

3-20-1979

Incorporated Press, Inc. March 20, 1979

Students of RISD
Rhode Island School of Design

RISD Archives
Rhode Island School of Design, risdarchives@risd.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/studentnewspapers>



Part of the [Aesthetics Commons](#), [Architecture Commons](#), [Art and Design Commons](#), [Art Education Commons](#), [Creative Writing Commons](#), [History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology Commons](#), [Music Commons](#), and the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Students of RISD and Archives, RISD, "Incorporated Press, Inc. March 20, 1979" (1979). *All Student Newspapers*. 129.

<https://digitalcommons.risd.edu/studentnewspapers/129>

This Newspaper is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Newspapers at DigitalCommons@RISD. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Student Newspapers by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@RISD. For more information, please contact mpompeli@risd.edu.



INC. PRESS INC.

INC. PRESS, INC. vol. 1
A Newspaper for the RISD Community



25c



DURING WW II, RISD FACILITIES WERE USED FOR
THE DESIGN OF MILITARY CAMOUFLAGE.

Letters

To the Incorporated Press Editor and the RISD community at large:

The recent political unrest here at RISD has prompted me (a concerned student) to express my feelings, specifically about the recent student meeting held in the RISD auditorium on Thursday evening, March 8, 1979.

It was quite a show - students vs. representatives of the administration, addressing pointed and angry questions about the faculty movement to unionize, the slowdown of the contract agreement process between administrator and faculty and, "binding arbitration" vs. "negotiation". In general, the tone of the whole meeting was heated and emotionally charged.

There was, in the midst of all this, one very calm and rational voice which was outstanding in contrast to the very passionate voices being raised there. This was, one Luigi Bianco, an alumnus of RISD who has worked closely with the school in recent years. Mr. Bianco simply expressed his concern and regard for RISD as a community. A community which is instrumental in producing individuals who express themselves creatively to our culture and, indeed, to the world at large. Mr. Bianco further expressed his concern for the sole students were playing in allowing themselves to be a tool for the faculty to achieve their own self serving goals. I thank Mr. Bianco, profoundly, for this concerned and rational note of caution.

I can remember a time (spring, two years ago) when the students of RISD rallied in massive support of a faculty cause. It was a time when many of the students here simply got hot and died. I myself, was among this number. As a direct result of that heat, a body of students sought legal assistance and in haste filed suit

against the administration. The suit was a preliminary injunction designed to prevent the dismissal of a popular division chairman. The students claimed this action directly diminished the quality of education within that division.

A hearing date was set and the injunction came before the bench at Rhode Island Superior (Federal) Court. The presiding judge immediately dismissed the case, stating that the students had no standing in the court to challenge the rights vested in the Board and the President of the College. If any amount of historical reference to such cases had been made, it would have soon become evident that the court system in this country tries to avoid ruling on educational issues (i.e., bussing), in order to avoid setting rational precedent for other such cases.

The ultimate result of this well intended but unsuccessful movement by the students was the loss of thousands of dollars (accumulated legal fees) out of the school's budget for fifteen minutes of time in a federal court. I now pose the question, "Did the loss of thousands of dollars out of the school's budget for this action constitute an act which improved the quality of education at RISD?"

This is all now a part of RISD's history but the circumstances now at hand are very similar to those which preceded the events of two years ago. Can we (the students at RISD) now draw from and learn anything from those historical facts about the possible consequences of our collective actions?

If we now choose to focus on the possibility of a teacher's strike with no other possible recourse and, to further choose to protect, riot and disrupt the regular functions of RISD, then we may certainly be able to claim a direct hand in its ultimate closing. Is this what we really want?

I now hope that the students of this school take a close look at themselves and realize their own worth here as a

resource. We (RISD students) represent a tremendous pool of talent and knowledge. Much of the learning process which occurs here takes the form of direct and free exchange of information and talent between ourselves. RISD is a community, not totally united, and a system, not altogether perfect. Just the same, it is an environment where creative people, of many varieties, come to work, learn and grow. That which they contribute to the world, beyond RISD, is almost incomprehensible. Do we really want to take a course of action which will ultimately make one less environment in this world, where creative and sensitive people may come to share their experience?

Let us now exercise cautious restraint in our actions, listen to the calm and rational voices in our midst and seek to work out, rather than to make war against the issues now at hand.

Sincerely,
Philip L. Knopp,
Senior, RISD Photo Dept.

To the Editor:

I submit this letter I wrote to the trustees for publication in the Inc. Press, Inc. to offer a different facet of student opinion than Nancy Davis presented when interviewed for the article that appeared in The New Paper. I feel her personal opinions do not necessarily represent the opinion of the student body at large.

To the Board of Trustees,

I do not write letters of this nature often, and do not take it lightly. I am here at RISD to concern myself with art, not collegiate politics. But when the situation becomes serious enough to affect the quality of my education and interfere with my ability to concentrate on my work, I will write.

The RISD campus is in turmoil. The administration continues to insult the intelligence and integrity of students and faculty in every Museprint, memo, and convocation. I think this is blatantly obvious to anyone familiar with the current state of affairs. When facts and figures are sought, information is inaccurate or inaccessible. When questions are asked, issues are skirted or half answered. This has

been the trend (or administrative policy?) for too many years. The RISD community will not tolerate it forever.

This school exists for students and is made possible by faculty. To keep the mechanics of the school running smoothly, we add administrators. Students and faculty are not here for the benefit of administrators; it is precisely opposite. This fact seems to have been buried under the landslide of administrative hirings and faculty firings. The fulcrum on which meaningful operation of this tripartite rests is a mutual respect for the very special talents and skills each group brings to it. It is increasingly obvious that the administration is unwilling to operate on this basis of respect. The crux of the situation lies in the fact that if the school were functioning properly, students and faculty would not want or need to question budget and policy; they would be busy teaching and learning. As things stand, circumstances are unsatisfactory and contradictory to a creative educational atmosphere. The school is indulging in complacency and riding on its reputation. It has been doing so for several years and more and more people know it.

The future of the school rests on your recognizing the nature and long term implications of RISD's current problems, and taking immediate action to reinforce the foundation of the school's reputation. The foundation of RISD's reputation is its faculty. As such, they deserve the consideration and respect of their administrators. Many faculty members have literally given the best years of their lives to this school, building the outstanding departments that attract students in spite of tuition costs. If departments have to struggle with overcrowding, worsening student-teacher ratios, insufficient funding and inadequate equipment, as well as lack of administrative support for their faculty, the school is destined for mediocrity. Mediocrity will be harder and harder to sell at the prices RISD is charging.

Please realize the seriousness of the situation and act quickly to save our school. I do not relish the thought of being ashamed and embarrassed to say that I received my Masters degree at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Very Sincerely,
Susan E Schaaf
MFA candidate
Jewelry and Metalsmithing Dep
RISD Box 1319

Staff...

Volume 1
Issue 5
March 20, 1979

<u>Editor in Chief</u> David K. Miller	<u>Advertising Manager</u> Liz Traynor	<u>Director at Large</u> Benjamin Dewey
<u>Design</u> C. Steven Martin William Ayres	<u>Typing</u> Laura Orchard	<u>Distribution</u> Monty Howard
<u>Treasurer</u> Barbara Knapp	<u>Contributing Editor</u> Mara Kalnins	<u>Emergency typing</u> Rita V. Sirignano

Published by the Inc. Press, Inc.

The Press encourages participation in the paper, and further invites criticisms and suggestions. Submit to RISD Box #F-18, or to our office at 118 N. Main, Studio 15, in the Chernov Bros. building. The deadline will be every other Tuesday, or as posted in the mailroom.

BOTTOM of the Barrel

In response to the Taproom's complaint that the Press' reluctance to print their Guidelines demonstrated some sort of bias toward them: The Inc. Press, Inc. has no policy of censure towards anyone. We would have been happy to publish any sort of Summary of the Taproom's recent repairs or new conditions of operation. All submissions are judged on individual merit.

-Ed.

TO THE EDITOR:

Before I begin this let me say that I will try to keep the content of this letter from becoming "newspaper-oriented material", a "stiff labored comic", or a "funny" story, in the off chance hope that since it deals with something that is "most exciting and central to (my life)" (i.e. the Tap) it is therefore most worth reproducing, reviewing or publicizing.

The above quoted material is taken from your editorial in the Inc. Press, Inc. Vol. 1, Issue 4, as is the following:

"Furthermore the Press need not be just a vehicle for RISC's political turmoil...our capabilities include representation of the entire bundle of activities that is RISD."

If this is the case, then why was the article submitted by the Taproom staff not printed in the press as requested: Why did the Tap staff have to print their article at their own expense when the RISD community ostensibly had an effective organ of communication.

Try to remember that word. In the midst of all that is currently happening at this school, in spite of reputed

efforts by the Press to keep the community informed, how could you forget that at the very basis of all that ever goes awry is a total lack of communication.

In your response to the Tap staff you write:

"I decided not to print your Taproom guidelines in the Press this week just because, as you say, it is all important and should be taken seriously..."

Dear Mr. Miller, am I to take the editor of the Press seriously upon reading the above? what do you want in the paper? If Taproom Dance Contest, a previously published article is any indication I shudder to think what might come next (although attentive readers are promised to learn "All about Homos" next week).

You further refer to the length of the article and its tone, of "parental upbrading". Do learn a bit about lay-out and realize that the article submitted by the Taproom staff could most likely have been run of the same page as Taproom Dance Contest and, in so doing, would have provided a nice bit of ironical juxtaposition. A solution "most eas-

ily arrived at", (your quite, though appropriately used out of context). As far as the tone of the article, it struck me as entirely informational and an attempt to clarify ambiguities in procedure that have existed at the Tap for a long while. The Tap is offered as a service to the community and an understanding of its legal status and house rules is as important to the consumer as is the function of a newspaper to provide a vehicle for communication to its readership.

I believe that the Taproom staff's article represents an honest attempt to communicate with the RISD community and find myself at once puzzled and outraged that you chose not to print it. I sincerely hope that other students will feel the same but, in any event, that they will demand that the Inc. Press, Inc. be, in the future, a true means of communication for the RISD community. I hope you will find the space to print this letter... (in its entirety) I mean, ... "Doesn't that seem fair".

Note: all quotes by David K. Miller, Editor of Inc. Press, Inc. Author's apologies for appropriate miscontextual representation.

Sincerely
Shaun B. Curran '80

All right, I admit it, I'm just pissed at them for not playing my request. - Ed.

Rita C. Michaelson Arbitrator 78 Lorraine Avenue
Providence, Rhode Island 02906 401-861-3056

March 15, 1979

To members of the RISD Community:

Dear Friends:

As a member of the Panel of Arbitrators of the American Arbitration Association, I would like to clarify some of the misinformation on the use of Arbitration which seems to exist in the RISD community.

Binding arbitration is a fair and equitable solution to disputes when the parties have reached a stalemate and neither side can resolve the issues. It is mandated in Police and Firefighter contract negotiations in many states including R.I. to avoid strikes in the public interest. When it is entered into voluntarily, Binding Arbitration often avoids the bitter and destructive effects of a strike which can deeply damage the institution at hand.

