

The Monitor

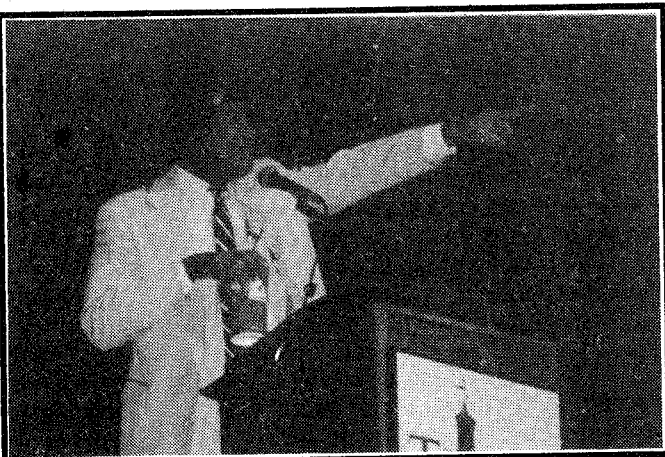
A Campus Collective

02 February, 1999
Volume 5, Number 10

Human State University's only source for thorough coverage of community issues, student affairs, politics and culture

Bobby Seale speaks to a packed Baldwin Auditorium on humanism, the Black Panther Party and DVD-ROM.

photo by
Jesse Pasley



Seale visit informs, entertains

by Jesse Pasley

"A lotta shit's changed," he said, in reference to America's progress on race relations. On Wednesday, January 27, co-founder of the Black Panther Party, Bobby Seale, came to Baldwin Hall to speak on his political ideologies, his involvement with the Black Panthers in the 1960's and the media's portrayal of the Black Panthers. Seale also answered questions from the audience after his rather lengthy and shamelessly plug-filled speech.

Bobby Seale, along with Huey Newton, founded the Black Panther Party in 1966 in Oakland, California. Seale spent four years in the Air Force and worked on the Gemini missile project during his attendance of college. But after seeing a greater need for Black liberation, Seale quickly spread his organization and political ideologies throughout America's inner cities. Seale is most famous for being the eighth person in the Chicago Seven, when he and seven white radicals attempted to disrupt the Democratic National Convention in 1969. Through the Black Panther Party, Seale preached self-defense, Black self-reliance, and "all the power to all the people."

Because of media distortion through movies like *Panther*, which he described as "90 percent fiction," Seale, a self-described "humanist revolutionary," attempted to show the true motivations of the Black Panther Party and to separate the BPP from black nationalist groups and the Nation of Islam. He also talked of the FBI's role in spreading misinformation through their counter-intelligence programs. While the Black Panther Party is portrayed in much of the media as racists, thugs, and hoodlums, Seale rebuts these claims with the facts that the BPP started free grade-school breakfasts, clothing drives, and many educational, housing and neighborhood watch programs all over the United States.

Bobby Seale, during his talk, not only discussed some of the history of the Black Panthers, but also highlighted the political ideologies behind his actions and demands. Quickly transforming the ideological debate from the 'passe' "black vs. white" issue into an intelli-

gent argument for socialist revolution, Seale spoke with great knowledge of political power struggles. To Bobby Seale, he saw his crusade as a fight against both the monopolistic capitalism and the "politburo" command economies.

Though sometimes going off on tangents concerning some of his rougher moments in life, Seale stressed the very Maoist-like idea of "constitutional, direct democracy, community control" throughout his speech. Stressing the need for support of grassroots organizations was also a main concern of Seale. Lastly, Mr. Seale made the interesting point that the event of Black Unity should be used as a catalyst to humanize society.

But all political mumbo-jumbo aside: this guy really knew how to connect with the audience. Finally, here was a guest at Truman that was interesting, controversial, important and it was actually fun to attend his speech. With many people still yawning from last year's visits from the Guerilla Girls and F. W. De Klerk., it was refreshing to see a guest speaker that could make his stance with intelligence, even if you didn't agree with his politics.

Seale also had the guts to say things that many college speakers wouldn't have dared said. He cursed and he yelled, connecting to the audience in a humorous and spirited manner. Making references to "equal-opportunity bullets" and "cheap-ass, low-life, scurvy Republicans," Seale raised a few eyebrows and laughs. Seale also encouraged people to watch more Discovery and TLC. "That's some good shit." Controversial, yes, but spoken like a true revolutionary.

As interesting as Mr. Seale's speech was, there seemed to be an abounding amount of plugs for his books and web pages. The first fifteen minutes of his talk was devoted to his "enhanced DVD-ROM." He even managed to get a reference to his barbecue recipe book somewhere in his discussion.

Despite the occasional sense of QVC in his speech, Bobby Seale proved himself a well-spoken man. Maybe he's a man you might not agree with, or you might totally agree with, but either way, he has proven himself to be an important figure in American history.

Panel to discuss race relations

by Dan Capotosto

A question for the reader: If asked to scale your opinion of the current relations among ethnic groups on Truman's campus, how would you reply? 10=good...5=neutral...1=need improvement. I have had no personal experience with any problems or confrontations; I would say the situation is easily on the good end of the spectrum.

I am assuming my encounters are similar to those of most of us on this campus, but that's the problem, isn't it? As we all know, but tend to forget, some don't have the same experiences as others. We all have our own individual vantage point. We all have a separate outlook as a member of this or that group of people. This is easy to understand; what's hard to conceive is an empathy for those others. Nobody will ever force you to consider the views of others but, assuming that you came to this university for an education, contemplate the extent of an education confined to the same people, places, and things you knew before arriving here.

Understand that the opening question put to you will not be graded--no one is looking over your shoulder, nobody even wants to score your response. Now ask yourself the question again.

In response to this inquest, April Warren-Grice and Julie Amico gave this statement: "The women of Delta Sigma Theta Inc. will be presenting a panel discussion on race relations. It has been brought to our attention that people of

different ethnic backgrounds don't communicate well with one another on this campus. This is not a climate that fosters good relations among students. We hope our Race Relations Forum will be beneficial in opening lines of communication."

Instead of lecturing college-educated students on something they already know, I refer you to an opportunity to become aware. The opportunity comes in the form of a question-answer session tonight at 8p.m.

Warren-Grice and Amico aim at an open discussion fostering honesty while suppressing ridicule. Emphasized is the opportunity for a candid and encouraging atmosphere--something that isn't available in most situations. Questions developed through several weeks of survey will be put to a multicultural panel of five students. After they have a go-round, the query will be opened up to the floor. "The questions are intended more as a lead-in for further audience discussion," Warren-Grice continued. "There is plenty of room, and we expect to draw a good showing."

Both Amico and Warren-Grice want to make clear the multiethnic range of participants. "This is not a black and white thing. We want people to know that this involves everybody," Amico said.

The Race Relations Forum will commence Tuesday, 2 February (THAT'S TONIGHT) at 8:00 p.m. in Centennial Hall's main lounge. "Be there and voice your opinion."--EVERYONE is invited.

Private Eyes showing soon

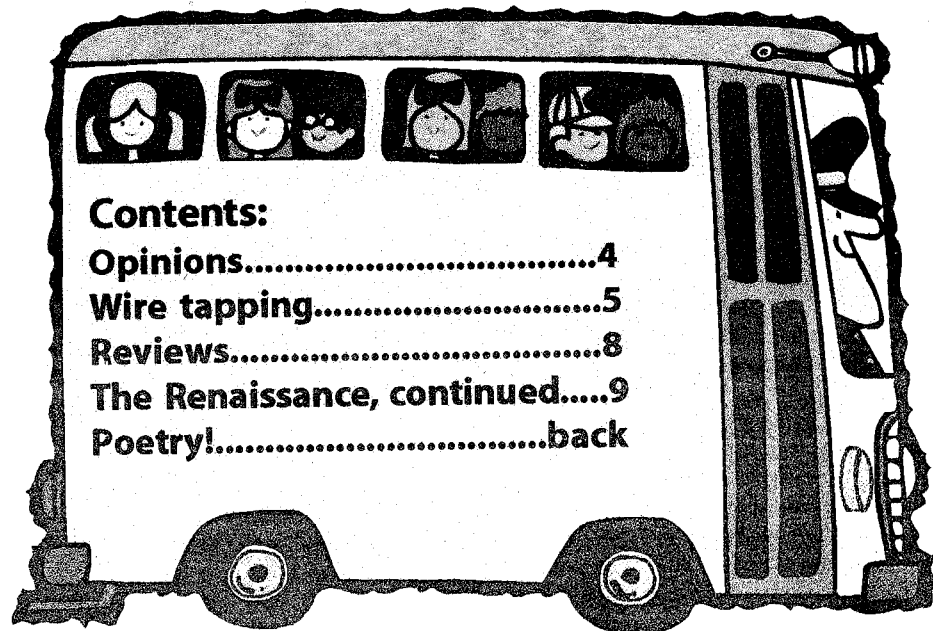
by Holly Cerny

Lust, betrayal, passion, and love will grab you and not let you go in *Private Eyes*, the next play to be performed in the Studio Theater. While only able to glimpse a snippet, I was enthralled by the performance of five individuals as they explored what has been dubbed "a play within a play." Director Jen Schlueter explains that while intensely passionate and moving, ultimately *Private Eyes* is a "comedy of suspicion." The characters of Matthew, Lisa, Corrie and Adrienne weave through a juxtaposition of their "real" lives and a play they are performing. Yes, the characters themselves are involved in putting on a play within the actual play itself. As a reader, if you are thoroughly confused, you must attend a performance for elucidation.

Tapping into universal human emotions, the characters evoke feelings of regret, sadness

and true love. Without even seeing the play in its entirety, I felt the pain and deceit that was being conveyed masterfully by the actors. Not to detract from its comedic intent, a therapist played by Brent Hunsaker helps lighten the edgy scenes of the play. Overall, I am certain the play will be a crowd pleaser. Not many people can resist a tale of deception, infidelity and romance. The strong presence of the cast will ensure that the audience does not walk away feeling as if they witnessed a soap opera.

Now that you are anxiously anticipating a performance, some words of advice. Seating is limited and there are no reservations. Show times begin Wednesday, February 10 at 8:00 p.m. and run through Saturday, with a 10:00 p.m. show added after the 8:00 on Friday and Saturday. The place is the Studio Theater in Baldwin Hall. Make sure to see it, or a P.I. will hunt you down.



