



the monitor.

truman state university's only source for thorough coverage
of community issues, student affairs, politics and culture

volume 9
issue 9

International Idol a smashing success

Story by | Amanda Hackney

How often do you have the opportunity to walk into Baldwin and hear different languages being spoken at the same time? If you were there at 7:00 on Friday, March 19th, then cultures from around the world would have greeted you. Students, adults and even some children were uniquely dressed in cultural clothing from Japan to Africa. Flags of various countries lined both sides of the auditorium, and music from many cultures was performed throughout the show.

Deepika Kansal is a student from India who performed a traditional Indian dance medley. She had this to say before the show Friday: "We have lots of expectations. I think the international students are enthusiastic; we have been preparing for this since the beginning of the semester. Not many events of this type happen on campus. International Idol of Fall 2003 was voted the most outstanding event of last year by the

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Amnesty International stages demonstration, debate

photo by | Angela Hoffman



Story by | Nicole Rainey and Andrés Delgado

Last Friday and Saturday, March 19 and 20, activists around the world gathered to protest the wars against Iraq and Afghanistan and commemorate the casualties accrued there. 350,000 marched in Rome, and another 40,000 marched in Seville. Perhaps the most emotionally powerful act of demonstration worldwide took place in Iraq itself, where Sunni and

Shia Muslims united in a public square to listen to speakers denouncing the war.

Truman's chapter of Amnesty International hosted two actions in the spirit of protest. On Friday afternoon, they surrounded the pit near the library with red, white, blue, and black balloons. Each balloon symbolized three casualties of the conflict, according to Amnesty

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The beneficiaries of fair trade

Story by | Marc Becker

Lake Atitlan is one of the most positively gorgeous places in the world. Located in the eternal springtime climate of the Guatemalan highlands in Central America, its brilliant blue waters reflect the cones of three volcanos whose eruptions millions of years ago blocked a river to create the lake. Twelve Tzutuhil Maya communities circle the lake, each carrying a Christian name of one of the disciples, as well as a name in the Tzutuhil Maya language. Each of the twelve communities is further marked with its own unique clothing style that has become a symbol of the people's resilient ethnic identity.

Lake Atitlan has also been the scene of some of the most barbarous and inhumane violence that somehow people are

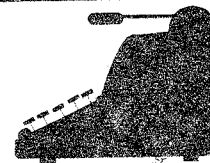
able to practice on each other. During the 1980s, the Guatemalan government in the hands of a wealthy white minority unleashed a genocidal campaign against the majority Maya population who, after almost five hundred years of oppression and exploitation, demanded their rights to dignity and a decent life.

Santiago Atitlan, nestled between the volcanos on the western side of the lake, was particularly hard hit in the military's scorched earth policies that attempted to root out insurgent forces. This violence resulted in the deaths of many innocent people and left behind many widowed mothers and orphaned children. After a massacre on the night of December 2, 1990, left thirteen community members laying

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The Monitor presents its second

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Campus Collective
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Volume 9, Number 9

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The Monitor Campus Collective unless otherwise noted.

The Monitor is published every other Tuesday. We meet every Tuesday and Thursday at 9 p.m. in BH 346. Each writer is responsible for his or her own work.

Subscriptions are available to out of towners - you just pay for postage. Send a check or money order for \$10 to the address above for a semester's worth of Monitors. That's really cheap, huh?

Among people who have learned something from the 18th century (say, Voltaire) it is a truism, hardly deserving discussion, that the defense of the right of free expression is not restricted to ideas one approves of, and that it is precisely in the case of ideas found most offensive that this right must be vigorously defended. Advocacy of the right to express ideas that are generally approved of is, quite obviously, a matter of no significance."

-- Noam Chomsky

FAC

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Women & Food: A Truman Conference

in honor of Women's History Month March 25-26-27, 2004

(Sponsored by Women's and Gender Studies Committee)

Thursday, March 25 (VH 1000)

10:30-11:45 Women and Agriculture

Marc Becker: "Indian Women Struggles for Land and Wages in Twentieth-Century Ecuador"

Mary Burford: "Take Your Cake and Shove It: Women, Rebellion, and Food in Chiapas, Mexico"

Ebube Nwazota: "The African Woman Farmer: Her Future is Africa's Future"

1:30-2:45 Women and Food in Popular Culture

Martha Bartter: "Cooking as Character Definition in Female Fantasy Novels"

Christine Harker: "Woman, Sex, and Food: Greenway's Castrating Diner"

Arnie Preussner: "Beer, Pizza, and Bounty-Hunting in New Jersey: The Semiotics of Food in Janet Evanovich's Stephanie Plum Novels"

3:00-4:45 Women, Food, and Art

Shannon Jumber: "Kitchen Artist: A Contradiction in Terms?"

Dana Kuhnline: "Onions and Voodoo: A Creative Essay"

Hena Ahmad: "Food and the Daughter in Anita Desai's *Fasting, Feasting*"

Thursday Evening, March 25 (Mehagan at

KCOM)

Non-Conference Event

7:00 NOW Drama-and-dessert Fundraiser

Becky Becker, dir., *Stepping from the Shadows: Lesser Known Stories from the Reproductive Rights Movement*, featuring Courtney Carter, Ben Knoll, Linda Seidel, Abigail Swetz, and Bertha Thomas

Friday, March 26 (VH 1000)

1:30-2:20 Eating Disorders

Olivia Bolles: "The Current State of Eating Disorder Treatment"

Chelsea Moeller: "About a Boy"

2:30-3:20 Women, Food, and Warrior Mentalities

Larry Iles: "Food, Women Workers, Cost of Living, and War Containment: Dr. Marion Phillips, MP"

Kasye Hahn: "The Me, The We, and The Warrior: Food and the Female Athlete"

3:30-4:20 Personal Testimony, part 1

Charlotte LaGalle: "Hard Work and Heartbreak: The Family Farm"

Gretchen Willier: "The Blue Packett"

4:30-5:45 Communities and Cookbooks

Alanna Preussner: "Heaven is Being First in the Potluck Line: Cookbooks and Community"

Kristin Walstrom: "Ambrosia: A Collection of Family Recipes and Memories"

Nicole Kling Rainey: "The Women's Studies Community Cookbook"

Saturday Morning, March 27 (Kirkville TCRC)

Non-Conference Event

9:00-12:00 Alliance for the Status of Missouri Women Assembly

Discussion of Issues affecting Missouri women. For more information, contact Kelli McBee at missouriasw@yahoo.com

Saturday Afternoon, March 27 (VH 1000)

1:30-1:50 Breastfeeding

Teak Nelson: "The Role of Persuasion in Women's Breastfeeding Decisions"

2:00-2:50 Cross-Cultural Food and Gender

JJ Pionke: "Gaijin Wisdom from Japan: Make Sure it's Dead Before You Eat it!"

Li Haihong: "My Father and the Meals He Cooked"

3:00-3:50 Personal Testimony, part 2

Keri Bodensteiner: "'Add a little Red 40, Blue 2, Yellow 5 & 6-What We Do to Our Food': A Mother's Research into the Dangers of Food Coloring"

Jeanette Standley: "Grazing: One Woman's Quest to be Full"

4:00-4:50 Original Drama

Dana Smith: "Let Them Eat Cake: A Play About Women and Food and Compassion"

Saturday Night, March 27 (828 E. Harrison St.)

7:00-? PARTY!

All conference participants, attendees, Women's Studies students and faculty, friends of WGS, and members of FMLA and NOW are invited.

L E T T E R S

monitor

Got something to say? Write a letter to *The Monitor*. Send complaints or praise to *The Monitor* mailbox in the CSI, or email us at monitortrm@hotmail.com. Letters may be edited for length.

Please respect even vile opinions

Dear Monitor,

I write in response to Nicole Rainey's article "Community must unite," in which she defended her decision to yell a request to sit down at the woman who spoke out against homosexuality at the end of Judy Shepard's speech. She argued that tolerance is really a patronizing, dishonest version of acceptance and that in order to be honest we must express our emotional reactions to political issues. As someone who also felt the urge to shout that woman down, but who instead forced myself to whisper under my breath, I strongly disagree with Nicole. I deeply opposed what that woman was saying during the question and answer session, but it was only once it was clear that her point was to rant and not to ask a question that I thought she needed to be silenced. I think Nicole is right that tolerance is often patronizing and dishonest. However, the solution isn't to intolerantly shout down those you disagree with. The solution is to try to honestly respect even opinions as vile as using religion to promote hatred of homosexuals, and fight as hard as you can against those opinions at the same time. True non-demeaning tolerance of religious fanatics often seems as hard for liberals as tolerance of homosexuals is for conservatives, but we should all aspire towards both. As for Nicole, I highly admire her honesty; I just don't think it needs to come at the expense of tolerance.

Jon Lawinger

Intolerance causes alienation

I love Nicole Rainey. She is hands down the coolest person I've ever had the privilege of meeting. That said, I know Nikki would be disappointed in me if I didn't offer a due response to "Community must unite" in *The Monitor* of February 25th, which was (in my mind) the most hypocritical opinion ever published in this generally level-headed paper.

According to Nikki, Judy Shepard was, among other things, "issuing to us, personally" a request for "holistic acceptance." Nikki spends several paragraphs offering accolades to Judy Shepard. Unfortunately, Nikki seemed to have forgotten what Ms. Shepard said by the time she wrote the second half of the letter. Nikki's right: this is a "community issue."

I hate to be the one to break it to you Nikki, but this community is not just made up of self-righteous, trendy hippies. To a not insignificant extent, this community's sense of identity is, and was well before you got here, based on a literal belief in the words of the Christian god as articulated in the Bible (see references to homosexuality in the books of Matthew, James, and John). When that woman stood up and spoke her piece, she was using her words as "political tools," just like Nikki is asking us to. When she stood up, she did so with the "bravery and honesty" that Nikki unfortunately attributes to Mary Burford. When people "asked her to sit down," they did so with a hate in their voices that was matched only by their tenacity. Let's be honest, Nikki. You didn't "ask her" to sit down. You said it yourself: you "yelled at her."

