

# Open Letter from Feitler

A tenacious group of Bard students started Feitler in 1998, as they sought an alternative to Chartwells and traditional dorm life by creating a more intentional communal space. In the last 17 years, the administration has attempted to shut Feitler down on several occasions, but has been met with strong resistance from the student body. We are currently in danger of being altered and/or closed again, and we hope to work with the administration to provide a positive solution to keep Feitler alive!

The Feitler Co-Op strives to build a welcoming, productive, and alternative community at Bard. With democratic consensus-based decisions and a co-operative focus, we run a sustainable home in which we eat, live, teach, and share in a decidedly local lifestyle. We are a dormitory, a dining hall, a community space, and a co-operative that intentionally welcomes Bard students and the greater community. This environment encourages creative systems that empower residents to run the home through leadership and responsibility. Residents engage with the house and the community through cooking, cleaning, maintenance chores, meetings, and friendship. On weeknights we host public meals providing ethically sourced vegan, gluten-free, and vegetarian food, and we have a public community dinner every Thursday at 7pm (although anyone is welcome to join us at anytime!). Feitler strives for the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, caring for others, self-help/self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and community solidarity. We are the only housing option on campus with an open-door policy and perhaps the only housing option on campus that has successfully created and maintained a sense of community on campus.

Bard is a school that strives to promote thought and civic engagement, with the college's motto even being "A Place to Think." The college's Language and Thinking Program and Citizen Science are dedicated to nurturing thought and community engagement. It should come as no surprise that Feitler and its co-operative living are directly aligned with Bard's core values of community engagement, alternative thought, ethics, democracy, and sustainability. Furthermore, Feitler is one of the only spaces on campus where students can come and identify alternative styles of engaging, thinking, and living. Without Feitler Co-Op, students will lose the opportunity to identify alternative systems of living and may never find a strong and welcoming sense of community at Bard.

Feitler is a core part of Bard's rich history, a critical part of student life, and a pillar of community. As a co-operative devoted to the wellbeing of Bard's social, political, and ethical climate, we ask that the community we actively try to foster join and support us in this time of need. We would greatly appreciate if you would email us testimonials about why co-operative living options are important to Bard, the benefits of co-ops, and the need for the community that Feitler generates, as this response will be critical in showing the administration the abundant support that Feitler has. Please email us at [feitlerhousecoop@gmail.com](mailto:feitlerhousecoop@gmail.com) and help keep Feitler alive at Bard! Additionally, Feitler is accepting applications for the upcoming school year, so please check the Bard website if you are interested!