Arbitrators are trained professionals. Over 600 Arbitrators are on the panel of the Boston Regional Office of the A.A.A. Some are laq school professors, including Archebald Cox. Others have served with the National Labor Relations Board or have had similar experience.

Often times, a panel of three Arbitrators hear a case. One is chosen by each side - the third mutually agreed upon, who then acts as a Neutral and Chairperson.

Hearings are held on the disputed issues at which each side presents evidence and testimony. In the case of RISD arbitration, this could include comparable schools data, economic information and a detailed analysis of the RI School of Design. Hearing could go on for as many days as necessary.

A Decision and Award (not a contract) would be written by the Arbitrator or the panel based upon the evidence. It would not be an "Award split down the middle". In some cases, the arguments presented by the administration would probably be deemed valid. In others the Union's contentions might be upheld.

The parties would admit they were unable to complete the process and were ready to abide by a fair decision by a third party.

Over 6,000 arbitrations are held in New England each year - in the public and private sector. Disputes in nontraditional areas such as student-administration; prisoner - prisoners and marriage are now being submitted to arbitration.

I am not advocating the use of Binding Arbitration at the RI School of Design. However, as an Arbitrator, it is distressing to see the process described as a callous appraisal in a few hours by an outsider who then splits demands down the middle.

I attended the meeting between students and the administration. I was impressed by the comprehension of students on the issues, the articulateness of the questioners; and the desire on the part of the student body to try to understand the situation. As painful as the days have been, students are witnessing a real life, head to head conflict of opposing interests and will be ultimately forced to examine their own goals, integrity and values. Good luck!

Rita C. Michaelson

OBITUARIES

Art Wood died Tuesday March 13th after a long illness. He will be sorely missed by all. Art provided the RISD Press with a weekly cartoon during his last years. Three of those cartoons, which speak for themselves, are reproduced here.

An exhibition of Art's prints will be on display in the clipping room beginning Monday March 19th.



EDUCATION HAS BEEN LARGELY REPLACED BY THE DEGREE AND GRADING SYSTEM.

BUT YOU GET A DEGREE, AND WITH THAT YOU CAN PROBABLY GET A JOB ANYWAY

AFTER ALL IT'S ONLY MONEY AND TIME

BUT OF COURSE YOU CANT ELIMINATE THE DEGREE AND GRADING SYSTEM BECAUSE AFTER ALL THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR.

SO YOU CAN GET STUCK IN A DEPARTMENT FOR 3 OR 4 YEARS BEING TAUGHT PRACTICALLY NOTHING

MAYBE THIS YEAR I'LL WEAR A BLACK ROBE AT COMMENCEMENT.

The grades are an enormous help to the Administration - to see at a glance the "value" of the student... grades are abused by faculty just as evaluations are but the abuse can be absorbed and benefits are so great (makes the job easier - just ask the Registrar, Provost(s), etc.).

So the grade is a crutch to the ease and comfort of the degree and grading system. You can't intelligently be against grades without being opposed to the system... lots of faculty understand this and everybody here conspires to keep it alive either knowingly or un-knowingly.



MEANWHILE, UNDER THE PARKING LOT

I'M NOT KIDDING, HAROLD. IT'S A WHOLE SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE PROVIDENCE SUNDAY JOURNAL SPECIAL SECTION... IT'S BEAUTIFUL AND IN COLOR FOR CRISAKES!

...WELL IT SAYS A LOT OF THINGS... IT SAYS THE PRESIDENT BELIEVES "THE PERSONALITY CULT IS A MISUSE OF POWER" AND IT SAYS THAT WARZYNSKI WEARS A RED SCAPE AND TALKS IN BROKEN ENGLISH....

IT SAYS THAT THE FACULTY IS "TOO CAUGHT UP WITH WORK IN THEIR OWN STUDIOS TO THINK MUCH ABOUT JOCKEYING FOR POWERFUL COMMITTEE STRUCTURES"

EXCEPT FOR ART WOOD, THAT IS, WHO IS "CONTENTIOUS" AND WEARS A "PONY TAIL"... NO SHIT, HAROLD IT SAYS THAT... AND -

IT SAYS THE ENGLISH INSTRUCTORS AND THE ART HISTORIANS RUN THE FACULTY MEETINGS BECAUSE THE REST OF THE FACULTY IS "INARTICULATE" IT SAYS

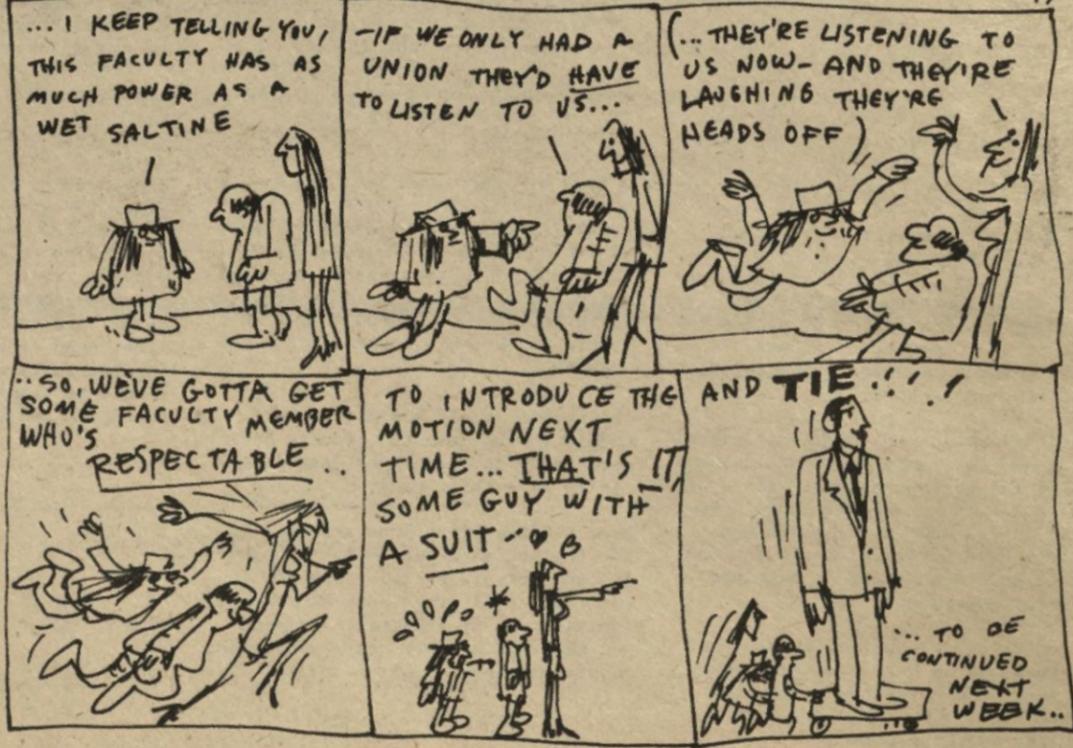
MERLIN SZOSZ IS COMPLAINING "BECAUSE WE'RE VERY SLOPPY ABOUT OUR USE OF WORDS. WE'RE NOT PRECISE" (WHAT WAS THAT IT SAID ON THE SIDEWALK, HAROLD?)

LOOK, EDDERT. IT WASN'T ALL BAD, THE PICTURES WERE GREAT AND SOMEWHERE UNDER ALL THAT PR CRAP YOU GET THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE'S STILL SOME ART GOING ON!! ...TAKE IT EASY HAROLD... JUST KEEP PAINTING - WHO'S THAT TAPPING?

SEEKS, IT'S BETTY PARSONS

MY COVER IS STILL OK...THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING - AND THEY THINK I'M STILL IN THE TEXTILE DEPARTMENT.

FACULTY FOLLIES (OH, WHAT'S THE USE) art wood '77



... I KEEP TELLING YOU, THIS FACULTY HAS AS MUCH POWER AS A WET SALTINE

IF WE ONLY HAD A UNION THEY'D HAVE TO LISTEN TO US...

(... THEY'RE LISTENING TO US NOW - AND THEY'RE LAUGHING THEY'RE HEADS OFF)

... SO, WE'VE GOTTA GET SOME FACULTY MEMBER WHO'S RESPECTABLE ...

TO INTRODUCE THE MOTION NEXT TIME... THAT'S IT SOME GUY WITH A SUIT

AND TIE !!!

... TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK...



A 4701

Title: MAN-MACHINE INTERFACE

Descr.: ...The main purpose of the course is to provide the working rational methodology by which designers analyze complex human and product relationships (man-machine interface) to enable them to understand product function and control the product development and design efficiently, economically, and visually...

(1978-79 RISD course announcement)

People at RISD still talk of a sense of community, albeit in a somewhat nostalgic tone somewhat akin to that used when remembered of prom nights, deuce coupes, Fillmore West, and curricular-reform are shared. The past few years have brought many changes to this school and, as a rule, transitional periods leave those students affected a bit disoriented, somewhat confused, and very frustrated. One enters a school buoyed by hopes and expectations based on that institutions' reputation but are apt to find that admissions booklet photos were outdated, degree requirements are in a state of flux, studio space is at a premium, and promised teachers on sabbatical. Well, let's wait until next year...But too soon there is no next year. Graduation brings with it some measure of objectivity and, in retrospect, one can recognize that in all those years, there was but one constant---change. That single realization, in itself, may provide all that formal schooling can possibly provide for those who ostensibly come to RISD to develop their skills as designers or artists.

But what of the current "community"? Faculty-administration contract negotiations have proceeded since last year to the point where impasse is close at hand, if not already a fact, and the possibilities of strike a potential reality that many would choose to ignore until physically confronted by picketing faculty. And what then?

I, for one, find a great deal of sadness in this entire situation because somehow I have never confused education with labor or industry. Perhaps this was idealism, perhaps it was ignorance. Nor have I ever confused education with economics and balance sheets. Again, ignorance.

After all "there's no such thing as a free lunch".

You see, the National Labor Relations Act was drafted to protect the rights of employers and employees and to promote fair labor practices in industry. Many of us have seen those now classic photos of children standing at the machines of the industrial revolution and have, perhaps, read of the deplorable conditions extant in the West Virginia coal mines in the early part of the century. This was abuse and exploitation that needed remedy. In more recent, less Cickensian, times

labor-industry disputes tended to focus on the economic issues raised by greater productivity and increasing profits. Workers demanded their fair share and union organization, with enlightened legislative sanction, provided them with a collective voice to request that management to recognize their needs. If management refused to acknowledge those needs, to the satisfaction of the union, and negotiations reached an impasse, a strike could be called. Production was slowed down, if not halted entirely, and profit margins dwindled. Though not without its own alternatives to counter such action, management would concede that, in the long-run, to allow the situation to deteriorate that far was not in its own, and its stockholders', best interests. Seemingly then, barring ulterior motives to the contrary, it is in the best interests of all parties concerned to prevent strikes and thus, the usual inclusion in negotiated contracts of binding arbitration clauses, generally understood as quid pro quo for labor's agreement not to strike. But all of this is industry, and admittedly, a simplistic view. But what of education?

