernest Becker's opinions that there are many who "don't understand what it means to think for [themselves] and who, if [they] did, would shrink back at the idea of such audacity and exposure." — This quote should strike the hearts of many—not that they will necessarily care. —





their colleague.

"I think the decision is unjust and unwise," said Carlton Fisher, professor of philosophy. "I think that pragmatic concerns interfered with dealing appropriately with the deeper and more important issues of the case."

Professor of religion John Tyson stated: "The decision causes me to wonder about who isn't going to like what I've got to say about religion."

Ray Horst, professor of Spanish, quoted this line from the hymn "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy": "And we magnify his strictness with a zeal he will not own." Horst elaborated: "In other words, I feel we try to make God too narrow and too small."

While the protesters warmed up inside the campus center, Mark Shiner briefly restated their purpose and thanked all who were present for their support. Eric Buck prayed, then led in singing "Do you not know? Have you not heard?" based on Isaiah 40:28-31. Shiner and senior Tim Swauger read from Thomas Merton's *New Seeds of Contemplation* and John Wesley's *Sermon on the Catholic Spirit*.

At 11:30, the group made their way back to Wesley Chapel to await the students and faculty who had not participated in the boycott. For ten minutes, the protesters held their signs in the cold. When the chapel was vacant, the group concluded their protest with a brief prayer.

The boycott received both positive and negative commentaries from students and faculty who chose not to participate. "I think it's being done in a good spirit,"

said Dean Danner. "The committee talked to us ahead of time so it was not as if we weren't aware that it was going to happen." About the trustees' decision, he replied, "I don't care to make a comment on it. I'm not in on the tenure decisions so I'll leave it up to those who are."

"If that's what they believe in, I commend them for it," said student

powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." The party who hung the signs remains anonymous.

Some students and faculty who chose not to participate in the boycott questioned the actions of the protestors. Student Beth

**Every wise man  
will allow others  
the same liberty  
of thinking,  
which he desires  
they should  
allow him.**

**- from *Sermon on  
the Catholic Spirit*,  
by John Wesley**



Bill King, adding, "But I don't protest the trustees decision."

The protest received comments from an outside voice as well. Jim Rovell, a visitor with the Institute of Theology, lauded the protestors on his way out of chapel by shouting, "Good job! Keep the pressure up!" When I asked the reason for his assertions, he said, "I believe in the essence of academic freedom. I think that students and faculty should respond."

Although not as evident, there was a protest against the protest. Signs placed on trees, poles, and edifices read, "Drop it. The decision has been made." Other signs posted on trees near the chapel quoted Romans 13:1-2a: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher

Ressler stated, "I wasn't there because I'm still not sure what's going on [concerning Dr. Meade]. People on both sides of the issue have lost sight of what the protest is trying to do."

Mathematics professor Richard Jacobson said, "I don't think it's a meaningful protest because nothing was really given up. People don't mind not going to chapel—why didn't they skip a meal?"

Junior Brian Schwartz commented, "I didn't really bother because I don't see the reason for the protest. Dr. Meade doesn't want to come back and he was already denied tenure. Why beat a dead horse?"



# Editorial



thom satterlee

## A Note to Freshmen

This weekend I wrote my resume. I hardly ever thought of doing this when I was a freshman, and so I suspect that it is not the first thing on your mind either. You are only completing the first of four years; resumes and applications for graduate school are long off. But I thought of the freshman class when I wrote on my resume, "Education: Bachelor of Arts, Houghton College." I thought of you because you may write the same thing one day. But three years from now, the term "Houghton College" may mean something significantly different.

You may have invested in a sinking stock. Although learning is intrinsically valuable, the market worth of one's college education can fluctuate. At present, there is a very live issue over whether the professors at Houghton College truly have academic freedom. Middle States, an organization that evaluates institutions of higher education, plans to examine the Meade situation and decide if the Trustees' decision was in keeping with the liberal arts tradition of academic freedom. For those of you who expect to lean on the repu-

tation of your school three years from now, concern would be a proper response.

Three years from now an employer could look over your resume and grumble, "Oh, Houghton College—that Bible school." It may be that you are comfortable with the values gained from a Bible school education. Future employers probably won't be. You chose a liberal arts college, and this suggests to me that you intended to pursue liberal arts qualities, such as critical thinking, creativity of ideas, and tolerance of opposing viewpoints. It is reasonable that you would want "Houghton College" to imply these qualities. But maybe Houghton isn't doing liberal arts any more. If so, this fact will be clear in three years, when the question of Houghton's integrity to liberal arts is answered.