The Monitor

Campus Collective
Independent Quality
Since 1995

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The Monitor Campus Collective unless otherwise noted.

The Monitor is published every other Tuesday.
Each writer is responsible for his or her own work.

"The important thing is not to stop questioning.
Curiosity has its own reason for existing."
- Albert Einstein



Aries (March 21-April 20): The moon is in your house of love. It's time to let loose all your pent-up frustrations. Kiss! Hug! But at all costs, do not visit the zoo.

Taurus (April 21-May 21): A change in your diet may make you a little restless this week. Use this excess energy to give beloved personal hygiene items a thorough cleaning with your tongue.

Gemini (May 22-June 21): Feeling a little left out lately, Gemini? Demand an explanation from your so-called friends. Call as many times as it takes. Don't let them off easy!

Queen Astra

Let the stars be your guide!!!

Cancer (June 22-July 23): Karma is finally working in your direction, Cancer. You may want to make an investment; the payoff will leave you happier than a six-dicked dog.

Leo (July 24-August 23): Karma is finally coming 'round to give you what you deserve, Leo. You can run, but you can't hide. Own up to it, Leo.

Virgo (August 24-September 23): The worst is yet to come. In order to deal with it, keep your options open and your head in a haze. Purple, if you will.

Libra (September 24-October 23): Don't despair this week, Libra; if Michael Jackson can be a father, anything is possible. Buy one white-sequined glove. It just might help.

Scorpio (October 24-November 22): Apathy has got you down. If you quit doing the naughty by yourself, you might have enough gumption to get off your arse and do something.

Sagittarius (November 23-December 21): Everyone knows what you're up to. Quit being so selfish. We all know dirty duds can be done dirt cheap, but they aren't around here.

Capricorn (December 22-January 20): Living vicariously through others' dreams can leave you feeling empty inside. But luckily, the sun is in your house of psychoanalysis, so it might not be that bad.

Aquarius (January 21-February 19): Provide fun, interactive ways for kids to learn about managing money. They don't have to call you their pimp. Clear it with mom.

Pisces (February 20-March 20): You need to get out, Pisces. You know your sign has the propensity to seclude. Everyone will think you're a snob; then again, that may not be far off the mark.

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The Task Force on Diversity, which has been charged with identifying critical issues of diversity on the Truman campus, will be holding a public forum to discuss diversity issues with the university community.

**The forum will be held
Tuesday, February 9, 1999
from 4:30-6:00p.m.
in the Governor's Room of the
SUB.**

All interested parties are urged to attend and share their ideas and experiences.

Hey Monitor! That damn shadow got me again. P.P.

Letters

Send letters -- not too long, not too short -- to the mailbox in the CAOC, or e-mail us at monitortrm@hotmail.com

Free Speech my ass

Something terrible is happening on the Truman campus. Once again, the hands of oppression are trying to take up our lives in their iron grip of death. As usual, these hands start with a light touch upon our foreheads. Almost as if to offer us some comfort in this world of evil and chaos. But we must recognize this evil and throw off these hands as we would with the hands of a frat boy when he gets too fresh. But I digress, let me begin this story at the beginning.

I have a friend, a friend who enjoys pinball. He particularly enjoyed the Shaquille O'Neal game in the SUB. His name is Alan Sam Smith. This friend enjoys pinball so much, that he managed to get the second and fourth highest scores. All was good in his life. Alan had finally done exceedingly well on something. His life was bliss.

Then tragedy struck. Alan had just finished playing pinball, when he decided to look at the high scores so he could admire his own scores. Alas! His scores had vanished like the prom dress of a varsity cheerleader. How could this happen!? How could ten people have beaten his high scores. Alan had to check again to make sure. And then he found the brutal truth. The "new" high score was less than either of his high scores. Apparently, Gottleib (for I hope that the "Harvard of the Midwest" couldn't be associated with such a crime against humanity) felt that Alan's initials, A.S.S., weren't appropriate for the high score section of their pinball games. So Alan was to be erased from the record books and Alan was to be a ghost, for no better reason than his initials. Merely, because of the letters that began his first, middle, and last names, it has been decided that Alan is to be erased from history. Such injustice cannot be

allowed to continue. This is not just a terrible crime against Alan, but this atrocity would prevent the Alissa Stephanie Stewarts, the Arnold Stephen Shultes, the Alec Simon Salingers, and any other A.S.S.'s from being able to make their impact in the pinball gaming industry. In fact fully one third of all people in America, are to be snubbed out of existence merely by the elimination of the initials A.S.S. (This is a made-up statistic that is untrue bordering on idiotic, but the point still remains.)

There may be some of you who would say that no one cares about the high scores on a pinball machine or that it is inappropriate to have "A.S.S." in the high score section. To you, I say that this is clearly just the beginning. If we accept this injustice, it is only a matter of time before anyone without the initials of time before anyone without the initials of H.R.P. will be killed. Killed because they don't have the name of H. Ross Perot. For this incident bears all the earmarks of yet another plot by Perot to take over the world (you are now entering the section of this letter known as the tangent). After all, who else, but Perot has the time and money to attempt a takeover by name erasing. Ross is clearly planning to force us all to tak on his namesake, and then once that is done, he will get on TV and tell us:

"Now y'all got my name, so it's as simple as a whore without legs, y'all gotta do what I say. It's just that simple."

And having already surrendered our right to identity to this evil megalomaniac, it will be all too easy for us to just comply and become slaves. And once we're his slaves, he'll take our souls. Well, not me! I, for one, am going to take a stand! I'm sending Ross a message! My name is mine, and so is my soul. So back off! But I can't fight this evil alone. I need your help. So everyone who's with me needs to meet me in Columbia at 7:00AM on February 27th. From there, we'll siege to Perot's Texas Ranch. And our call to battle will be: "This one's for ASS!"

Ass Asston

Iles' thoughts on Seale

As I heard in person the excellent Bobby Seale (even though I did not like what he had to "pro" say in favor of guns as "self-defense" in

"the neighborhoods") come under fire from all conceivable sides last night in the Baldwin Hall packed auditorium for his being in favor of "democratic co-operative community control socialism" as contrasted with other commoner forms of socialism he delineated, I could not melancholily help but reflect. I reflected on the death of my staunch friend back in England, Ron Huzzard, who was head of the very independent-minded British Labour party peace action group I have the honor to be the sole representative of in your country.

Even though he was an "activist," like Seale not given to "theory" exposition, he would have had no difficulty in understanding exactly what Seale was driving at: to a sometimes-baffled audience. Indeed "Ron," although much quieter and less mercurially explosive than your Bobby in temperament, would have related most to Seale's remarks!

As Seale described incident after incident from real Black Panther party history in which his radicalism was tested by police and media brutality and harassment. It is difficult being a radical in conformist "west" society.

Indeed my own mind swept back to one wind-swept, cold, drizzling rainy early Saturday morning, 1995, late September in my home coastal town of Brighton. There was Ron, myself and a handful of brave elderly working class lady "aides" of us leafleteering the delegates of the now-governing national British Labour party convention in favor of social reform/peace expenditures and slashing pro-US NATO/UK arms collaboration policies.

I never ceased to be amazed how my elderly cough-ridden Quaker friend kept his calm "activist socialism" upbeat, alive, despite the fact that some of the well-off "in-suits" aides of present British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, were palpably rude, almost to the point of wanting to spit and assault him for trying to shove an unwelcome leaflet in their arms. I had to restrain myself by contrast!

Having also experienced in 7 years, out of my 21 total years history/literature teaching career survey college American teaching, the sort of gross bafflement and variety of spectrum reactions Bobby Seale and my late friend, Ron, have undergone about what "socialism" really means, may I therefore attempt some generally

valid generalizations in risk for you? Seale said, categorically, in his talk last night, it does not mean for him "Russian-style, top state command economy imposition" which in subsequent audience questioning he defined properly as an "extreme pole" over-reaction to the sort of "avaricious monopoly corporate capitalism" he, 1999, now warned was "global." Agreed! My own first effort as a radical youngster was to publicly campaign for Soviet "mental" hospital imprisoned youth "dissidents" in an acknowledged letter I still proudly (16 year-old) possess from the then British foreign secretary, Lord Home, the late. Even though I still defend 1917!

But I have to be honest, as Seale was! No great matter how many valid definitions of alternative non-USSR "socialisms" we give, as he did, from elected governing parties like Germany's and France's, to his cited Afro-"market"-socialism of Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe in one-party state, I don't think you can evade ethos!

Socialism does believe in government economics, whether at Seale's US "credit union"-subsidised but decentralized level, or my own US party's state-aided "worker co-operatives." This, I submit, readers, is our point of departure; from those of you who are valued "radical liberal," "Green," or "Libertarian anarchist" friends. If you do not have such an economic control insistent ethos of production for "use," not just "profit," how do you ever curb the vicious, selfish, racist side of mere status individual greed? Any answers out there, folks?

Larry Iles

Random thoughts on concert, AAUP, etc.

by Dane Stangler
There has been so much going on lately that it is hard to write a column and just stick to one topic. So this will probably be a sort of piecemeal opinion piece.

I attended the Jabali Afrika music concert Friday evening and was thoroughly impressed with the group. They did an excellent job of getting the crowd into it and putting on an entertaining performance. The soft a cappella singing complemented the upbeat dance songs and helped set a pace for the show. Kudos to SAB for bringing them in for a fairly small amount of money. I hope they can bring in a really cool band before this semester is up. They scored big with Goldfinger last year and need to do the same thing this year. I am in favor of bringing in small but talented bands that tour the college circuit. Bands such as MxPx and The Mr. T Experience and Bad Religion come through this area frequently -- could we get them to stop off here and play a fly show?

Did anyone read the article about professors on page seven or visit the website? Some of the comments are very startling and can get you thinking about the actual condition of our school. If the professors are not completely

happy, are they going to give 100% in their classes? While I am sure that some of the problems are directly tied to the administration and its structure, the professors treat other problems (such as salaries and textbooks) as if they are particular to this university. But they sound like usual complaints that you would hear at any university or job occupation for that matter. While I agree that salaries should be more equal, this problem is not peculiar to Truman.

But the teacher comments really do cause us to wonder what the "culture" here is and what the state of the intellectual environment is. Are things really that bad at the administrative level and tensions so high among the faculty?

One comment especially interested me. The professor was complaining about the closed culture here and how no public discussion of issues takes place. It is true. Did faculty ever come forward with austere complaints before this website came about? And the website is not even advertised well. How many people actually visit it? And how many of those people leave comments and opinions? More discussion of issues needs to take place at this school, professors and students.