Where's your "holistic acceptance" now? Where's your understanding that this is a "community issue"? Oh, I forgot... You simply couldn't "accept the lens through which she sees the world." Wow. That's really accepting. That's really community-oriented. What did yelling at her accomplish? Nothing, unless you count the alienation of one more member of the Kirksville community from the students that make up our campus. As a bisexual man, do I think this woman was right? Do I think the Bible should be used as a tool of hate? Absolutely not. But that doesn't excuse the audience response.

I'm sorry you think "tolerance is phony acceptance," Nicole. I'm sorry you think that if you don't yell and boo out of auditoriums those that disagree with your position you will be "neutral, disconnected, and benignly helpless." I am sorry because I know that's not the case. I wanted to vomit when I read that opinion, but I didn't tell people not to read *The Monitor*. I didn't pull copies off the stands, and I did NOT "smother [my] emotional reaction." I wrote this. The only example of "denying ourselves an opportunity to truly communicate with ourselves and other people" that I can think of is when the "brave and honest" Mary Burford grabbed the microphone from a woman using her words as political tools. Nikki, I can hardly believe you would say people should "share their loves and fears with each other" after supporting such an awful display as the one in question.

Tolerance isn't "phony," Nikki. That said, *pretending* to be someone who accepts the views of individuals certainly is.

Please don't hate me, Nikki. You're too cool for that. :-)

Corey Owens

The Vagina Monologues serve many purposes

As organizer of "The Vagina Monologues" and V-Day Truman for the past two years, I have to vent a pet peeve: "The" is part of the title in "The Vagina Monologues." The *Index* and *The Monitor* never, ever include it. Furthermore, the *Index* deliberately took the "The" out of the quotes in the letter I recently sent. I had it right, and they changed it! Anyhow, there is more pressing controversy surrounding "The Vagina Monologues" (henceforth TVM's), and for that, I am grateful.

Last Wednesday, I walked into a Women's Resource Center (WRC) exec meeting to find a bemused and slightly miffed director, Erika Cortez, saying, "Did you know I'm white and middle-class?" This confused me, because she's not. Turns out that an article was commenting on the hypocrisy of TVM's because, in part, it was presented by and for people who have no real need for TVM's. Erika and I were bemused because our nuclear families are both decidedly lower class (according to economic standards), and Ms. Cortez is indeed Hispanic.

So, I am writing in part to split hairs over a peripheral and probably negligible point: despite any faults one can point out in TVM's themselves (and there are some), several of the people responsible for bringing it to Truman are not middle-class or even white, as we were so cruelly accused. Obviously, being full-time college students raises us above the socioeconomic status of our families; we are privileged and we like it. It's this privilege that allows us

to work at the WRC while our family members work to survive, or worse, don't work and barely survive.

We are painfully aware that many women don't have the luxury of working for, or even benefiting from, women's rights. Our tickets for the show began at \$2, which I felt like nearly any person in Adair County could afford. Furthermore, all of our other events were free. I did not organize free babysitting for women who need it, and for that, I apologize. I would LOVE, truly love, any suggestions for new ways to appeal to the general population of Kirksville, as I have tried almost everything I can think of.

One tactic we know helps women is to raise money, so that the people who perhaps most need our events, but don't feel welcome at them can still reap the benefits of our work. We were critiqued for our shameless commerce. I hope that selling silly merchandise that nobody needs doesn't intimidate anyone and that no one will be criticized if they don't have money to spend.

However, if you do have money, then I want it! As much as I try to bring in an alternative population, it's mostly college kids who come to TVM's, and many of these college kids have money to toss around. This year, this classist organization raised \$2600 for women's organizations in Kirksville and in Juarez, Mexico, and I'm pretty damn proud of all the people who helped do that. No matter how shallow our intentions or faulty our rhetoric, money is power, and money helps people. If we cannot personally help women, then at least we can give cash to the folks who do.

I understand and share the critique that mainstream feminism has largely ignored the needs of working-class women, girls, and elderly women. I truly hope that TVM's are one way to counteract that problem. However, it disturbs me that people feel that just because you are among the privileged in the U.S., you have nothing to gain from feminism anymore. I know so many people at Truman who are survivors of or have been directly affected by violence against women. These women's stories are what V-Day is about. You can say that violence is far, far away, and we aren't doing anything to help that, but you can't ignore the violence that surrounds us. We are not safe and cozy at Truman, and V-Day tries to drive that point home.

I don't know how to fix the world's problems, but I try to keep busy at it nonetheless. Sometimes I fear that all the work that I put into TVM's is simply another way of distracting my scurrying mind from the futility of the human condition, that, as many say, TVM's are trite and pop and don't make a difference. This pop activism is just a way to make us feel good about ourselves and an excuse to prance about. If that's the case, well dammit, at least I didn't spend all day watching TV. At least it makes me feel better at night, when I'm falling asleep, to know that I worked hard at something, even if my conscience is the only one who benefited. And if I haven't helped a single person; I did my best not to make anything worse, so I'll sleep soundly. That's all I can ask for.

I appreciate critiques of TVM's, I understand many of them, and I even share some of them. I can't control how people react to our productions, but I do hope that they react. What does V-Day accomplish, and how can we do more than what we are doing now? If my letter or Mr. Jackson's article have sparked some critical thought on those topics, then I'm grateful. Just realize that we are trying our

best over here at the WRC, and we don't know how to do more than that. If you have any practical suggestions, send them our way.

With great love for *The Monitor* staff,
Dana LeeAnne Kuhnline

Violence a relevant topic for all

I'd like to start by saying that as a man I feel just a little uncomfortable writing what I think needs to be written and probably will be written by a woman. However, I have decided to write this anyway and risk drowning out other more viable voices for fear that nothing will be written at all.

In the last issue of *The Monitor* Suzanne Leslie's article on the Vagina Monologues was co-opted by Zach Jackson's commentary. Although I am always open to hearing criticisms of any writing, project, or ideology, I do find fault with some of Zach's comments. Zach makes several claims about the classist nature of the Monologues that are themselves classist. For instance, he asserts that the message of the Monologues doesn't reach the right ears, specifically poor and working class women. To imply that violence against women is most prevalent in lower classes is to belittle the violence that occurs in the homes of suburban middle class families, in the corporate workplace, and yes even in the families of the very rich. Perhaps, I would be jumping too far down Zach's throat by saying that his assertion implies that lower classes are more prone to violence against women than upper classes. Also, men play a very intrinsic role in the oppression of women of all classes and therefore should be included in the appropriate and necessary audience of the Monologues.

In addition, Zach comments that "... a certain amount of economic stability needs to be in place before you can even think about participating [in] or attending a theatre production. Also, a certain amount of political agency already needs to be in place before a production like this can proceed." Does this mean that poor people cannot enjoy or participate in the arts because of their class? This might be true in some circles but certainly not at an open production with admission prices based on sliding scale donations. Also, Zach implies that "political agency" is a privilege that comes with economic stability. However, if Zach would examine any period of history he would see that the oppressed classes have always held a considerable amount of political consciousness and political power in their collective organization.

Finally, Zach makes the mistake of trying to subjugate the feminist movement to the environmentalist movement. By saying that until the earth is respected no woman will be safe, Zach is asserting his male opinions on a movement by, for, and of women. This is not the first time that a movement of oppressed people has been subject to this type of typically white, male domination. Oftentimes race issues are placed below class issues in importance but mostly in the minds of white men. This mindset only serves to create a hierarchy of struggles and divisions where there should be alliances. Let us not try to merge all struggles into one, but instead respect each other's positions and stand in solidarity with each other.

While anyone is oppressed, no one is free.

Chris Scheets

O P I N I O N S

monitor

Digesting John Kerry

Opinion by I John Lawinger

Since I spent my entire last article railing against the current administration, this time I'll start off with its opposition. Bush caught a lot of flack recently for using imagery from Sept. 11th in a wave of television campaign ads. Perhaps most notably, or at least most noted, the president of the International Association of Fire Fighters, Harold Schaitberger, denounced the move. What many news outlets failed to note is that Schaitberger is also co-chairman of the Kerry campaign. In general, coverage of the ads seemed to indicate widespread popular outrage based on statements from a dozen or so people, including many who are opposing the political use of Sept. 11 primarily for political reasons. Personally, I figure Sept. 11 was the major event of the last four years, so there's no reason it shouldn't be fair game for political use. Using it politically might be sad, but I think it's also inevitable and probably necessary. Funny none of the people upset at Bush trying to benefit from the tragedy seem to care about John Kerry showing up with firefighters every chance he gets. That's because his doing so has nothing to do with Sept. 11th, right?

In other Kerry-is-doing-his-best-to-be-a-hypocrite news, Kerry recently proclaimed that several foreign leaders had told him that they support his bid for the presidency. When the Bush admin smartly demanded that he prove the claim by naming the supportive leaders, Kerry claimed that for the sake of those leaders he could not

reveal who they are. I'm not upset because I believe that Kerry just made up the claim in the first place, I'm upset because he was stupid enough to put forth such a claim when he had no way to back it up. The last thing Kerry needs is to start making "I can't back this up, but just trust me" claims. That's exactly the kind of thing that has turned a lot of people against the current administration.

One smart move by Kerry was recently challenging Bush to monthly debates between now and the election. I suppose it's an unlikely scenario, but I'd much prefer to see frequent head to head debates by the candidates instead of battles fought through TV ads and spokesman. It'd be nice to see more support for debates among political candidates.

Even if Kerry has been less than stellar lately, people have good reasons to turn against the current administration. Two hundred thirty-seven of those reasons are documented in a report from the House of Representatives Minority Committee on Government Reform titled "Iraq on the Record." The report quotes 237 misleading statements in 125 different public appearances by Bush, Cheney, Rice, Powell, and Rumsfeld on Iraq. Along with each quotation is a short explanation of how it is misleading or sometimes overtly false. This thorough collection of specific instances of dishonesty

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Bush annoys in variety of ways

Opinion byI Andrés Delgado

The Howard Stern Show was removed from Clear Channel stations late last month after a caller asked guest Rick Salomon, the guy in the Paris Hilton tape, "Hey Rick, we wanna smell your fingers, one thing. We wanna smell those fingers, see what they smell like. And my other question is have you ever banged any famous nigger or spic bitches? And what do they smell like?" This occurred in the aftermath of the Superbowl, but also significantly after Stern, who had supported Bush in his invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, abandoned his support of the President and replaced it with criticism. It is important to recognize that the above quote was from a caller, not Stern himself, and not very unusual for the show. The banning amounts to trumped-up charges brought forth to appease a vocal, censorship-minded minority in this country. And it's Bush who courts this minority, the religious right.

