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MUSIC - NEWS - PUBLIC OPINION - ARTS - EVENTS

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SUING YOUR OPPRESSER

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POST CAPITALISM

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DUSTING IT OFF

FEMINISM IS

MORE

THAN FONNY



ISSUE 59

MARCH 16 2006





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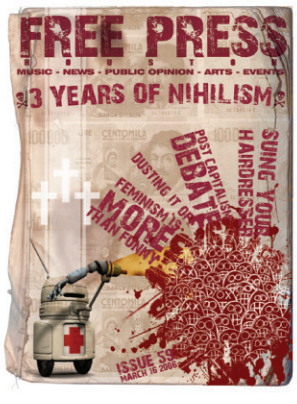
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Cover Art: Shelby Kelly and Buffalo Sean

Feel FREE to take us Seriously.

editors@freepresshouston.com

I once took a dump THIS big.

Houston- This issue marks 3 years since the inception of the Free Press Houston. We sincerely hope that reading our publication has been a break from the norm of both franchise journalism and the vapid fashionista mags that canvas our city. We promise to work harder than ever to bring you rare stories and subversive content that you otherwise would never find in print. Reaching this benchmark has not been easy. The road that has lead us here has been littered with past due notices and checks hot enough to give you third-degree burns. Many months, we walk away spending money from our own pockets to circulate this mag. Our business plan has always been a hybrid of Soviet-style credit policies and Reagan-esque deficit financing. In short, that means a lot of motherfuckers owe us money and we owe a shitload of folks. If you are one of the latter, thank you. That's right: Thanks. You are our 'working capital.' See, most self-respecting small businesses get the ball rolling with some working capital to dip into when shit hits the fan. Along with our own elbow grease, this publication is driven by the faith and patience of all of those who work so diligently to make it happen. Anyhow- I will stop rambling and re-iterating sentiments of anniversaries years past. Thanks for reading and keep your eye out for coming changes.



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1st February

LOVEHATEHERO - Ferret Music

SECRET LIVES OF THE FREEMASONS - Astro Magnetics

THE FULLY DOWN - Fearless Records

THE PANIC DIVISION - The Militia Group
Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors @ 8:00 All Ages $8

6th February

RAMALLAH - Thorp Records

DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR - Bridge Nine Records

DIE YOUNG - Suprise Attack Records

LAST MINUTE FIX
Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors @ 8:00 All Ages $10

9th February

THE NUMBER 12 LOOKS LIKE YOU - Eyeball Records

ED GEIN - Blackmarket Activities

THROUGH THE EYES OF THE DEAD - Prosthetic Records

ALL HANDS ON DECK

FIGHT PRETTY
Java Jazz 2502 Fm 1960 Rd
Doors @ 8:00 All Ages $10

12th February

SKARE TACTIC - Thorp Records

TEN CROWNS

MY LAST WAR

GAMEXTIME
Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors @ 8:00 All Ages $7

6th March

DARKEST HOUR - Victory Records

THE ACACIA STRAIN, HIMSA - Prosthetic Records

A LIFE ONCE LOST - Ferret Records

DEAD TO FALL - Victory Records

Engine Room 1515 Pease St.
Doors @ 7:00. All ages. $12 presale $14 at the door. Tickets are available at Sound Exchange and Vinal Edge or you purchase them online here

THIS SHOW IS A HATETANK & SUPERUNISON JOINT!

MERIDIAN
"BEST NEW CLUB 2004" -Houston Press
1503 Chartres

Wed. Feb. 1
The SexPistols Experience, The Living Dolls

Fri. Feb. 3rd
The Yonder Mountain Band

Sat. Feb. 4th
Pinebox FetishShow w/ Axis Mistress Deja

Tues. Feb. 7th
In Flames w/ Trivium, Devil Driver, Zao

Thur. Feb. 9
Big Head Todd & The Monsters w/Jackie Greene

Sat. Feb. 11th
Pimpadelic, South

Tues. Feb. 14th
The Fray

Wed. Feb. 15th
SKA 2006 TOUR
Featuring The Toasters
w/ Satori, WestboundTrain

Mon. Feb. 20nd
Brandon Stanley Acoustic Duo / Benjy Davis Project

Tues. Feb. 21st
45 Grave , The Dead End Guys Phantom Pains, Heist At Hand

Fri. Feb. 24th -
Galactic w/ The Hot 8 Brass Band

Sat. Feb. 25th : RENT

Sun. Feb. 26th
The Click Five

Wed. Mar. 1st
The Subdudes , Grand Texas

Fri. Mar. 3rd
John Evans Band CD Release

Sat. Mar. 4
Texas MetalFest 2006

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arts



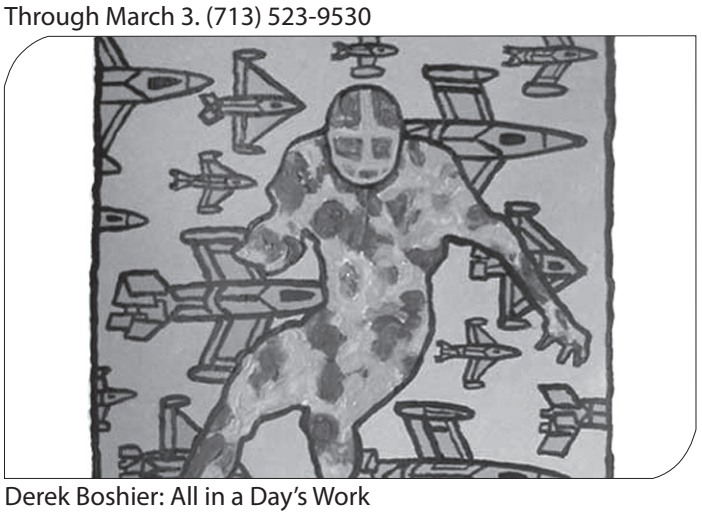
Seth Mittag: Gun Play
Poissant Gallery — 5102 Center St.
Through March 4. (713) 868-9337



Paul Horn and Laura Lark: Hugs and Kisses
Commerce Street Warehouse
Through March 2. (713) 226-7897



Dawolu Jabari Anderson: The Birth of a Nation
Art League Houston — 1953 Montrose
Through March 3. (713) 523-9530



Derek Boshier: All in a Day's Work
Moody Gallery — 2815 Colquitt
Through March 11. (713) 526-9911

DEBRIS:
FAR TOO LONG

by Buffalo Sean

Basquiat is closed.

Frances Trotter, one of the knitter and glitter artists around, got up on several Shepard Fairey pieces put up while the artist was in town; the ensuing barstardized portrait is one of the best street art pieces recently. Leaving a love letter to who she thought did the wheatpaste (not Fairey) and violently altering the crisp stencil with flowery pinks and glitter? Just attention to detail.

The Houston Chronicle is now getting something from Bill Davenport. Whatever it is, I hope he starts giving more.

Polvo threw up a good show at CSAW. Seeing contemporaneous Chicago stuff is good to compare and contrast with work here, the featured Polvo work is thoughtful and well crafted. Make your own decisions down at 2315 Commerce. Go see Laura Lark's intense new drawings and Paul Horn's attempt to fuck Julian Schnabel in the ear while you're there.





Slide Jam at the CAM, Thursday, February 23, 7:00 p.m. (Corner of Bissonett and Montrose) CORE Jam! Join us in the Cullen Room for Slide Jam! featuring Glassel School Core Program artists Jonathan Durham and Carl Suddath. March 9 on the same corner check out high school art videos projected out in the front lawn. Traffic-stopping style.

Fotofest has split their focus this year, theming their festival both "The Earth" and "Artists Responding to Violence." After "Water" last time and "The Classical Eye" in 2002, embracing a complicated and difficult theme is applaudable (and risky). There'll be stuff there about the Earth too. Between March 10 and 23, 102 exhibits of photography go on display. We've got a lot of white walls in town. Check out the ten gallon fotofest.org.

Wanting to see the bleeding heart of a real liberal, the Dudley Recital Hall at U of Houston was overfull for the Guerilla Girls (On Tour) February 9; the "On Tour" was imperative, a splinter group to The Guerilla Girls proper, the group is populated by theater guerillas instead of art gorillas. The ensuing discourse lacked the vinegar one may have expected, more Broadway performance than lecture. They showed good posters and had good wigs, though.

Finesilver is already mining Houston, bringing Mark Flood to San Antonio this month and a show curated by Rachael Cook in April. We get Austin's Virginia Fleck in return. Hippie funk brings plastic trash mandalas through the 18; March 3rd opens Chuck Ramirez, Coke Wisdom O'Neal, and Christine Bruni Fondren (probably some Fotofest thing).

artshound.com throws down against spacetaker.org and glasstire.com for up-to-date info on art in Houston, will the increased competition drive up quality? "More pictures!" is all I can say to that. Artshound is sponsored by the city of Houston; I'm not sure if they decided to be repetitious or just didn't know that quite comprehensive sites are already available. It's a good sign (at least) that someone is throwing more money at artists, we can flush it all away on stupid shit.

The Gospel

According to Miss Bly

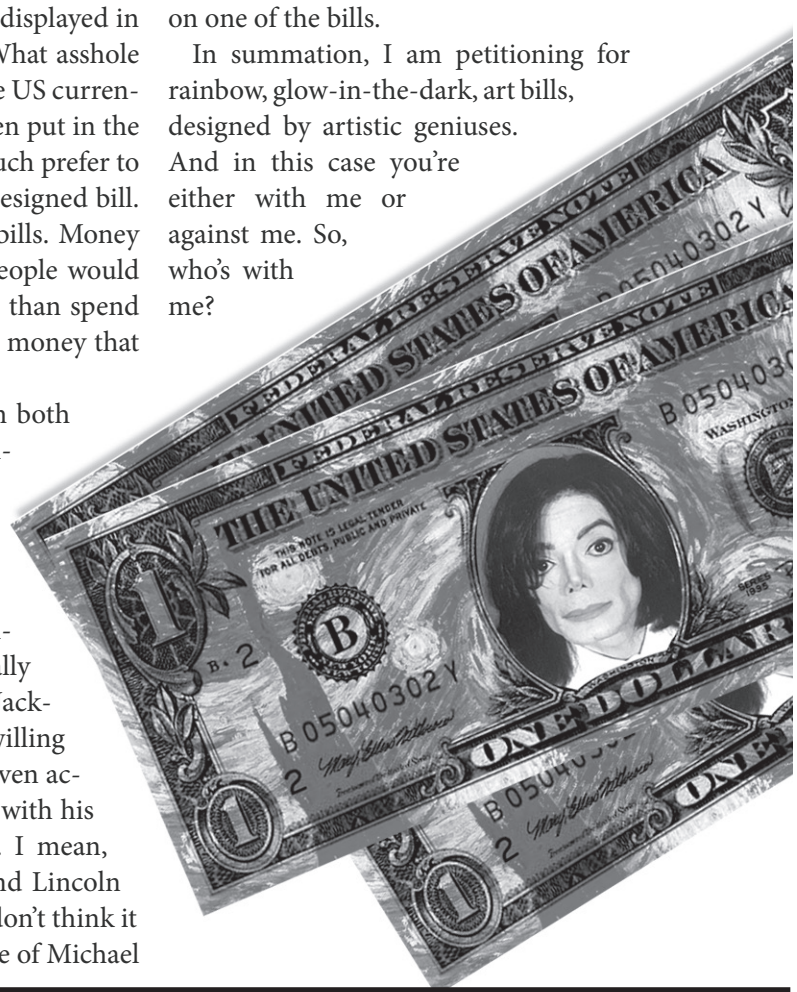
Oh Beautiful Money! (Please Give Me Some More)

In the spirit of the holidays, love is in the air. With people spending so much money to show their love and affection in the form of flowers, candy, cards, and dinner for two, I am reminded of the most ignored of holidays also upon us: President's Day. I don't know exactly what we are supposed to be celebrating on this day but I know I'm thinking of love, in another form. Love towards those little slips of paper with all those presidents' faces on them: money. Money is power, money is seductive and in that way money is beautiful. It can transform a person's mind by the purchase of college tuition or books, body by the purchase of jewelry, make-up and breast implants, and soul by charitable donations. However, currency itself is ugly. People assume that it should not fall under the scrutiny of visual interpretation because its purpose and role in society is one of function and strictly utilitarian. But, all objects, all things out there in the world should fall under the examination of sensorial experience: touch, taste, sound , etc.