Can we just forget this whole impeach-

ment thing? It is mostly personal anyway. Republicans harbor a personal hatred of Clinton and they mix this up with their politics. Even before any of this scandal broke, Republicans were calling for Clinton's impeachment, just because they didn't like him.

Why do they hate him so? Because Clinton has stolen their thunder. On issues such as crime and welfare reform, Clinton has stepped forward and taken these issues away from the Republicans. And while we are on the topic of politics, I have some questions. Why the hell do some Republicans vote to repeal the assault-weapons ban? That is the dumbest thing I have ever heard of. And why are Republicans so anti-homosexual? I am not gay, but I don't hate homosexuals -- they are people the same as anyone else.

State governments should actually listen to their constituents and legalize marijuana for medicinal purposes, instead of ignoring votes and referendums that favor it.


The third floor of the library needs to be jazzed up a bit more. There is space up there for more of those gray desks that encircle the second floor or those wooden desks on the first floor.

Hey Monitor readers!

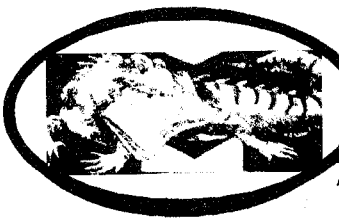
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"If I've got something to say, sir, I'm gonna say it now."
-Phil Ochs

Pathways need to be used

by Ben Braun

Well, the snow has melted in Kirksville. Though it is only January, the temperatures have warmed up from the -31 degree windchills of late December to the highs of 40 recently. And with the higher temperatures have come melting snow and thunderstorms. This leads to one major effect upon our world: The ground is soaked with water.

Yes indeed, the grass is soaked through to the dirt, and the dirt to the stone, and the stone to the mantle of the earth, where the rain is sucked into giant aquifers and then sucked back to the surface by big machines people build with the express intent of draining all the freshwater from the earth's crust and emptying the aquifers, causing a huge sinkhole which will swallow us all and cause the earth to implode. But that isn't the concern of us here in Kirksville; that is one for a bigger town like Arkansas. The concern that these rains bring to us can be summed up in one word: mud.

It is really muddy here. Now, most people, it seems to me, would have the intelligence to stay OFF of the mud and let it firm up, not to mention staying off the dried mud (aka dirt patch) so as to allow it to grow a new covering of grass. But foolish mortal that I am, I forget certain things about the world around us which super-sapient people around me remember, things such as the fact that, no matter how much you tell them otherwise, many people think that mud and grass are the same thing.

This can be observed routinely if you stand outside the entrance to the Library and face the Kirk Memorial during the springtime. Just in front of you on the ground, cutting across a little corner of un-concreted land, is a gaping trough, a veritable chasm in the ground caused by the treading of feet

over it day after day. It seems that people cannot walk on the pathways that their tuition dollars pay for, rather preferring to save the approximately 1.8976 seconds by cutting across the grassy portion. Or, muddy portion as I now see it. An interesting aspect of this behavior is that people don't seem to realize that they are walking on dirt rather than grass. When asking someone what they are doing as they are cutting across along the barren gorge, they will often reply "I am cutting across the grass."

This illogical reasoning can even be seen now, in the wintertime. Ironically, in the same place where the dirt path lies during the springtime, there is now a mud path in the winter, created by people cutting across the snowy/melting fields in order to save not quite 2 seconds of their time. I have not had the opportunity to ask anyone yet, but I wonder, would they tell me that they are cutting across the grass? Because in this case, not only is it dirt that they are trodding on, it is a big, slimy, sticky, oozing pile of mud that has been churned up by lots of shoes, shoes that now are muddy and dirty for no reason. In other words, people wander around in the mud instead of walking on a clean, shoveled path, and they don't seem to realize that they are being stupid.

This is a problem.

While perhaps not as dire as the general end-of-the-world scenario created by the aquifer-draining, sinkhole-causing issue, this problem is a definite one. And it needs a definite solution. Fortunately, a simple solution is out there for us.

Stop walking in the mud, you idiots. It's dirty, and it looks ugly because it rips up the grass. So, long story short, quit it.

Problem solved.

demands this extreme level of exaltation because he is appointed directly by God is biblically weak.

Compared to other men of the cloth, the Pope has an easy job. He isn't doing relief work for countries hit by disaster. He isn't debating the validity of Christianity on college campuses with the best minds in the world. He's not a military chaplain on the front lines. He isn't performing mission work in a treacherous jungle somewhere or translating the Bible into an obscure tribal language.

That isn't to say that his service isn't of value, because anyone that serves God glorifies Him, regardless of the size of their contribution (and the Pope does contribute more than many people). But the papacy reminds me of so many professional athletes that we admire. Like them, the Pope provides a needed service, but there are other people that perform services that deserve more of our respect.

You could list a million different people. The evangelists that work in our inner cities. The pastor that leads a small rural congregation for little pay. The individual that stands up for their faith at the risk of losing face with their peers. The apologists that stand firm in their

Hulshof addresses district

by Shawn Gilmore

For some reason or another, I've never committed to one political party or another. It's not that I really have a problem with either one but that there's never been a truly compelling reason for me to speak out for either Democrats or Republicans (not to mention the numerous thousands of independent parties that seem to spring up around election time). Kenny Hulshof's "State of the District" address last Monday evening did nothing to change all of that, but, for a moment at least, I stopped to think about the district around us.

For those of you that don't know, Kirksville is located in the 9th District, which basically comprises the north-east corner of the state of Missouri. In 1996 Kenny Hulshof Republican was elected as this district's congressman. Since then, he has given a "State of the District" address that follows the President's "State of the Union." Last year, Hulshof gave the address at the University of Missouri-Columbia, and this year he chose Truman State.

Many of you are probably asking yourself why any of this really matters. The truth is: it may not matter to you at all. But I happen to be from Montgomery County, which is also in the 9th District. The chance for me to hear one of my direct representatives in the United States government seemed to be something I couldn't pass up.

Hulshof said many times that the evening was not a partisan event, which did allay some of my initial fears. Most politicians would have used the evening a way to muster support, garnering votes for some future election. But Hulshof took a higher road and did what all true representatives of the people should do: he reported on what he had been doing on our behalf, and then he directly answered questions from the people.

Most of his speech centered on three main topics: the impeachment of President Clinton, improvements to the IRS and Social Security, and highway programs. I will skip the impeachment and only say that Hulshof voted "yes" on three of the four articles of impeachment. He justified his actions by his own moral standards and claimed not to have acted along party lines.

Hulshof mentioned major improvements concerning the right of defendants in tax court cases, as well as current developments regarding the future funding of Social Security. For the most part, this was interesting information. I will admit though, that I was curious to find out about the expansion of Highway 63.

On four separate occasions, the issue came up. Here is the story, according to Hulshof. All nine of the representatives from the state of Missouri fought for funding from the federal government to expand Highway 63. They were successful in securing \$31.5 million. But that money only went directly to the Missouri Department of Transportation, which then was allowed to decide how to spend the funds.

Somewhere along the way, the Department of Transportation realized that they had miscalculated the total cost for the project and revamped the scheduling and funding accordingly. Currently, the best concrete hope that we have for a four-lane expansion anytime in the near future is a 15-year plan by the Department of Transportation. Hulshof did vow to fight for a widening of Highway 63 in the very near future.

All in all, the speech actually impressed me with Hulshof's manner, as well as his willingness to follow the will of the people. Opportunities to see one's representatives come along very rarely, and I'm glad that I took this one.

Pope enthusiasts confuse man and God

by Tom Wheatley

Did you hear? The Pope's in town!

Well, he's not actually in town, but this is as close to K-ville as he's going to get. The national media has thrown quite a bit of coverage at the arrival of John Paul II. In light of the wholesale shutdown of a major metropolitan area because of the arrival of one man, the whole situation warrants a little scrutiny.

The way that individuals act towards the Pope is somewhat troubling. There are thousands of people lining the streets to get a glimpse of him. They scream like teenage Beatles fans when he enters a room. They yell things like, "We love you, Holy Father!" They thrust their children in front of him to touch.

This sounds a lot like the way people acted around another individual about 2000 years ago. The critical difference is that only one of them is God.

Indeed, the Pope is not God, but this seems to get lost occasionally amidst the hype and exaltation of the office of the papacy.

Why does this extreme adulation continue? The Pope is an instrument of God, just like every other Christian. However, he is not God. Nor is he holy. The idea that he or his office

faith and present the compelling evidence for Christianity to every atheist, Marxist, Buddhist, humanist and every other "ist" you can think of. The unknown and forgotten who have been martyred throughout the ages for their faith.

The most glamour these men and women get is maybe respectful applause when they begin a lecture or a hug from someone whose life they have touched. They don't live in their own city or ride in a "Popemobile."

Yet, without them, Christianity would be an empty following, a dead religion. Even the glorious office of the papacy would cease to exist.

If you went and saw the Pope, great. It's even okay to get a little excited to see him drive by. After all, he is an excellent Christian. People could do worse than follow his teachings.

But he is just a man. He's a sinner and needs God's forgiveness and absolution just like every other person.

One could learn a lot from the teachings of the Pope. They could also learn a lot from Billy Graham, C.S. Lewis, or Josh McDowell. When we do learn more about God from someone, thanks is definitely in order. Let's just make sure that we reserve the glory for God.

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Changes in wire tap laws violate privacy

by Kevin Bersett

Amendment IV: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the person or things to be seized."

On my many drives through the inner depths of Kirksville, from my home a couple of blocks north of Too Tall's to campus or wherever, I usually pass not one, not two, but as many as three different cop cars. It's like I'm going through St. Louis on New Years Eve. Here a cop there a cop everywhere a car-cop.

The weird thing is I have never thought of Kirksville as a really dangerous place. Oh, we have the occasional underwear bandit. And they tell me there are a lot of methheads up here, and apparently we got a lot of stray dogs 'cause I always see that sporty animal control vehicle buzzing around town. But you can pretty much avoid those problems (except for the underwear bandit, I'm lost on how to handle that) by following a simple adage attributed to Neal Cassady, "Even a bad dog won't bite if you talk to him right." By the way, I don't notice too many methheads roaming around the predominantly student residential streets these cops so vigorously patrol. I would say check the trailer parks (no offense), but I guess I'm not an expert on drug-control policy.