It seems to me that if one is to carry the industrial analogy onto the college campus and relegate administration and faculty to the status of an employer-employee relationship then I, the student, must assume the role of product, an analogy which, perhaps, may be appealing to some, abhorrent to others, but, nonetheless, enlightening, I think, to all.

Little talk has been devoted, by either the faculty or the administration, to the involvement of the student in current negotiation proceedings, though some has been devoted to their exclusion from the process. President Hall has been quoted as saying that student involvement is "totally inappropriate". Public sector legislation in several states, written on behalf of students would lead one to believe otherwise. Faculty, though publicly sympathetic to student concerns, seem content to continue negotiations as dual interest sessions. Both interest groups seem to ignore the fact that a truly inspiring, creative, and, accepting the work for lack of better, productive academic environment is focused on a recognizable, functionally interdependent, tri-partite community i.e. students, faculty, and administration.

Though both faculty and administration profess to have the students' interests in mind, little attention is paid to the student, specifically, in either contract proposal, and a contract is, after all, "an agreement between two, or more, persons or parties to do or not to do something". So if my concerns are not in the contract, what guarantee do I have that

my best interests are being considered. Do I have the faculty's word, or the word of the administration that all will be well in the future? At this point in time it seems that neither's spoken word is acceptable to the other without the support of the printed word so what am I, a student, to deduce from all of this? Perhaps the necessity for organizing my own self-interest group, for indeed, after all, that is what a union, almost by definition, is.

At the very least it places upon the student the responsibility to be informed and to communicate his or her concerns and ideas to others. To understand that such times may lead to factionalism and emotionalism and that one's responsibility is always to separate truth and fact from allegation and innuendo. To remember that community implies common goals and rational, though heart felt, means to achieve desired ends.

It is vitally important that each student attempt to formulate his own vision of what an education at the Rhode Island School of Design is, or should be, and only then can one make the decisions which future situations may require. Only then will one be able to identify those who share a similar point of view; those with whom one may wish to be aligned. To view the present situation as calling for support of one or the other of two adversary groups and to merely appropriate their beliefs and tenets is to abdicate one's responsibility as a functioning member of an academic/design community. And I do believe that the differences between such words as align and support, share and appropriate, are, in this context, much more than semantic distinctions and, further, not at all subtle. Nor are the distinctions between the words *exceptional* and *mediocre* at all semantic or subtle.

A friend once advised me to see the movie *Annie Hall* and listen for a particular bit of dialogue. I did and if any of you have seen the movie, you may remember Woody and Diane flying from L.A. to N.Y. as Woody discussed their deteriorating relationship:

"You know, they say that when a shark stops moving, it dies...I think that what we have here is a dead shark".

And so too, what we may have here at RISD is a dead shark but there is, I think, some hope. You see, ultimately, in spite of all the legalities and "educationese", there are no employers, employees, M.B.U.'s, F.T.E.'s, or student I.D.'s, but only people. Should this prove not to be the case, I suggest the following, in the not-too-distant future, course offering:

Number: A 1984

Title: MAN MAN-INTERFACE

Sjaun B. Curran '80

PAINTINGS

CURRY GIBSON

OPENING 4:30 MARCH 14
BANK BUILDING
GALLERY

M

arch
14-20

Union Information Session

David K. Miller

On Wednesday March 6th, representatives of RISD's faculty union addressed an overflow crowd in the auditorium. The team introduced themselves and Merlin Szosz, a professor in Design. Szosz has been a faculty member and in 1976-77 held the office of Acting Provost. His varied experience lent his comments a credibility proven out by enthusiastic applause. Szosz synthesized the Union viewpoint in a "history of threats I have observed...a history of disaffection with this administration." He felt administrative policy does not reflect carefully reasoned goals, and was aggravated at the use of "the excuse that we are in the negotiating process to tell you (students) that our fate is in the hands of strangers."

Derek Bradford, head of the negotiating team, followed Szosz with a reinforcement of the statement issued by the Union to students in November. Then Bradford characterized the current state of negotiations, saying only two areas have been agreed on—recognition of the Union and a re-phrasing of the academic freedom clause so that it limits faculty from consistently introducing controversial material into the classroom. (The original wording of the clause specified controversial material unrelated to the teacher's subject, and the latter half of the sentence is presumably still intact though Bradford didn't mention it one way or the other). He objected "more than anything to the misdirected energy we are all giving over to this concern."

His conclusion was ominous: "there is a point beyond which faculty will not make concessions, and I'm afraid we are coming close to that point." Bradford's statement did not introduce much new information but seemed to extend an appeal for student support. A student called him on this appeal, and Bob Jungels, Union President, responded, "Yes, we ask your support in two ways. First, if you think binding arbitration is a good idea, please tell the Trustees and Administration. Second, a strike could not succeed without your help." At this point Bernie Singleton, the Union negotiator, was called on to provide an explanation of binding arbitration. A concerned student asked for clarification of Derek Bradford's indication that the faculty were on the verge of being forced into a strike. Merlin Szosz responded that "I don't think that's a judgement any one individual can make."

A student voiced the feeling of helplessness felt by many, and attributed it to the feeling that nothing could be gained by involvement. She stressed that a reaffirmation of a positive commitment to the faculty would demonstrate to the administration that students will not allow the basic bond of the community to be violated. "One way of avoiding a strike is to affirm the faculty we have now, to stand by them."

Blossom Kirschenbaum took the floor and delivered an eloquent statement

of what it means for her to teach at RISD. She addressed the difference between community and structure, that community is what's at stake in the current dispute. She pointed out that indeed the Administration will not have much trouble replacing striking faculty: "There is a surplus of unemployed professionals right now." To her it was a question of what sort of stuff the replacement faculty will be made of: "To eat shit and be a scab is difficult but possible - it depends on how hungry you are." She asked, "What kind of artists are they? What kind of morals do they have?" On the general conditions of teaching, "If it ever comes to where I have to teach defensively, then I don't want to teach in that climate. It's not just a matter of strike - if we find ourselves perpetually humiliated...then our status is eroded as the status of administrators is augmented and augmented."

Students were curious as to specifically how a strike would occur. It was explained that a majority of the Association would have to vote in favor, and that no notice would likely be given.

The meeting closed with the presentation of a letter drafted by students and addressed to Trustees. The letter, reproduced below, was signed by 749 students and mailed on Friday.

Merlin Szosz

This past week, on February 28, the contents of an attached memorandum* from the Vice President for Academic Affairs was made known to the faculty by their various Division Chairmen. The Rhode Island School of Design is a very troubled institution and the released memorandum can be seen as a barometer to those troubles.

On the face of it, the Vice President is taking responsible action to a perceived threat by requesting information. It is also, however, a provocation of new dimension that only broadens the base of faculty frustration and disaffection with this administration.

Mr. Ford prefaces his directive with a statement for the record. His action is blameless in the face of a "history of threats (occasionally veiled) at the bargaining table, in newsletters, and in letters to parents and students." Certainly no one likes threats since when observed, they may require undesired strong action.

Reluctantly now I, for the record, am compelled to review a history of threats (occasionally veiled) that I have observed. They form the basis for this faculty's alarm and distrust of this administration's ability and intentions and are the push against which the shove may need be applied.

THE HANDBOOK

Two years ago the administration declared that a faculty handbook was its highest priority.

The faculty prepared and made preliminary approval of those sections dealing with its governance and responsibilities.

A Handbook Committee was formed and included members of the administration, trustees and faculty. The ground rules were, that in any outstanding areas of disagreement, both the faculty and trustee bodies would hear both sides of the controversy before offering approval, disapproval or amendment.

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees received and approved criteria, developed by the faculty,

for promotion and contract renewal. (At my request, while Associate Dean the Board had banned any new contracts or promotions to the rank of Associate Professor and Professor until criteria were developed and approved.

Although they approved the criteria, the Executive Committee refused to remove the ban on promotion to higher ranks until an entire handbook was formulated and approved.

After reviewing all draft sections of the handbook, the Handbook Committee focused upon the areas of significant disagreement which were:

1. description of faculty responsibility to the College.
2. conditions relating to outside professional activities of the faculty.
3. due process.

Under one and two above, the administration had put forward a very articulate document which, according to the President, was based upon customary language and practice of those institutions we should be emulating.

The faculty took strong exception to this language on the basis that it would destroy the fundamental success and reputation of the College, namely, that we are a "professional" design school. (In demonstrating opposition on this matter a Division Chairman was removed from his post).

In a thorough investigation of this issue by the faculty members of the Handbook Committee the following findings were made:

1. No professional design school with which we compare had such restrictive policies on outside activities. Moreover, they encourage professional activity and often require such activity for promotional consideration.
2. From those universities which have such policies, (Harvard, Yale and MIT), we found that:

- a. such policies relate to and are formed around a different tradition than our own.

- b. while maintained, they are not employed within the Architecture and Design Schools of those institutions.

This issue is fundamental to the character and future of this institution.

The administration offered no counter argument to the research presented by the faculty.

"Due process" proved a more difficult issue and eluded any definition which could satisfy all concerns.

It was stated by the President that we seemed to be in fair agreement and that a document could be prepared for submission to the faculty and trustees pending a legal review. (It should be noted that a secretary was present all of these meetings with a tape recorder. No minutes were ever produced and when faculty members, who missed meetings, asked to hear the tapes of those meetings, they were denied).

After an approximate six to eight week lapse, the Committee was presented a draft of the faculty governance section as prepared by the administration from our discussions. There was a new clause in it however, effecting due process, which was purportedly urged by the legal counsel for the College. (I feel compelled to reveal here, for the first time, that I inadvertently received a copy of minutes from a meeting in which the administration directed their lawyer to draft such language).

The effect of this clause was to eliminate any value of faculty advice on anything relating to contract renewal and promotion, and the months of labor to produce a responsible apparatus was suddenly moot. The shock of this came at a time when many members of the faculty were reserving their judgment as to the advisability of a union.

* This memorandum, soliciting course syllabi from Division Chairmen, was reproduced in the last Press.

continued on page 8

Just a few days prior to a scheduled vote on a union, I received a more complete draft of a handbook which still retained the clause just referred to, as well as, a reintroduction of the administrations proposed language relating to outside professional activity.

At this point a majority of the faculty determined that the administration could not be relied upon to be candid in its intentions. Although many felt uncomfortable with the idea of a union, there seemed to be little choice in the matter.

The work of the Handbook Committee was a crucial test of leadership for the administration and represented an opportunity to develop a positive working relationship with the faculty. The failure of that effort cannot go unjudged in the face of pious rhetoric we now hear regarding the effects of union negotiations.

THE BUDGET

In the past two years there have been tuition increases which have realized for the College approximately 1½ million dollars in new money in this year. The announcement of these raises, to students and their parents, have always included heavy emphasis upon the need to raise faculty salaries.

The faculty has undergone some significant reductions in the past two years, especially in the rank of its full-time members. The faculty for the most part has received minimum increases during this period and it is evident that the funds made available came largely from those let go and not replaced. The Sabbatical Fund was also abolished. There is little evidence or likelihood that faculty salaries played much part, if any, in the required increases. The faculty feel much used on this issue and wonder why the needs and priorities which require tuition increases cannot be more fairly stated.