First of all, the colors are all wrong—especially in regards to the new bills. Someone call the fashion police because this whole green, peach, gold, and silver color combination is not working. How about some icicle blue bills or glow-in-the-dark bills? How about rainbow bills? Now that would be pretty. And who allowed for the oversized portrait to be so strangely off-center as well as the denomination to be displayed in each corner as four mismatched fonts. What asshole decided he had the expertise to design the US currency, when clearly this task should have been put in the hands of true professionals: artists? I'd much prefer to see a Tom Friedman or a Mark Tansey designed bill. I want arty fonts, arty images, and arty bills. Money that people would hail as genius, that people would hoard to admire and contemplate rather than spend on Monet posters at their local museum, money that would belong on a museum wall.

Additionally, if Hamilton and Franklin both have bills and they weren't even presidents, how about currency featuring cultural leaders outside of the political field? Being the "King of Pop" or the most famous artist of our time in this country is about as close to being president as you could ever get without actually being one. So how about we put Michael Jackson or Andy Warhol on a bill? I'm even willing to compromise on the portrait. I would even accept a bill with Michael as he looks now with his Diana-Ross-meets-decaying-corpse-chic. I mean, let's call a spade a spade, Washington and Lincoln were not quite the picture of beauty so I don't think it would be fair to put a good looking image of Michael on one of the bills.

In summation, I am petitioning for rainbow, glow-in-the-dark, art bills, designed by artistic geniuses. And in this case you're either with me or against me. So, who's with me?



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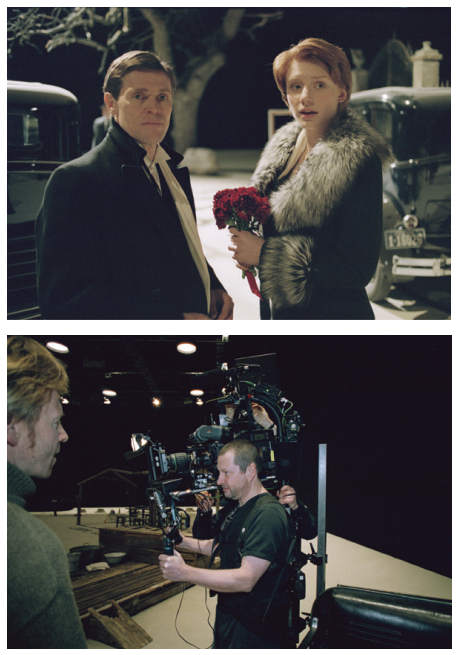
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DJ Sets By : Ceeplus & The House Of Bad Knives

23 FILM 45

Serious Enthusiasm for Blather

By Michael Bergeron

People don't go to the cinema to see a film by a particular studio. Who, for instance, glances at theater listings on Friday and thinks "I want to see a Warner Brothers film this weekend," or, "this would be a good evening to see a film from Sony."



| Writer Director Lars von Trier on the set on Manderlay. |

Granted, there's some Middle American demographic that Disney feels will boycott their films if they release, say, Fahrenheit 9/11 under their banner (so they don't). Regardless, movie mavens are attracted by the film and not the studio that made same.

Up through the 1950s you could tell a film's studio by the look of the one-sheet poster, many of them stone lithographs with distinct use of white space or certain colors, although that certainly isn't the case today. Still the changing reels of cinema dictate that in 2006 there are definite signs that signify a studio (not including the logo, duh).

In the current Warner Brothers release Firewall, a The Desperate Hours template thriller starring Harrison Ford, some technoid baddie rewires the hard drive on an I-Pod to save financial data. Rest assured that if the same thing happens in a Sony (Columbia Pictures) film the device never will be an I-Pod but rather a MP3 player.

Firewall unwinds pleasantly enough, which is to say that it meets its formula requirements and even takes that extra step of poking gentle fun at itself. Not only has the dastardly though urbane Paul Bettany kidnapped Ford's family, he's snagged Rusty, the family dog. When the baddies let their prisoner, Ford's wife, talk to Ford on a cellphone he hears Rusty barking in the background. Knowing the lovable mutt has a GPS sensor in its collar Ford uses a lost pet website to track the kidnappers to within a hundred yards of their transitory location. Ford scrunches the lines in his face and stares with intensity as he vows "I'm going to get my dog."

Such heroics exist only in the movies but it's a movie moment that works. And you've totally forgotten about it by the time you get home from the theater. Good movies can be like that.

Then there are the films that are good in the sense that they remain etched in your mind long after you've seen them. Recently films as diverse as Manderlay and The Libertine have cast their cinematic spell on my subconscious. (I also really liked Marebito and The World's Fastest Indian.)

You know how in cliché horror movies like Saw 2 you have a character named Jigsaw that tells you "Oh yes, there will be blood." Well, in The Libertine you have a rake, the Restoration era Mapplethorp, John Wilmot the 2nd Earl of Rochester played with both dignity and callousness by Johnny Depp.

Depp, puffy sleeved and with long dark hair, looks his audience straight in the eye and intones, "Oh yes, there will be shagging." And you believe this 17th century Austin Powers with good looks and no manners. But Wilmot's tale of debauchery has a tragic ending, one that allows Depp to show a degree of acting range absent in his more farcical portrayals like pirate John Sparrow. (If one-tenth the audience seeks out The Libertine as will see the two sequels to Pirates of the Caribbean later this year I'll go on a hunting trip with Cheney.) For Pirate Depp's image adorns a Kellogg's cereal box that features chocolate pearl shaped cereal (Coco Puffs only bigger) and pirate shaped marshmallows. Depp isn't a leprechaun, he's a libertine.

There is pain and suffering in Depp's performance. He goes through the last half of the film in makeup that gives sharp relief to a syphilitic ravaged face complete with one blind eye and an eaten away nose. On his deathbed, in his early-30s, he repents. Perhaps that is why The Libertine has such staying power. It's vision of boorish excess tempered by a moral conclusion and shot in grainy colors. At one point the screen is awash in monochromatic puke green tempered with the mud of wet dirt roads.

The Libertine is purposely ugly even while celebrating the appetite of flesh. The film has an obligatory steamy sex scene between Wilmot and actress Elizabeth Berry (Samantha Morton) but the real jolt comes from the film's raunchy dialogue and situations. Also along for the ride: John Malkovich as Charles II who had the real Wilmot imprisoned for kidnapping a teen heiress. In real life the King commuted Wilmot's sentence and the victim married her abductor.

Short List

Manderlay will be an ocean of sophistication in a sea of blather to the cineaste. This latest film from Lars von Trier will delight fans with an institutional knowledge of drama. (At times you get flashes of the severity of Genet and the mysticism of Strindberg.) But Manderlay plays to the box seats, not the crowd. It wouldn't be out of line to compare this film to a fine wine. You have to be a creature of cinematic darkness to want to sit there all the way through it and then savor the upward glances you will make searching for meaning afterwards

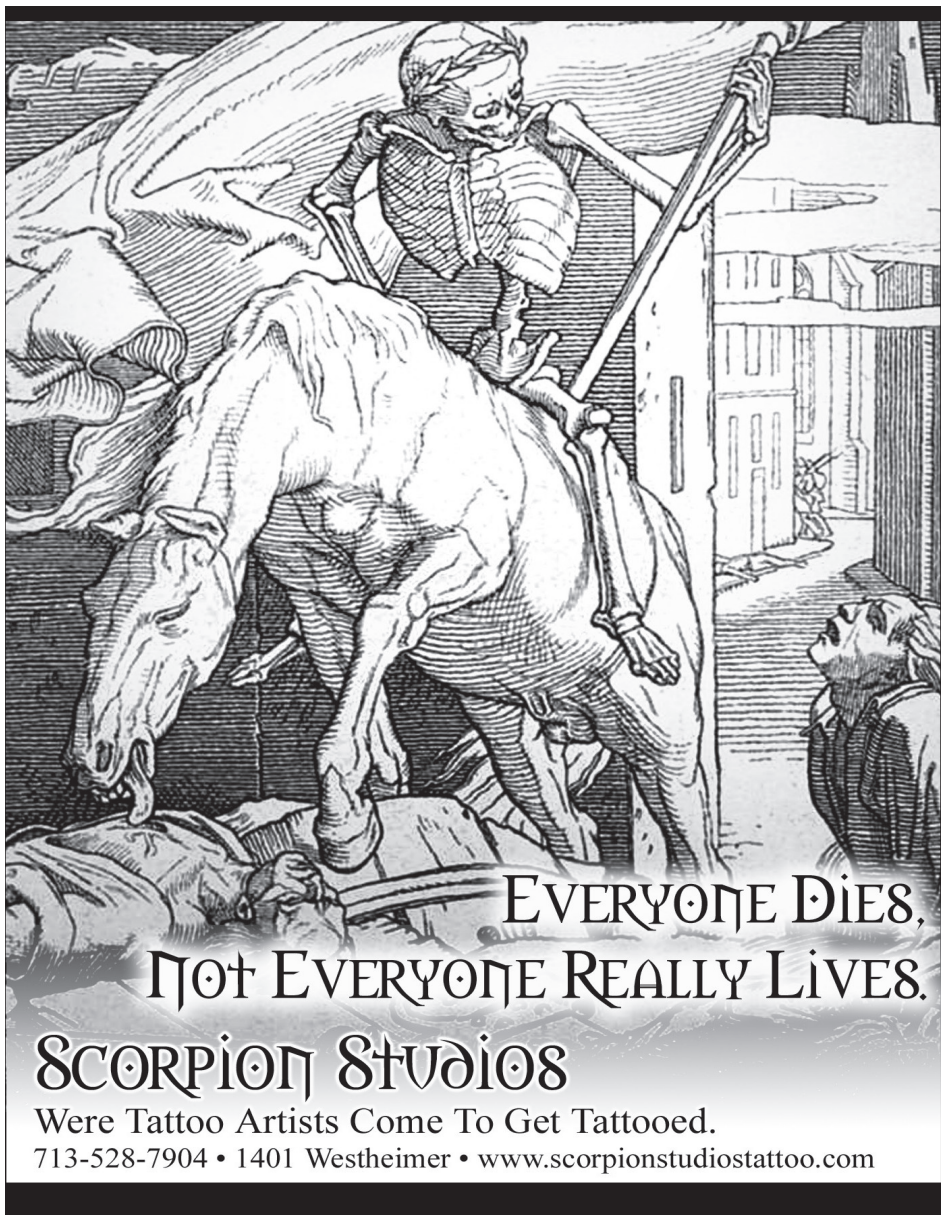
And the primal fuck scene baptizes Bryce Dallas Howard as an actress capable of projecting any depths of despair in the human soul. Howard has only done a couple of films (she's the love interest in next year's Spiderman 3) but she's a keeper. Bryce is Hollywood DNA but she has the chops to back her quick ascent. After seeing Manderlay, and having seen Dogville, you have to wonder if Nicole Kidman (they play the same person in each film) could have summoned up the kind of essential feelings on display here.