So my question is why do we have so many fricking police in this quiet little town?

An article that appeared last fall in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch's* commentary section "On our way to a U.S. Gestapo?" 11/12/98) had me asking the same question. Why?

Last fall, Congress voted to expand the federal wiretapping laws. The old criminal tapping laws that used to make the feds specify the location of the single phone being tapped picked up a host of innocent calls. *USA Today* reported five out of every six calls being tapped were innocent. The Justice Department's own statistics say 80 percent of the conversations recorded under the old wiretap laws were innocent. It seemed a little unnecessary, at least to me, to increase this obvious invasion of privacy.

Let's take a little stroll through wiretapping history.

Under the old statute passed in 1968, a year after the Supreme Court decided phone conversations were protected under the fourth amendment, single-phone wiretaps could be used to gain information unobtainable by other means in the course of a criminal investigation. The specific targets for this law were gambling and organized crime syndicates.

The limitations were that the government officials (cops) would have to plead their case before a federal judge and show probable cause for this action. The wiretap had a 30-day ceiling, which could be extended another 30 days

after another hearing over the probable cause. Like the title states, it is only applied to a single phone.

Let's fast forward to 1996. Lo and behold there are these bombs going off on our American soil (World Trade Center bombing ring a bell?). Congress just couldn't stand for that. And like their approach to crime, they got tough on terrorism. They came together to pass some anti-terrorism legislation. Surprisingly, noble Bill Clinton and the FBI tried to take advantage of this hysteria. They proposed to expand wiretap laws along with a number of other shady law enforcement measures. (Why?) The one this article is concerned with was the proposed expansion of roving wiretaps (more on that in a second). After much debate throughout Congress, these proposals were not added to the 1996 Anti-Terrorism Act.

Roving wiretaps (also called multi-point wiretaps) are a previously rare method of wiretapping in which a law enforcement agency is able to wiretap numerous phones the suspect may be using because he or she is attempting to thwart the single wiretap. This is allowed after a single court order. In other words, if the enforcement agency thinks this suspect is trying to evade the wiretap by using other phones, they are able to tap into any number of phones they suspect he would use, but they first must get a single court order. It was up to the feds to show that the suspect's intent was to thwart their wiretap. The exact wording is: "Of a purpose, on the part of that person, to thwart interception by changing facilities." The judge's guidelines: "The judge finds that such purpose has been adequately shown."

Obviously, these wiretaps are on a much grander scale. Say they find out (this must be through other means than just random tapping) that drug-dealing Billy is using his buddy Bob's phone to evade his own tapped phone. If the police have proven this to a federal judge, they can then tap Bill's phone and listen in on anything Bill or anybody else says on that phone. Even if Bill's only mistake is poor judgement in determining who uses his phone. They can do this with any phone, public included, if through other methods they determine that the suspect is thwarting surveillance.

This is the old way. Last fall, in another push to expand wiretapping, the justice department and the FBI lobbied Congress for a more liberal roving wiretap law. (Coincidentally, they had a wish list of other law enforcement items besides this expanded wiretap). These groups learned from their mistakes of 1996 (actually letting Congress debate on the topic). They waited for the intelligence spending bill to get to conference committee before acting. At that time, U.S. Rep. Bill McCollum added the expanded roving wiretap provision without it being a part of either version of the spending bill that was originally passed through Congress. The President signed the Intelligence Authorization Act for FY 1999 with the roving wiretap expansion in effect, signing it without any de-

bate on the matter.

This new law abandons the old provision in the roving wiretap law that makes the cops show the suspect is attempting to thwart the wiretap. (That must have been a real pain in the ass). This new law does not make them show intent. They need only to show "there is probable cause to believe that the person's actions could have the effect of thwarting interception from a specified facility." The new law also allows them to tap any phone when it is "reasonably proximate" to the phone to be tapped. Before they had to show that the roving wiretap could be placed only on phones they knew he or she was going to use. This new law allows them to basically tap any phone the suspect is near.

Here's an example. Say that drug-dealing Billy's phone is being tapped, but he is using a bunch of different phones: his mom's, friends', public, etc... The cops can go to a judge now and say his actions mean he is thwarting our wiretap, even if he is not. The judge will have to approve the wiretap, and any of those phones Billy was using or any phones which were "reasonably proximate" can be tapped.

You might be wondering who gets to decide what reasonably proximate means. Guess who? The same justice department that pushed for the roving wiretap in the first place.

Back to the example. Say they decide the pay phone at the gas station next to Billy's pad should be tapped. Everybody who uses it will be listened to.

Now if 80% of wiretapped conversations were innocent before, I am just wondering how many it will be now.

I also have a couple questions. Why would this criminal law be attached to a must-pass intelligence bill (that is supposed to be foreign intelligence since we supposedly don't have a secret police)? Why would we need to record so many innocent conversations? Is the crime problem so bad that we need to take these steps? Why do we vote for people who think we need to be secretly be listened to? And they decided this with no debate on the matter.

Like I said before, I don't feel in danger of crime.

President Clinton signed this trampling of the fourth amendment into law. The same guy who is trying to use the Constitution to stay in office.

And I hear Clinton is getting the highest approval ratings ever. I guess that answers my whys. Why care when you can just sit back and love Big Brother; he knows what's best for us.

Here are a list of some sources I used for this story: the aforementioned article, U.S. Constitution, <http://www.cosc.georgetown.edu/denning/wiretap/roving.txt>, ACLU web page, On Patrol web page, <http://msanews.mynet.net/MSANEWS/199810/19981013.2.html>.



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Word of the Week: Quixotic, adj. 1. Caught up in the pursuit of unreachable goals; idealistic without regard to practicality. 2. Capricious; impulsive.

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Vision of the future: clean pants with animals

by Jesse Pasley

Often, when a new technological breakthrough is developed, it may take years for such a marvel to affect the common man. However, as we look to the future, we must not only take on the "big" problems of overpopulation, global-warming, and MTV, but we must keep the "common person" in mind, to better his/her life in a dramatic manner. This brings us to hopes and dreams of nearly every person on the face of the globe: clean pants.

Yes, good clean pants are indeed a precious commodity, especially here on the Truman campus, where good, worn paths become dirty swamps of mud in the winter. I've heard talk all over campus of "Pants. Man, do I hate pants!" In fact, all through history, men and women everywhere have been looking for a way to stay comfortably (and fashionably) clothed without tarnishing their good pants. According to legend, the Scottish finally gave up on pants in favor of the kilt, something they turn inside out easily after a muddy day's work of battling those pesky Romans.

Soon, the technology will be available to be able to implement a solution to this problem. And here's what I propose: we should engineer

some sort of genetically-augmented animal that could hang on to your pants and lick the mud right off of them, should you be trapped in a dirty situation.

"Now wait one second there mister!" you ask. "How would such an animal operate? No animal can live off of dirt!" But you see, I said "genetically-augmented." That refers to changing an organism's genetic code to eat dirt, my friend. Besides, there are many animals that eat dirt now as it is, such as the earthworm, the World Maggot, and the occasional small child. I also think that you can convince a donkey to eat dirt as well. And while we're at it, this animal should also be able to suck ink and acrylic paints out of pants, too, for all the art majors.

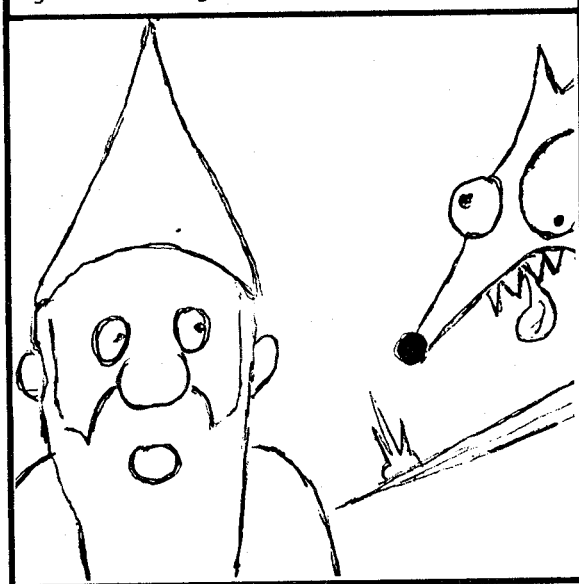
All the genetic engineers have to do now is to transfer this dirt-eating trait to an animal that would 1) be able to cling to my pants in a comfortable manner and 2) have a mechanism (a tongue) to lick up all that mud that is collected from walking through the quad (or playing TANK!). Some good candidates that I came up with include the marmot, the South American tree sloth, or the koala bear of Australia. I've had personal experience with a raccoon clinging to my pants, but its rabid teeth gnawing on my shin-bone makes this furry friend undesirable. A colleague of mine has also suggested using an animal that has long tentacles, to maximize the clinging factor. A land-squid perhaps?

Just think of how this simple idea could change our everyday lives. No longer would I show up to social events and have people



fig. 1 Here's me, my mud-lickin' mutant and my clean pants.

fig. 2 A doomed gnome.



whisper behind my back. "Look at those dirty pants. Commoner!" With this new development I could go to parties and have all the ladies saying, "Damn Paz! Those are some clean pants! And that funny creature that hangs from the inside of your thigh [no, not that one] is very fashionable" (fig. 1). And of course I'd say, "Whv, thank you."

Of course, these little "varmint mud-lickers" could have applications elsewhere. Seeing as how they would be quite intelligent, we could use them to patch up holes in giant Superwalls (see previous issue of *The Monitor*). Also, if we arm these mud-lickers with tiny swords, we can finally get rid of the gnomish scourge. You heard me right: those bastard gnomes. Those tiny thieving thugs that steal my Saltines at night must be eliminated! Ooh, you're gonna get it, David! (fig. 2)

With our eyes and hearts to the future, humans can surely accomplish anything. That is why we must commit more research hours into technologies such as this, not only for our pants, but for our children's pants as well.

The Vagina Monologues come to Truman

by Marie Montano

In her play award-winning play, *The Vagina Monologues*, Eve Ensler talks about the vagina. "I say it," writes Ensler, "because it's an invisible word—a word that stirs up anxiety, awkwardness, contempt, and disgust...I say 'vagina' because I want people to respond."

To Ensler, the way to empowering women and overcoming shame is to say what is not supposed to be said, and to say it out loud.

"What are we saying about our bodies," asks Ensler, "if we can't say 'vagina'?"