Fortunately for me, I am graduating in May. I plan to apply to graduate schools within a month, while the stock is still perceived as high. I would not want to be in your shoes. But if I were, I would take an active interest in the issues that have sprung up this year.





## An Open Letter to the Students of Houghton

Though up until now I have not initiated any of the debates surrounding my tenure, at the risk of appearing self-serving, I would like to share some observations with those on both sides of the issues, and those caught in the middle. On Tuesday afternoon I walked over to chapel to read the signs that those from the "Drop It!" campaign had hung. It raised a genuine issue: people are being hurt at Houghton. No one is more aware of this than my wife and I, who have seen our pain compounded by a community that we love tearing itself apart. Yet the Bible warns against trying to "heal wounds lightly," and until some fundamental issues are resolved at Houghton (and I do *not* mean whether I get my job back), the injury will not go away just by ignoring it.

The sign also mentioned the prayers of the trustees. I'm grateful for all the prayers that have been offered, yet I am also aware that among both the prayers offered and the answers perceived, there are diametrically opposite positions and conclusions reached! Without deciding whose prayers are right, don't you think it would be reasonable that the trustees, half of whom were new and none of whom had spoken

with any knowledgeable faculty member, ought to meet with Rank and Tenure, students and others, and *pray together* that God might give us a common answer? (The rules of procedure only specify the minimum that you should do, not the maximum.)

"The decision has been made," the signs read. But what decision has been made? Obviously the *result* of the decision was the denial of my tenure. But my presence or absence at Houghton is really peripheral to the main issues of doctrinal and academic integrity.

"We can have academic freedom without compromising our faith," said the sign. I *agree*! However, the sign implies that the Board of Trustees judged my views doctrinally unsound. But the board said it didn't do that! Others say the board censored the legitimate expression of academic freedom. But the board said it didn't do that either! So what did it do? *This* is the cause of the wound that will not heal. Houghton has lost its clarity of vision, and without a common vision, the institution may survive, but community will not.

So what is to be done? The signs say to submit to "God-ordained

authorities." I agree, but I think there is confusion as to where this authority lies. The Board of Trustees is not, in fact, the final arbitrator in questions of doctrine or academic freedom. They, too, are under authority. In matter of doctrine, it is the General Superintendents of The Wesleyan Church (and every fourth year, General Conference) who decide what teaching is doctrinally sound. In matters of academic freedom, Houghton College has legally bound itself to the judgment and oversight of the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges, and to the New York State Board of Regents. The General Superintendents have been asked to respond, but so far have declined. The Commissioner for Middle States, however, has responded, and the College has been asked to explain its actions to them. Since this matter is in arbitration, I suggest that further public debate will only make the wounds more difficult to heal. Instead of "dropping it," I ask that you hold the responsible parties in your prayers.

Sincerely,  
david g. meade

The **Star** is a weekly student publication; its attention is turned inward upon Houghton College. Letters to the **Star** should be signed and no longer than one page double spaced. The editors reserve the right to edit all contributions.

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# Platforms for Student Senate



**melissa macdonald**  
running for secretary

Sophomore

Hi! As a candidate for Secretary of Student Senate, I would like to tell you a little bit about myself and share with you some of my credentials. I am currently a Sophomore with a communications major and a minor in writing. Since I have been at Houghton, I have had the opportunity of participating in several activities.

During my Freshman year I was a member of our homecoming committee and secretary of our class. This year I am currently serving as Public Relations of our class. During the fall, I was given the opportunity of being a PACE Leader. This year I am also a Tour Guide for Admissions and an East Hall Desk Proctor. All of the above have taught me how to relate to and understand people.

My hope for the future? I am anticipating a career in broadcasting. Maybe one day it will be "ABC News" with Melissa Macdonald. Until then I'll continue to dream and smile because that's what tomorrows are built on.

## High School experience:

1) Student Body Treasurer from 1982-83; 2) Business internship program at 20th Century Insurance (automobile insurance) from January 1983 to June 1983 (my senior year); 3) Volunteer at Great Beginnings Pre-school from June 1982 to September 1982; 4) Treasurer of Hunter League from 1981-82.

## Pre-College experience:

1) Worked for George Smith Financial as Secretary/Receptionist from October 1983 to December 1985; 2) Worked for



**amber kindsvogel**  
running for secretary

Westrim Crafts as Secretary and Purchaser from December 1985 to December 1986.