In recent years a budget process had been developed for the instructional areas which required that Division Chairmen collectively participate in an overview of the priorities and equitable distribution of the available resources. This required that they have some understanding of each others' operation and have full access to all instructional budgets including detailed staffing and salary information. The denial of such information to Division Chairmen in the preparation and authorization of the present budget raises concern regarding the candid development of instructional priorities.

ADMISSIONS

In the late sixties and early seventies, the College experienced a steady period of growth in its student body. In the mid-seventies a deliberate effort was made to stabilize student population at 1350. This move was important to meet two concerns:

1. the prospect of a future stagnation and decline in applications.
2. to bring an end to the constant fluctuations and expensive renovations related to changing demands upon space.

By 1977 most of the costs of moving toward a stable rather than an expanding budget base for the college had been absorbed. Instructional budgets, in terms of salaried positions, non-salary categories and capital needs were created in line with understood departmental student-major populations. This was the continuing assumption of the program heads when budget requests were prepared for the current year.

Admissions has always played a sensitive role in maintaining this stability and significant efforts usually made to coordinate departmental and divisional quotas. Faculty returned this year to find a significant increase in the total size of the College

with the result that several departments experienced strains in staff, space and budget.

While we are flogged with the rhetoric of effectiveness and economy, administrative moves do not reflect a picture of thoughtful planning and action that is consistent with an understood set of goals.

In the midst of this general turmoil the administrative layers of the College have become deeper. Among our Division Chairmen, several have been appointed as Deans. The administrative benefit of this move is a mystery since there is no job description for such a position. The title of Division Chairman and Dean appear to be a distinction without a difference except that the appointment of Deans does not include those personalities which have irritated the administration.

It is disturbing that such superficial reorganization is even contemplated let alone acted upon. The transparency of such a move does not bode well for positive change at RISD. Positive change can only occur within a rational, understood framework, and a sense of community where challenging ideas are developed through candid dialogue. We are without such conditions, and the history of how we have arrived at our present circumstances is beyond disappointment, it is tragedy.

Merlin Szosz
Professor of Design
former Associate Dean
of the College and
Acting Provost

STUDENT Letter

To the Board of Trustees of The Rhode Island School of Design:

The students find the present situation at RISD unacceptable. Negotiations between faculty and administration have been repeatedly interpreted as a conflict. As students we feel this interpretation is unreasonable and destructive to the educational process.

Most dangerous, we feel, is the recent series of exchanges which have constructed a circumstance almost inevitably leading to a strike. These actions are an irresponsible play of power which we refuse to see continue.

It is imperative that more constructive negotiations be employed. We call upon the trustees to join us in emphasizing the need for more responsible avenues of dialogue! If mediated negotiation continues to produce open hostility, Binding Arbitration should be considered as an alternative. Our primary concern, however, is that a healthy environment be restored.

We ask that you consider this matter at the upcoming board meeting and reply to us through the Student Board.

We would also like to encourage the response of faculty and administration either through the Student Board or the Incorporated Press.

This letter was signed by 749 students and was sent to all members of the board of Trustees on Friday, Mar. 9th.

STUDENT MEETING

"Last Thursday, at 7:30pm, what henceforth will be called the student meeting, took place. Upwards of 500 students and interested "guests" were in attendance. The evening began with the introduction of the Administration information team and that of the moderators, Nancy Davis, President of the Student Board and David K. Miller, Editor of the Incorporated Press. Two of the four representatives of the Administration negotiating team, Andrew Ford and John Stevens, were present, defining the event in sharp visual contrast with the Faculty presentation of the previous evening. The other members of the Administration negotiating team, Murray Danforth, (Life Trustee and Treasurer of the Corporation), and James Jackson, (Chief negotiator and lawyer for the Administration), were unable to attend due to "prior engagements". The stated purpose of this meeting, an information session to field questions on the Administration position, was challenged by several students who complained of the unfor-

tunate absence of the chief negotiator. These students questioned the sincerity of the Administration, who, if concerned with an open investigation of the issues at hand, notably the "character" of the two contract proposals and how the adoption of a mutually agreed upon proposal relates to the future of RISD as a contract base, would fail to secure the attendance of such an important figure. The Administration team responded that the meeting was called at short notice and that Mr. Jackson's schedule was admittedly a busy one. Questions then turned to the material of the proposals.

Debate shuttled over a plethora of issues, with the tenor of student outrage increasing exponentially. Central however were the issues of weekend Library hours, conditions of membership within the union, faculty salary levels at competitive institutions, the Administration's refusal

to accept Binding Arbitration, and the highly confusing issue of a replacement Faculty. Mr. Ford asserted that if such a faculty proposal were to be accepted in regards to Library hours, then that would necessitate the closing of the Library during weekends; (Eds. Note: This is denied vociferously by the Faculty and they have constructed a statement of rebuttal. Upon previous investigation and subsequent double-checking on this point, the editors have concluded that Mr. Ford's assertion represents an incorrect usage of context.) Student comments ranged from the misinformed to the incredulous on this specific issue, as also in the case of salary.

continued to 9

would not be given the proper attention from their standpoint, and that their necessary goals could not be reached. He also commented that it was rare in such a contract settlement to adopt Binding Arbitration in the first year. There was some student agreement on this point, though it was generally agreed that the existing knowledge of such labor practices among the student body was inadequate and that further research should be done. (eds. Note: Nancy Davis has placed a copy of the National Labor Relations article on negotiating procedures for labor and management on reserve in the Library. We urge you to read it, post haste.) But the issue which produced the greatest reaction was Dr. Hall's threat to expell students for three unexcused absences. Andrew Ford repeated the Administration line that it was obligated to provide services and to monitor those services. He met with such comments as expressed by this one RISD woman: "How do you expect us to regard your situation in a mature manner when you employ such kindergarten tactics in your type of threat?" What previously had been regarded as the "intangibles" of the situation, i.e. student rights vis a vis perception of student power, concepts of community in the decision-making process, etc., were asserted by the students in an angry and lopsided manner. In the words of one well-known campus figure, "If there are three parts to this school, administration, faculty, and students, how can you as an institution tell 2/3 of those groups to take a walk and still be a school?" Though that last comment would suggest a basic committment to the faculty, a more correct reading of student feeling would tend to reveal a confusion locked into a sense of ruptured community that presently defines RISD. Students were most vitriolic

However in the following discussion of a replacement faculty, the single chord of a common-sensical approach was struck: as articulated by one student, how could the Administration pretend the capability of corraling 70+ "competent" faculty replacements in the period of three to ten days, when they were still proceeding, (and the assumption was slowly), in searches involving the appointment of seven new full-time faculty for next year with no choices yet definite? Andrew Ford responded to this and other comments regarding the memo of early March sent to Division Chairpersons, that it was only prudent for an official in his position to make contingency plans, and that somehow, (he didn't specify, but indicated that inquiries were under way), a substitute faculty would be assembled, and that finally it was improper to interpret his memo requiring syllabi as an imputed strike threat, given the divisive nature of the conflict. To questions concerning Binding Arbitration, Mr. Ford stressed the delicate nature of negotiations vis a vis the intrusion of an outsider; under those circumstances, the Administration felt that the unique nature of the problems at RISD about what they felt to be insipid Public Relations from the Administration in terms of the options open to them and a gnawing sense of powerlessness in regard to their role in defining this "community". The anger directed at Andy Ford took on a symbolic quality as the tone of the meeting grew more heated. The spokesmen for the Administration left the Auditorium around 8:45. Nancy Davis asked that all in attendance other than students please leave and the real student meeting got underway in a few minutes. Though Messers Ford and Stevens did not leave to catcalls and the like, a late announcement by Don Pierson that there would be a tuition hike of \$250.00 for the coming year, (eds. note. If one subtracts the figures in the RISD article in the Providence Journal story of March 13th, the figure one arrives at is \$360.00), did nothing to improve the Administration's credibility in

With the departure of all non-students, Nancy Davis opened the floor to proposals towards defining a student position. Towards the end of the information session with Andy Ford, an amorphous collection of spokespersons had gathered in the center aisle, near where the microphone was located. Certain voices from this group expressed the need for some independent action by the student body to underline the community aspect of the crises, the most logical choice, it was generally agreed, being the upcoming trustees meeting, (Eds. Note: This meeting has been postponed until the spring). David K. Miller presented this suggestion in a proposal for a one-day student walk-out, to coincide with the trustees meeting. Students then lapsed back into a formless debate over the nature of such an action, but one student expressed the sentiments of the many who would simply like to continue their work: "If we are an art and design college, then we should make something, engage in some constructive operation, rather than take a day-off."

A general interpretation of this last statement, and indeed the mood of the evening revealed a curious political outlook: a strong reluctance to commit oneself to a political statement or more expressly an action, (i.e. a rally, protest meeting, student strike, etc.) countered by the overwhelming negative reaction to the Administration's presentation and what many considered to be a program of distilled double talk. Nancy Davis then codified a variant of student feeling by advising that the trustee postcard and letter/signature campaign be allowed to run its course, allowing for the vagaries of the U.S. Mail, before any concrete student posture was assumed. The most oft-heard comment was one admitting confusion, or as one student put it, "being really torn up by this thing", indicative finally of a general incomprehension on the student's part of their place in any ongoing political process. There were however groping questions of student involvement in the negotiating sessions, possibilities of individual litigation and legal recourse, and the "floating" situation of the more than half of the student body on financial aid. This reporter came away being impressed by the higher overall level of absorption and comprehension of the various materials in question, but somewhat dismayed by the RISD student tendency to retreat in terror from the implications of political discourse in their attraction to the strongest speaker of the moment. All of which brings us to what henceforth will be called the Luigi Bianco affair.