Yes, it's that kind of film. There are arch moments galore (Chloe Sevigny in blackface), incidents that will confound you. That's what makes it so appealing.

Meanwhile, von Trier has revised his Dogme 95 with a Statement of Revitality. As of Manderlay, von Trier will no longer seek the same level of world publicity for his films. Quoting from his manifesto: "Over the last few years I have felt increasingly burdened by barren habits and expectations (my own and other people's) and I feel the urge to tidy up." And still later: "I want to launch my products on a scale which matches the more ascetic nature of the films, and aimed at my core audience: i.e. my films will be promoted considerably less glamorously than at present, which also means without World Premieres at prestigious, exotic festivals."

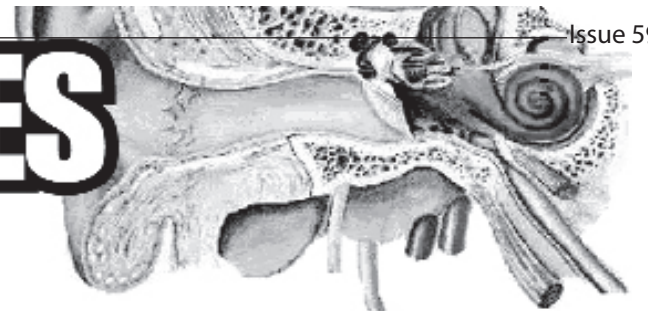
Okay, let's see if he keeps his word.

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Shows

Sundays
Proletariat 903 Richmond

Indulge in the ugly side of cheap beer. Shiner's are a buck fifty and the Proletariat boasts one of the best jukeboxes in town. Pop in at the right time and hear some classic Geto Boys. Also, 'the Prolie' has recently renovated the men's toilet just in case you ate at Chapultepec next door just prior. Even if you have not, stop by and try one of their 130 different tequilas. Shit gets started at 8pm.

Mondays
Helios 411 Westheimer

This is by far one of the most musically diverse nights in Houston. It is also the most likely place to find drunken youth puking over the balcony. Mondays at Helios has become a Montrose staple and for good reason. For those of you who enjoy both bluegrass and meth-amphetamines, Medicine Show downstairs is right up your alley. They deftly combine performance, bluegrass, and low level rioting to create something uniquely Houston. Upstairs is The Trade whose shredder fucking players will wow your sox off and make your lower mid section gyrate in simultaneity. Things kick off at approx. 10 or 11 pm but show up early and you make catch upright bass player Bill Miller starting off the night.

Wednesdays
Fizgerald's 2706 White Oak

Admit it, Karaoke is still fun. It is of the utmost importance that you don't bring any people who are in bands as they will both raise the collective vocal standard and/or critique vocal performance. Fitz' Marc from the dark hosts the shebang with over 40,000 songs to choose from and embarrass yourself. More importantly, a Taqueria has shown up in the parking lot of in the guise of a big, white school bus. As I remember the foul-nasty shit I did on school buses, I feel apprehensive about eating from one. Nonetheless, word hast it that their Lengua tacos are the shit.

Thursdays
Catbird's 1336 Westheimer

I must really be a scumbag. I got kicked out of Catbird's last week for not buying a drink within 6 minutes. I walked in with the remainder if a coffee I bought at La Fendee next door. Having seen 13 or so fights, many a 'pharmaceutical transaction', and other Sodom and Gommorah-esque happenings, this felt unmerited to say the least. I often show up at Catbird's to listen to the great classic jazz playing, enjoy informal conversation, and by my broke friends their modestly priced Lone Star longnecks. But fear not- I will be back in the guise of another lowly patron who has spent immeasurable amounts of money in the dive. You gotta love the place.

Fridays
Numbers Westheimer 300 Westheimer

Having gone to catbird's the previous night; you are ostensibly sleeping on the streets. If that is the case, walk a few blocks down to Numbers when you wake up from the freight train they call Yagermeister. Classic Fridays at Numbers is always a solid bet. Patrons of every scene and sub-genre find a common thread in letting loose for the weekend to the soundtrack of DJ Wes Wallace. Wallace is one of Houston's most seasoned DJ's and knows how to keep many a musical fancy happy. After closing time, sleep on the sleaziest metro stop in town outside and wake up to brunch at La Strada.

Saturdays
Stay at Home- Learn to read music

Don't you have a fucking job? Are you some kinda' trust fund kiddy or are you on a course for self destruction. It has been six nights and all you have accomplished is a bad case of diarrhea and an aroma I have dubbed "the essence of Wukman." Once hailed by Elton John as the "night I like", Saturday has transformed itself to the new Monday which is oddly enough the new Saturday but soon to be just another Tuesday. Understand? I don't.

Shows



Sarah Golden
2/20 @ Meridian



GreatnessinTragedy
2/24 @ Engine Room



Joel Mercado-See
2/25 @ Helios



The Jonx
2/18 @ Rudyard's



Chiasma
2/23 @ SuperHappyFunLand



TheShowistheRainbow
2/22 @ Proletariat

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MARCH PREVIEW

HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW & RODEO
RELIANT PARK.....2/23/06 - 3/19/06

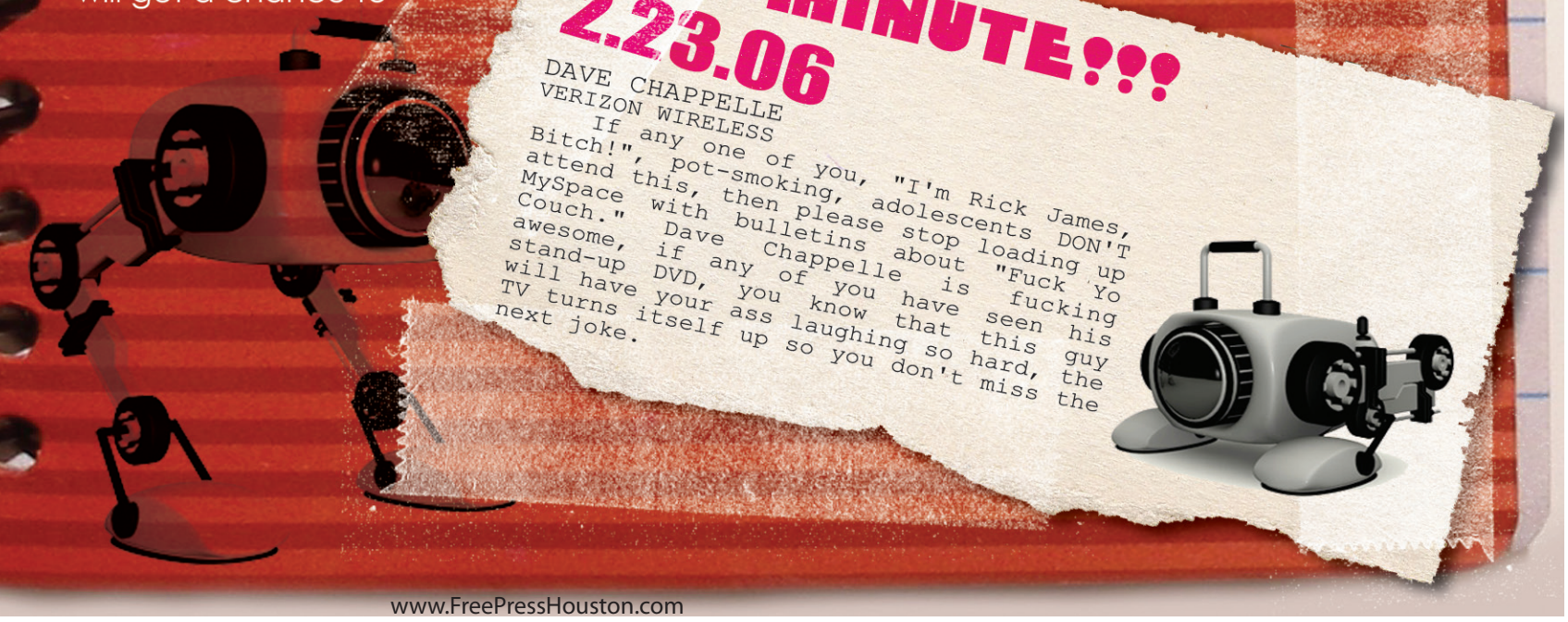
Last year, Free Press Houston attended this through free passes that had to be GIVEN AWAY to companies around town that could boost any oil profiteers potential client list. Its the same old song and fucking dance, Maroon 5, serenades us into eating the nastiest shit we possibly can, while everyone not wearing a 12 inch diameter belt buckle are busy getting one with their names on it. If you actually pay to go to this, feel free to personally contact us, because we'd like to know what kind of people out there would commit such an atrocity. To sum it up, nothing says Houston, Texas like a caged animals, guns, chewing tobacco, Marlboro;s, and Lone Star, and the sad thing is, someone, somewhere's eyes just lit up like a candle at the thought of all those things in one place.