## College experience:

1) Petitioned in Spring semester 88 to have Women's choir changed to two classes per week like the Men's choir. I found out that they agreed with me, and now Women's choir meets twice a week; 2) I am currently on the Executive Board of the College Republicans as Chairman of Membership. I am considering running for Corresponding Secretary next year; 3) I am currently helping Chris Daniels, Photo Editor of the Yearbook, with organizing times to take pictures of the clubs, and developing and printing pictures for the 88-89 Boulder.

## EXPERIENCE

### High School:

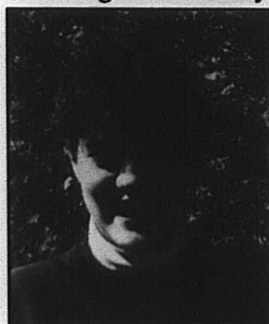
Treasurer - chorus 3 years (86-88); Treasurer - Mu Alpha Theta 1 year (88); Co-Captain - Track and Field 1 year (88); Monitor in Computer Lab 1 year (88); Coordinated concerts for choirs 2 years (87-88); Organized class trips 2 years (87-88); Chaired fundraising activities 4 years (85-88)

### College:

Member of Movie Selection Committee; Secretary of Publicity Committee; Had Computers in Business so I am familiar with the programs that Senate uses; Have also worked with the Senate computer

I am willing to work with others and actively contribute to the Senate Cabinet. I will do more than just follow the basic job description. If Senate is to be productive they need input from everyone. I am ready and willing to listen to and communicate anyone's ideas and suggestions.

**amy fawcett**  
running for secretary







## **mary biglow** vice-president (unopposed)

Qualifications: Senate chaplain (one year); Class Cabinet member (2 years); Student Development Council (1 year); Class Senator (2 years); Class Shirt Committee; Parents Weekend Committee; Dorm Council member; and Senate Relations Committee.

As Vice President of Student Senate for the 1989/90 school year, there are a variety of areas I would like to see strengthened. Since the main job of the Vice President is to oversee CAB, this will be my main focus. My main goal for CAB next year is to provide a wide variety of entertainment for the Houghton community. I hope to send out several surveys over the course of the year to find out what the students want to see and to find out what they see as areas which can be improved.

My main goals for Senate are to work on service to the students by becoming stronger and to encourage unity to help accomplish this task. Unity is very important, especially to the cabinet, since any group is only as strong as its leadership. I would also like to find a better way to communicate the desires of the students to the Senate which serves them. I believe I will offer much leadership experience and enthusiasm to the position of the Senate Vice President. I look forward to serving you in the coming year.

Year: First Semester Junior  
Major: Business Adm. Minor:  
Economics.

Leadership Experience: Member of YAO, member of ISA, member of the Spanish Club, Member of the Student Activities Committee at the BSC.

Course Experience: Intro. to Econ, Business Fund, Micro Econ, Accounting I, Marketing, Management, Macro Econ.



## **ricardo lopez** running for treasurer

First of all, I will be sincere with all of you, I may not have a lot of experience as a treasurer, however, as an international student I proclaim to be a valuable asset to our Student Senate Body and I shall bring new ideas to our Houghton Campus. By electing me you will give me the chance to serve all of you Houghton students.

Second, for all of you who do not know me personally but judge me by what others say about me, I encourage you to reconsider and do not let it influence you in your decision next Wednesday when you vote for me.

Finally, I promise to manage all the financial affairs to the best of my ability and to do anything that I can in order to serve the student body.

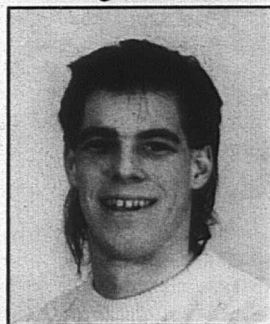
**No changes, other  
than layout, have  
been made to  
these platforms.**

Class: Freshman

Qualifications: Previous Senate Experience; Music Survey Committee; Treasurer of Class in High school; Business Administrator for Missionary work in Africa (Uganda); enjoyment of working with people on Dorm Council South Hall, I feel I can do it.

Students need to know what their fees are for and where the money goes. I want to make that happen!

## **darren chick** running for treasurer



# Letters

At the heart of my goals is one to create a sense of commitment on several different levels. I will start within the Senate Cabinet itself. I know each of the candidates running for office, and I am confident that the Cabinet will be close, on a personal level, and cohesive, on a professional level. Getting along with one another will be an important factor in having a productive and successful year.

The next step is to build committed Senators. Each Senator will know from the beginning of their terms that Senate is in existence to meet the needs of, and to hear the voices of, the students. The Senators need to make themselves approachable, but they also need to do the approaching. They need to go out and talk with their classmates, or make reports about Senate happenings at class meetings.