Out of the same amorphous mass that earlier had served as the staging area for various statements, emerged Luigi Bianco, at a moment when discussion was at its most intense. He proceeded to the podium where he was introduced by Nancy Davis as the former head of the RISD Alumni Association and an interior decorator in Providence. Before he proceeded very far in his statement his presence was challenged by a sizable bloc of the students present, and Nancy Davis decided that a voice vote would be necessary if Mr. Bianco were to be allowed to continue. As Mr. Bianco had already distinguished himself as a commanding speaker, the majority of students felt a certain curiosity about what he would have to say. Beginning with a note of warning, that in the complex social matrix of the art world, RISD represents one of the very few places where individuals could make a serious, (and the implication was also individualistic), political statement, he extended that notion to the current political drama unfolding at RISD. Citing his extensive personal history and experience in this area, and also his changing

opinions over the years concerning the RISD faculty, he opined that the faculty was "using the students" to protect what he characterized as "a few people who want to hold onto their cushy jobs." Mr. Bianco did not name names however and left the podium to return to his former place in the knot of people collecting around the microphone. (Though it is not usually the custom for a writer such as myself to step out of a reportorial context and make reference to other material in the paper, in this case I must make an exception. I be, to differ with Mr. Knopp in his assessment of Mr. Bianco as "one very calm and rational voice" in the midst of the debate. Indeed Mr. Bianco was a very controlled speaker who used the occasion to dramatically advance his views. If one means by calm, rhetorically blessed and by rational, biased against the faculty for an unrevealed set of reasons and worldly-wise to boot, then I can agree with Mr. Knopp. However, to afford by such a simple contrast with the voices of the student body, a misrepresentation of the "character" of Mr. Bianco's statements, if in effect an admission of their veracity. I think Mr. Knopp will admit, upon recollection, that Mr. Bianco's delivery was as passionate in kind as those preceding him.) In what must be regarded as a most astute surgical incision, Mr. Bianco effectively split the present members of the student body into competing pockets of chaotic dissension. Though he did not offer any concrete evidence in his discrediting of the faculty position, relying instead on innuendo and allegation, Mr. Bianco galvanized the current strain of student fears, namely that in their flailing attempt to effectively organize, the faculty felt no guilt in resorting to any form of manipulation available to them. In this turning of the tables, the students, who regularly have problems with the credibility of the administration, (i.e. the declared deficit of \$300,000 that due to a variety of "errors", turned out only to be \$8,000), were forced to question their basic assumptions concerning their relationships with the faculty. For those graduate students present, who are to a greater or lesser degree employees of this institution, the opening up of discussion to, (a kind of public revelation of what many had privately speculated on) the matrix of manipulation, was all the more poignant. Mr. Bianco's comments effectively discharged what had been a growing student sentiment for a collective process of "recapturing" the intangibles of student input into this community, as discussion returned to the need for each individual to come to his own decision regarding these matters. (As everyone I'm sure knows, the RISD rumor mill has been constantly active, and one of the most recent products is this: that Mr. Bianco was a plant by the administration, who though, perhaps not under explicit instructions, was open to the suggestion that such an independent excursion to this meeting would not be ill-advised. There is absolutely no concrete evidence to support this allegation, but having figured prominently in the meeting, in question and subsequent discussions, the Inc. Press felt bound to report such a disturbing possibility, especially in regard to Mr. Bianco's previous associations with this institution, its administration, and the general artistic community. There is no intent to slander Mr. Bianco in the reporting of such a possibility, and we welcome from him any clarification of his role and for his statements, which upon analysis suffer from a lack of factual input.)

continued on page 10

The meeting broke up as a majority of students headed for the doors. Although no individual or group was democratically charged during the meeting with the responsibility for researching and contacting a lawyer, it has since been learned that Nancy Davis, on the basis of her office as student board president, elected herself to pursue the agreed upon goals.

It is the opinion of this reporter, who having attended two student-president meetings, and a confusing array of other group discussions, be they departmental, student board, or ad hoc, that the tone of this meeting was markedly different from previous gatherings. Students were better informed and less cowed in the face of inappropriate or unsatisfactory responses. It was quite amazing to see the level of energy generated by two consecutive meetings, and what I believe was a sincere desire to arrive at some view of a student identity, within a process that does not encourage your involvement. Evidently the conflict that we have been witnessing refuses to address, by its very nature of secretive maneuvering, the very real problem that we all, as students, are facing: the actual deterioration of the educational process before your very eyes, which may

sound like a movie marquee for either the ambitions or radical who would like to parade truths, but unfortunately is based in day-to-day living. Luigi Bianco not withstanding, (and I fully believe that we should take his comments into consideration, if only to arrive at a more comprehensive basis for individual decision-making), the real insecurity that students faced was not their role as an object for manipulation by either party, (naivete is no excuse at this point for any except the most obtuse), by an unreadiness with their own sense of power, (often deemed powerlessness), in the upcoming struggle. It would not be incorrect to say that students will ultimately decide what happens: If the faculty decides to strike and the students decide not to cross picket lines, then the school cannot operate. Likewise, if students choose to attend classes, if offered, then such a strike must fail. For the confused and forlorn, there are the simple realities. What is not so simple is what you will do. It may be time to tip-toe away from the premises of the on-going "process of education", which though still func-

tioning are now so replete with contradictions as to invite such labels as "saturated comedy", and look at what the real education of this time period is shaping up to be. This is not a call to stop working, or for massive demonstrations, or active protest or anything so much as a realization of encroaching realities. If RISD students are the romantic and resilient figures of lore that the prestige of their instituting attempts to communicate, then I cannot believe that you will so ultimately fail as good consumers. And as the battle-lines continue to develop, it might be wise for the half of the student body on financial aid, but in general, everyone, to consider the earlier perception of a now discredited figure, Mr. Dylan: "Money doesn't talk, it swears."

Article and comments by

Benjamin Dewey

FARISD/NEA

Truth, half truth, half lies and lies. What does it all add up to?

We have recently come across a position paper called "Briefing on union positions on issues in negotiations." It set out twelve points which it feels represents the NEA contract proposal and we feel obliged to clarify some of them.

1. "Faculty members who do not wish to pay union dues must be fired even if they do not wish to join the union." (half lie) Our position is that no one is obligated to join the union. We also feel that if we negotiate a contract for a non-union faculty member, that that person should pay a fee (less than dues) to the union. We assume that the increased benefits will more than offset that cost.

2. "An average increase in employment benefits in addition to faculty salaries of 253% -- more than 2 1/2 times the 1977-78 fringe benefits." (true) But, when you get almost nothing any increase is major in terms of percentages. For instance we are asking for Flue Cross. This will more than double our present fringe benefits.

3. "A 16% increase in faculty salaries. RISD is already higher than the average of faculty at other art colleges listed by the AAUP in its 1977-78 report on faculty salaries. 16% is about \$2,600 per person." (half truth) In our first proposal we are asking for a salary increase. In Rhode Island our salary scale is lower than Brown, URI, Rhode Island College, and Rhode Island Jr. College. We wish they would tell us if they are comparing 1979 RISD salaries to 1977 salaries at "art colleges", and just what schools they are.

4. "Faculty could accumulate their sick days over a period of years and use them all at once -- a faculty member could take off more than one full year with pay under this proposal. This is in addition to disability insurance which already covers faculty who are unable to work." (true) If one is never sick for eighteen consecutive years.

5. "Faculty would be required to teach a maximum of 9 contact hours (lecture) or 15 contact hours (studio) per semester. This means faculty would teach a maximum of three courses per semester. One-fifth of more of the faculty would be allowed to teach only two courses per semester. No faculty member would

have to take students for independent study courses. This provision would account for generally larger classes and fewer course options." (half lie) This is current practice. There would be no change in class size or course option unless there is a change in the student/faculty ratio. Be careful about the limiting nature of the contract. We are limiting what the school can require a faculty member to do, not what that person can do should he or she so desire.

6. "Librarians would not work on weekends, evenings, or holidays, resulting in fewer open hours for the library." (lie) Librarians have never worked at those times and the present pattern of using assistants to keep the library open would probably continue. Librarian's hours are not related to library hours.

7. "Faculty would be required to advise students for a maximum of two hours per week. Many faculty would spend less time." (true) But at present there is no requirement to spend any particular amount of time advising students. Our contract could require 2 hours; faculty could spend as much time as they wanted to.

8. "Faculty would be required to advise a maximum of only ten students. This would result in almost 1/2 of the student body not receiving any faculty advice or counsel." (half truth) Faculty are currently asked to advise five students. The amount of advice and counsel varies. In our first proposal the administration could require 10 advisees per faculty. The faculty members could take more if they wanted to. We have a newly created office of Vice President for student affairs and expect that office to handle some advice and counseling. If it doesn't, what does it do?

9. "Faculty would not have to serve on any RISD committees." (half truth) Committee work and always been voluntary and elective.

10. "Faculty would be given hiring preference in non-union jobs." (true) If they were equally qualified.

11. "All present faculty would be given tenure (an expectation of permanent employment) instantly upon ratification of the contract." (lie) We have proposed various categories of faculty contract with some (yet to be negotiated) percentage of core faculty who after some (yet to be negotiated) period of probation would expect permanent employment as long as they continued to perform satisfactorily in their positions. The administration wants absolute freedom to capriciously not renew any faculty contract at any point in the teacher's RISD career.

12. "The union would have the ability to stop a faculty member from presenting a grievance about the way he was treated at RISD." (lie) This is ridiculous and contrary to the whole nature of the union movement. The union will aid faculty members in the presentation of grievance.

It adds up to propaganda, but worse it so obviously underestimates the intelligence of the RISD community that we worry about the capacity of the administration to manage the power invested in its position. If you have doubts read the contract proposals; they are in the library. Demand open negotiations; the union has. And above all, place unresolvable issues before a neutral professional arbiter rather than a strike committee.

We feel our first proposal is not unreasonable. It is negotiable. Take a look at the administration's first proposal and make your own decision.

Andrew Ford Interview

The Inc. Press, Inc. interviewed Andrew Ford in order to pursue issues raised during Ford's address before the student body March 8th. At the March 8th meeting Ford stated he has had to redefine the goals which he brought with him to RISD. He explained to the Press that he had hoped to work with the faculty in developing long-range planning. Now, however, "That has become impossible. The problems are even greater than I anticipated." Ford spends his time on negotiation and on the enforcement of existing regulations governing the faculty.

We asked Mr. Ford about his past experiences in hopes that they might throw some light on his role at RISD. Ford outlined his experience, which has centered around negotiation of college level contract disputes. For some time he worked for a 13-college consortium in New Hampshire, serving those Administrations as an advisor or negotiator. With the exception of his first job he has represented Management interests in all cases. His involvement in bargaining has produced a variety of settlements including in one case a "faculty who when I arrived were involved in Unionizing, but who ultimately

decided not to Unionize." Referring to Ford's record as a temporary advisor, we asked him how permanent his commitment to RISD was: "As long as it remains interesting and challenging."

At the March 8th meeting, students directed a request to Mr. Ford for a legal definition of the school's implied contract toward them. When we followed up this request in our interview, Ford confessed he had forgotten the request, but added that "I know of no court in the land that would interpret such a contract as a guarantee of an individual faculty member's availability to students. If there was such a precedent colleges would issue catalogs listing no faculty so they would not be interpreted as guaranteeing the presence of those individuals." He felt the school provides the wherewithall for a degree.

At his audience with students Ford had listed Management's objections to individual items in the faculty proposal. The Press asked, were not the clauses cited quoted from the initial contract proposal and had some progress or compromise not been made? (This in light of the

Jean Blackburn

lawyer's comment that it is common practice for both sides to deny publicly any progress, so as to justify a charge that the other side is unyielding and unreasonable.) Ford responded that "I did not want to drive a wedge between faculty and students and what I tried to do was diffuse these positions. In some cases, the faculty has backed off on the positions I quoted, others are bargaining chips, others are not things the faculty are genuinely concerned with. I tried to convey that information honestly and fairly."

The Press referred Mr. Ford to the Union's assertion that their proposal regarding librarians would continue the existing operation of the library and not limit its hours. Ford replied, "I'll have to look into that. I might add that I'm not sure the library's current operation is entirely satisfactory to student needs."