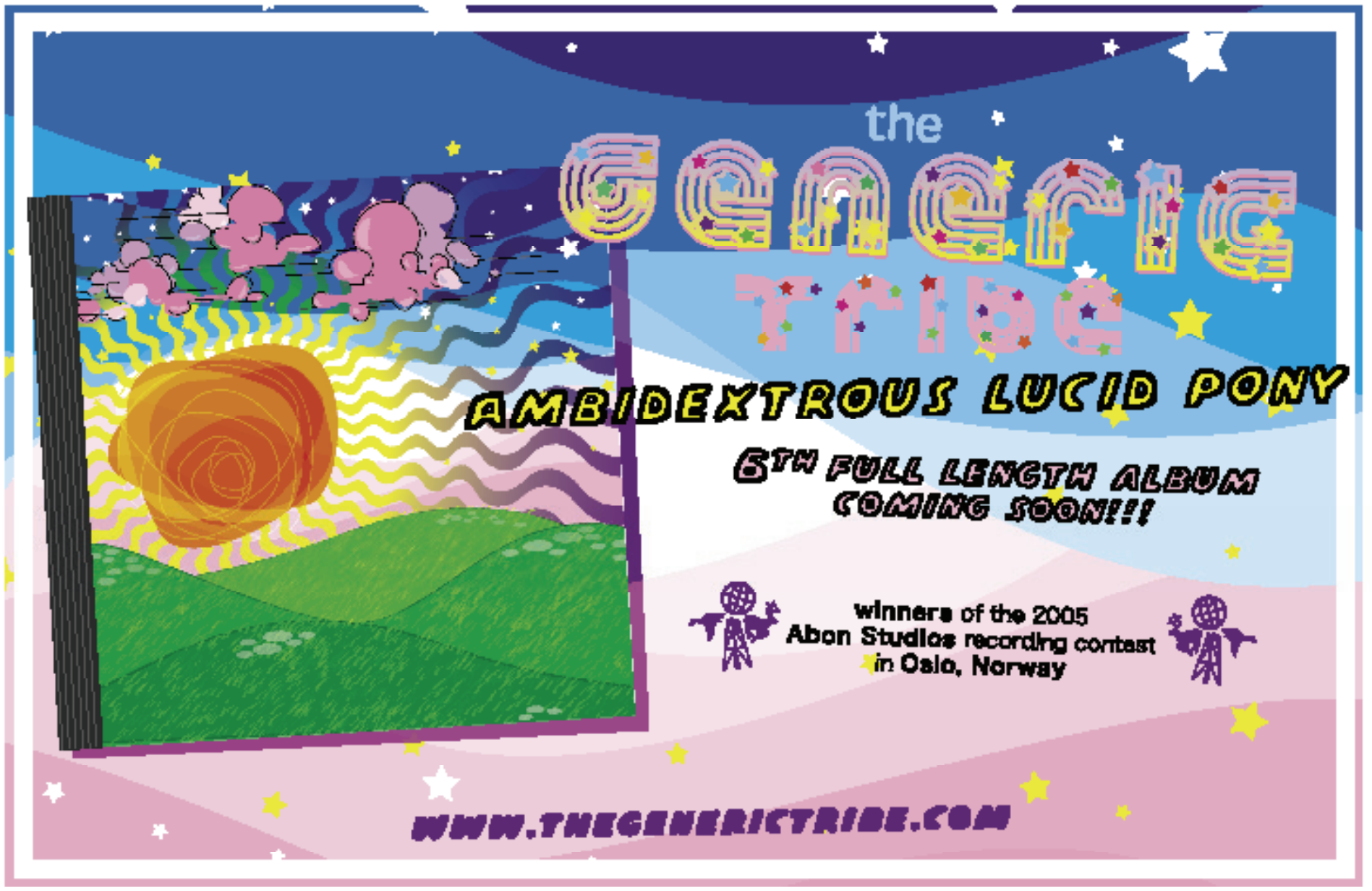
DARKEST HOUR, HIMSA, A LIFE ONCE LOST
ENGINE ROOM.....3/06/06

Get out your "scene-o-scope", because this show will be THE place to be for pink and black t-shirts and distress filters. On the bright side, and after pushing your way through piles of swoop cuts, you will get a chance to catch some of the better hardcore bands out these days. I recommend making sure you get there early enough to catch A Life Once Lost, yeah yeah, they just toured with Disturbed, but I assure you, these guys will fucking own the Engine Room. Also, Ive been seeing a lot of inactivity at touring bands merch tables lately. You rich fucks, all they need is gas money, stop trying to sneak drinks and buy something that'll last llonger than a hang over.

BODY WORLDS 3: THE ANATOMICAL EXHIBITION OF REAL HUMAN BODIES
HOUSTON MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE.....2/25/06 - 9/4/06

Gunther Von Hagen will be bringing this amazing collection of artwork composing of human body parts preserved from decomposition through "Plastination". This is probably one of the only REAL things worth seeing in Houston at the moment, and will probably not be hearlded as anything more than an eccentrics guide to getting kids out of the house. Nonetheless, you will see more body parts here than in The Howling 3 and even the most Leftist, Conservative fuck can appreciate that. Hell, just look at Iraq.




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WEDNESDAY
Breakfast Club @Numbers
British Invasion Night with The Dreambreakers @Rudyards
Miss Leslie and Her Juke Jointers @Continental Club
Poetry Night @Helios
Pot Roast @Last Concert Cafe
Ralphie May @Laff Stop
Turbojugend Hump Day @Rudyards
SKA 2006 Tour @Meridian
15

THURSDAY
The Hightailers @Last Concert
Hustle & Flo @Numbers
digifunk, Open Mic @Helios
Rock Box Pelvic Thrust Thursdays @Proletariat
Ralphie May @Laff Stop
16

FRIDAY
Official LeBron James All Star Party @Meridian
The Medicine Show and Shawn Reefer @Helios
The damnations, King Coal @Rudyards
Ralphie May @Laff Stop
My Life with the Thrill Kill Kult @Numbers
Indofin @Last Concert
Bowel, Horehound, Cardinale, Slag @Walters
17

SATURDAY
Chris Neri, The Friends of Rock 'n' Roll, Black Math Experiment presents: The Rocky Horror Picture Show @Helios
Ek$on, Tzar Bomba, Foreign Affairs @SHFL
The Linus Pauling Quartet, Jonx @Rudyards
Ralphie May @Laff Stop
My Bloody Valentine, Gothic Beauty Pageant @Numbers
18

SUNDAY
Cry Blood Apache, The Strange Boys, Rua Minx @SHFL
David Fahl & Band w/ congas by Carlos@Last Concert
Big E's Rockabilly @Continental Club
19

MONDAY
The Medicine Show, The Trade @ Helios
The Mighty Orq @ The Big Easy
Soul Satisfaction @Proletariat
Open Mic Comedy @ Laff Stop
Pool, Darts, Ping Pong @Fitzgerald's
Brandon Stanley Acoustin Duo
The Benjy Davis Project @Meridian
20

TUESDAY
Bellydancing @Helios
Texas Tuesdays @Rudyards
Free Pool (all day) @Proletariat
The Lisa Novak Band @Continental Club
Scott Daniels Band @Last Concert Cafe
45 Grave with Dinah Cancer @Meridian
21

WEDNESDAY
Breakfast Club @Numbers
British Invasion Night with The Dreambreakers @Rudyards
Poetry Night @Helios
Pot Roast @Last Concert Cafe
Kickball, Mt. Smaller,Matt and Kim, Pumpkin Pie @SHFL
22

THURSDAY
The Hightailers @Last Concert
Hustle & Flo @Numbers
digifunk, Open Mic @Helios
Rock Box Pelvic Thrust Thursdays @Proletariat
Realicide @SHFL
Joe Rogan @Laff Stop
The Honorary Title, Limbeck, Koufax @Walters
23

FRIDAY
Classic Numbers @Numbers
Bonsfire, Whorehound @Rudyards
Molly and the Ringwalds @Continental club
Galactic @Meridian
Starving Poets@Helios
Shapes & Sizes @SHFL
Cadillac Sky, The Hay Makers @Last Concert
Joe Rogan @Laff Stop
24

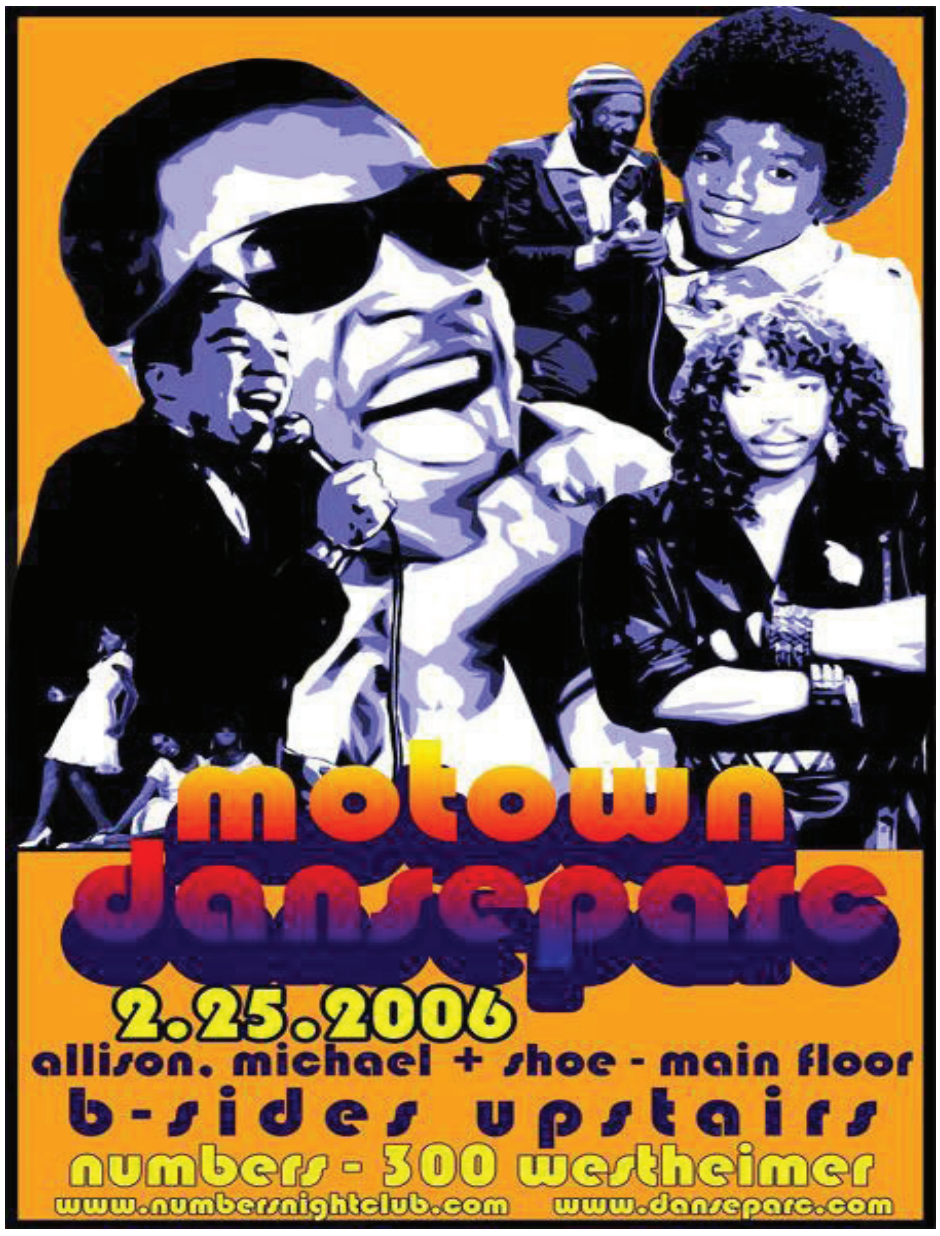
SATURDAY
Joel Mercado, kDrop trio and the Ills @Helios
VU 21st Century @SHFL
Joe Rogan @Laff Stop
rent @Meridian
Motown Dansparc, Shoe Allison & Michael @Numbers
Southern Backtones, Hide, Slovak Republic @Rudyards
Vie Chestnutt, David Bazan, Mark Eitzel, will Johnson @Walters
25