Ensler interviewed hundreds of women from around the world for over three years to research her play. The monologues, which range from serious to hilarious, are always intelligent and poignant. They have entertained audiences around the world. Topics include such things as what a vagina would wear to rape victims in Bosnia. Ensler started performing her monologues solo in off-Broadway theaters, but her movement quickly grew. The 1998 showing of *The Vagina Monologues* featured performers like Winona Ryder, Calista Flockhardt, Susan

Sarandon, and Whoopi Goldberg.

The performance comes to Truman as a part of the V-Day 1999 College Initiative. Colleges all over the country will perform the play on or around Valentine's day. V-Day is a campaign, started by Ensler and others, to raise awareness and end sexual violence against women. "The V stands for Vagina, Victory, Valentine's Day or anti-Violence," says Ensler. At Truman, the play will be performed on February 11th, 8:00PM, in the SUB down under.

The Vagina Monologues are a part of Sexual Respect Week, hosted by the Women's Resource Center. "I hope men attend the events too because sexual respect works both ways," said Women's Resource Center Volunteer, Olivera Bratich.

More information about violence against women and V-day can be found at <http://www.feminist.com/>.

For more information about Sexual Respect Week events, stop by the Women's Resource Center located in Ryle, or call x7224.

Sexual Respect Week February 7 - 12

Monday

Ice Cream for Sex

Tuesday

Lesbian & Bisexual Health Day

Wednesday

Sexual Discussion

Thursday

V-Day, *The Vagina Monologues*

Monday - Friday

informational table in the SUB

Faculty express opinions on university

by Dane Stangler

Last semester, the Truman Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) issued a survey to Truman faculty concerning the state of various aspects of the school. *The Monitor* ran a story on the results of the survey, but could not print any of the anonymous teacher comments because they hadn't been made public to the faculty yet.

Now, the AAUP has set up a web page for Truman professors and students in order for open discussion to take place on the computer. E-mails can be sent and questions can be asked and answered at this web site. The address is <http://www.socket.net/~susand>.

Exploring this site and viewing teacher comments is very interesting because now everybody can see what everyone else thinks about this school. While there are some positive comments, many of them tend to lean toward the negative side. Hot topics on the forum now include the liberal studies program, the grading system, textbooks, and faculty salaries, as well as opinions on the school as a whole.

Scrolling through these sections, several comments stand out, such as this professor's view on the current textbook situation:

"...since we lease the space why can't we negotiate a bookstore contract that would have textbooks in our students' hands at the beginning of the semester, rather than by individual special order a week later? We waste too much academic time (class time, professor time, and student time) already with our disaster of a registration system, and changing schedule and waiting lists and yellow cards... Shall we just put the semester on hold for a week, while we adjust schedules and let students get their books? Of course it hardly saves our frugal institution money when we need to make questionably legal copies of textbooks so that our students can begin the semester."

One subject that teachers had a lot to say about was the issue of the grading system. Truman State currently uses the straight A-B-C-D-F grading system, as opposed to giving out grades such as A- or C+. Several professors offered comments supporting switching to this

other system:

"... I would like to... go to the plus-minus system anyway. It is the way I grade anyway; it was the standard of my education, and of every place I worked, until I came here."

"I agree with need for a more discriminating method of grading [plus-minus grades], they at least help us differentiate between the 'barely up to a B' student and the 'almost an A' student."

"I think that our job would be both easier and truer if faculty at Truman had some sort of plus-minus grading system."

"The current system makes grading at Truman much more onerous than it needs to be."

A touchy topic at any school or corporation is the question of salaries. According to some comments on the website, some faculty salaries here are grossly unequal. Consider this somewhat bitter comment on salaries that includes a few jabs at the administration:

"Many of my colleagues in the Business Division continue to earn the kind of salaries that make a mockery of our claim that we are a Liberal Arts university. I am not trying to advocate here a socialist agenda where everyone earns the same pay! Instead, I am pointing out how this administration, from which I expected progressive ideas and measures, is not really working hard to correct these rather disturbing features of pay and compensation. Creativity and vision are required from leaders and managers if we are to have even a semblance of equity."

This particular professor gave an example of this inequity (the following information about salaries is completely public and can be viewed by anyone). Two professors began in the same year, in 1997, one of these professors earned \$68,486 teaching three classes a semester. The other professor earned \$38,980 the same year teaching four classes per semester.

In addition to these comments about specific aspects of this institution, several professors contributed comments that dealt with the overall condition of the university:

"The administration does a good job of promoting cheapness at Truman (Money Maga-

zine Mania) and of promoting Assessment figures. The administration fails to look beyond our assessment reputation and deal with faculty load, salary..."

"Assessment is collected, sits somewhere, is trotted out to bludgeon innovation with (live in the past, live in the past, don't disrupt our long-term data collection) and to feed to state legislators. It promotes stasis on campus, because of the long-term studies at stake, but what improvement?"

"Stop expecting us to come up with the answers to the bureaucratic problems."

"This is the best a highly-selective institution can do? Staff salaries and part-timers' salaries are insulting."

"An image without substance to support it simply becomes a façade."

"There just seems to be a lack of management ability at all levels - the ability to convert policy into action, the ability to utilize available resources effectively - faculty, facilities, resources and ideas. What I am trying to convey is my serious concern for and frustration with the inability of the University to effectively convert its resources to end product. Until serious improvements in management are instituted, I feel that the University will be teetering on the brink of mediocrity."

"The state of the university is stasis and paralysis."

"Given our mission, our salaries do not correlate with being the 'Premier Liberal Arts and Sciences University!'"

"There is no public discussion about salaries, workloads, etc. There is a culture of closed-minds, closed-mouths. Because we have no local media of any worth to discuss campus issues, everyone just accepts what is done and no public discussion of issues takes place."

"The administration lacks a vision of liberal arts culture."

"The administration needs to take a long realistic look at the state of the university. It is not the rosy picture painted in our PR brochures; in fact, it is a far, serious cry from it."

"Stagnation, moral and intellectual, is the rule at TSU."

Book scoffs at society's morals

Deliver Us From Evil
by Ravi Zacharias

by Tom Wheatley

Ravi Zacharias shows his range of expertise with his latest literary effort. The renowned apologist tackles the problem of secularization and relative morality and their effects on both religion and the culture of the United States.

This is a change from most of Zacharias's previous work, which mainly dealt with the area of apologetics, or the defense of the faith. He is probably best known for his book *Can Man Exist Without God?* and for spreading Christianity to college campuses worldwide.

The intent of *Deliver Us From Evil* is threefold. First, it looks at how we arrived at the socially amoral society in which we live. Then, it analyzes how the popular moral ideas of the day have caused the present social conditions. Finally, it offers practical predictions and suggestions for the future.

It seems that every day we hear of more shocking crimes and saddening moral actions. Zacharias has answers for those that look at the world around them and wonder how we let our society go downhill so far. From philosophers that penned theories of morality to validate their own lifestyles to science's stubborn refusal to

even consider its own empirical evidence for the existence of a supreme being, the history or moral development (or some might argue regression) is laid out in a way that is easy to understand and follow.

Zacharias isn't arguing that crime or immorality are new phenomena. What he is saying is that the subtle, misleading rhetoric of secularization and relativity are making these societal plagues more acceptable to the average American. As a society, we no longer value human life the way we used to. The gift of sex has been distorted. And the most sacred of all beliefs, the knowledge of a personal God that cares about our well-being, has been reduced to personal preference and shoved from public forum through skepticism and ridicule.

As always, Zacharias continually encourages that Christians take a stand against immorality and boldly share their faith publicly. Never a fatalist, his optimism for the future and the possibility for Christians to play a positive role in shaping it is refreshing and invigorating.

Deliver Us From Evil is a delicate, thorough look at the history of morality in this country. Zacharias once again shows why he is one of the best authors of any genre around these days.

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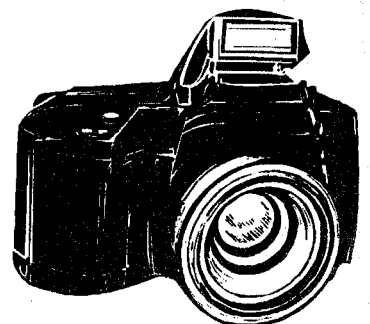
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Reviews



music film literature art

Stereolab: experimental pop

Stereolab
Aluminum Tunes
Drag City

by Dave Heaton

Since the early 1990's, London-based musicians Stereolab have been walking the line between melodic bubble gum pop and out-there experimental electronic music, and doing it quite well.

Theirs is a musical art based on sound. They have a skill at utilizing any sounds they can find, from the sweet to the surprising, but doing so within the conventional structure of a pop song.

The postmodern, "postrock" 90's is a world of constant genre-crossing, and Stereolab has been at the task of blurring categories since their start. Their influences are too many to quickly sum up: just about any musical trend interested in sound and what can be done with it, from avant-garde composers (Stockhausen, Cage), far-out jazz (Sun Ra), space rock (Silver Apples, Spacemen 3) and "Kraut rock" (Can, Neu!) to more light-hearted but still sonically relevant pop styles like lounge music, surf rock, bossa nova, and the Beach Boys' harmonies.

Their music is thus a synthesis of important developments in sound. To some extent, Stereolab prey on the past, not in a "retro-cool" sense, but as serious purveyors of melody, tone, and sound. They take arranged vocal harmonies, repetition of chords and melodies, extensive guitar jams, and weird blips and gurgles, and process them into a sound which is distinctly "Stereolabian," enough so that it's easy to spot others trying in vain to successfully imitate it.

Stereolab, headed by Tim Gane and the gifted, French-born lead vocalist Laetitia Sadier, can easily be called a "headphones" band for their layered, multifaceted music. Two of their key features are a reliance on analog synthesizers and pretty, complementary vocal arrangements. The lyrics, sometimes in French, sometimes in English, are generally powerful social criticism, yet they are not at the forefront; it can take several listens or sometimes even a glance at a printed copy of the lyrics to figure out what they are saying. Rather, the sound of the voices and the sound of the words are used as instruments themselves, from the way they are arranged to the creative juxtaposition of words.

One continuing habit of the band is to

release super-limited edition singles, EP's, and promo-only discs which immediately sell for big bucks, and then a few years later to put out single collections so fans can hear the rare stuff without spending a fortune. *Aluminum Tunes* is the third such collection. As a higher-priced 2-CD set (in a puzzling cardboard package), it isn't the cheapest introduction for new listeners (perhaps try 1994's *Mars Audiac Quintet* or 1996's *Emperor Tomato Ketchup* instead), but definitely a worthy one, an overview of the intriguing music they've made over the last few years.