Stem-cell research. One estimate puts the number of people in the US suffering from a genetic disorder at 100 million. Stem-cell research has shown very promising potential. However, as of Bush's 2001, only about 60 cell lines are approved for federally funded research. Thousands of fetuses are destroyed yearly as the result of in vitro techniques. They would be useful, as many scientists have expressed regret that their research must thus be limited to such a poorly representative sample pool. Bush went against the bent of the religious right just to approve that limited funding. Why are they opposed to this method that could relieved the suffering of actual living human beings? Because the cells came from fetuses. And enough people feel that their ticket to heaven is protecting "the unborn." As pissed as I am, I can not even imagine what I would feel like if I had imperfect genes.

Who is behind Bush's astounding support for a

Constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman? The same group. There is hardly anything to say further about this.

Bush's other masters, the corporate rich, are responsible for screwing us all over as well. Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. described in The Nation nine EPA press releases between September and December of 2001 assuring the public of safe air in downtown New York in the wake of 9/11. The earliest "air is safe to breathe" assurance came out on 9/18. Many rescue workers believed these statements, as a Mt. Sinai School of Medicine study has found persistent lung and respiratory illnesses in half the rescue workers. Writes Kennedy, "An Inspector General's report released last August revealed that the EPA's data did not support those assurances and that its press releases were being drafted or doctored by White House officials intent on reopening Wall Street."

And Bush as a person is sketchy as well. Remember how he continued reading his children's book after learning about 9/11? There's video of it at <<http://www.thememoryhole.org/911/bush-911.htm>>. His history at his failed companies is laughable, then infuriating. As a director of Harken Energy, he received a memo from company lawyers one week before selling all of his stock that "If the insiders presently possess any material non-public information, a sale of any of their shares could be viewed critically." When the financial statements were published for the quarter, two months later, the stock declined in value eventually to ¼ of Bush's selling price. To keep them straight, this is the company that he rode into the dirt just prior to his father attaining the presidency. Incidentally, the SEC investigation under President Bush of his son, W. Bush, found no wrongdoing.

Newswire

Compiled by I
Narissa Webber

Africa

Tripoli, Libya – President Bush celebrated International Women's Week by paying tribute to Libyan reformer Fathi Jahmi, a government official imprisoned in 2002 for advocating democracy. Unfortunately, Jahmi is a man. Well, all those foreigners look and sound the same anyway – don't they, Dubya?

Darfur province, Sudan – After Arab militias instigated a mass rape atrocity against over 100 black African women in Darfur, the region's U.N. coordinator, Mukesh Kapila, emphasized the potential for large-scale genocide there. Kapila said, "I don't know why the world isn't doing more about [ethnic cleansing]," and the U.S. promptly responded, "Uhh, have you guys seen that Osama dude lately?" Meanwhile, the Arab-dominated Sudanese government attacked Kapila's remarks as a "heap of lies" in violation of neutrality and successfully removed him from the Sudanese mission.

Americas

New York – 2,000,000+ people participated in 600+ worldwide protests marking the one-year anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq on March 20th. In Washington D.C., President Bush stuttered his usual cryptic buzzwords, citing "turrtrrrsts" and "Merika" and "nukela-lur" and "evil" as key justifications for his administration's war. Bush also declared progress in Iraq, in contrast to Iraqi citizens protesting rising unemployment and security lapses under American forces outside of Secretary of State Colin Powell's Baghdad address. Bush and Powell were later seen in the parking lot, circling, screaming "I DON'T GIVE A FUCK," with their windows down and their system up.

McLean, Virginia – A *U.S.A. Today* probe uncovered substantial portions of major news articles by its former star foreign correspondent Jack Kelley as fraudulent. Kelley defended his actions, asserting that most of *U.S.A. Today's* readership doesn't read the foreign affairs articles anyway.

Wall Street – World stock markets plummeted amid international political tensions, high oil prices, and U.S. unemployment. One nervous investor confided, "I wish all this shit would just let up so my portfolio could perform like it's meant to. Otherwise, I'll have to pull a Martha." Millions upon millions of starving children and refugees chimed in solidarity, "That's so fucking irrelevant, you asshole!"

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Gibson and Kucinich: passionate politics

Amongst many strange facts unobserved probably by most Americans, is that the 96 percent of us proudly planetarily not-US citizens are cognizant generally and specifically on two things about you. Generally, even the thickest, most historical of us have particularly public service and non-ad-free comparative broadsheets that assure we know far more than we could critically want about YOU! Specifically, that we agree with both the US writer turned GB citizen novelist Edwardian Henry

James and even, wait for it, Bush II in his presidential last debates with Gore, that there is existent, the "ugly American" in sheer couldn't be less ignorant pride danger to us all! (see Bush excerpt in IRAQ UNCOVERED documentary expose)

Now, bearing in mind this ugly versus handsome American hypercritical reality, apply the construct to the late popular historian, left to right politically, Chris Lasch, used in his book THE CULTURE OF

NARCISSISM to the very different self TOTALLY admiring way the US media employs the categorized polarities. Its distressingly the reverse of such world-wise commonsense criteria of evaluation!

Handsome is for US tv and college administrators, even US serious mainstream papers, that of Gibson and his movie, THE PASSION. Last night of writing ABC mistitled WORLD News Tonight raved articulated on his movie "packing" visibly in lots of poor Americans into theaters. In a Peter Jennings led commentary all this happened before the movie "officially opened", and half whisperingly in the Canadian anchor's most bourgeois reverential voice at showings "promoted to conservative Christians", but Jennings fawningly pronounced it "a total American success"! Because of Hollywood/US advance sales and the fact only two of his half-dozen African American free show teen ladies had objected to Gibson's own conceded extreme violence. Only fleetingly was the black businessman benefactor reverentially too interviewed!

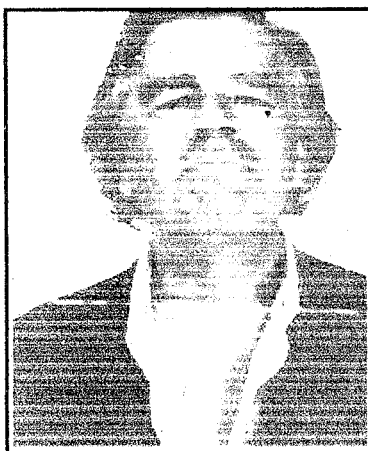
No overseas, Jewish historian, no theologian critical was ONCE interviewed on Gibson's fact blatant anti-semitic screed. My Amnesty International fellow officer, former French TSU associate professor, Gloria Kwok informed us recently also that the same uncritically handsome menu was staple largess of ABC Diane Sawyer's TWENTY-TWENTY half hour plus Gibson interview which she did and for which he was presumably paid handsomely. Commendably, she did raise the HOLOCAUST WWII denial views of this schismatic Catholic dad on the deaths of over 6 million Jews, gypsies, gays, Jehovah's witnesses. But meekly she shut up when he bragged told her his dad's denial views of the FAR right were "off limits"! Why, when he's used the same evasion tactics for years and when his own movie production company is fanatically titled "Icon Productions, do you respond only with silence, Sawyer?

Now let's move to the so-called "ugly" American whom ABC rarely by contrast covers like MEL, and who by the time of this MONI-

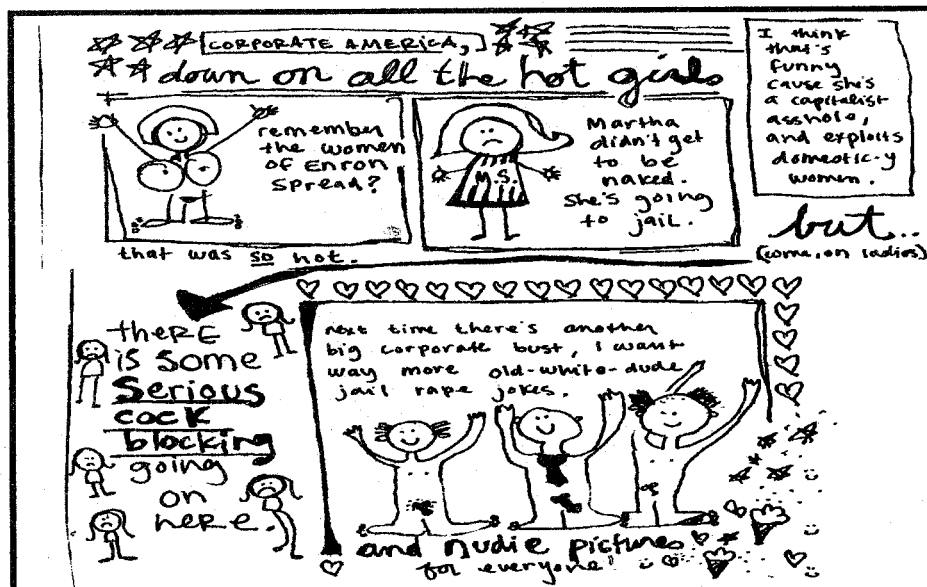
TOR opinion appearance will have either been eliminated by poverty from the US Democratic party presidential candidate handsomeness stakes or even if Hawaii etcetera last delegate boosted still rigged out by Kerry or Edwards big money from any realistic chances of winning in November in the world crucial survival anti-Bush contest! He is a supposed dwarf, physically small literally, divorced and a PROGRESSIVE but real ROMAN Catholic, and too a once defeated Ohio big city mayor,

Congressman Dennis Kucinich! Yet the man who brought cheap public power to that city to this day. Every day that the very right wing Gibson is feted by US home media, Kucinich has had to face ridicule by even serious papers like THE NEW YORK TIMES despite third places in 2 states. Even when his views in favor of gay marriage might fit a story they did yesterday as of writing where they mentioned Bush, Kerry, and Edwards varying degrees of antagonism they left both DK and pro REVEREND Sharpton entirely skeweringly out. By contrast, Mel's BRAVEHEART has a gay thrown out of his son's consenting tower turret to the gay's death in sickening phobia worthy of Gibson's exoneration of the handsome UK white actor Peter Firth's ROMAN in fact execution of Christ in his latest movie!!