SUNDAY
Monkeysoop, Chm Charro, 24/7 @SHFL
Joe Rogan @Laff Stop
Smoking Popes, Bayside @Walters
The Click Five @Meridian
Big E's Rockabilly @Continental Club
26

MONDAY
The Medicine Show, The Trade @ Helios
The Mighty Orq @ The Big Easy
Soul Satisfaction @Proletariat
Open Mic Comedy @ Laff Stop
Pool, Darts, Ping Pong @Fitzgerald's
27

TUESDAY
Bells On Our Toes @Helios
Texas Tuesdays @Rudyards
Free Pool (all day) @Proletariat
The Lisa Novak Band @Continental Club
Scott Daniels Band @Last Concert Cafe
28

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Feb 3rd:
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Rebecca Draper
Art Opening
With Open Mic Poetry

Sun Feb 5th:
Liquid Cheese
Red Star of the Solar Federation

Feb 8:
The Girl is a Ghost (Kansas City, MO)
Chim Charoo

Feb 10th:
Riff Tiffs Cd Release Party
w/The Riff Tiffs, Another Run
King Louie & the Swinging Monkies
Bojones, The Dimes

Sat Feb 11th:
Devil Bat's Daughter, Mr Obliviated
Gasher, Venison Whirled

Sun Feb 12th
Death Bomb Arc
About This Product, Wince
Pedestrian Deposit, Yatagaras,
Werewolf Jerusalem

Mon Feb 13th:
A Shameful Display
Chris Neri
A'tris
Division Theory

Tues Feb 14th:
ILYA
Goodbye Blue Monday
Blame It On Rio

Feb 17th:
Steve's Birthday Jam
Aquarius Party

Feb 18th:
EkSon, Tzar Bomba
Foreign Affairs

Feb 19th:
Cry Blood Apache
The Strange Boys. Rua Minx

Feb 22nd:
Kickball (Olympia, Wa.)
Mt. Smaller, Matt and Kim (NYC)
Pumpkin Pie

Feb 23rd:
Realicide

Feb 24th:
Shapes & Sizes (British Columbia)
The Dimes, Listen Listen, Weird Weeds

Feb 25th:
VU 21st century, Porch Creeps
Rotten Piece, Rose Lange
Concrete Violin
Mass Murder Media
Organ Failure
Dan and Christi Workman, Muzak

Feb 26th:
Monkeysoop
Chim Charoo
24/7

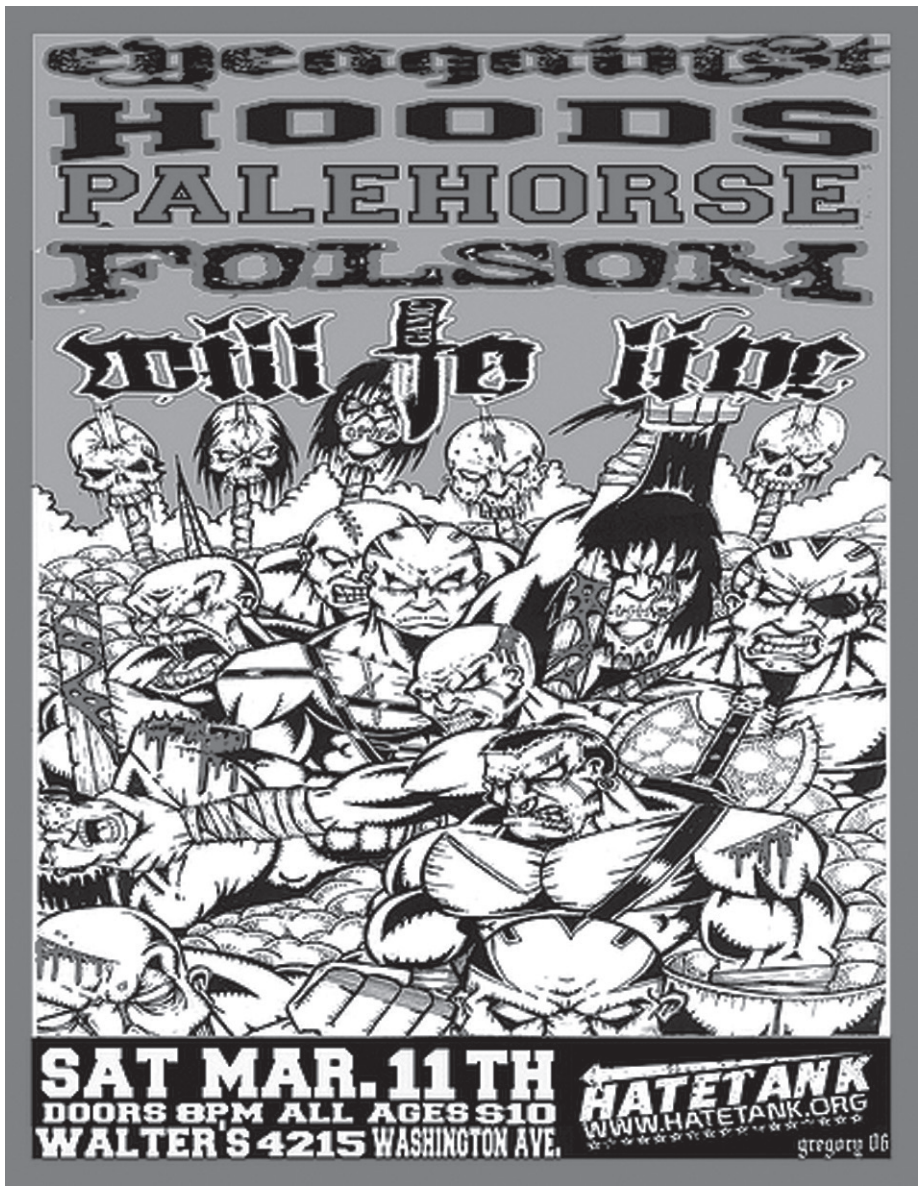
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Xbox, Playstation 2, PC

Marc Ecko's Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure

Publisher: Atari
Developer: The Collective
Players: 1-2
ESRB: Mature



The awkwardness-alert-status was on red this past Friday in the Men's Department at the Galleria Foley's. A small crowd peppered the intersection of last season's menswear and Marc Ecko's clothing line. Retailers scurried to bring Marc Ecko's clothing display up to the highest standard. A local DJ played the latest hip-hop to set the mood for Marc Ecko's instore appearance. He was there to promote "Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure", his new game by Atari and The Collective. So far the game has recieved attention both for its controversy surrounding the core content of the game—graffiti, its broad range of reviews, and its ban in Austrailia. I was able to talk to Ecko about his up-and-coming game, as well as a discussion on the future of gaming.

What made you want to start making video games? Are there any specific games that started you off?

I think what started me off wanting to make games was probably comic books. I remember when I was in seventh and eighth grade I would geek out on making my own fictional comic books. Back when platforming games came out, back for Nintendo, Calecovision, the classic Marios and Donkey Kong, me and my friends would make paper games with tracing paper. We would draw platformers and little characters, and move the characters around. Just bugging out on it. I believe in the medium, and I think the line will blur between film and gaming as the next generation gets more polished. It's an exciting time.

Are you looking into developing games for the next generation?

Yeah. I'm totally into developing for the 360 and PS3, but I want to wait a minute because right now, the only guys that make games are the big publishers. It's so expensive. Once there are more consoles embedded—right now there are about five and a half million Xbox 360s in America—so once there are about ten million, then it's worth the investment. Right now it's too risky to build it. That's why you see all the real innovation on PC, with Half Life 2 and what those guys at Valve are doing. That's my baby, gaming's my baby.

How do you feel about the handheld market?

We have a version of "Getting Up" coming out for PSP, and a bunch of other games that we haven't announced yet. But I love handheld. I love it for the old-school sensibility, like the arcade: 20 minutes, then put it down, 20 minutes, then put it down. I love that.

Was it your duty to make sure the graffiti culture remains authentic in the game?

Yeah, that pretty much was my core job. I wrote the script for the game, we managed the look of all the key characters, the environments, the soundtrack, the voice-overs, but the most important thing was the graffiti. When you play the game, you collect the black book. You really get an education on graffiti culture, all the guys that inform the motifs. It's so important to me—graffiti is the most appropriated part of hip-hop that gets no credit. Historically, the guys that really inform the look, inform the style that media companies, soft drink companies and sneaker companies use to market to young people. So it's important to me to involve guys like T Kid, Ghost C(?), Cats, new jacks even, like Banksy, Shepherd Perry, so people understand these guys are out there doing it. You have to understand the person behind it. There are real people behind it, and these guys have created incredible careers for themselves as designers, fine artists, animators, filmmakers. Spike Jonze—he has a love for graffiti. It's something that the mainstream needs to acknowledge. You can't throw the baby away with the bathwater. Some people want to say it's vandalism. If I took you to schools here in Houston, and we go visit eighth graders, we'll see kids drawing in the motif of graffiti that never draw on a wall. It's kind of colloquial, it's a dialect. It's our generation's visual dialect. It's very important to keep it sincere. Authenticity is one thing, but sincerity is the most important.

graffiti is the most *appropriated* part of hip-hop that gets **no credit**

Video games and graffiti are both in the same boat. People often don't consider either of them to be art...

They're both demonized. Graffiti culture is demonized, and gaming culture is demonized. I knew that mixing the two would create an interesting tension inherent in the product. It's a generational divide. Whenever you take Westerners, Americans, our greatest exports are our ideas. And when you converge them with technology—every 30 or 50 years you get this: Broadway's going to die because there are "moving pictures" with no voices. Don't let him shake his hips on TV, you know? Every generation gets grey hair in their eyes and they can't understand the new technology so they dismiss it as not relevant, not significant. It's just the time we're living in. Hopefully, if enough independent thought gets out there in these mediums, we can prove the cynics otherwise. Prove 'em wrong.

What do you think about the people out there who'd like to change the word "video game" to "interactive entertainment"?

"Video games" is the name. It's like church and state. There are people out there who are like "it's only about the game". And all they care about is that tilting mechanic and they geek out on it. If it's not hyper-polished then it's shit. Then you've got gamers that are about the narrative, the brand experience. They are two different consumers. I think the mainstream, the mall-wakers, are more about the entertainment experience. That's the future, I don't know what they're gonna call it, but someone's got to shake it up. That's why I love what the people at Valve are doing for PC games. They just announced this week that they're doing episodic content. So they're only releasing six hours every two months. You can buy as much as you want, and you can buy it in four or six hour blocks. Pretty interesting. That's what we're doing right now on our video iPods, you can download an episode of this... That's the future.

Yeah, they're allowing people to mod their own levels...

I did a signing yesterday in New York, and I couldn't believe how many PC versions were coming through. Guys were just like "I'm gonna mod this shit. I'm just gonna grab the art and bug out on it."

Our conversation made it clear that Marc Ecko is sincere in his drive to give graffiti and its culture the respect it deserves. Ecko is also a gamer; he has grown up with games. By pulling together two things he loves, Ecko successfully delivers an entertaining graffiti-driven world to players. He's right about the types of gamers—the type who wants polished gaming versus a gamer that wants an "entertaining experience." However, it should not be overlooked as a reaction to the recent extremes in reviews of "Getting Up" on the Internet. Regardless, fans can look forward to the announced PSP version of "Getting Up." If you're sold on the entertainment experience, look forward to a slick presentation of graffiti culture with Ecko's digital vision.