Another step in my commitment process, and one I will take seriously, is a Senate commitment to God. Serving as chaplain this year made me aware of how difficult it is to incorporate our Christianity into a body such as the Student Senate. Working with my cabinet, I plan to find two dynamic individuals to take over as chaplains, ones willing to try new things to bring the Spirit of the Lord into our meetings, which will result in wiser decisions for the students.

The bulletin board that was established this year to post Senate news will be used again. In addition to the pictures and box numbers of the senators, there will be a schedule stating the dates of the Senate meetings (the meetings are open to all students and we encourage you to attend), the minutes from previous meetings, and any information that will keep students up-to-date on what is happening.

**thom fenner**  
president (unopposed)



## Dear Editors,

I should like to commend Dave Perkins on his critique of the circus ministry that all of us suffered through last week. I firmly believe that such criticism and close scrutinizations of outreach ministries is indeed justified. I hate to think that that chauvinist is even allowed to perform, and has the audacity to proclaim himself a Christian. I wouldn't be surprised if he soon begins beating his wife on stage with a bullwhip to illustrate his interpretations of Paul's message to women in the church ("Wives, be submissive"). The editorial, coming out on International Women's Day, had a particularly resounding effect for all female readers. Your tact and insight is appreciated, and I definitely feel that women should have some time on the top once in a while also!

a. rosa parkinson

★

"Opening This Fall" [March 8 issue] closes with Dr. Bence's quotation, "Students were not involved in any planning phase." Faculty were invited because it will be a teaching facility, but will it not equally be a learning facility? Why were learners not included in the planning? Does Dr. Bence believe that faculty 100 years from now will appreciate the input of today's faculty any more than the input of today's students? This is shortsightedness.

P.S. I think the building is ugly, overlarge, too expensive, and utterly out of it as far as current standards of aesthetics in architecture go. (Don't any members of the Building Committee read magazines about building?) The lack of windows on the south side means we will not be able to take advantage of solar energy for heat and lighting. The shoe-box shape does not

blend at all with any of the buildings already on campus, but more resembles Noah's Ark. The method of coating foam boards with the hard cement-like substance such as was done at South Hall cannot possibly last longer than a real wall. Furthermore, no matter how lovely the streamstones are, the wide gaps between them invite decay.

thomas woods

★

On March 1, I received a call to come and have dinner with the Black Student Organization to talk about a letter I wrote to the *Star* (Feb. 24). I was glad to go, but somewhat apprehensive as well. But happily, they were very nice about it, and many of them thanked me for writing, for they felt at least it showed I cared. They, however, did not agree with a lot of what I wrote. For example, they objected to my definition of black history. In my previous letter, I said "Black history is the history of blacks since they came to America." They said this was untrue, and they were right, in concept. However, I was only judging from what I saw around me. It looked as though most of the people they commemorated were American. Therefore, it only made sense to me that the black history they were celebrating was American black history. Still, although my definition of black history could be construed as incomplete, I do not think that damages my argument. I still believe that Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation should be mentioned in Black History Month, as should Henry Clay and the Missouri Compromise. Their argument was that these events were already well known and did not need to be re-emphasized. They stressed their lack of time and they felt they needed to cover some of

cont. on next page



the more unknown portions of black history. Now I understand this argument, but I do not think this excuses them from overlooking these events vital to black history.

First of all, I am not confident that as many people are aware of these events as BSO would like to believe. Furthermore, how much time does it really take to put up an overhead of Abraham Lincoln or Henry Clay and explain their contributions to black history? Not a whole lot, I would guess. So I fail to see any reason why this cannot be done. It's not like I'm asking for a whole chapel, just some recognitions of these events. Is that so difficult? If so, why?

I left that meeting of BSO with a healthy understanding of their position, but the same opinions I walked in believing. I am sure they are frustrated with my stubbornness, but I heard no plausible argument to change my view on the subject: You don't have to be black to be in black history. But to be recognized in Black History Month, you do, despite the contributions you may have made to make it possible. Not only does this ignore the whole picture, but it commits an act paramount to leaving the Indians out of the story of expansion in the West.

jamie lindsay

★

I am not usually the kind of person who speaks out in public, but I feel that my rights as an individual have been violated by the Student Protest Committee.

First, I would like to state that I believe in the goals and activities of the Student Protest Committee, including the boycott on March 7. I believe that there is something wrong with the few (the Board of Trustees) deciding school policy without consulting the majority (the student body and faculty). I am deeply offended, however, by the

methods of the Student Protest Committee in arranging this boycott.