As a summary Ford addressed student involvement: "My concern as it has been from the beginning is that students not be drawn into it - that they not be politicized. If they do choose to become involved they should bring as much care to the situation as they possibly can."

NOTES FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH LAWYERS BILL POWERS AND JACQUES HOPKINS 3/13

In pursuing a lawyer to advise students, Nancy Davis contacted Hinckley and Allen, a large downtown Providence firm, on the basis that "it was one of the few prestigious Providence firms without trustee affiliation." Jacques Hopkins, her initial contact, referred Nancy to another member of the firm, Bill Powers, on the basis of Powers' expertise in labor relations law.

The student body was represented by Nancy Davis who was accompanied by Student Board members Wendy Peterson and Chris Ezzell and by David K. Miller, of the Inc. Press, Inc., who was accompanied by David L. Miller, former Student Board President.

At the outset of the interview David K. Miller informed Nancy Davis of his concern that a lawyer not be retained on any basis at that initial session, given that Hinckley and Allen represented a certain professional bias. (The firm in all its dealings only represents Management, including the Administration of Roger Williams College, in labor disputes. Asked whether or not she was aware of this fact when she arranged to consult with the firm on the students' behalf, Nancy replied, "No, it came as a complete surprise.") The following notes were taken during the interview by David K. Miller of the Press:

At the outset Jacques Hopkins eliminated himself as a possible candidate for advisor on the basis of his close friendship with Lee Hall and other members of the school community. "I think it's very important that you feel whoever you're consulting with is independent."

Powers explained his unwillingness to enter into an agreement with students which would involve representing them in court. "Our concern is

that in serving a student body as council we are serving a collectivity...The problem with representing a large group of people is that they do not have the authority to direct us, and in some cases it has become a negative proposition." Powers however felt that "serving as counsel to the student body has its plusses. As a member of the community I believe the community has a stake in RISD continuing as a viable institution."

Powers then delivered what he called "a thumbnail sketch of Labor law, a sketch which explained a great deal to me. That presentation was duplicated before the student body on Thursday Mar. 15. The following notes are intended to supplement Susan Schaff's report on the later meeting, and comprise a few observations from the Tuesday interview which were not brought out on Thursday.

On the Management Negotiator:

"From the point of view at least of Jim Jackson, there are no moral issues involved in this bargaining. His interest is in securing the desires of his employers."

On statements issued concerning negotiation progress/lack of progress:

"The first months of bargaining are a series of bluffs and postures on both sides. Both parties need the crisis period of bargaining to actually show their hands." "Both sides have to create turmoil and crisis as a negotiating tactic." "You should believe almost nothing you hear. If people are bargaining well they create straw horses to give in on, phoney demands to surrender at the last moment."

On student involvement in negotiations:

"I think there's nothing that would chill negotiations more than a student present looking over their shoulder."

"If you understood the issues and developed, with legal council, a set of compromises to the issues which the parties haven't thought of, you might be influential. But it's an iffy route, depending on the receptivity of the two sides."

"In a strike situation, you are a swing vote. You then display the clout of your affiliations, voting with your feet."

"In any case your unsophisticated influence into the situation is completely useless at this time. If you're going to get involved in the process of negotiation, you'll have to do so on the basis of sophisticated judgement."

On Peter Riefler's letter to students on financial aid:

"The one thing you have to understand about things like this is that there are immediate practical considerations which supercede legal rights in a strike situation. It's interesting to know that legally RISD can terminate students who miss classes but when the career preparation of 1300 individuals is interrupted, RISD is not going to succeed on the basis of naked legal right."

On replacement of faculty:

"One of the reasons employers replace striking employees is because you create a critical new bargaining issue to trade off at the moment when settlement is possible. You say those employees are replaced and that person's reemployment becomes a critical issue to the Union and one they're willing to sacrifice for."

The RISD Faculty Association voted 10-2 demanding the attendance of Lee Hall and Bayard Ewing at a negotiation session to be held before Wednesday. The faculty will take a strike vote Wed. if their demand is not met.

Nancy Davis Interview

David K. Miller

Q: Please state your feelings about your job as student board president. Do you consider yourself an advocate?

A: "Well I think that student board presidents try to represent first the student board but beyond that the student body. I think of my role as a liaison in terms of gathering information. I refer people with problems to the people they should see. I think I have to represent the student opinion to people and other peoples' opinions to the students. I think also that ensuring that the student board and the students see both sides is another important function."

Q: "Both sides?"

A: "I think the student board has to be for the students and not for anybody else, and to that end we have to project objectivity. We have to ensure that we don't just offer our help to one side of the issue. We don't say the faculty has our support, just as we don't say the administration has our support, but we have to say the students have our support, we have to look out for ourselves."

Q: Do you see that viewpoint as generating any particular objectives which the Student Board is pursuing - in other words you state that you see it as important that the Student Board, I presume in its representative function, not throw the weight of student allegiance to one side - has the Student Board generated such a policy?

A: "I think we're trying. That's why we're arranging all the large meetings and all - so we can provide information straight from the horse's mouth."

Q: Do you ever see a possible decision on the part of students to vote their allegiance to one side or the other - how do you see the next few weeks?

A: "I would hope that in the next few weeks the students desperately try not to take sides. I would hope they listen to everybody, not believe a hell of a lot, try to read everything that might help them make a responsible decision should that decision ever have to be made. My hope is that they never have to make that decision. As Mr. Powers said, the only time students can make a decision is if there's a strike. In that case there's no neutral ground."

Q: Would it be reasonable to infer then that the student board follows as a policy the reservation of any action until after a strike has taken place?

A: "No, I would say that the student board follows as a course of action - hopefully - that they not make a decision until they have all the facts. And I think it's clear that they don't have all the facts. If there ever comes a time when the majority of the student board feels that there's no way to remain neutral, I'll have no choice but to represent that to the proper channels. If the students vote to walk out of classes or if they voted never to walk out of classes, I'd have to publicize that stance."

Q: Right now the Student Board is following a policy of gathering information.

A: "Yes, I feel that's our purpose. If the students want a lawyer we will get a lawyer, ask the questions the students want asked and then report to the students."

Q: Do you sense that events have become accelerated recently or that there's any reason to consider action in the next few days - what is your

projected time table for information gathering?

A: "On the contrary, I feel the mood on campus is a little less volatile than it has been. I think that the faculty have been laying a little low - and the administration isn't engaging in bargaining warfare. I think the students have some time to gather information in a calmer way. I don't think we're in a crisis situation."

Q: When is the next Board of Trustees meeting?

A: "I don't know. I don't get invited to them."

Q: Going back to my earlier question, more specifically, I wonder how you interpret your role as representative of students, do you see your actions as representative of what students would like to see done?

A: "Do you mean am I doing a good job?"

Q: No, I mean how do you conclude what students want, and do you feel your actions as representative of student concerns?"

A: "Yes, I do. I feel that my actions are in direct response to student requests and concerns. At that Thursday meeting students screamed for a meeting with Trustees and students screamed for...many things...and it was my function to listen very carefully to what they were screaming about to codify that information, to present it to the people who could answer the questions and then give it back to the students. It was clear that at that meeting there was a lot of energy, but at one point someone screamed, 'No one's writing it down.' At that point I step in and do that, and in that way am absolutely representative of what they want."

Q: I have been an active student for four years and I think I have a better overall picture of how both faculty and administration operate. The most important thing is that any information I get from anyone goes back to the students."

Q: From what you know, and where you stand, do you think that the students' requests represent a well-informed direction to pursue?

A: "The most important thing the students need is an outside legal opinion, to interpret what they've heard from both sides. The students are confused and upset, because they know they're the victims no matter what. They need to know is exactly to what extent they will be victims, we need to know exactly what the risks are."

Q: Did you know before our interview with Hinckley and Allen that they only represent management?

A: "No, I was completely surprised. What you'll find I think is that the reason they only represent Management is that they're very expensive..."

Q: Do you envision at any point a student collective action? That is, some sort of democratically agreed to demonstration of their position?

A: "Do you mean a walkout or an adherence to one party or the other? I wouldn't personally condone it. If the Student Board voted for it, I'd have to go along with it. If students are unhappy, they should consider leaving for a semester or a year..."

Q: So essentially you're reiterating the administration's point of view that if students are dissatisfied they should leave the school...?

A: "You seem anxious to pigeonhole me with the administration -"

Q: No, I'm concerned with how you see your role.

A: "If students feel absolutely helpless, and at this point I feel students can still have a positive effect, instead of walking out of a class, but if students are frustrated, and if they feel they can't do anything to change that, I don't feel they have a choice but to leave. If I was unhappy someplace and could look forward to four years of that unhappiness, I would leave."

Q: Based on the kind of misinformation that's going around, why do you feel it would be more reasonable to leave than any other course of action?

A: "Well I would never suggest that anyone leave unless they felt they couldn't stay. If you're unhappy about your education, and you're miserable, it's to your own advantage to leave. But I don't think it's reasonable to leave at this time..."

Q: Well are there droves of students waiting at the gates ready to leave?

A: "No."

Q: Do you feel there are routes which have not surfaced yet which students might base action on?

A: "I think based on lawyer's advice, students could make valid suggestions to the negotiators."

Q: Do you see it as irresponsible for students to conclude they should take some sort of collective action?

A: "I would advise the students that they spend their energy on finding out how it affects them personally. Once they decide that they can decide what to do. I would hate to see a group of students who feel they could be protected by the Union forfeit their financial aid status or credit status."

Q: What would it take for you to advise a collective action?

A: "I'd have to believe that one side stopped trying. I would have to believe that the faculty was refusing to meet, or the administration was refusing to meet."

Q: Don't you feel the students might consider the possibility of a plan of action, to prepare for a strike, so we're not caught with our hands down? None of us will know if a strike action happens until it happens.

A: "I think the faculty will tell us first. I think they'll give us some warning because our support is so important to them."

Q: Do you see the possibility of students forming a political position which does not conform, say, to the Faculty Association's platform, one which is perhaps registering its independent rejection of administrative moves?

A: "I don't buy that. I don't believe you walk out of your classes unless you're supporting the faculty. Walking out of your classes is a clear indication that you're supporting one side or the other."

Q: How do you define support of the faculty? A distinction might be made between support of the faculty position as stated in the contract proposal, and support in general of the kind of security the faculty is asking for."

A: "I make a distinction between the faculty and the Faculty Association. That's the first distinction I make. A great many of my faculty are not members of the Association, and very much a part of my life."

Q: "I guess what I'm asking is whether or not you might see support of the faculty as above and beyond the statements of the contract."

A: "I personally wholeheartedly support the faculty...who teach me. There are a few faculty, as there are a few administrators, who I do not feel belong at RISD. I've been here four years and I've never once considered transferring or leaving. But I cannot separate those people from the proposals and what they want from me. And I feel uncomfortable with political discussions in the classroom. When I'm in a classroom I want to learn what I signed up for."

Q: How do you see the exercise of your office in regards to a collective action, i.e. a walkout in support of the faculty. Or just a display of unacceptable conditions...

A: "If students vote to do that personally I won't support it, I won't walk out of my class. I will communicate the information without my bias affecting me. If it comes to a point where my personal opinions are tearing me in half, I simply won't be as involved."