Authenticity is one thing, but **sincerity** is the most important.

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Dusting it Off

by Lance Scott Walker

Sometimes it's great to see someone go and pull it out of the closet. The rock, that is. Some music is timely, some music is decadent and some music is... well, neither, really. Those are the tougher ones to figure out -- the ones where your initial response to a particular reunion might not be the same as your response by the time either a) it's time to go and see said band, or b) you actually see said band. That's because some reunions are fueled by a paycheck, some are fueled by ego and others still are fueled by a stubborn refusal to just let it go. I wrote a piece on these very pages some months ago about a half dozen or so recent reunion tours/resurrections of the past couple of years, pointing out both the good and the bad of each one and the inherent egos, money and gall that was behind some of them. These are new...

45 Grave with Dinah Cancer and Heist at Hand
Tuesday, February 21st at The Meridian (1503 Chartres)

At first, I was really excited about this one. 45 Grave made some fucking fantastic contributions to early '80s punk via their early singles and the undeniable hit "Partytime." I remember "Return of the Living Dead" coming out in the mid-'80s and being blown away by the fact that just about the entire soundtrack was punk rock. Enigma put the record out, and I suppose thus had their pick of bands from their label to feature on it. The single was old by that time -- dated and having run its course, but still, it was making rounds on the radio, and it totally fit the movie. Beyond that, that track in particular helped to spawn a lot of what became the hair metal of the later part of the decade. You can hear a little bit of 45 Grave in nearly every band that followed them in the '80s biopsy of punk and metal from Los Angeles: Motley Crue, L.A. Guns, Faster Pussycat and even Guns and Roses. But with the perhaps accidental influence therein aside, taking it just for what it is now -- this reunion has no balls whatsoever. It's being billed as "45 Grave with Dinah Cancer." For anyone not in the know, Dinah Cancer is/was the lead singer of 45 Grave since from way back when she basically joined The Consumers and the band hijacked their catalog, thus becoming 45 Grave. For those in the know, you know that original bassist Rob Graves passed away in 1991. That leaves three surviving members -- four if you count their run as a quintet. And how many of those original members are on this tour? But one: Dinah Cancer. Why does that suck? Well, because it's not 45 Grave, for one. But also because though there are good rock songs in place here that basically any band could play, there was something about the way the original band played those songs that made them so good. It's kind of like going to see a Beatles reunion where Dave Weckl and the bassist from The Dave Matthews Band are filling out your rhythm section. Actually, the rhythm section for the Beatles is the only part of that band that's still alive. I stand corrected. But you get my point -- it just ain't the same.

Smoking Popes with Bayside, Dead Girls Ruin Everything
Sunday, February 26th at Walter's On Washington (4215 Washington Ave)

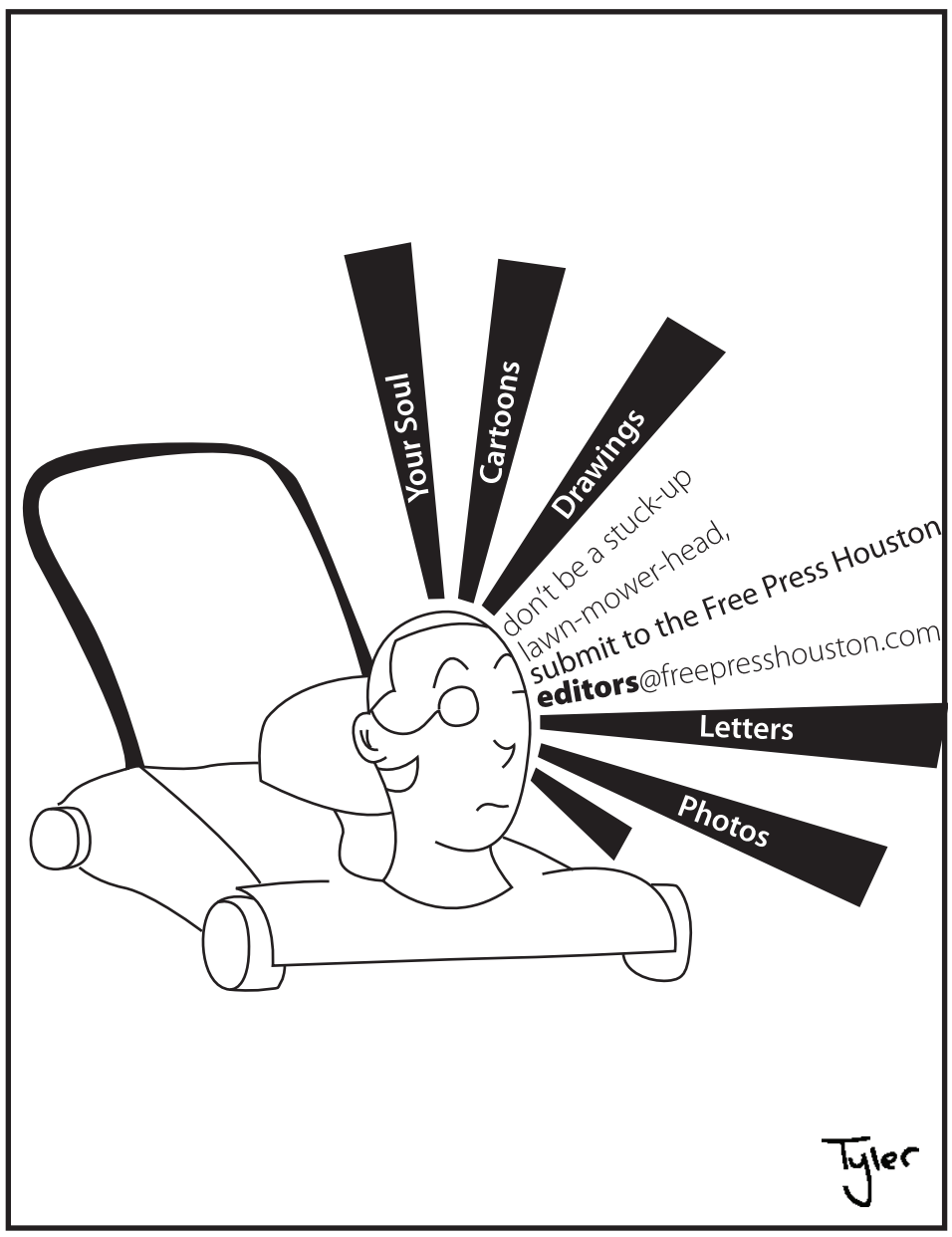
This one is different. This one is a lot different. It's different based on the body of work that the band in question has behind them and it's different in terms of a lack of decadence with The Smoking Popes. Back in 1993, I was working in a screen printing shop here in Houston. We would listen to KTRU all day (except when a free jazz DJ snuck in there) and lots of what we heard would rock our balls off. But nothing... nothing hit us the way we got punched in the jaw one afternoon when we heard a roaring, catchy rocker of a tune called "Writing a Letter." As soon as the song ended, we were all running around the shop singing it, and within seconds we were picking up the phone, calling KTRU and screaming "play it again!" The DJ obliged, and we called her back a half hour later to ask her again. She again obliged, and then informed us that her shift was about to end and another DJ would be coming in. So? We called that guy up and requested the song three times over the next four hours. He played it twice. We couldn't get enough. I bought the single from Sound Exchange (at its Westheimer location at that point) that night and made us a tape, which we looped over and over again to listen to for pretty much the entirety of that Spring. I point all of this out to illustrate the fact that The Smoking Popes are just fun, and even after they calmed down a bit, they still made beautiful songs. In fact, they probably made prettier songs. Josh Caterer's voice has only gotten more angelic over the years, and the songs haven't lost a bit of life in the time since the Popes disbanded in the late '90s. Add in the fact that local boy Ryan Chavez will be playing drums on this tour (no shit!) to boot, and you've got no reason not to be standing up front singing along.



• 45 GRAVE WITH DINAH CANCER AND HEIST AT HAND
• February 21
• The Meridian 1503 Chartres



• SMOKING POPES WITH BAYSIDE, DEAD GIRLS RUIN EVERYTHING
• February 26
• Walter's On Washington 4215 Washington



Saturday February 26th !

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WHAT: March for Dignity and Respect and Against HR4437
WHEN: Saturday February 26th, 10:00 am
WHERE: Corner of Post Oak and Westheimer at the Galleria
WHY: To demand the respect of ALL immigrant communities!

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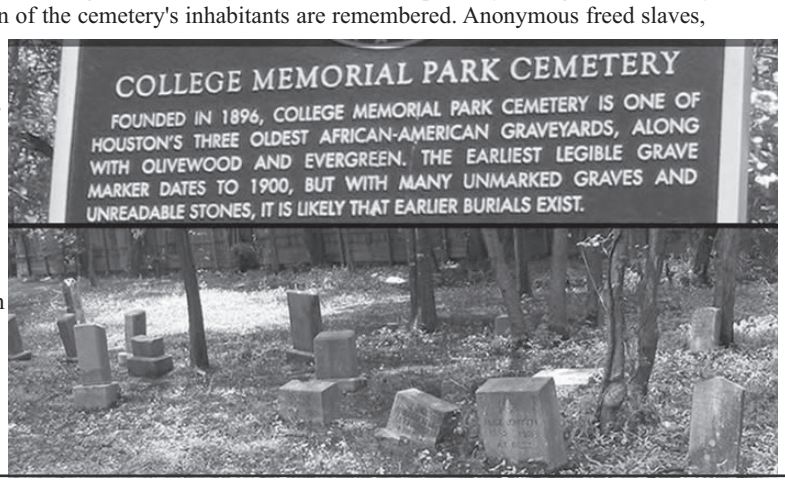
houston.indymedia.org

Leaving the Dead Behind: College Memorial Park Cemetery

by T and K: College Memorial Park Cemetery has been the focus of several preservation attempts over the past 20 years. This historical Black cemetery is the resting place for Houston's freed slaves and their descendants. Located on W. Dallas between Dunlavy and N. Shepherd, the cemetery continues to suffer from the gentrification that separated it, early on, from it's living community. College Memorial Park Cemetery was founded in 1896. A survey from that period indicates that the cemetery is 5.2 acres and holds 4,400 grave sites. It is currently bounded by a large apartment complex on the east and houses on the south along W. Clay street. A new front of town homes encroaches on the West side.

On paper, the Emancipation Proclamation of 1865 freed the slaves of Texas. In reality they and their descendants continue a battle against racism and segregation. Freedman's Town, the first settlement of freed slaves in Houston, still fights for it's existence. This once vibrant center of early Black culture, has been reduced from hundreds of homes and businesses to just a handful of buildings. Many of the people laid to rest at College Memorial came from Freedman's Town.