Yet you know what? While I mustn't exaggerate Kucinich knowledge abroad, as it's mainly confined to our political class watchers, its an amazing fact that if you take just my tiny native UK alone, DENNIS has got more regular coverage on key programs tv news like BBC 2 NEWSNIGHT and CHANNEL FOUR SEVEN NEWS, seen from Ireland to Holland than here! The ugly American for us is not the three times re-elected Congressman, the NATIONAL US CHAIR of the 50 member plus elected Congressional Progressive Caucus. He is the "handsome" guy who stands for a free health service for 43 million you Americans who can't afford NOUGHT or even if as in TSU most can afford it, they are typically under-insured. He's the Yank who talks about, as he did in Wisconsin, the US "rejoining the world humanity in Iraq" by reparations for the damning destruct you did and are doing by perverting a reluctant Blair spy upon UN misinvolvement. He's no pose-brood like MEL and can admit religiously he got it wrong opposing for years women's reproductive rights as he mistakenly did in wrong intolerance as a man. IN EUROPE OR CANADA KUCINICH WOULD BE A MINISTER ELECTIVELY BY NOW! SO THE QUESTION REMAINS, READERS—WHY IS THE BRUTALISED GIBSON, AUSTRALIAN RAISED TOUGHIE, THE HANDSOME GUY, WHEN HE SHOULD BE THE REAL UGLY AMERICAN? He should be the one American who is denied most of our attention and our money, as he unsafely is promoting unhistorical hatred. Pope John 23rd was long himself a holocaust defender, condemned as far back as the early 1960s. Gibson's own present movie after all just tells US bully style yet another non white Semitic people to subtext take white injustice for their own and Gibson's profiteering good. WHY??



Opinion by | Larry Iles



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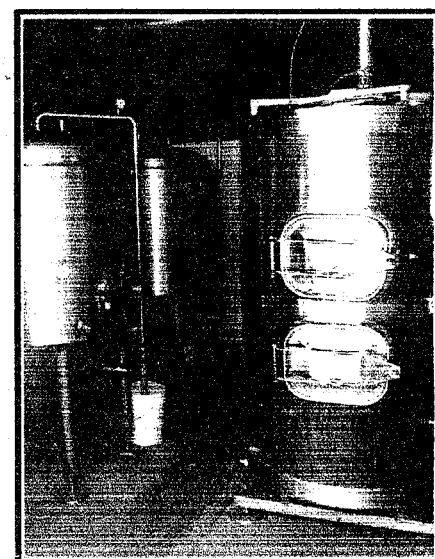


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F E A T U R E S

monitor

POINT

Flag burning is protected speech

Point by | Ken Susman

Freedom of speech is the cornerstone of American life and culture. Since the founding of our country, it is the rock that has guaranteed Americans the right to hold opinions contrary to those of the majority. It has guaranteed, and in many ways helped to create, the concept of loyal opposition.

But one question has plagued America for two hundred years: what is speech? If I go to the Quad and rattle off a list of reasons why Bush is the worst leader America has had since George III, there is no doubt that is covered under freedom of speech. Other actions are not so clear cut. Flag burning is one of those actions.

In the past decade, there have been several attempts to amend the Constitution to ban this repulsive form of "speech." One must wonder how burning a symbol that represents generations of men and women who have fought and died to secure and preserve our freedom qualifies as speech. Is this the same group who feels that bribing public officials under the guise of campaign contributions is a protected form of speech?

As a free society, we must be constantly vigilant for people or groups looking to erase the memory of the great sacrifices our nation was built upon. The flag has given Americans hope in times when all hope should have been lost. In 1812, when the British nearly reconquered the United States, the flag stood as a symbol of all that America had gained in the thirty six years since independence—Francis Scott Key's now famous poem, "The Star Spangled Banner," perfectly sums up the feelings the flag summons in each of us.

The flag is a visible symbol linking America's past, present, and future. It is a reminder that freedom is not free. America now enters a new millennium full of uncertainty; we in the early stages of what may become the dirtiest Presidential campaign in history, we are fighting a cultural war on all fronts at home, and we are at war against rouge states and terrorists who are bent on our destruction.

The flag as a visible sign of American unity and sacrifice is not one that can easily be dismissed. To permit the destruction of so powerful a symbol is to denigrate the record of generations of veterans who have fought and died for the freedoms we enjoy so thoughtlessly.

An amendment banning this vile act would permit Americans to live knowing that the countless sacrifices made to by generations past, present and future will never be forgotten. It is a fitting tribute to generations of veterans that the flag that has given so many people hope is protected from zealots who think that burning a cherished national symbol is speech.

On March 25, the Freethinkers' Society will be discussing this issue in depth. It will be an open discussion and all opinions are welcome. The meetings are held every week on a variety of topics and are held in Baldwin 303 at 8:30. If you have questions, you can contact the group at trumanfreethinkers@hotmail.com.

COUNTERPOINT

The flag should be protected

Counter-point by | Andy Frazier

Flag burning is unquestionably a repulsive action. It refutes a tradition of freedom and belittles the efforts of those who have fought and died for it. The action tears at our hearts and offends our senses. It is for this reason that all true lovers of freedom should work against prohibitions against flag burning.

"Freedom" is more than the right to read the latest gossip on celebrities or download vomit fetish pornography off the Internet. "Freedom" is not exclusively the right to worship or copulate as one sees fit. Freedom, at its most basic, is the ability to act however one chooses within one's own capacities, so long as those actions do not interfere with the lives and actions of others. Freedom is about tolerating more than those opinions which we happen to agree with. It is about permitting those actions which we disagree with as well, so long as those actions do not directly interfere with or impede our own freedom. Flag burners, despicable as they may be, in no way interfere with the lives of those around them, save the handful who may righteously choose to take offense at their actions. That interference however is not direct, and it is itself a manifestation of the freedom to respond as one sees fit to offensive action.

It is ironic that burning this symbol of freedom stands as a testament to freedom itself, but the ability to question all things, including freedom, is at heart what freedom truly is. In prohibiting flag burning, we undermine what the flag is truly about and in doing so, perhaps lend justification to their actions. We cannot maintain that we prohibit flag burning in the name of freedom, because without the right to burn the flag, we are not truly free.

A proposition to end postal plight

Feature by | Jennifer Weimer

As I was disappointedly checking my mail the other day, per my daily routine, a thought occurred to me: I like getting mail. Not generic campus notices, organization promotions, or even the J. Crew catalogue I requested in an effort to console myself; even that proved to be void of true satisfaction. Hardly anything is more thrilling in a college freshman's day than to peek through the little window of their mailbox and see something other than the uniform, bright orange announcement impersonally slid into every single mailbox on campus; whether it's a hand-addressed envelope from Mom or, better still, another box of assorted goodies from Grandma, who must think that you go through a jar of peanut butter a week the way she keeps sending it! Anything of this sort will serve to brighten the eyes and tweak a smile from the lips of even the surliest of grouches.

However, as I'm sure most of second semester freshmen have noticed, those letters and packages only last so long. Sure, there are those rare parents out there who have to write Susie a letter every other day to make sure that she's taking her vitamins and whatnot, but most of us have fallen into the pattern of a few calls a week and even regular emails. This may be simply part of the transition of growing up, but I don't think that my mailbox should

be punished. While my inbox and voicemail get plenty of attention, my mailbox spends most of its time in a state of solitude. Don't get me wrong, I love new technology as much as the next girl who has discovered the joy of shopping online, but I just don't want to see the U.S. Postal Service suffer for it.

I don't think I'm alone in this either. Ask any of the hall desk workers at the residence halls on campus and they'll tell you just how disheartening it is to see the same downtrodden faces day after day as a result of empty mailboxes. Some of the hopefuls venture to ask the workers if they've just not gotten around to distributing the mail yet or whether there's a stray package back there somewhere with their name on it. Valentine's Day is quite possibly the most significant example of this; as a bystander I had only to silently observe as the hall desk workers told hopeful resident after hopeful resident that packages and flowers were still

being sorted and they'd just have to come back later. Almost cruel, the way the nature of this situation let some of the residents hold out hope that something would come for them.

Something is flawed with this system. When the demand for mail is not even close to being met due to lack of supply, change is in order. After much deliberation and days of analyzing my plight on the walk back to my dorm room, I have

come to what can only be considered the perfect solution. Our fault until now has been that those hopefuls only see themselves on the receiving end. Far too often we are so caught up in our own lack of postal pleasure that we neglect to realize that we are one of many with the same dilemma. If we'd only take a moment to care about our friends more than ourselves we'd immediately arrive upon the solution: *send each other mail*. This is absolutely the best solution for those of us on campus desiring personal mail, those of us who know there are more people who care about us besides random Greek organizations we've never heard of.

Another angle of this perfect solution is found in the price — there is none! Campus mail is absolutely free! The cheapest of cheap people could grab a piece of paper out of the recycling bin, write a quick note to a friend using a pen found on the floor, tri-fold it with tape from the front desk and be done with it. This may not be the most thoughtful way to go about communicating but it accomplishes the higher goal. Think, if all of us did this *once a week* for someone that we care about how much happier we'd be. Good works are repaid with good, soon there'd be only happy faces leaving the mailbox area. We'll work on packages later...