Q: It's now Wednesday. Do you see this as a crucial time?

A: "I don't feel pressured at this time."

Q: I don't understand the basis of the communication on financial aid or visa status. Do you presume that students are risking some sort of financial aid viability by supporting a walkout? Are you at all influenced by the lawyer's statement that there will be practical concerns that will prevent the school from operating the letter of the law? Doesn't that defunk what Peter said?

A: "I think what Bill was saying is something that is obvious to all of us, that if all the students walk out of their classes, the school will close. That's what happens. No one wins. The faculty don't win, the students won't win, the school will close."

Q: Is that obvious to all of us?

A: "I think so. I think that is absolutely - one thing that might happen."

Q: Didn't the lawyer say that if students support the strike the faculty will get their demands?

A: "Yes, I think that's probably the normal case... and, you'll see the Trustees Monday night - but I think the Trustees, rather than put up with this any longer, will close the college."

Q: I gather you have access to information that other students don't have now? And that's leading you to draw this conclusion? Trustee information? Your opinion differs considerably from what the lawyer said."

A: "What the lawyer said is absolutely true, but now you have to consider the special case of RISD. RISD's been putting up with this kind of turmoil of a long time."

Q: "Putting up with"?

A: "They've been - RISD's been involved with this kind of turmoil for a long time. It's my opinion that the faculty's not going to win under any circumstances, not win everything they want."

Q: I wish I had access to the kind of information you have access to. Why hasn't that information been made public?

A: "Because it's my opinion. It's my opinion that the Trustees would close the school. The Trustees and the administration feel that the faculty is unreasonable. Just as the faculty thinks the administration is unreasonable. If all the faculty and all the students walk out, I don't think the Trustees - I don't know what they could do except close the college."

Q: Are you projecting their behavior or are you basing your interpretation on statements they've given you?

A: "I base my interpretation on the fact that people in the know - people like Luigi and people who've been involved in the school, know damn well that the Trustees take their role very seriously. And under pressure even so severe as a strike, the Trustees are not going to give in to what they don't believe. By law the Trustees have the power to do that."

Q: You allude to the Monday night Trustee briefing. Do you anticipate a disclosure to the effect that the Trustees will close the school?

A: "I have no idea. It's one of their options. You can ask them."

Q: What are your feelings on Peter Reifler's financial aid statement?

A: "When it became clear that there was a possibility that students might consider some kind of action..."

Q: Did you refer the possibility of such an action to Peter?

A: "Yes, I told Peter people would have many questions..."

Q: How do you now feel about that considering what the lawyer said yesterday, that most of those things will be recinded in the heat of the crisis.

A: "I think as long as the faculty is threatening strike the administration has no choice but to make clear their policy."

Q: I'd like to address the general question of your work in Woods-Gerry.

A: "I work primarily in the development office, with Alumni things and typing and all. I'm grateful for the job. One of my interests beyond RISD has been education, and educational administration. It's invaluable experience for me in terms of the future, working with these people."

Q: Do you project for yourself a future in Administration?

A: "Right now I'm more interested in publishing and advertising than I am in Educational Administration, but I think Educational Administration is fascinating. It doesn't interfere - it doesn't make me a puppet of the Administration."

Q: Do you do any of the student board work in that office?

A: "No. I just explained what I do there. They don't pay me to do student board work. I do a great variety of work there. I can be paid up to twenty hours a week, but it usually works out closer to twelve."

Q: Do you intend to work at Woods-Gerry after graduation?

A: "No. I already feel there's too much inbreeding at RISD."

Q: Students asked about your summer work here.

A: "I worked as my summer job. RISD trained me, and I went a number of times up to Boston to the local computer center to learn how to program the terminal for Alumni address lists."

Q: In general, is there any summary you could make of your role for students who have questioned it?

A: "Because I have a friendly relationship with members of both the faculty and the administration, I have the opportunity to collect information from both sides. Friendly ties always open up channels. You have to understand there are always two sides, and an important function of my job is to show students both sides...I've been consistently involved since freshman year and will continue my involvement as an alumnus - in a volunteer capacity. Obviously I feel very good about this school - I adore it. That's what drives me to all this madness - I love it."

STUDENT BOARD EMPOWERS AD HOC COMMITTEE TO MONITOR STRIKE AND LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Board passed a motion to form a committee to research the quality and responsiveness of a legal advisor. There was much discussion on who should compose the above committee and how to pick these students. Rebecca Spivack, a second year graduate student in Painting, felt that

the members should not be composed of only Student Board reps, but that it should be a cross section of the student body. The students at tonight's meeting felt that one student from each Division -- Fine Arts, Design and Architecture --

a Graduate Student, a representative of the Minorities, a rep from the Student Board, a student from the Freshman Foundation Program, and a representative from the student Press would compose a strong committee.

Excerpted from Student Board minutes

Thursday evening, March 15, two lawyers addressed the RISD students who came to the auditorium at the request of the Student Board. Bill Powers has been practicing labor law for 20 years, and has exclusively represented management. Milton Stanzler has been practicing labor law for 30 years, and has occasionally represented management, though the majority of his experience has been in representing unions.

The forum opened with an address by Bill Powers, first explaining the basic aspects of Federal Labor Law procedures of collective bargaining

The forum opened with an address by Bill Powers, first explaining the basic aspects of Federal Labor Law involving the forming and recognizing of a union, and the procedures of collective bargaining under federal mediation. Once a union is recognized by an employer, the employer is obligated to "bargain in good faith" with the union's chosen collective bargaining agent. The phrase "bargaining in good faith" is not entirely specific, and in the event that one side of the negotiating table accuses the other of not bargaining in good faith, the situation is subject to the review of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The criteria for judging "good faith" involves the party's behavior at the negotiating table as well as away from it.

The employer is bound to bargain with the union's agent only as long as the union enjoys majority support of employees. The NLRB presumes such support during the new union's first year, their "certification year". A motion to question majority membership and possibly de-certifying the union can be put forth from either within the union or at the request of management at the end of the first year. Either motion would result in a new election supervised by the NLRB to affirm or negate majority support for the union as the employee's collective bargaining agent. This applies to RISD because May is the expiration date for the faculty union's "certification year". If either union or

management feel that majority support for the union has eroded (or can possibly be affected), bargaining table tactics could be planned accordingly. But if both parties feel that the union still enjoys majority support, the May expiration date becomes less significant.

Powers stated that both parties at RISD desperately need support of the student body; that it "does not overstate the case to say that the students will decide the controversy." He also said that until a crisis situation occurs, no agreement will be forthcoming. He felt the faculty union would have to threaten a strike to precipitate a crisis, and they have not done so yet, not only because they are new to union politics, but because they are a "group of artistic, sensitive individuals" who want to avoid such a confrontation. When asked about foreign students' status in the event of a strike, Powers doubted that anyone would blow the whistle to the immigration service. Stanzler said he seriously doubted anyone would be deported. In regard to the implied administrative punitive action towards students on financial aid that might honor a picket line, he said: "If the administration takes retaliatory action, if they consider that business as usual is continuing, they are, in my view, ill advised. Such an action can result in nothing but a unification of student support in favor of the faculty."

In reference to Powers' characterization of the parties' gestures towards students as a "wooing", one student asked, "would a threat be construed a wooing?" Mr. Powers responded that, "I do not think effective wooing involves threats of any kind." When asked how students could counter the administrative communications they interpret as threats, he advised, "Your relationship with the administration during a strike should be negotiated beforehand. It would be prudent for student representatives to sit down at a table with members of the administration and engage in a reasoned, mutually respectful discussion of your rights."

Powers summed up by stating a few "fact of life" for students. He said that initial contract negotiations are very often "quite long" in duration. He also presented that negotiating any collegiate faculty union contract is "extraordinarily difficult" because of the nature of what needs to be put in writing. Neither side wants to relinquish in writing powers that have traditionally been held jointly.

Milton Stanzler took the floor by saying that Powers had been objective and fair in his assessments, but that he would take some small issue with what Bill had said. Stanzler stated that in representing faculty unions in contract negotiations, it had been his experience that as long as the union was truly accepted and recognized as being there to stay, agreement could be reached in a matter of months, with no strike, no threat of a strike, and no need for student involvement. Also, according to his experience, items such as a peer review process for faculty hiring, firing, and promotion, peer grievance process for faculty, and faculty input on school governance matters are not that difficult to negotiate in a good faith situation. In fact, these items are generally a basis from which collective bargaining begins. Stanzler then observed that unions generally are not hasty to request binding arbitration, as they stand as much to lose in a 50/50 split as management. Unions are very reticent to surrender their cherished right to negotiate. Stanzler felt the fact that the RISD faculty union is willing to submit to binding arbitration reflects a "great reluctance on the part of the faculty to resort to a strike".

Commenting on the viability of hiring an entire new faculty in the event of a strike, Stanzler said: "It boggles the intelligent mind to think that the faculty of the Rhode Island School of Design, many of whom are top educators and artists in their field, could be replaced."

Calendar

ART SHOWINGS

3/10-3/30

Richard Quinney photographs. Gallery at the First Baptist Church in America, Providence. M-F 10-3, Sat. & Sun. 10-12.

3/11-3/25

"Festivities: Ceremonies and Celebrations in Western Europe 1500-1790." An exhibition featuring births, marriages, funerals, official ceremonies and social gatherings of Europe's royalty as seen from the artist's perspective. Bell Gallery, List Art Building.

3/12-3/23

"The Flower" An exhibition of work done by students during Winter-session, using the flower as a source. Faculty lounge, College Bldg.

3/13-4/3

John Wood, photographs. Photo Gallery, Fine Arts Center, University of R.I., Kingston RI.

NEW YORK

3/13-5/24

"Japanese Culture," New York City, At Cooper Hewitt Museum.

3/20-5/20

"Rembrandt Etchings - Illustrating Scenes from the Bible," New York City, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

RHODE ISLAND

3/14-3/20

Bruce Bergman, prints; Lee Allen Kreindel, prints; Jonathan Lansburg, drawings & prints; Steve Greenburg, glass slide presentation; Paul Stumph, aerial photographs. Woods Gerry Gallery through March 20.

3/15-3/30

Carol Ranson Palombo (RISD alumnae) prints. School One Gallery, 182 Pine St. M-Th 9-11, Fri 9-1, Sat & Sun, 2-6.

3/18-4/5

Jock Sturges, photographs. Anyart Gallery, 5 Steeple St. Opening Sun. Mar. 18, 1-4pm, gallery hours: Tues - Sat 1-4pm.

3/24

"RI Association of Craftsmen" annual Gallery show and sale. March 24 & 25 from 1-5. Slater Mill, Roosevelt Ave, Pawtucket. Anyone interested in entering the show call 821-3376.

3/25

Merle Barnett, audio visual presentation "Paths" at Hera Women's Coop Gallery, 560 Main St., Wakefield RI 2pm.

3/25-3/31

Southern New England Collegiate Drawing and Print Show. Roger Williams College, Bristol, RI. Opening 3/25 3-5pm.