Today, the Harris County Juvenile Detention Center across from the cemetery sends over their youth to mow and rake the grounds. Large bags of leaves are a permanent fixture in the cemetery. White lilies surrounding several grave sites have been cut short by the mowers blades. Broken tombstones are propped up against the nearest tree. Fast growing hackberries are literally growing around grave markers and pulling them into the ground. newly built townhomes cut through the cemetery and have driven repeatedly over gravesites. Only a small portion of the cemetery's inhabitants are remembered. Anonymous freed slaves, veterans of both World Wars, victims of the 1917 race riots and beloved children lay forgotten along with this vital part of American history.



World Social Forum in Caracas: Reports from Houstonians

Under the unifying slogan of ÒAnother World is Possible,Ó more than 100,000 participants gathered in Caracas for the 6th World Social Forum. The World Social Forum took place from the 24th to 29th of January and gathered activists from around the world, even Houston Texas, to build a powerful movement against neoliberalism, capitalism, and imperialism.

The WSF is organized in a decentralized format that encourages grassroots participation. This is accomplished through a series of workshops and forums that bring together political activists from throughout the world to give them the opportunity to share experiences and build social networks. Each day, during the six days of activities, there were hundreds of forums, discussions, and meetings.

In addition to the World Social Forum, there was also an Alternative Social Forum, which was organized around anti-authoritarian principles. The ASF media team has published a report back on the success of their forum which brought radical activists from throughout the world to share and reflect on struggles in different parts of the world. Houstonian WSF attendees who are also organizing a Houston Social Forum (www.houstonsocialforum.org).



On Feb. 20, which is President's Day, Cindy Sheehan and the Gold Star Families for Peace, in conjunction with Veterans for Peace and Code Pink (and other groups) will be taking our protest of the Iraqi War to Barbara Bush, mother of the President. We want to ask her "Why did our sons die for your son's lies?" This is to be a peaceful, nonviolent anti-war protest/demonstration, mother to mother (and we all have mothers, right?). Place: In front of St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 717 Sage Road at Woodway in Tanglewood just outside 610 (the West Loop).
Time: 4-7 p.m. on Feb. 20

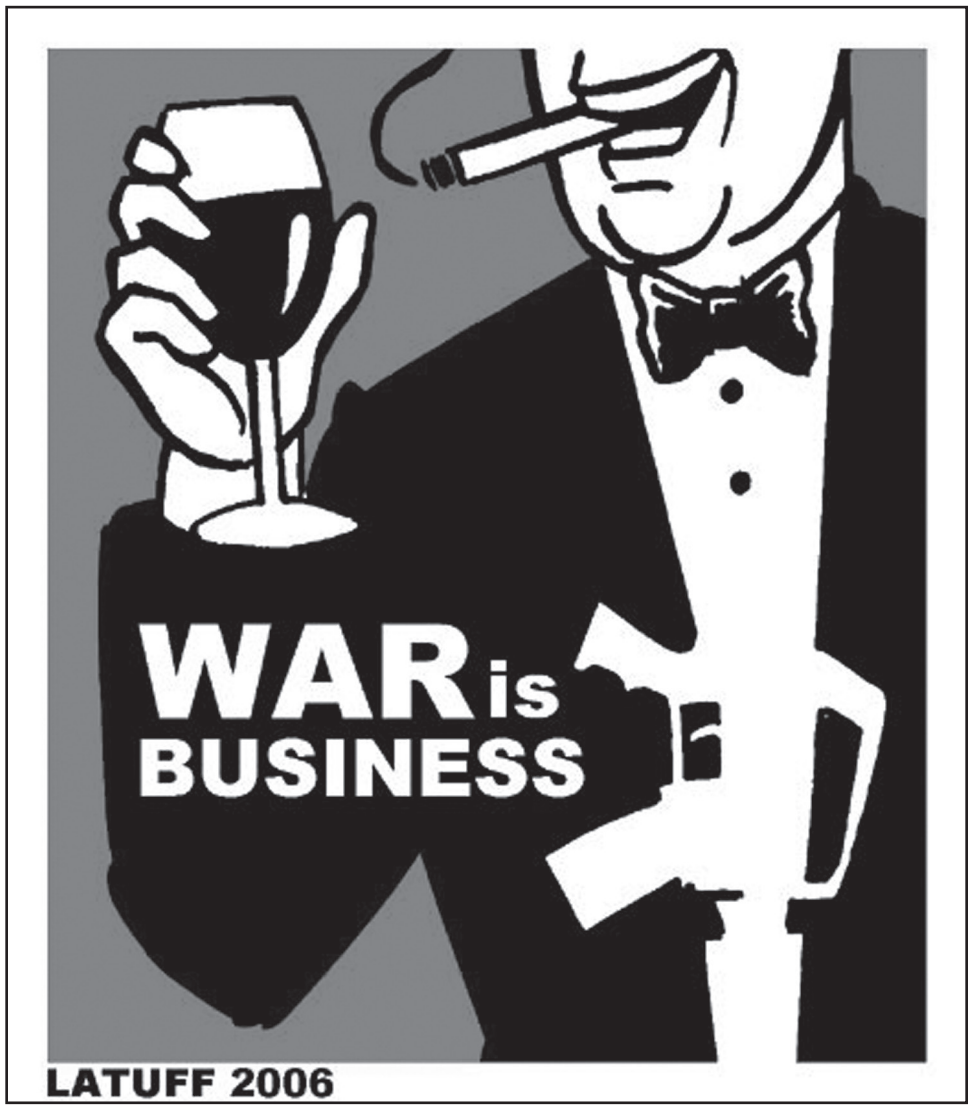
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WORLD VIEW

200 Insiders Against the World

Inside the Global Dominance Group

By PETER PHIILLIPS



The leadership class in the US is now dominated by a neo-conservative group of some 200 people who have the shared goal of asserting US military power worldwide. This Global Dominance Group, in cooperation with major military contractors, has become a powerful force in military unilateralism and US political processes.

A long thread of sociological research documents the existence of a dominant ruling class in the US, which sets policy and determines national political priorities. C. Wright Mills, in his 1956 book on the power elite, documented how World War II solidified a trinity of power in the US that comprised corporate, military and government elites in a centralized power structure working in unison through "higher circles" of contact and agreement.

Neo-conservatives promoting the US Military control of the world are now in dominant policy positions within these higher circles of the US. *Adbusters magazine summed up neo-conservatism as: "The belief that Democracy, however flawed, was best defended by an ignorant public pumped on nationalism and religion. Only a militantly nationalist state could deter human aggression Such nationalism requires an external threat and if one cannot be found it must be manufactured."*

In 1992, during Bush the First's administration, Dick Cheney supported Lewis Libby and Paul Wolfowitz in producing the "Defense Planning Guidance" report, which advocated US military dominance around the globe in a "new order." The report called for the United States to grow in military superiority and to prevent new rivals from rising up to challenge us on the world stage.

*The **US** now spends as much for **defense** as the rest of the world* combined.

At the end of Clinton's administration, global dominance advocates founded the Project for a New American Century (PNAC). Among the PNAC founders were eight people affiliated with the number-one defense contractor Lockheed-Martin, and seven others associated with the number-three defense contractor Northrop Grumman. Of the twenty-five founders of PNAC twelve were later appointed to high level positions in the George W. Bush administration.

In September 2000, PNAC produced a 76-page report entitled *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century. The report, similar to the 1992 Defense Policy Guidance report, called for the protection of the American Homeland, the ability to wage simultaneous theater wars, perform global constabulary roles, and the control of space and cyberspace. It claimed that the 1990s were a decade of defense neglect and that the US must increase military spending to preserve American geopolitical leadership as the world's superpower. The report also recognized that: "the process of transformation is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event such as a new Pearl Harbor." The events of September 11, 2001 presented exactly the catastrophe that the authors of Rebuilding America' Defenses theorized were needed to accelerate a global dominance agenda. The resulting permanent war on terror has led to massive government defense spending, the invasions of two countries, and the threatening of three others, and the rapid acceleration of the neo-conservative plans for military control of the world.*

The US now spends as much for defense as the rest of the world combined. The Pentagon's budget for buying new weapons rose from $61 billion in 2001 to over $80 billion in 2004. Lockheed Martin's sales rose by over 30% at the same time, with tens of billions of dollars on the books for future purchases. From 2000 to 2004, Lockheed Martins stock value rose 300%. Northrup-Grumann saw similar growth with DoD contracts rising from $3.2 billion in 2001 to $11.1 billion in 2004. Halliburton, with Dick Cheney as former CEO, had defense contracts totaling $427 million in 2001. By 2003, they had $4.3 billion in defense contracts, of which approximately a third were sole source agreements.

At the beginning of 2006 the Global Dominance Group's agenda is well established within higher circle policy councils and cunningly operationalized inside the US Government. They work hand in hand with defense contractors promoting deployment of US forces in over 700 bases worldwide. There is an important difference between self-defense from external threats, and the belief in the total military control of the world. When asked, most working people in the US have serious doubts about the moral and practical acceptability of financing world domination.

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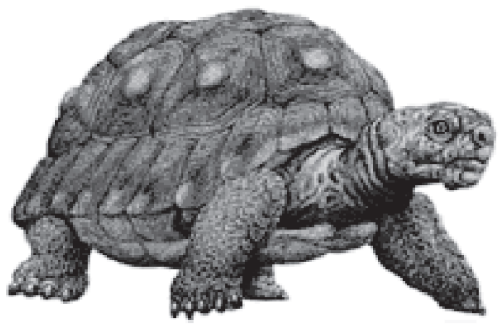
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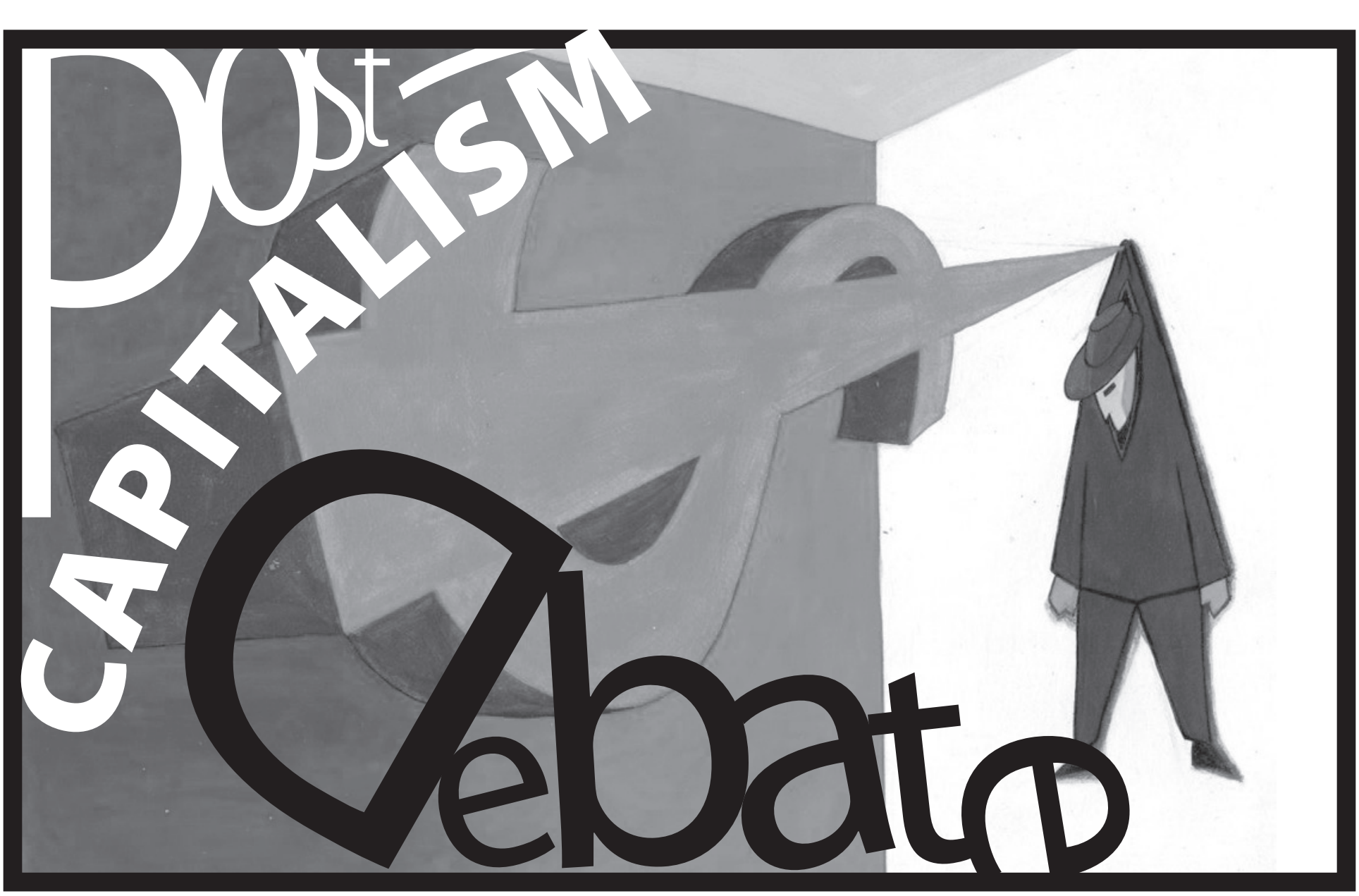
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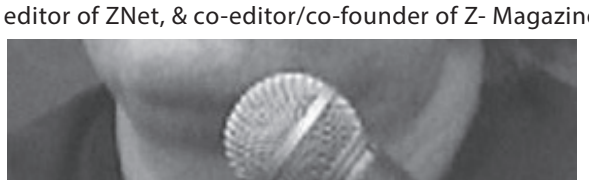
Post CAPITALISM Debate