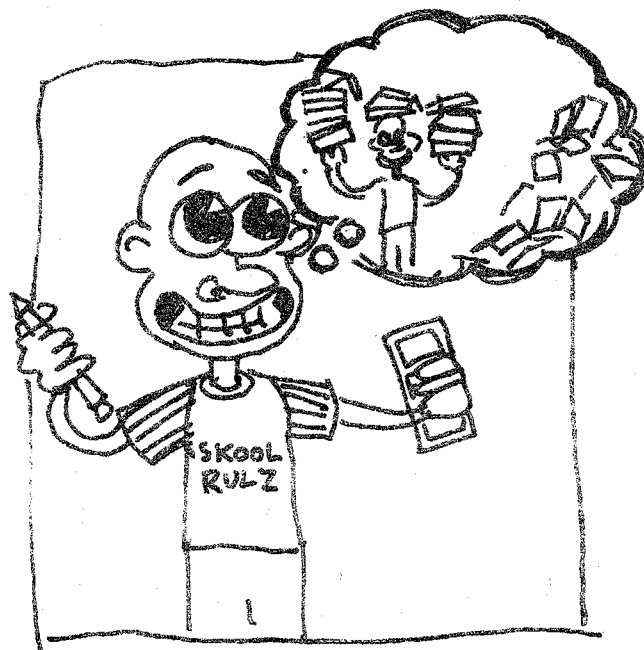


Image by | Joe Moccia

Never say die until the bones are rotten

Feature by | Philip Gosu

The first part of the semester has been crazy for some people like me and good for others. We all know it is part of life. There are occasions in everyone's life when everything goes so well and according to the way it was planned. Most times, when things do not go as planned we tend to get upset trying and in a way become hostile to people around us. I know some have already thrown in the towel but I want them to know that all is not yet lost, because if there is life, there is hope. Like the adage of getting up one more time when we have been knocked down, we can reorganize ourselves to face the second half of the semester. We should not allow circumstances to shape our lives and self image. As students we are like boxers, and just as the boxers reorganize themselves and get up each time they are knocked down, we must learn not to stay down but persevere whenever we are knocked

out by our classes.

Sometimes one has to give up certain aspects of his life in the short term to be able to achieve his priorities. I gave up playing soccer in high school even though it's a sport I loved and cherished so much, because it kept me away from my books. This break from doing what I loved was essential and it enabled me to achieve my aim of getting into college.



Image by | Joe Moccia

Yes, it is really hard sometimes to do away with things we love, but we have to try if that is a possible way of solving our problems.

The question we must ask ourselves is, "Are we the first to encounter such problems?"

Definitely not! Then why should we give up so easily? Unless we want to call ourselves failures, which we are not, we should gather our courage and work towards our goals. One thing we must know is that the best bet in life is to never give up trying despite the setbacks we face.

The second part of this semester is action time for those of us who think there is hope no matter the case. It's time for those of us who know we can obtain victory by exerting, at the last moment, all our efforts, more than ever before. In the 1999 European Cup final which was between Manchester United and Bayern Munich, Manchester United in the last minute rose from a goal down and achieved victory over Bayern Munich. Manchester United did all they could to win because they knew they needed that victory.

We should also strive the same way to show the world that we know why we are college. It's time to change our F to D, our D to C, our C to B, and our B to A. For those who already have the A, beware because it is not over until it is all over. Never say die until the bones are rotten.

Courts obligated to legalize gay marriage

Opinion by | Jon Lawinger

Gay marriage seems to be a rather trendy controversy as of late, spawning more protests and commentary than any other political topic over the last several months. The most recent debate on the topic has centered on the Massachusetts court decision requiring the state to allow homosexuals to marry, the mayor of San Francisco (and later other mayors) illegally issuing thousands of marriage licenses to homosexuals, and the conservative push for state and federal constitutional amendments banning gay marriage. In the midst of all of this, I've noticed a peculiar practice emerge amongst conservative politicians. None of them are making claims about what is wrong with gay marriage anymore. They've chosen to avoid that messy situation as much as possible and focus their declarations on one simple fact: the American public does not support gay marriage. It's the truth. A Gallup poll taken in early March of 2004 indicates only one third of the country is in favor of gay marriage. So the conservative approach is now to defend the desires of the people against "activist judges" who might force the legalization of homosexual marriage. Therefore, I'm not going to bother arguing that gay marriage should be allowed. That's not enough at this point. I'll go one step further and maintain that forcing legalization of gay marriage through the courts is appropriate, even if the majority of the population is solidly opposed to such legalization.

The first thing that must be established is that homosexuality is naturally occurring. Most of the scientific community believes that homosexuality is a natural inclination of some people, and not just a choice of behavior as some people claim. The evidence is very convincing on this point. The existence of homosexuality in nature has been well documented among several species of animals. Still some conservatives claim that childhood events might

"turn" someone gay, suggesting that the trait is not inborn, or point to examples of former homosexuals who have "gone straight" as evidence that sexual orientation is purely a matter of choice. All we have to do is consider left-handedness, a trait similarly estimated to be possessed by about ten percent of the population, to see that neither of these arguments are convincing. Few people would argue that being left-handed is unnatural or purely a matter of choice. However, childhood events certainly could effect whether one will become left-handed, and many naturally left-handed people have forced themselves to become right-handed in order to make life easier. Therefore, homosexuals are a naturally occurring class of people, as much so as left-handed individuals are a naturally occurring class of people.

Now if homosexuals are established as a naturally occurring class of people they must be protected by the equal protection clause of the fourteenth amendment, which demands equal application of the laws. Thus, on constitutional grounds, homosexuals cannot be denied the same marriage rights as heterosexuals any more than left-handed people can be denied the same marriage rights as right handed people.

A conservative might still argue, "Homosexuals do have the same marriage rights as heterosexuals. A homosexual man is allowed the same right to marry a woman that a heterosexual man is granted. A heterosexual man is also denied the right to marry another man even if he would like to. Similarly, either a heterosexual or homosexual woman can marry a man if she so pleases, but neither a heterosexual or homosexual woman can marry another woman." Despite its seeming to dodge the heart of the issue, such an argument might still seem adequate in a strictly logical sense. However, consider a similar scenario: A state run art school requires applicants to (while supervised) perform some drawings with their right hand, and their acceptance or denial will depend on

the quality of those drawings. In response to claims that the school was in violation of the equal protection clause by discriminating against left-handed people one could claim, "Left-handed applicants are treated equally. They are offered the same opportunity to draw with their right hand as right-handed applicants are, and right-handed applicants are similarly denied the option to use their left hand." No one would find such an explanation convincing, and neither should anyone find an equivalent argument convincing in the case of marriage rights for homosexuals.

From all this we can see that the courts have not only the legal grounds but the obligation to force the legalization of gay marriage. While a democracy should be based on the will of the people, a constitutional democracy wisely provides certain rights for all people so as to prevent abuse by those in power. This is a case in which the will of the people should not determine the legal standards put into place. This is not unreasonable, considering that many people have no interest in forming legal grounds for their opposition to gay marriage, since they are satisfied to oppose it purely on religious grounds. Conservatives need to start proving (not merely asserting) societal harms, instead of citing public support if they want to validate their views on gay marriage. Anyone disconcerted by the idea of a court ruling in opposition to public opinion ought to look back fifty years to when the Supreme Court decided in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregation of public schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment. Film footage of masses of rioting whites gathered to hurl insults and threats at black children trying to make their way into school isn't going to convince me that the courts shouldn't have outlawed school segregation, and opinion polls aren't going to make bans on gay marriage any less unconstitutional either.

Queen Astra



*Let the stars be
your guide!*

So I was talking to my friend Nostradamus the other day, and I was like, so what do you think is going to happen to this guy Steve, and he was like, I don't know, he'll probably perish in flames like the phoenix, and then from his ashes a bigger better Steve will emerge, and that Steve will lead an army of darkness, he will command the dead, and they will do his bidding, and when the moon aligns itself with the sun, then Steve's army of mummies will fight the armies of decency and censorship and then decadence and immorality will triumph once and for all. I hate Nostradamus, he's always saying this ridiculous stuff like that, thinking he's the only jerk who can read the future. So then I said, well I think that he's going to meet this chick, and things will go pretty well for a while, but then she will catch him masturbating to internet porn, and she'll get super angry/jealous, and then she's going to dump him, and he'll get all sad and shit, and then he'll start drinking a lot, and he'll get fired from his job because he always smells like cheap gin, and it will ruin his whole life. So then Nostradamus was all like, No way, I don't think so. So then I asked if he thought that Steve would just keep being a dick for the rest of his life, and he was all like, sure. Then I was all like dig it.

The Geek in You, The Geek in Me

Story by | Nicole Rainey

Kirkville, Missouri

According to Matt Lageman, a junior, and president of Truman's Role Playing Game (RPG) club, "everyone has a little bit of geek in them." We at *The Monitor* could not agree more. In case you didn't know, Truman State is currently in the middle of the Role Playing Club's own Geek week—rollover Pan-Hellenic council; these kids have more fun than you could ever dream of. Here are some of this week's highlights: on Thursday night, geek it up in the Centennial Hall 4th floor lounge for some board game action, or go to MC208, 209, and 210 on Saturday at 3:00 for D&D. According to Lageman, geeks play a vital role in the Truman community. He explains, "we add the element of the unexpected, and bring something completely different."

The RPG club meets on Thursdays at 7:00 in Centennial 229. Put on your mage face, and get ready for some action.

R E V I E W S

monitor

Reinterpreting "Green Eggs and Ham"

Signature by I David Capps

Before delving into analysis, let me point out that I am responding chiefly to, I am motivated by, other reviewers, who, being poor or/and mocking in their own right, have failed to do hermeneutic justice to the most exceptional piece in the oeuvre of Mr. Seuss. And among those attitudes, I direct my comments to one Katy Smith, of Pratt "Elementary" School in Montgomery, W. Virginia. Smith, is the case with most others, spirits her academic rigor down the waste-pipe by abusing the profundities of Seuss to a superficial plot summary. The loins of her analysis yearn to be quoted in full:

"...Sam-I-Am then tries to get the friend to taste them anyway. He suggests different places and with different creatures. The friend keeps refusing. Finally the friend agrees to try them IF Sam-I-Am will stop bothering him. Sam agrees, hesitantly, the friend takes the first bite. He really likes them!" (Smith, 345)

And what of other, more famed critics? No better, if not worse. Take for instance Dr. Laura Hoyler, of the prestigious minion Trail elementary School. Likewise liberal in her use of exclamation points, she attends solely to the fact that "Green Eggs and Ham" contains rhyming words. And I quote:

"Everyone knows the tale of Sam I Am trying to convince his friend to eat green eggs and ham! The rhymes are repeated through the book, with new ones added on. 'I would not, could not with a mouse, I would not could not in a box...' It is all for rhyming words!" (Hoyler, 216)

The obvious point to be made about Hoyler's analysis is that its conclusion is false. For any schoolchild knows that unless the poem were to treat of the "orange" and "purple" rhyming paradoxes, it cannot be said to have made any definitive claim on "rhyming words." And secondly—No, I do not suggest that Dr. Hoyler be drawn and quartered, merely that she would do well to abandon her session with rhyming words.