When I received the announcement of the boycott, the first line that I noticed was "We of the Student Protest Committee. . ."; I noticed this several times. This was the first time I had heard of the boycott. It seems to me that the committee decided amongst its own members what the student body should do. In the *Star's* March 8 issue, Mark Shiner stated that "Petitions on behalf of Dr. Meade were signed by 460 students." I signed a petition, but I do not remember signing one that said I would participate in a boycott. Even if it had, 460 students (out of a total of about 1200) is hardly a majority agreement on a course of action.

It seems to me that the Student Protest Committee (the few) decided on a course of action without consulting the student body (the majority). Is this not the same reason for the protest against the decision of the trustees? The decisions of the ten or twenty people on the committee can hardly represent the decision of the student body. By deciding amongst themselves what action to take, the committee is no better than the trustees.

The Student Protest Committee had no right to assume the majority of students wanted to have a boycott. By doing so, they have caused tension among the student body, because they forced students "to decide. . . where their loyalties are" on the spot. I am deeply offended at this arrogant behavior, and it has led me to conclude that the Student Protest Committee is nothing more than a group of people who want to leave their "mark" on Houghton history.

I highly suggest that the next time the committee wants something done that they have a voting session with the majority of the student body. In this way they will truly represent the will of the student body.

john percy

★

I must say, I truly enjoyed this past month. It's another month closer to spring break, which we are all anticipating rather anxiously, and I enjoyed Black Student Outreach's commemoration of Black History Month. *Childhood*, performed by Lorna Hill, the "Mottown" study break, *Cry Freedom*, and other events not mentioned, not only entertained but also educated. *Cry Freedom* in particular had the most impact on me. Not only was I educated about the unjust and repulsive system of apartheid, but it also made me think. It made me think of how far minorities have come since the days of "whites only" signs and burning crosses. It made me think of how far we have yet to go, because neither I, nor anyone who believes in human rights and justice can rest as long as there are such systems as apartheid; until all men are freed from inequality and injustice, I am not free. It made me wonder how far we *really* have come, when men like David Duke, the ex-grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan are voted into the Louisiana legislature. Not only have I been thinking about this a great deal, but I've been infuriated by the fact that the people of our nation have been set back in this way. We have let down our guards, from the legislature of Louisiana to the streets of Capetown, South Africa.

This is a challenge to get our guards back up, or to finally put them on. How? The answer may be found at the next Amnesty International meeting or in your own prayer closet. It can be found in a protest letter to your congressmen, or in a conversation with the next bigot you meet.

Thank you, to the officers of BSO and the producers of *Cry Freedom*. Thank you for slapping my guard back on and waking me up to our still-present injustices.

natalia king

## Questions of radiation

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These definitions were vague, however, because there has not been any long-term testing of the effects of low-level waste.

The Department stated that the probability of cancer is proportionate to the dose of radiation, but also that "we don't know this, it's an assumption." The *rem* was introduced as a unit for measuring the biological effects on a person from a dose of radiation. Normal radiation therapy is about 500 millirem, or half-rem. In a study on 10,000 people exposed to one thousand millirem, which is considered a medium to low dose, zero to two cancer deaths resulted. But it was estimated that within the lifetime of this group, up to 1600 fatal cancers may occur. The Department said that health effects depend on three major factors: the kind of radiation, the amount of radiation, and the specific parts of the body exposed.

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation. The first question was simple, "When the leak occurs in the waste facility, what can I do to protect myself?" Members of the audience gave such advice as "move to Albany," or "buy a gun and shoot yourself." The panel hedged until a man suggested, "Why don't you be honest and tell us you don't know?" They were honest.

One of the main arguments was that we shouldn't produce nuclear waste unless we know what to do with it. One citizen, for example, said that if he wanted to install a toilet, he couldn't just set it

inside and use it—the waste had to be stored. The toilet wouldn't be useful unless it could get rid of the waste. The same is true with nuclear power, he reasoned—if we can't store the waste, we shouldn't produce it. This analogy brought applause and laughter. Even the health commissioners had to smile.

Another argument was that people's health cannot be risked without their consent. A man dressed in a black robe, wearing a skull mask and chains, moved to the front. He said that we can choose our risks, but we do not want risks thrust upon us. Then he jangled his way back to his seat.

Throughout all this, the people of the Health Department were as straightforward as possible and answered the questions as best they could. They were patient and understanding of the audience. Yet, war against the waste dump continues; however, now more is known about what the war is against.

A view of the panel from the balcony.