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| Michael Albert |
• editor of ZNet, & co-editor/co-founder of Z- Magazine



On January 26, Venezuelanalysis.com (VA), an English language, critical yet pro-Chavez website, hosted a debate in Caracas, Venezuela during The World Social Forum, between John Holloway who writes about the movement of the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico, and Michael Albert, editor of ZNet, and co-editor and co-founder of Z Magazine.



| John Holloway |
• writer of the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Mexico



Both agreed that capitalism is following a destructive path, and VA put them together to debate their differences regarding escaping it. The debate brought out more agreement than real disagreement, but the contrasting visions were fascinating.

Holloway is an Irish writer now in residence in Mexico. The most popular of his many books, "Change the World Without Taking Power: the Meaning of Revolution Today," advocates Zapatista methods of creating a society we want, while avoiding the pitfalls of trying to seize power. It was pivotal in the movement of Argentina's Piqueteros, who rejected corrupt government structures in the wake of the financial collapse a few years ago.

For Holloway, capitalism is an *absolute mistake* for humanity, but we have found nothing but **failed models** for ***challenging*** it.

Holloway expressed concerns about the term "post-capitalism," in that it involves "a bourgeoisie concept of time." The idea that capitalism would end and be replaced by something else, denies the non-capitalist realms that exist all around us now, which he sees as "cracks" or "rips" in a metaphor in which capitalism is a curtain that blocks our vision. The rips in the curtain are capitalism-free zones, not just physical locations, but also events, concepts, or resources, such as air, water, or DNA -- which there are reasons to exempt from market forces.

Groups might try to refuse to allow certain things to be owned, sold, taken, or destroyed.

Talking about a revolution coming in the future implies a false duality: first is the time of building the movement or party to prepare for the taking of power, and afterwards comes something so different that it is hard for us to really feel it. But, if we can escape the idea of taking power, then we are immediately confronted with the question of what to do right now. The problem ceases to be "how can we abolish capitalism," and becomes "how can we stop creating capitalism." This is similar to "Enough Already!" which the Zapatistas asserted as they rose up against a global system in which indigenous people like themselves are just some thing to clear out of the way before strip-mining, or factory-farming the land.

Albert said if we are to ***escape*** capitalism, we must win something **worthwhile** to put in its place.

For Holloway, capitalism is an absolute mistake for humanity, but we have found nothing but failed models for challenging it. Revolutions have been based on the mistaken idea that we know how to proceed, with parties monologuing about their plans. Holloway and the Zapatistas, admit that they don't know how to do everything, and therefore, dialogue is needed. They not with answers but with questions. Another Zapatista principle brought up here is "we walk, asking." This is a contrast to a traditional leader who tells -- the idea that politics is about an inclusive dialogue.

To Holloway, we can use "power" to mean "power to do," or "power over." Within the realm of power to do, he finds much of interest, but power over is to be avoided at every level. The power to do is associated with freedom and dignity, and power over with oppression. The power to do implies a female orientation. For Holloway, now is the time for women.

Albert helped develop an "economic vision called Participatory Economics (zmag.org/parecon). Participatory Economics is a vision that challenges the foundations of economic theory. It posits a society run by neither markets nor central planning, neither competition nor control, instead a society based on participatory planning and sharing." (from the znet website.)

Albert said if we are to escape capitalism, we must win something worthwhile to put in its place. One goal is worker -- consumer self-management, which asserts that self-regulation is possible without a hierarchical structure. The idea is that consensually formed groups can decide things through direct democracy about how to set values on work. Another goal is equitable remuneration, which means that people are paid in relation to how long or hard they work, and to how unpopular a job is. The goal of full equity refers to not only avoiding ownership rights that give those who do the least work the most money, but also avoiding the socialist pitfall of empowering a coordinator class.

I am less familiar with Albert's work than Holloway's work, so I am hesitant to try to summarize it, but his presentation is available in it's entirety here zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=41&ItemID=9602

During the question part of the presentation, there were some attempts to shake up and challenge the two English-speaking white male experts. One audience member asked why these men allegedly opposed to hierarchy got to do all the talking while we sat in the audience listening to them, and why we weren't sitting in a circle where everyone could be equal. Albert answered that to hear Noam Chomsky speak, he would be happy to be one of thousands sitting in an audience. Here, forty or so people had come to hear him and Holloway. These people might not be as interested in hearing everyone else who showed up talk. But, the important thing is that they were discussing ideas, not exercising any power over choices of the audience, who could simply go to another room and have any sort of meeting they wanted.

The most interesting challenge to Holloway came from an Argentinean who explained how much initial excitement there was about his book "Change the World without Taking Power," in Argentina during the government collapse. But soon, he said, people were becoming frustrated with everyone arriving saying "I don't have the answers, only questions." As the traditional government hierarchy began to reassert itself, people were desperate for someone who had some answers.

Holloway answered that he has come up against this question before, groups that have created "cracks" for themselves are unsure what to do next, or how to continue expanding these cracks.

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STICK IT TO THE MAN

Suing Your Hairdresser for a Bad Cut

by Devin C. McNulty

Editor's Note: The information in this column is not legal advice. It is merely intended to illustrate general information about the law by using hypothetical examples. If you have a legal issue, including one that resembles the situation described below, you should consult with an attorney regarding the circumstances of your particular problem.

I recently went to a high-end salon and the stylist butchered my hair. I am absolutely humiliated by my appearance and raving mad about what he did to me. The "haircut" cost me over $300 and I want to sue him to get my money back and damages for screwing up my hair so badly. Can I sue him?

Yes. You can hold the hairdresser and the hair salon responsible for any damages to your body, appearance or livelihood caused by the hair cut. If you rely on your appearance or hair for your career then you can hold them responsible for losses to your livelihood.

At least two legal theories exist for you to go after the hair stylist and hair salon. You could sue under a breach of an implied contract or a negligence theory. Going to a hair salon is a contract just like any other commercial transaction. When you enter a hair salon and sit down you have made an implied contract that you will pay for whatever service you request and they normally provide. The hair dresser (and salon) are contracting that they will cut or style your hair in a normal and customary way. If you refuse to pay, then you are in breach of that contract (and also have potential criminal liability as well, for "theft of services", but that's a topic for another day). The hairdresser and hair salon on the other hand, have held themselves out (i.e., advertised, applied for a business license, opened their doors, etc.) as ordinary, competent individuals in the business of cutting and styling hair. Any deviation from ordinary competence opens them up to liability. In plain English, that means there is a certain standard of ordinary care for all hairdressers and salons, and if your particular salon does not take meet that standard then it has been negligent and you may have a cause of action against it.

The damages the hair dresser and/or hair salon may have to pay could include medical bills you incurred for any care or treatments; you could recover for pain and suffering if the injury is truly egregious and for any lost wages or out-of-pocket expenses in connection with the injury.

The pain and humiliation you feel from getting a bad haircut is largely subjective. If you merely think your hair dresser took an inch too many off, or that you do not really like the style or color, then you will not have much of a case. You will need to be able to first convince an attorney and then possibly a judge or jury that "but for" the horrible haircut you would not have the damages.

In order for your hair "tragedy" to rise to an actionable event, the damages must be pretty extreme before any attorney will spend time on your case (and good attorneys only spend time on good cases). The lawsuits against hair stylists and salons that actually win generally include; hair falling out and not growing back because of incorrect chemicals used; hair growing back kinky or wavy because of incorrect chemicals used; chemical burns on the scalp; hairdressers cutting off parts of ears with their scissors. Cases where someone thought they looked "stupid" or were "humiliated" by their new hair style do not go anywhere in the legal system. The injury must be big and the damages must be real in order to prevail in court.

A famous Japanese "hair model" recently recovered hundreds of thousands of dollars from a lawsuit against her hair stylist after he butchered her renowned hair. She demonstrated to the jury that she would have signed additional modeling contracts because of her hair and that she lost out on work because of the hair stylist's awful cut.

You can sue someone for a multitude of reasons. And that's a good thing. "Suing" is not the same thing as "winning money" or "jackpot justice." "Suing" just means holding someone responsible for something and a person being more responsible is a good thing. Not being able to "sue" someone means the courthouse door is closed and that allows bad actors to do whatever they want without any consequences (see whom "tort reform" really benefits). A hair salon lawsuit may seem "frivolous" but your right to hold someone responsible for injuring you, your family or your property is dead serious.

To recap: You can hold your hair stylist and/or the hair salon responsible for injury you or your career by giving you an awful haircut. If your hair will grow back and can be returned to its natural state at some point in the future, you probably should not go through the time, effort and expense needed in bringing a lawsuit because you probably will never recover anything in the courts.



Devin C. McNulty, a former prosecutor, is engaged in the private practice of law in Houston, Texas. He can be reached at devin.mcnulty@gmail.com with any questions or comments.


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