The first CD starts off with the 6 songs that originally made up the *Music for the Amorphous Body Study Centre* CD. The music, a collaboration between the band and Sean O'Hagan, now of the High Llamas, was created in 1995 as an installation work to accompany artist Charles Long's sculptures. These songs are thematically linked and lean toward the pop side of Stereolab.

Aluminum Tunes showcases every aspect of Stereolab's unique sound, from upbeat tracks where they jam like some kind of rock/dance hybrid ("One Small Step," "Golden Atoms") to the slower, dreamy, meditative pieces ("Space Moment," "You Used to Call Me Sadness") and those which start in one realm and move into another ("1000 Miles an Hour"). The most recent songs, like 1997's "The Incredible He Woman," show the band's increasing turn towards the electronic side of modern music, as do two remixed tracks, the Wagon Christ (aka Luke Vibert) remix of "Metronomic Underground" and "Percolations," a percussion-heavy deconstruction of their song "Percolator" by John McEntire (Tortoise, The Sea and Cake).

Other highlights include the *Red Hot and Rio* collaboration with flutist Herbie Mann on Antonio Carlos Jobim's "One Note Samba" and "Surfboard," and "Melochord Seventy-Five," a live favorite with creative use of repetition and call-and-response rock guitars.

This collection is a must-have for die-hard fans (except for fans who are so die-hard and/or rich that they already have these songs in their limited edition formats). It again shows how Stereolab thrive on the vitality of all sound and on the interesting effect various noises can have on people, and how they turn that into music which consistently evokes treasured feelings of beauty, mystery, and pure fun.

Beautiful film for everyone

Life Is Beautiful
Directed by Roberto Benigni

by Leslee White

This may seem insensitive, but to be totally truthful, I am tired of hearing about the Holocaust. Now, before you start writing angry letters, let me clarify. I'm not tired of the Holocaust in the sense that I don't care anymore; much to the contrary. I am tired of hearing about it because the thought of the Holocaust is so emotionally taxing. The images of the inhumanities which took place are so terrifying, it hurts to think about them. It is so difficult to read Wiesel's *Night* and come away from that experience untouched.

In the past few years, with the advances in filmmaking, we see the Holocaust more up close and personal. The images Holocaust films present are even more disturbing than those of the other media. I am extremely reluctant to attend a film I know will focus on the Holocaust.

These thoughts accompanied me into the noon showing of *Life Is Beautiful* at the Plaza Frontenac. I wanted to see this film because of the things I'd heard about it, but I was fearful of the prospect of spending the remainder of the day after the movie near tears and extremely depressed. So, I attempted to psyche myself up. "It is supposedly controversial, and the critics loved it," I said to myself upon entering the film (it makes me feel more cultured to go to movies the critics really like or really hate, and no one else sees). Anyway, I went into the movie expecting the worst, but I got something amazing, something I've never seen before.

Life Is Beautiful is an Italian film directed by and starring Roberto Benigni about a man and his family during the Holocaust. The first half of the movie is a cute love story and com-

edy, and my boyfriend and I wondered if we had walked into the wrong English-subtitled, Italian movie called *Life Is Beautiful*.

Soon, however, the focus shifted to the Holocaust. Now, the controversy in this film starts when Guido's (Benigni) family is deported to a concentration camp. It is his son's birthday, and in Guido's attempt to keep his son innocent and unaware of the horrors surrounding them, Guido convinces his son the situation is an intricate game designed by Guido as a birthday gift. In this very competitive game, the contestants must acquire points by doing various things, such as hiding from the guards and keeping silent around German people. The person with the most points wins a tank at the end of the game.

Through the majority of this movie, I was very tense. I prepared myself for the horrible images, and there were some terrible images. But the movie does not focus on this aspect. The movie shows the strength of family and the overwhelming triumph of humor and the human spirit. You will cry, and you might get angry. You will, no doubt, still curse the Germans. In contrast, you will spend a surprising amount of time laughing, and you will feel a real attachment to these characters.

This is one of the few movies I have seen in my life that I will recommend without reserve. I put no disclaimer on telling you to see this movie because I am sure you will be touched by it, and you will not forget it. Many movies are fun and entertain you for a couple of hours, but this film and its message will be with you when you close your eyes at night, when you hear mention of Italy, when you look eyes with innocence. This film will move you, and as my Italian Film teacher said the other day, "If it doesn't move, it's not art."

Book criticizes pop culture

Red Lobster, White Trash and the Blue Lagoon

Written by Joe Queenan

by Nick Phillips

Self-admitted urbane sophisticate [sic], snob, and overall prick, Joe Queenan decided in March of 1996 (having grown weary of his niche in America's "elite, effete subculture") to flourish his own haughty pretensions and plunge into the culture of the "hopelessly plebeian." After all, asks Queenan, "How bad could it be?"

About this bad: *Red Lobster, White Trash and the Blue Lagoon* is a 188-page pantsing of American Pop Culture and all those associated with it. Message to all readers of *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, Yanni fans, and Branson, Missouri: take cover. No one is spared, not even Molly Ringwald. His odyssey begins with a trip to a Broadway matinee of *Cats*, followed by the purchase of a Michael Bolton record, which leads to a trip to Red Lobster, and before he can say "Phantom," his life spirals into the abyss of suck.

Queenan's cavortings in the cultural tar pits of America [sic] meander back and forth through different mediums. He reads Mary Higgins Clark and Stephen King, marveling at the abundance of italicized phrases *whenever the ineluctable force of unspeakable horror* makes its entrance into the plot. At the cinema he attends a showing of *Gone Fishin'* starring Joe Pesci, after which he feels such abject sympathy for his fellow audience members that he stands outside the theater door to reimburse exiting moviegoers under the pretext of being an

associate with the "Joe Pesci Cultural Indemnification Institution."

The wry and consistently amusing criticism scattered throughout the book is held together as the reader follows Queenan's life during this period of cultural exploration, as he sojourns to Atlantic City, Las Vegas, France and finally Branson. Yet what starts out as dilapidated wading through cultural sledge ends up a full-blown addiction, from which Queenan attempts to escape for the better part of the book.

Occasionally he fails to directly point out flaws in an artists' work and simply slanders them. However, targeting the music industry for his most amusing tirade, Queenan extensively and thoroughly bludgeons the work of Billy Joel for four pages, body-slams Kenny G in two pages, and finishes off John Tesh in three. Indeed there is no ambiguity about what aspects of John Tesh he doesn't like.

His scope is broad and misses nobody, from Tony Orlando to Tony Danza, so reading this book without occasionally feeling sheepish is difficult. I can almost guarantee that you've already innocently read, watched, or listened to someone or something that he mocks. Nevertheless, *Red Lobster, White Trash and the Blue Lagoon* is a quick read, offers a prodigious load of hearty laughs and performs a vital function: it keeps you honest. Too often we mindlessly accept the fact that *The Horse Whisperer* is a best seller or that Jon Bon Jovi is still putting out records. But Queenan doesn't. And he fears for our country in Ernest I mean *earnest*.

The Renaissance

a fiction series

by Matt Siemer
Click.

Tim's body jerked. He peered over the side of his bed and saw his stereo light up.

Whir.

Tim scrambled down the ladder and hustled across the room, jabbing the power button just before the CD began to blare. Standing still for a moment, he felt the adrenaline fade as remnants of sleep slowly reasserted themselves. He walked over to his desk, swept away papers and books with his arm and sat down. Looking out the window, Tim watched students file in and out of the building. They leaned forward as they walked, trying to cut through the gusting wind. In the distance a white wall of snow stretched from ground to sky, blanking out everything behind it. People seemed to approach the wall with indifference, and it swallowed them without a sound. Others emerged from it with the same indifference, showing no signs of anything being unusual.

The telephone rang, interrupting his thoughts. As he picked it up and answered, early-morning whiskers scratched against the mouthpiece.

"Hello?"

"Time for a shave."

"Who is this?"

"This is Kevin."

"Kevin..."

"Your hall director."

"Oh. Hey Kevin."

"Didn't wake you up, did I?"

"No, no. I've been up a bit."

"Good. I've got a favor to ask. Could you come downstairs for a few minutes?"

"Why?"

"Don't worry, nothing big. Just come down as soon as you can, all right?"

"Sure."

He turned off the phone and let it roll out of his hand. Tim stood and slowly wandered around the room, collecting items for his shower. When he was done, he returned to the window and stared out at the wall, watching people pop in and out of existence.

Tim knocked and pushed down the handle.

"Hev... come on in," said Kevin, glancing up and smiling. As Tim sat down in the chair across from him, he returned to flipping through papers in the file folder on his lap.

"What did you need, Kevin?"

He closed the file and set it on his desk. Sitting forward in his chair, he took off his glasses and rubbed his eyes.

"Tim, you have to promise me this doesn't leave the room."

Tim nodded.

"We wouldn't normally ask a resident for this kind of help, but this is an unusual situation."

"Don't worry about it," said Tim, fully

realizing that he was the one who should be worried. He watched as Kevin nodded and stood. Walking across the room, he took a picture off the wall and stared at it for a moment. He brought it over to Tim and handed it to him. It was a picture of the residents of Dagny Hall at the beginning of the year. Tim looked it over handed it back, wondering what Kevin was trying to prepare him for.

"Tim, all 400 of the people in that picture are my responsibility, and I don't take that responsibility lightly. When one of them has a problem, it's my problem too, and I try to help them out as best I can. But I can't help Gwen without you."

Tim shook his head. "What?"

"Tim, you're her only friend. I've never seen her speak with anyone else. I can hardly talk to her myself. I'm asking you to help me help her."

"What's wrong?"

"Well, at the beginning of this semester, the University mailed out bills for tuition fees to everyone's parents. About a week later, the one they had sent to Gwen's parents came back. The address doesn't exist."

"Okay."

"Someone in the business office called the town and asked them to check the records. They confirmed that there was no such address and that no one by the last name of Sullivan had ever lived there. But, someone there insisted she remembered a house fire on the other side of the state about ten years ago involving people with the same last name. The parents were killed, but the children survived. We checked into it, and we confirmed that it was Gwen's family."