Now that you, gentile reader, have the idea of the travesty of scholarship surrounding the work in question, lend me your ear, place a gumdrop to your tongue, and I will set Seuss's work aright—tithyfar from Smith's notion of the poem as a gesture between friends or Hoyler's structural phasis. Without assuming that Sam is a kind of friend, I will sprinkle clarification on the relationship between Sam and the speaker, which forms the nucleus of the work.

The initial and crucial move I make is to refrain from the otiose linguistic convention "Sam-I-Am" used by my predecessors, who follow Eisler like Santa follows Rudolf through our postmodern blizzard. Nay, the twentieth century has com-

plicated matters such as these. It is true that "Sam-I-Am" does appear several times in the text and it is widely considered important to "stick to the text." But while Geisel undoubtedly had good intentions (e.g. reminding us of the importance of the semantics of word transposition), the aforementioned phrase is arguably misleading and constrains the rich interpretations we might otherwise develop. To understand why this is so, consider the word "Sam." "Sam" is generic; "Sam" could be anyone (e.g. your postman, your garbage man, your junked-up damsel, to name a few). But Sam's existential statement, his cry asserting his very being, is an answer evinced every day in the "soul" of each of us to the Shakespearean conundrum "to be or not to be?" Where Hamlet reflects abjectly, or Aurelius in a contemplative Thanatos-ridden elegy, it is Sam's persistence that provides the reader the key to the uniqueness which permeates his being. Even the name "Sam" seems to reverberate with affirmation. The name may be even better conceptualized as the following elision:

"Yes, I am; Yes I am; Yes I am; Yei Sam; Sam; Sam"

That is how clear the truth is, and shinier if the reader notes the resonance of the above elision with the dictum of Fichte "I am I" (or in Dutch, Ich bin Ich). I know that in the past readers have objected to my use of German Idealism in these direful times, but I know nowhere where it is more appropriate.

One must also notice that Sam is not just anyone, and that it takes time for his identity to develop. In fact, it is significant that Sam is introduced in the regular subject-predicate fashion ("I am Sam", see Seuss pg. 2), and it is only directly before Sam is reintroduced tromping around with his platter of alien foodstuffs that the subject-predicate inversion occurs ("Sam I am", see Seuss pg. 4). This is evidently a type of foreshadowing of the distorted relationship between Sam and the speaker of the poem. Scholars on the East Coast have referred to this inversion as "The Switcheroo", but I refrain from such inane terminology because it is not cool. But perhaps the simplest, and certainly non-stylistic reason to read 'Sam I am' as the speaker's self-assertion is that the "I am" complement is superfluous if it refers to Sam, who is ostensibly present 'in a car,' '...a house,' '...with a mouse,' et cetera.

We can say, then, that Sam's assertion of his being, and the worldview it rep-



Sam attends the hermeneutic consequences of his egg

resents, is echoed by the speaker after their initial meeting and up until the speaker relents, but only provided that we read "Sam-I-Am" not as a rough-and-ready appellation of "Sam," but as an affirmation of the speaker directed at Sam (and it is this author's hope that in subsequent printings of Seuss's work, the phrase will read "...Sam, I am!"). After all, it is Sam who is confronting the speaker with multiple disorienting contexts such that the speaker's only response is to issue the broadest categorization of his own existence. And this is no surprise, for how else could the speaker react to various forms of otherness being projected ontologically onto his Being?

Here a likeness of Geisel's ideas to Camus' may be apropos. For the speaker, in affirming his own existence, naturally, continuously, and necessarily denies Sam's way of life and his crude yet absurd offerings which are tokens of the life of an Epicurean through the Looking-Glass (in contrast to the speaker, a clear renunciate of the worldly and fantastic scenarios his "friend" proffers). But where Camus leaves us pushing pebbles in eternal contemplation of our own frumpy wills, Geisel synthesizes the respective affirmations (and hence denials) of Sam and the speaker. Practically drowned, and surrounded by what appear to be bird-chested perverts poised to attack with driftwood, the speaker finally conforms and "tastes" the dish. As we would expect at this point, he fails to assert his own existence while addressing Sam ("Sam"! see Seuss pg. 56). But to his own surprise, runs the standard interpretation, he accepts it wholeheartedly.

edly.

The standard interpretation of his acceptance is that he does in fact like the dish, that it does, in fact, please his taste buds. And the standard interpretation gains its plausibility from a literal reading of the poem as a vilification of ethnocentrism, supposing the speaker to be unacquainted with this spectrally askew food variant from the Deep South. On this reading, despite the persistent affront to the speaker's cultural identity ("I would not, could not, with a goat," Seuss 24), he realizes he must accept a new heritage and altered personage, or enrage the page.

But this interpretation, even if supported literally, leaves out the crux of the situation: that the speaker is without freedom, having been surrounded either by products of his own unconscious (and how fitting that he is in the middle of the ocean) and/or minions that Sam has hired. Either way we construe it, the speaker has no other choice but to taste the Green Eggs and Ham, which, for all he knows, may be laced with strychnine. Consider that though Sam has no apparent motive except possibly colonialism in Larry Niles' sense, we never see him take a bite. Additionally, if the standard interpretation were correct, and the speaker had been happily absorbed into Sam's universe, what reason would there be for the speaker to employ the phrase "Sam-I-Am" in such a sardonic tone near the end of the piece?

The result of my interpretation is that the speaker, facing a watery death, begrudgingly partakes of "Green Eggs and Ham" and dissembles his appreciation for it although he finds it nasty. In this light, his acknowledgement of Sam as a "friend" is just his old affirmation in sheep's clothing. Perhaps the speaker's emerging I-sense is best characterized in terms of Martin Buber's conception of the alienation between the I and the world, where the "I" in this case is a juxtaposition between the I of innocence before spiritual confrontation and the tragicomic I which has no relief but to be banded amidst several feathered pricks barfing up this and that. Buber expresses it this way:

"...Then he sees that the I is contained in the world, and that there really is no I, and thus the world cannot harm the I, and he calms down... And when man is overcome again by the horror of alienation and the I fills him with anxiety, he looks up and sees a picture; and whichever he sees, it does not matter, either the empty I is stuffed full of world or it is submerged in the flood of the world, and he calms down.

But the moment will come, and it is near, when man, overcome by horror, looks up and in a flash sees both pictures at once. And he is seized by a deeper horror" (Buber 121, 122).

Fortunately for us, as well the speaker, Geisel's books are short and we are spared this deeper horror.

Elvis: The Early Bird Special

Elvis Presley
Self Portrait

Part III of V Review by Tom Usted

Elvis estimates that he has something approaching fifty hours of tapes from the *Self Portrait* sessions, ranging from his Dylan marathon to massacres of Nirvana songs, from polished Roy Hamilton tributes to rambunctious free-for-alls, and the finished record incorporates elements of all of the miles and miles of tape—real live tape, man, the old man is so in tune with the

industry and he still insists on recording in fucking analog.

Turns out Elvis has even been doing some songwriting in his spare time. He started out scrawling lines on random scraps of paper, as so many of the songsmithing ilk have done, and then he worked his way up to whole verses and choruses. Unlike most songwriters, though, he did not stop there. The songs Elvis has written and quite remarkably long, and boy, let me tell you, most of them are godawful. The rest are just fucking bad. Except for one, and it's included on *Self Portrait*. It's called, no shit, "Diggin' Mama's Bones," and it has to be one

of the single most frightening expressions of human despair and depravity ever created by a major artist in any medium. For more than eight minutes, Elvis does his best imitation of Scott Walker singing a Flannery O'Connor story about exhuming Gladys' body from the grave at Graceland with a shovel in the dead of the Memphian night in order that it might be refitted with a waxen flesh-substitute: "I pulled her up and I pulled her out / The rotten smell invaded my snout / I searched for skin, found not a speck / With Vernon breathing down my neck." And I thought it was gonna be something sexy.

The impromptu session mischief yielded one of the most inspired sequences in Elvis' canon, a tornadic howl through Buddy Holly's "Rave On," complete with the perfect carbon-copy hiccupping

"we-he-he-he-hell" to kick the swirling maelstrom into gear. This would not be anything more than truly incredible were it not for the fact that it goes on for a full five minutes of party-hardy madness and then—then, because it could not possibly have ended there, no sir—after another fit of hiccups, Elvis tears into Lucinda Williams' "I Just Wanted to See You So Bad," which would sound half-remembered if Elvis hadn't managed to recall all the words and then some, that's how casually, how collectedly, he segues into it. And the whole thing is done in the exact same style as Elvis would perform his Fifties hits onstage in the Seventies, meaning it's taken at two hundred miles per hour with a flame torch tickling his asshole.



the communities often have to work on the farms of large landholders who have monopolized resources in Guatemala, or travel to the city to work as day laborers.

Maria is a survivor, however, and continues the struggle to improve her life as well as that of her community. Although illiterate and a mono-lingual Tzutuhil Maya speaker, she is part of a group of twelve women who have formed a weaving cooperative in order to survive and to improve the lives of their children.

This weaving cooperative, called Atitlan Dos, began to make checkbook covers, coin purses, and cosmetic bags, but found that the prices they received for their work were so low that it hardly covered the costs of raw materials. Then they discovered fair trade networks that are based on the principle that profits should go to those who do the work rather than intermediaries who previously had swallowed up the lion's share of the revenue.

For these women in Santiago Atitlan, fair trade means a brighter future. "For us here, this is the only work we know how to do," says Dolores Tacaxoy, the president of the cooperative. "We are poor, and we use the money for our families." In a community without land or work, these women now have a means to support their families, including sending their children to school. After a long history of pain and violence, fair trade helps guarantee the women of Santiago Atitlan better tomorrows.

Becker teaches history at Truman and visited the Atitlan Dos weaving cooperative over spring break.

International Idol

Continued from page 1

Center for Student Involvement."