3/27

William W. Leete, small paintings & studies '79. Mar. 27 - Apr. 15 Fine Arts Center URI, Kingston, RI.

3/28

"Fantastic Illustration and Design in Britain 1850 - 1930." RISD Museum - Opening 3/28, 8-11pm. COSTUMES WELCOMED - do indulge your fantasies.

4/2 - 22

"Native American Images." Exhibition in Bell Gallery thru 4/22

Correction: A poetic line in Bruce Helander's review of John Udvardy's sculpture was prevented from "float" ing and made "flat" by an omitted "o". - Ed.

Any judgement of a situation must be based on evidence. In a situation such as the conflict at RISD, a certain amount of the information which might serve as evidence is kept confidential by the parties to the dispute. However, there is considerable information present in the public domain, namely communication presented publicly in open forum, administrative policy, and the words of key individuals. In this climate of suspicion and insinuation, there is nevertheless enough evidence available to students to formulate an informed understanding. I am referring not only to the jargon of bargaining, and the interwoven travesties it represents. The lawyers who lectured the student body on labor law (pp. 11 & 14) emphasized much of the rhetoric emerging from negotiations is an exchange of bluffs and counter-bluffs. The tactics as explained by the lawyers have involved students, but more peripherally and less coercively than the "clarifications of administrative policy" addressed directly to the students on their academic, financial aid, and visa status in case of participation in a walkout. These statements are in direct consideration of the lawyer's assessment that, "it doesn't overstate the case to say that the students will decide the controversy. If they respect the picket lines, the strike will succeed." Given that student opinion is such a decisive factor, it is a natural target for coercion. The faculty's overtures towards students are awkward and transparent, hardly disguising their motivations. The administrative pronouncements are a more sophisticated manipulation, providing both a more urgent object of analysis, and, in terms of students' awareness of their place in the picture, a more fertile evidence of how they are being addressed, or used.

Upon brief inspection Peter Riefler's *Letter to students of 3/9* reveals a circular argument. Federal regulations are enlisted in an effort to justify retaliation against students who respect a picket line. However, the quoted statute doesn't evince an independently enforced federal standard but reroutes the ultimate determination of an individual's standing back to the "standards and practices of the institution in which the individual is enrolled." By now it should be clear to all that the administration reserves the option to interpret policy according to its prerogatives. In the event of a strike the usual standards of academic standing could be suspended, and the lawyers have said that in all likelihood this is just what will happen.

If Peter Riefler's statement was legally viable it would be logically substantiated. It can be concluded from a simple reading that this statement is a coercion. Here I reiterate my initial point that abundant evidence is extant in the public domain from which to judge the intentions of the parties towards students. Through deduction from evidence a critical base is established upon which conflicting information can be judged.

The example of Administrative coercion offered above is the tip of the iceberg. The involvement of the student body in the present crisis has been emphasized by the Administration so that it can be tactically exploited. Students are being given the deciding vote, and steps are being taken to ensure how that vote is cast.

At this point it appears that even members of the Board of Trustees are resolved in protest against the actions of the Executive Board and the President. Two Trustees recently resigned in protest. A meeting of the Board scheduled for Monday 3/19 was cancelled, perhaps on the fear that mavericks would make waves. When Nancy Davis, Student Board president, invited Trustees to address students in the Auditorium

(after this paper goes to press) she excluded any dissident elements from the lower echelons by limiting her invitation to Executive Board members.

I will defer from judging this particular act until I have documented others. Suffice it to say that the role of students cannot be overestimated when even members of the Board of Trustees have to be kept away from the campus lest they voice dissident convictions.

As a gesture originating outside the student body but aimed directly at us, Riefler's strikes a little closer to home than the fallout from the bargaining table. From the statement, one can read two things—the Administration is practicing sophisticated exploitation of language and is not above dishonesty. These observations inform a broader investigation of Woods-Gerry's strategy against students. Once they have adopted methods of coercion there is no reason to suppose they would abandon them, especially as the crisis draws near.

If students at large are courted or manipulated by the bargaining factions, student leaders must provide a particularly tempting target. Any faction successfully ensnaring a student leader has the leverage necessary to win in the showdown. Beyond peripheral influence from the Administration, student opinion can be the subject of a campaign of covert manipulation initiated by Woods-Gerry but carried out from within.

I became suspicious that Nancy Davis, student board president, was the operative of such a campaign during the search for a lawyer carried out a week ago. The student meeting (report pp. 9 + 10) produced an initiative but not a method for securing a lawyer. Nancy assumed the responsibility of single handedly securing a counsel responsive to student needs.

Given student impressionability I knew the words of a lawyer would have a persuasive effect on their response to a picket line. I felt the search for a lawyer should be shared by several students to ensure the selection of an objective counsel. The firm Nancy contacted, though it shares no trustee affiliation, was an expensive prestigious corporate law firm which in labor disputes represents only an labor disputes. The choice seemed to me inappropriate given the kind of counsel students would require. There are many interpretations of the law and a management spokesman seemed professionally biased. In light of Nancy's employment at Woods-Gerry, and frequent communication with Lee Hall and other top Administrators, I suspected she had been advised to choose a lawyer representing just that bias. The individual lawyer students heard in the Auditorium on 3/15 made an enlightening presentation which transcended the bias active in his selection. However I pursued my doubts about this selection, and other gestures of Nancy's leadership, in an investigation and an interview (p. 12). My conclusion, that Nancy was planted as an operative by the Administration, is my own responsibility. Individuals may glean what they can from the interview.

In a sustained investigation the statements of the individual investigated include gaps and ambiguities which when analyzed reveal their hidden intent. I hypothesized that Nancy's statements, if genuinely prompted by Lee Hall and crew, would in inverse form constitute the Administration's strategy towards students. Aware of the ramifications of a student-ramified faculty strike, Woods-Gerry's program for student involvement runs something like this:

- 1) Nothing is likely to happen right away. "I don't think we're in a crisis situation." (Delay student involvement under the guise of collecting information.)
- 2) The Union will tell us before it strikes. "I believe they'll tell us first."
- 3) Don't formulate a collective position before a strike announcement. Act separately and reactively. "The only time students can make a decision is if there is a strike."
"Students need to know what the risks (financial aid status, etc.) are... so they can make individual decisions." (Whatever you do don't unite as a powerful body willing to exercise its clout.)
- 4) There are only two parties to this dispute, and students, in acting, must align themselves with one or the other. "I don't buy (a third, or independent position). I believe if you walk out of your classes, you clearly support the Union."
- 5) If you act, you'll be sorry. "I would hate to see a group of students who felt they could be protected by the Union forfeit their financial aid status of credit status."
- 6) Don't protest.
- 7) Trustees will announce at Monday night's meeting that they will close the school if a strike is called.

These positions clearly formulate the roll students are being asked to play. Its importance dictates that we not focus attention on vindication of an individual like Nancy. I call for her speedy resignation from student board presidency. Beyond that, I feel the nature of her role should simply be allowed to illustrate the inscrupulous abuse of individuals that is being practiced by the Administration. In itself, I feel the episode exhibits the corruption of the Administration, and the nature of the pall hanging over this campus.

David K. Miller
Editor

Calendar

THEATRE -- POETRY -- FILMS -- LECTURES

3/26-4/3

John Thornton, paintings. Bridgewater State College Art Gallery. Gallery hours Mon thru Fri 10-3. Gallery talk Apr. 3, 12:00.

3/19

Board of Trustees of RISD appear before the student body Mon 7pm in the auditorium.

3/20

Peru 1979 twenty eight days in Peru. 8pm in RISD auditorium.

3/24

Concert by Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Providence, 8pm at Veterans Memorial Auditorium.

3/25

Poetry Reading, Bill Knott. Anyart Gallery, 5 Steeple St. 8pm.

3/27

The Brown Theatre Arts Department will present a dance/lecture performance by the actors and dancers of the Yakshagana dance-drama from South India at 4pm in the Faunce House theatre. The performance is part of the troupe's first national tour, as part of the program presented by the Performing Arts Program of the Asia Society. Admission is free. The Faunce House Theatre is located on the corner of Brown and Waterman Streets. For further information, phone 863-2838. "At dusk, the beat of the drums entices people to come to the dance-drama, which is usually performed outdoors under a tropical night sky."

3/30

"Death of a Salesman" opens 3/30 8pm, Trinity Square Repertory Co. 201 Washington St. Performances: Tues-Sun at 8pm, matinees: Wed, Sat, Sun 2pm. Reservations 351-4242

3/27

American Fiction Now Series...Brian Moore Tues. 7:30, RISD auditorium.

4/1

Poetry Reading, Theodore Endlin. Anyart Gallery, 5 Steeple St. 8pm.

4/4

Bookbinding lessons start. \$80 for info call 863-2525.

4/5-5/10

Electron Movers is offering a series of classes in the production of Slide/Tape Presentations. Thursday nights 7:30-9:30. April 5 to May 10 in the 4th floor of the Ocean State Theater - 228 Weybossett St., Prov. \$50 reg. fee 401-272-4305.

4/8

Poetry Reading, Barbara Guest. Anyart Gallery, 5 Steeple St. 8pm.

4/10

Anne Beattie.

4/16

John C. Ewers. Rm. 120 List Auditorium. Lecture.

4/17

Film - "The Shadow Catcher" 7:30, location to be announced.

Advertisement

College House Pharmacy

We offer a better selection of imported wine and beer than an average liquor store.



268 Thayer Street,
Providence
274-0033

BLUE POINT



OYSTER BAR - RESTAURANT

fresh seafood daily
fine wine - spirits

mon-fri: 11:30 - 3 lunch mon-thurs: 6 - 10 dinner
fri & sat.: 6 - 11 dinner
closed sundays

99 North Main Street, Providence
(401) 272-6145



repro-stat

- HOURS -
8:30 - 5:00

Monday thru Friday

Closed on legal holidays

Closed for vacation
the week of July 4th

49 Peck St. 331-3780

Solomon's Market

"alta moda mexicana"
by gonzalo bauer

wedding dresses

madeline carol

exclusive women's apparel

357 s. main st.
providence, r.i.



"salt, pepper,
celery salt?"

sandwiches- to

go or stay

at

geoff-'s

benefit st.

Some things cooking downtown

Julien's
mon & tues. wed → sat
3:00 8:30

soups stews pasta quiche salad desserts
wines beers

Phone 421-6700

Clark's
Flowers Shop, Inc.

294 Thayer Street
Corner of Cushing

"In the Heart of the East Side"



PORTLAND SCHOOL OF ART, MAINE SUMMER SESSION 1979

Study art this summer on the incomparable coast of Maine. Six week courses, all offering college credit. Also special weekend workshops and special programs for pre-art students (11th and 12th grades) and transfers. Write or call for brochure.

The Registrar
Portland School of Art
97 Spring Street
Portland, Maine 04101
207-775-3052

CERAMICS
PAINTING
SCULPTURE
GRAPHIC DESIGN
WATERCOLOR
PHOTOGRAPHY
SILKSCREEN
DRAWING
CALLIGRAPHY
2 AND 3D DESIGN
ENGLISH
ART HISTORY