Tim looked away, staring out the window at the man in a small, orange cart sweeping snow off the sidewalks. He noticed Kevin's reflection in the glass, frowning at him and pulling a sheet of paper out of his file. He tossed the paper on Tim's lap.

"Check it over. It's all there. Two witnesses saw Gwen carry her four-year old brother out of the fire and disappear into the woods. And this one," he said, handing him another sheet, "details the failed search party and the kids' placement on the missing list."

The cart pattered away and disappeared into the wall of snow. Kevin watched and waited.

"Aren't you going to look at them?"

"She hasn't told me anything, Kevin."

He nodded. "We didn't think so. We were hoping you could get her to talk about it."

Tim put the photocopies back on his desk.

"Nope."

"Look, Tim, I know you're her friend. That's exactly why I'm asking you to help her."

"Gwen's fine."

"Are you sure?" he said, sitting back and folding his hands in his lap. "Do you really think someone could live in complete solitude and be 'fine'?"

Tim shrugged.

"And what about her brother? What if she's been raising him by herself for the past ten years? Look, Tim, people are real good at faking things. They might be miserable and you'd never suspect a thing. Sometimes, you just need to force people to do things differently, for their own good. And you're her friend. That's why I need your help."

Tim noticed the baseball sitting on the edge of Kevin's desk. He picked it up and examined it. It didn't feel right. Looking it over more closely, he realized it was fake. Its cover was a soft, white plastic that shined in the light. He pressed his fingernail down into the ball. It left a small crescent moon in the surface.

"What do you say, Tim? Can you help me?"

Tim sighed, looking at the baseball. "What do you want me to do?"

Jack tossed the ball in the air and smacked it into the cornfield.

"Gwen?"

Gwen sat on the ground, pouring over pages in a notebook.

"Gwen?"

"What?"

"Did you see that one?"

"No."

Jack sighed. He reached down and picked up a clump of snow in one hand and a baseball in the other. Placing the baseball under his armpit, he rubbed his hands with the snow. The snow melted, and his pink hands burned. He wiped them dry on his jeans, tossed the ball in the air and smacked it into the cornfield.

"300 and... 25? 30? Gwen?"

"What?"

"Do people usually play baseball in the winter?"

"No."

Jack tapped his shoes with the bat, knocking loose some of the snow. "That's too bad."

Gwen put down her pencil and looked up. "Is this what you do while I'm away?"

"Yes. Baseball and physics. They rotate in one-hour cycles. Or two if I'm doing real good."

"At which one?"

"Um..."

"Hmm..." she said, looking down at the notebook again and erasing some numbers.

"What's wrong?"

"Too much baseball leads to mistakes."

He set down his bat and pulled out his glasses from his back pocket. He kneeled down and looked over her shoulder. "What are you doing?"

"Checking your math."

He patted her on the shoulder. "Don't worry, I'll get it. It's just a matter of time."

Gwen stood up and stretched her arms above her head. She shut the notebook and handed it to him, placing the pencil on top.

"What if you left me your book?" he said as he picked a pebble and flung it into the forest behind them.

"Can't you leave anything in its place?"

she said, packing her book bag.

"No. The world is my lab," he said, sweeping his hands through the air.

"You're really testing me."

Jack laughed. "That's great, Gwen. I love dumb jokes. But seriously, I like collecting as much support for my hypotheses about the world as possible. For instance, I propose a simple experiment to simultaneously test causality and gravity."

"What's that?" she said, zipping up her bag.

Jack placed his hand on her shoulder and pulled her backwards. Gwen tumbled into a half-frozen puddle of water. Her eyes squeezed shut and her mouth opened wide, but no sound came out. She lay in the water for a few seconds, then rolled out and stood up, brushing the snow off of her coat.

"I think I'll keep my physics book," she said, ignoring the grin on Jack's face. "You're far beyond it, and I have to finish some homework." Gwen picked up her book bag, turned, and started off towards the forest.

"Wait up!" Jack collected his bat and balls and caught up with her. "Do you have to leave now?"

"Yes. I have to go to work."

He nodded. They entered the woods and began climbing the hill, carefully avoiding ice-covered rocks and clinging onto tree branches for balance wherever they could. It took them about five minutes to reach the clearing at the top of the hill. In the middle of the clearing was the log cabin, their home for the past eight years. It had taken them five months to build, and every time Jack went inside, he paused to study the rings of the trees on the outer wall, reflecting on their accomplishment. As they approached, Gwen noticed the billows of smoke coming out of the chimney.

"Jack, please, no more fires during the day."

She sighed, turning to leave him at the front door. She started down the opposite side of the hill, heading towards her car.

"Gwen?"

Gwen turned and looked over her shoulder.

"Are you all right?"

Her shoulders slouched, but she tried to keep a smile on her face. "I'm okay, Jack. I was just really hoping we had it this time."

He nodded, watching her cast her eyes to the ground. "We'll get it soon... Do you think things will be different when we do?"

"What do you want to change?"

"I'd like to stop hiding," he said. "I'd like to have a normal life."

"We do have normal lives, Jack," she said. "That's why we have to hide."

Gwen turned and walked down the hill. Jack set his hand on the doorknob and felt it pulse against the cold metal. Turning over his wrist, he pulled the door open, allowing the warm air to rush by. He lingered there for a moment, in a mixture of hot and cold, watching Gwen disappear from view.

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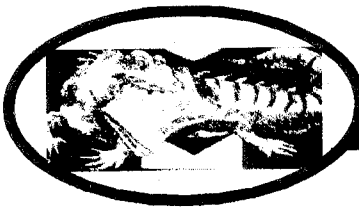
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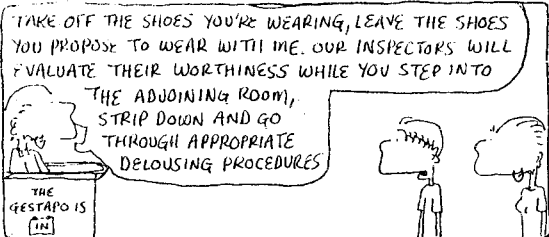
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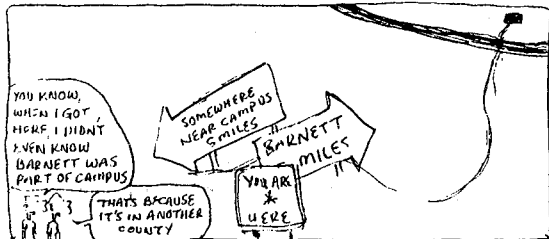


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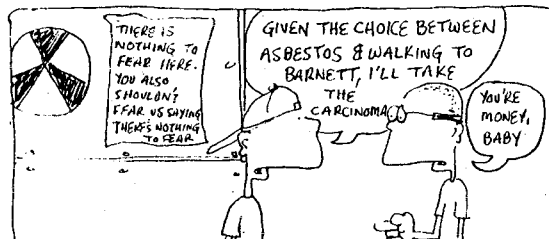
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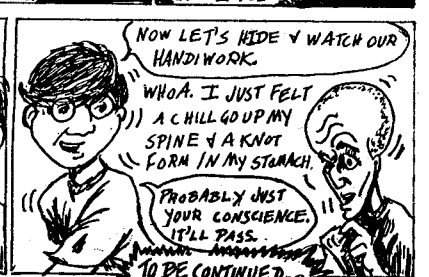
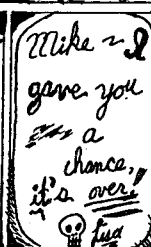
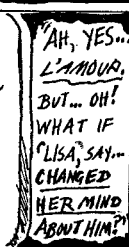
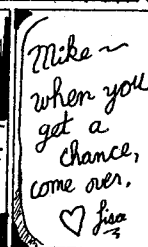


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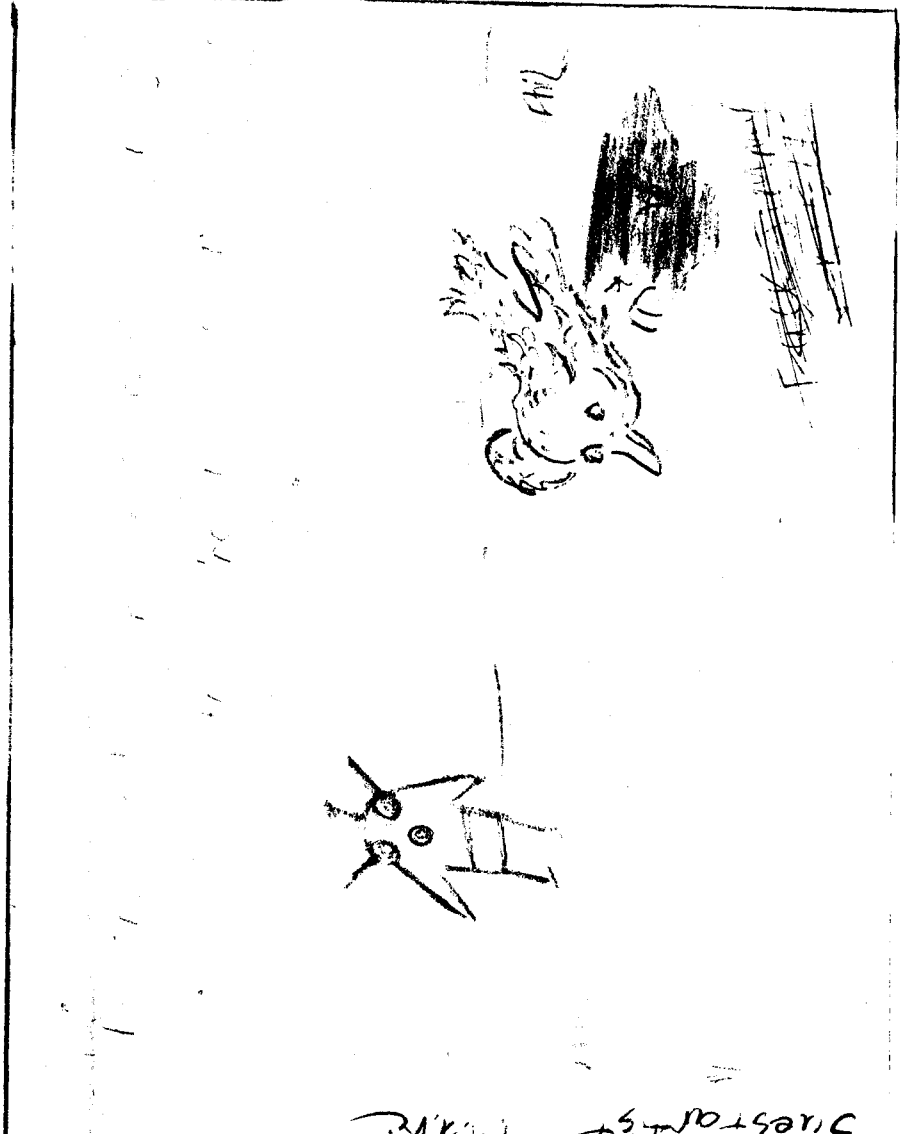