A welcome video started this year's event with scenes from the previous International Idol. The video also showed parts of the performance from last year's popular winner, Tripti Uprety. Tripti came onstage at the end of the show to announce the winner for 2003-2004: Makoto Hotta and his magic show, "The Secret of the Magician and the Sacred Bowl," performed by Makoto and 12 other students. The magic show included more than magic: it took acting and choreography as well. This included an interesting sword-fighting scene between Makoto and performers dressed in black, followed by a vanishing trick. The 2nd runners-up were Petar Mihaylov and Vanessa Hernandez for their fast-paced, provocative dance that included the Rumba, Samba, and Cha-Cha-Cha.

The show included dances such as the Bandana, a Nepalese Classical Welcoming Dance, The Awakening of the Flowers, a Japanese Summer Festival Dance, and an African dance representing the entire continent of Africa. "OM," a Nepalese Band, also performed two of their songs. Koichiro Matsuno astounded many audience members by his Japanese harmonica and guitar solo, "Emptiness."

Towards the end of the show, there was a guest performance by TSODA, Truman Society of Dance Arts. They performed a dance with Southeast Asian influence, Ya Habibi Daab Alibi (Easy Does It). There was also a much-anticipated world fashion show directed by Rūth Sabai. One international student from France, Celine Boudet, participated in the fashion show. She described her experience as "Really, really fun. I was very nervous, but we know that people are here [in the auditorium]?"

For the show to go on, it took more than the cooperation of the performers. Judges and backstage workers also added their time and effort.

Bertha Thomas from the Department of Multicultural Affairs was one of the judges for the event. "The level of talent was phenomenal,"

she recalled afterwards. "Judging was hard because so many acts did so well. It was very close for a number of performances."

While judging the show was difficult, behind-the-scenes work was just as challenging. David Bonner, a student at Truman, said that "It was hard work but it was awesome. [The best part was] seeing them doing their acts and come together. I hope I can do this next year."

Sansanee Suwaratana, a student at Truman, reflected on her childhood memories. When she was a little girl, she wanted to dress in the beautiful attire worn by Vietnamese women. She hopes to travel over this coming summer and buy a Vietnamese dress, then wear it at International Idol in fall 2004. The next International Idol promises to be just as entertaining as its predecessor.



Fair Trade

Continued from page 1

dead on the ground, the people rose up as a united force to demand peace, tranquility, justice, truth, and security. Using non-violent means, they forced the military which had perpetrated the massacre to leave their community. Their bravery and success helped bring an eventual end to the political violence which for so long had plagued this earthly paradise.

One of the survivors of this violence is Maria Coquiz, a widow who looks ancient far beyond her 45 years. During the violence of the 1980s, armed men came to her house one night and took her husband away. As with many victims of this violence, his name remains on the list of the "disappeared." Although he is probably dead, his body has never been found.

Maria lives in close proximity to her neighbors in houses constructed out of bamboo and concrete blocks clustered along narrow dusty paths. They don't own any land, and the few men who remain in

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Story by I Dave Yost

On my first day in Mae Sot, Thailand, I also met my first political prisoner. For purposes of this column, we'll call him Than Win. Than Win is tall for a Burmese, but thin, and with his head shaved completely in the style of a Buddhist monk, which he is not. He's quiet—maybe even a little shy—but I first found him bent over a chess game in which he destroyed his opponent with a savage glee. He had had a lot of time to practice in prison, I later learned.

Than Win then led me through a construction site next to his home, moved aside a false wall, and showed me in to the small museum he had built about his experience. At the center sat a scale model of Insein Prison, a prison just outside of Rangoon in Burma (or "Myanmar," the name selected by its military government but not yet recognized by the United States or many others). Insein holds some 10,000 prisoners, ranging from legitimate offenders to those like the periodically imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi. The government has sent other activists to Insein for crimes including using the word "democracy" in public, "illegal use of a fax machine" (which, in Burma, is any non-governmental use), and the tautological "committing of a crime."

Than Win himself was imprisoned for joining other business students to protest for democracy in 1988. He received a two-year sentence at one of Burma's less notorious prisons, and on his release, began protesting again. Again, the military arrested him, and this time, he got seven years in Insein.

The exhibits in Than Win's museum testify to what exactly this sentence means. The arm and leg shackles that the prisoners wear on their ten minutes of exercise a day (Than Win put them on to demonstrate). The one long, coarse shirt that was Than Win's only clothing for seven years. Photographs of shackled men in several standard poses, ranging from standing with your feet apart and head bowed to falling on your knees

with your face pressed to the ground. If the guard calls out the name of one of these poses, all prisoners on the cell block must assume it immediately, a method which dates to British colonial days. Slow learners pay the price of beatings or solitary confinement, though political prisoners such as Than Win usually face these regardless of their behavior.

The cells themselves measure six feet by eight feet. They are furnished only with a bucket in the corner for human waste. Than Win's guards often neglected to empty his bucket for a week at a time, until his waste overflowed onto the cell floor that doubled as his bed.

Faces covered the last wall—faces of those still sharing these cells, and sometimes, faces of those who died in them, whether through disease (HIV and dysentery are rampant in Insein), or violence by their guards, or failed hunger strikes to try to improve their conditions. In some cases, Than Win's organization believes, certain imprisoned activists have been outright murdered ("executed" would imply a documented legal process) at the military government's behest.

In the years that I've been a member of Amnesty International, I've read of dozens of cases like Than Win's; maybe you have, too. Sometimes they touched me, and sometimes, frankly, they didn't. But nothing in my life had prepared me for meeting someone like Than Win in the flesh. It's hard to believe now that stories of torture and imprisonment could ever feel unreal or far away, when all along it's been happening to people just like me and just like you. It's even harder to believe that my words are just as unreal to you, but of course you've never seen Than Win smile.

Until then, he's just another story.
Further information about Burma's political prisoners can be found at aapb.net.

Amnesty

Continued from page 1

bolized three casualties of the conflict, according to Amnesty International's calculations. The red white and blue balloons stood for American casualties, and the black balloons symbolized Iraqi casualties, reflecting the frightening total of 4500 deaths, altogether. Mary Burford, a sophomore, and vanguard of Amnesty explained, "We wanted a visual representation of the massive loss of life that has ensued since George Bush and cronies have started this illegal war inspired by greed."

Although the message of the action was a sad one, both the Amnesty International members and the students walking by seemed to maintain a positive attitude about the conflict. Narissa Webber, a senior at Truman, and another organizer of the protest described herself as "ecstatic." She said the balloons were "like the car accident that nobody walking by has been able to avert their eyes from."

Lauren Rosenfeld, a graduate student observing the action was enthusiastic about seeing activist work going on at Truman, explaining, "What's going on is really frustrating, and a lot of people don't think they can do stuff—but they can."

Kerry

Continued from page 4

by the administration is available as an online database searchable by speaker, subject, keyword, and date. Check it out at http://www.house.gov/reform/min/features/iraq_on_the_record/ or just go to <http://reform.house.gov/min> and click the link to the report.

On a non-presidential note, a bill was recently introduced by Kentucky Republican Representative Ron Lewis (with 19 Republican cosponsors) that would allow Congress to overthrow rulings of the Supreme Court with a 2/3rds vote in both houses. Claimed to be a defense against activist judges (and homosexuality) and a way to restore a balance of power between the legislative branch and an overly powerful judicial branch, the bill would come into play in situations where a constitutional amendment would now be required. The problems with this are immense, ranging from the ability to functionally (but not actually) amend the Constitution without the states having any say, to the fact that the legislature could pass laws that overtly conflict with the constitution if it so chose. Of course this will probably never make it to a vote, let alone pass, but it'd be kinda fun to see it thrown out by the courts.

Finally, in Tennessee's Rhea County, where John Scopes was convicted of teaching evolution in 1925, all eight county commissioners unanimously passed a request for state lawmakers to alter state law so that the county could charge homosexuals with crimes against nature. J.C. Fugate, the commissioner who introduced the measure, also announced that he was having the county attorney look for a way to ban homosexuals from living there. The fact that people like this still exist is sad, but the fact that some of them are holding public office is deeply disturbing. Fortunately, the county commissioners have reversed their request after it ignited nationwide outrage and protest. I can't help but wonder, in light of evidence that many animals naturally engage in homosexual activity, if the county commissioners also consider nature to be guilty of crimes against itself.

Some feet away, a group briefly staged a counter-demonstration in support of the armed forces in Iraq and in support of the war effort. It featured yellow balloons, which junior Rebecca Knefelkamp said represented courage. The demonstration also included a poster of statistics, including the number of Kurds gassed by Hussein's regime, which remained on display throughout the day.

Saturday, March 20th, students and faculty numbering between 15 and 20 gathered in an Ophelia Parrish classroom to debate US foreign policy on Iraq.

The pro-war side was unrepresented at the event, however, as the College Republicans had voted to attend another event. Anti-war advocates instead responded to the event's prepared questions and raised hypothetical pro-war arguments.

Addressing the present state of Iraq, professor of geography Wilhelm Hoeschele said "It's all about determining 'security.' If a woman is raped, a soldier not fluent in Arabic, and that is a man, cannot interview her to find out what happened."

(IPS, indymedia.org)

Newsire

Continued from page 4

Asia-Pacific

Taipei, Taiwan – Taiwan's recent elections went FUBAR this week, with President Chen Shui-bian winning by only 0.2% over his opponent, Lien Chan, with significant numbers of ballots invalidated. President Bush was quick to console Lien Chan, promising to get his long-lost cousin, Governor Jeb Li on the case.

Bangkok, Thailand – It seems some chickens caught the flu, but Thai officials determined they were only faking it to get out of an inhumane factory farm death.

Karachi, Pakistan – History was made last week in a rare cricket match between India and Pakistan, two nations on the brink of war just two years ago. A fan called the match "a strong symbol for the peace process." Regardless, not one self-respecting American can say what the batsman and the bowler do on the wicket and the stump.

Europe

Madrid, Spain – 202 people were left dead and hundreds more injured in the March 11th train bombings in Madrid most credibly linked to Islamic extremists. Shortly thereafter, the people of Spain overwhelmingly elected the Socialist party's Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero as their new prime minister over the favored, pro-war, incumbent-party candidate. Viva la gente! Viva las socialistas!

Middle East

Gaza, Israel – Israeli troops assaulted Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, founder of the militant group Hamas, as he walked home from dawn prayers at a mosque. In Gaza, tens of thousands of Palestinians thronged the streets in a volatile mixture of mourning and rage. International leaders condemned the killing as unjustified, illegal, and detrimental to the peace process. The U.S. stopped well-short of condemning the assassination.