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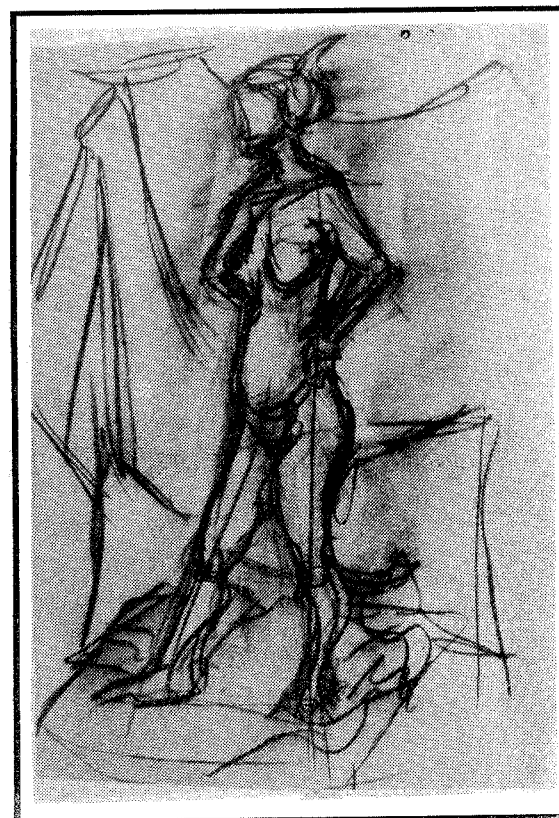
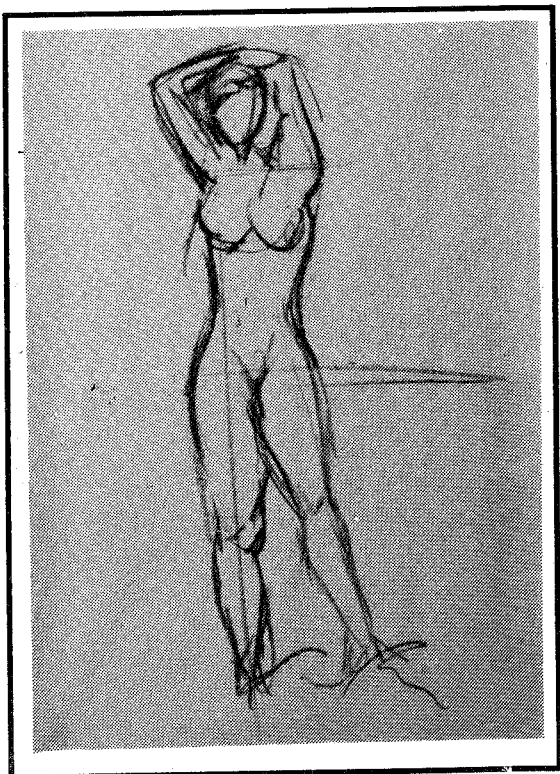
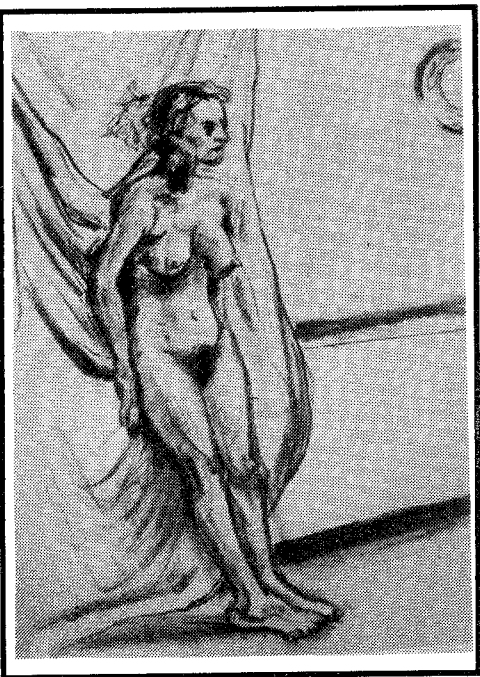
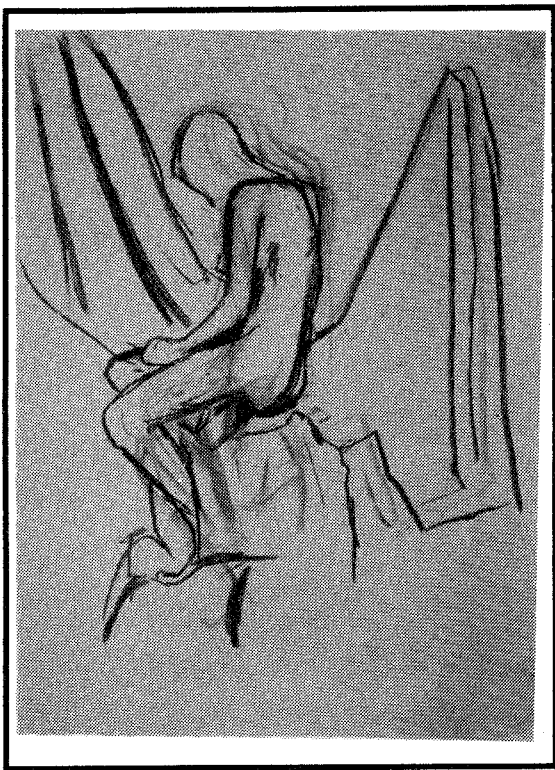


Kjell Hahn



Art Page!!!

Art page features gesture drawings displayed on Baldwin Hall's third floor.



My Back Pages...

Cicadas

The cicadas hatched.
Their creepy crawling bodies
Shedding their skin everywhere,
I wish I could've shed mine.

No one will forget that summer,
The trees were not masters
Of themselves anymore. No,
Instead those flitty flying wings.

Only they weren't good at flying
They sat all day screaming, crying
Yelling, singing their lives away.
No one who was there will forget.

One day the rain was the master
Of the trees. The cicadas were silent.
There was peace for a while.
But they felt like crying once more.

Sometimes I wished I was
A part of their chorus
That overwhelming buzz
Shaking, screaming for me.

They sang loud. They knew
What to do in their short little lives.
I won't forget that summer.
They never stopped making noise.

--A. Teresa Miller

bigots without spigots

you shake your unpainted
finger in my face,
saying that because
i am a man,
i am evil,
that this conspicuous
lack of breasts makes me
unclean,
and this ungainly
protrusion betwixt my
thighs make me
a candidate for the
pyre,
with the witches and the
WWF wrestlers.
you throw us all
into one souffle.,
a testosterone laden pastry
that you choose to leave
in the plexiglass
display case,
because 'men' is a
flavor,
unpleasing to your palette,
and because you won't
no one else should
either.

--Shawn Hauk

On the Altar

When I last saw her, she said she was drawn to the rhythm,
that behind the broken Picasso,
there was an undercurrent of something, dark and thick, like blood
that she wanted (needed) to be a part of.
The shining viper fangs of his caress had
grazed her naked, prone flesh, the venom of a thousand lies
spreading dark and steely, like spirits through
her once vibrant skin.
On the altar, she sang His praises and slashed her wrists,
wishing only to be consumed by the world, to shed her thorny crown,
to escape the pain that no one had glimpsed.
Her eyes flutter before me, her eyelids a mosaic of elation and pain,
and I am saddened by her loss, what she is abandoning
though I can already feel my no longer trembling hands
reaching for the same blade.

--Shawn Gilmore

Modern Martyr

I said the words,
And I faced the man.
He was filled with hate,
But I stood Bold.

I took the chance,
And I fought for my right.
I questioned authority
Ages old.

I broke the law,
And I walked the plank,
Lined with judges
Throwing stones.

I said the word,
And I paid for my thoughts.
A modern martyr,
My story's been told.

--Brian Clever

Blessed are the virgins
with their torn dresses and emptied expressions
Blessed are the flowers
populating the unpopulated hillside.
Blessed are the carpenters
sharpening the plane with an unsatisfied wit.
Blessed are the fields
tilled with minds of passion and rows of dharma.
Blessed are the field-hands
filled with joy and laughter.
You can learn a lot from a field-hand.
Blessed are the windmills
spinning and circling the wheel of life
reminding the birds that humans wished that they too could fly.
Thankful are the field-hands for the handouts from God
and the fulfillment of the open air and satisfaction of life.
Blessed are the poets who romanticize every damn thing.

--J. Bennett

E. and L.

Eddie's brain was evil and twisted
and that's why when anyone looked up his nostrils
all they saw was blackness.
It was a thirty degree day
the day he met Laura at a stop sign,
and he told her she was the apple of his eye
the apple behind his eyes
the apple in his skull.
Laura had a silhouette shaped like the coast of Africa
and a long fuse
that she just let burn
and burn and
burn
til she became an autistic gleam
in his passenger seat.
She took a sip of coca-cola through her straw and said,
"Eddie, this is like amniocentesis."
He didn't know what she meant,
but he leaned over to kiss her hard,
and Eddie wrecked the car,
took them head-first into the forest
when the paramedics came they gathered up Eddie's brain
and a rib lying on the ground, that seemed like
it could belong to either of them,
just like Adam and Eve.

--Megan Wampler

Blind Trust

All this trust turned to bitterness
And my innocence to pain
Thinking of you simply sickens me
As you look back on your personal gain
I shudder to think you touched me
And stole me very heart
And once again I'm mending
The soul you ripped apart
My insides all are broken and bruised
My emotions torn and tattered
To think I thought the words you used
Ever truly mattered
How could you have done this?
Do you even know what this means?
I felt safe in your arms
And then you wrecked my dreams.

--Suzanne Chappelow

To all poets: Spring, the
time of new beginnings, is
just around the corner.
Why not submit to poetry
to My Back Pages... (Just
drop them in the Monitor
mailbox in the CAOC.)