[BBC World Service, CNN, United for Peace and Justice, Eminem]

⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘⌘
The 24th hour
of the Day
after Forever
t he journal of
an insomniac

**Making Mountains
out of molehills can
be a great way to
keep a look out for
danger. It can also
be a great way to fall
off a cliff. I really
need to remember
that.**

~Amanda Hackney

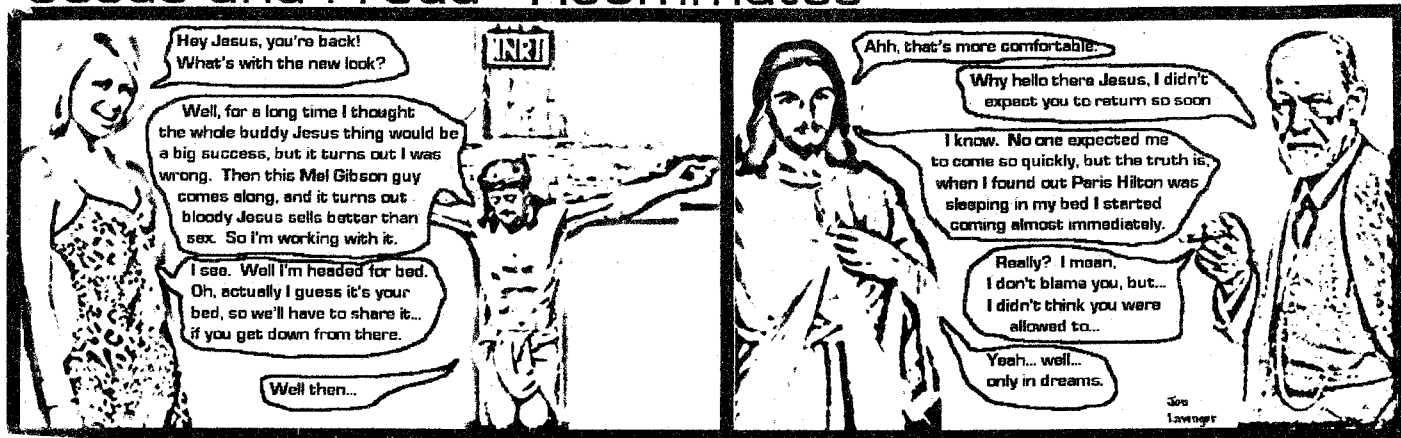
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ECO

Tip

Divert waste water from storm drains: Wash your car on the lawn. The rinse water will water the lawn and be diverted from storm drains. Make sure you use an earth-friendly, biodegradable soap (available at health food stores)!

Paris Hilton and Jesus again Jesus and Freud - Roommates



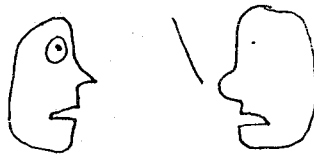
BAD COMICS FOR BIOLOGISTS

BY PHIL SPEAR

HEY, I'M GOING
TO APOPTOSIS, SOME
APOPCORNTOSIS,
YOU WANT SOME?



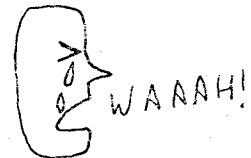
NO, BUT I DO
WANT A DIVORCE.
THAT WAS A
HORRIBLE PUN



GOODBYE



DONT BE
THIS GUY



A SPECIAL BONUS BAD COMICS FOR BIOLOGISTS! INSPIRED BY JULIE RUBLY

MY LEVIS HAVE
A TORN RIGHT LEG.
+ MY OLD NAVY JEANS
HAVE A TORN LEFT
LEG.



MAYBE YOU SHOULD
TAKE THE LEG FROM
ONE + PUT IT WITH
THE OTHER, THEN
YOU'D HAVE...



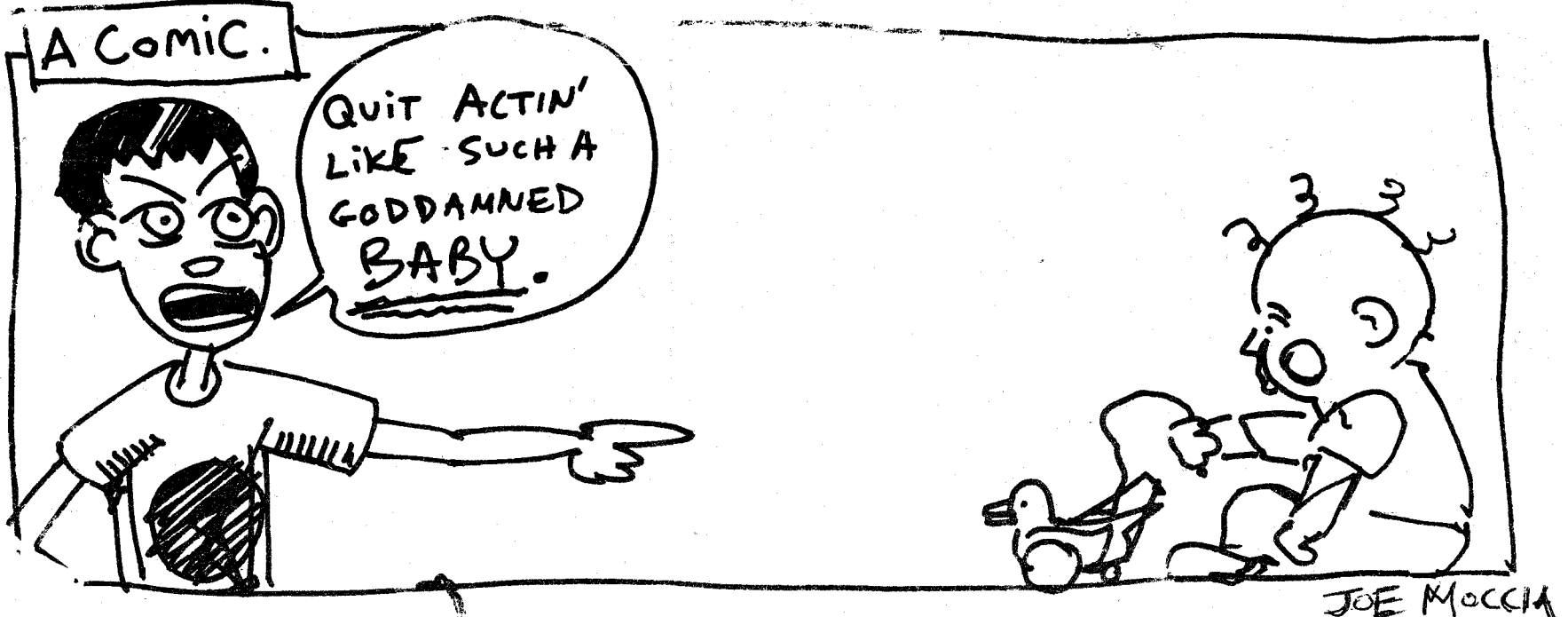
CHIMERIC
JEANS!!!



HA HA HA
/ HA HA HA
/ HATE YOU!



A Comic.



JOE MOCCIA

MY BACK PAGES...

Spring is here again. Tender age in bloom. Break out your pheromones, your honey gettin clothes and stroll on down the block. Rock the casbah, then come back for more. When your all done, write it down like a poem and send it to countzachula@hotmail.com. I'll publish, rinse, repeat. peace.

I had to write.

A question posed, oft answered later than sooner.

But blunt sentences; how can they cut through sharp indifference?

She worked in Ryle, swiping cards daily.

She died a few weeks ago.

Grief for a stranger,

a reminder,

a boldly silent declaration.

How does a dying man write to dying men?

A noise of prepositions and adjectives filters through a busy world.

Where a currency of time buys what none can keep, gains what will be lost.

Lives of grass bursting green, until inevitable chill strips away.

Flowers of glory parading in a field, until waning autumn withers away.

What is your life?

One life resolutely marches into a fading dusk;

a blackened horizon sighs of defiance.

One life whispers of a coming dawn;

a drifting twilight holds promise of an Eternal sun.

What is your life?

-Daniel Sem

Untitled

To the vultures of the communal laundry facility

Keep your hands off my underwear

It won't kill you to wait two minutes while I finish off your boyfriend

Lonely

I wake up at night
Tears dried to my face
I dreamed you were
...beside me.

I long to be with you
With you and in your arms
But your arms are tainted
...tainted by HER!

She has nothing on me
I am the one you love
DAMN the distance
...damn.

Until we are married
You whispered
Slid the ring on my finger
...cursed memories.

I can't move on or let go
Five hours away
You can't let go
...of someone else!

I fall back asleep
Dreaming of someone else
But I still wake up with thoughts
...thoughts of you.

-aravis-

Little rain drops, little rain drops,
Splash down upon my face.
Little rain drops, little rain drops,
Fall down every place.

Little rain drops, little rain drops,
Know I love the rain.
Little rain drops, little rain drops,
Please don't bring me pain.

Little rain drops, little rain drops,
Come down harder yet.
Little rain drops, little rain drops,
Now I'm soaking wet.

~jana

People tell me I have
a fake british accent

Is time a discrete variable
or a continuous one?
Time does not exist.
A history of moments
repeats itself repeats
itself
repeats itself.

Are human beings devolved
like cattle?
We all die some day.
Try waking up before
Your time is up.

Is making out a visceral
experience?
Your guts keep shutting me
out.
There is no shelter from
the storm.
Verbal language over rated.

Man created God.
One man killed God, on
accident.
His name was Nietzsche.
All the King's horses put
Him
back together again.
God that is.

I'm pyrokinetic. Meaning
I shoot fire from my palms.
Don't worry, I use my powers
for good.
Good destruction. Good
blowin
Up stuff. Good decimation.
Good.

Now let's rebuild again
now.

-The Breeze

Pencil Lead

Pencil lead, pencil lead, where dwells thee?
Over high peaks or under the sea
Beyond tall chasms or below deep lakes
where shall I find my pencil lead case?
Without more lead how shall I see
The answers to questions eighteen to thirty-three?

by Arthur Harrill