August 2005
7/15–7/31
Issue #48

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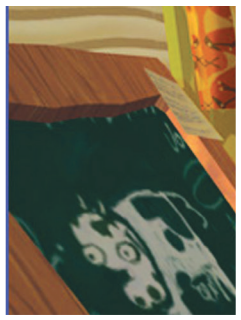
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Publishers Andrea Afra, Omar Afra, Omar Al-Bochi

Associate Editors

World View Ken Freeland

Arts Sean Carroll

Film Michael Bergeron

Local Alex Wukman

Music Kwame M. Anderson

Managing Editor Omar Afra

Contributors & Staff

Writers Lance Walker, Christopher Brunn, Gerry Graphia, Devin McNulty, Jeff Storm, George St. Clair, Alex "Asshole" Wukman, John Kaminski, Yolanda Garza Birdwell, John Ferguson, Timothy O'Brien, Brandon Montes

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Designers/Illustrations Lyndia Haryanto, Omar Al-Bochi, Ryan Ottea, Shelby Hohl, Tyler Barber

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This issue's cover is courtesy of a C Language Program written by John Ferguson of Houston. An exploration of lost material common in visual programming, the file inverts color data into a smaller space subsequently reversing the process. Applied in this case to a painting by Brian Piana, the result destroys the image save a small circular center which leaves an abstract space determined by the program. The process can be applied to any image leaving the "art" inherently in the program.

johnf@freepresshouston.com

Feel FREE to take us Seriously.

editors@freepresshouston.com

Who are we anymore?



Houston (Formerly known as Clutch City)- If you have not yet felt the wrath of the Free Press, Feel it now. Check this; Pg.39 features our spankin' new feature: Fat City Yoga. Eric Anthamatten brings us this new column that features a yoga instruction in a city setting. Masterful! Also, Film columnist Michael "Iceberg" Bergeron interviews James Toback . Calypso! What else? Alex Wukman broke his foot. Lovely photo of Wukman's foot included. Swollen!

Also, has anyone been getting death threats lately? Yeah, none of us either. It's enjoyable to find out what people may think to be humorous or even where they think they stand on the food chain. For those of you whom have hate in your heart, repent now or God will not smile upon thy beautiful visage come the day of reckoning. Not joking. It is all "good" right? I don't think so. The world quickly crumbles around us every day...and every day you will loose a piece of your soul the more that "the ignorance" fills your hollowed body. Not joking.

SO DON'T JUST STAND THERE! GET OUT IN THE WORLD AND CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR OTHER PEOPLE! DUH! What else is there to do?

(Some of the views/advice expressed in the second half of this column is unfortunately applicable to a large part of our society today. No apologies needed.)

Thanks- Editors

Feed Back

We love hate mail. We hate love mail. We love mail hate.

photo by: Anthony Rathbun

Once again-you over simplify the Israel-Palestine conflict in your printing of Senator Hollings diatribe (Dealing with the core of Mid-East Terror.; last issue.). He does nothing but paint the Israelis as aggressors and the Paletsinians the unwitting victims.

C. Schafer

Well done! Eric Anthamatten's article on the prison system was excellent. We unfortunately live in a country where the criminal justice system makes people more of criminals.

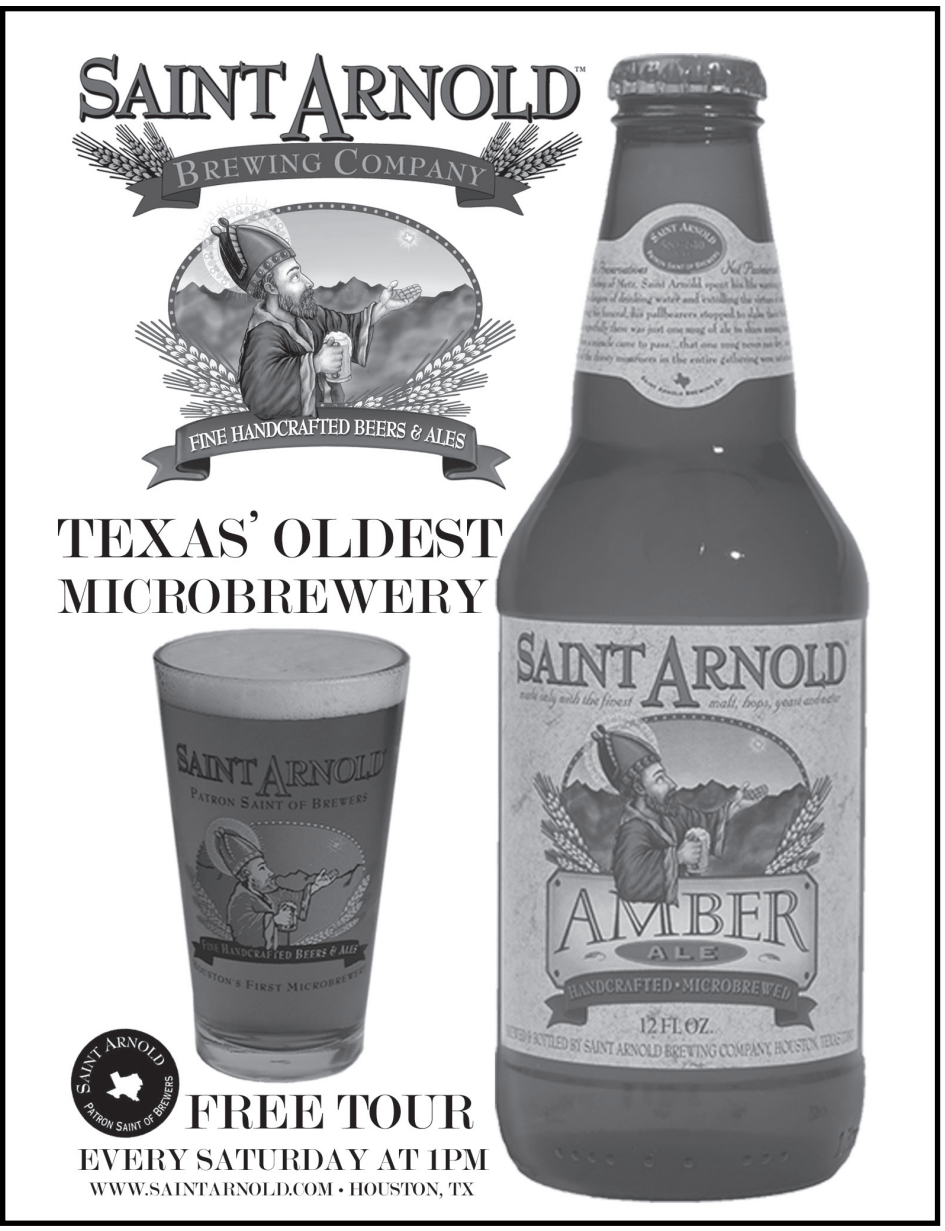
Heather

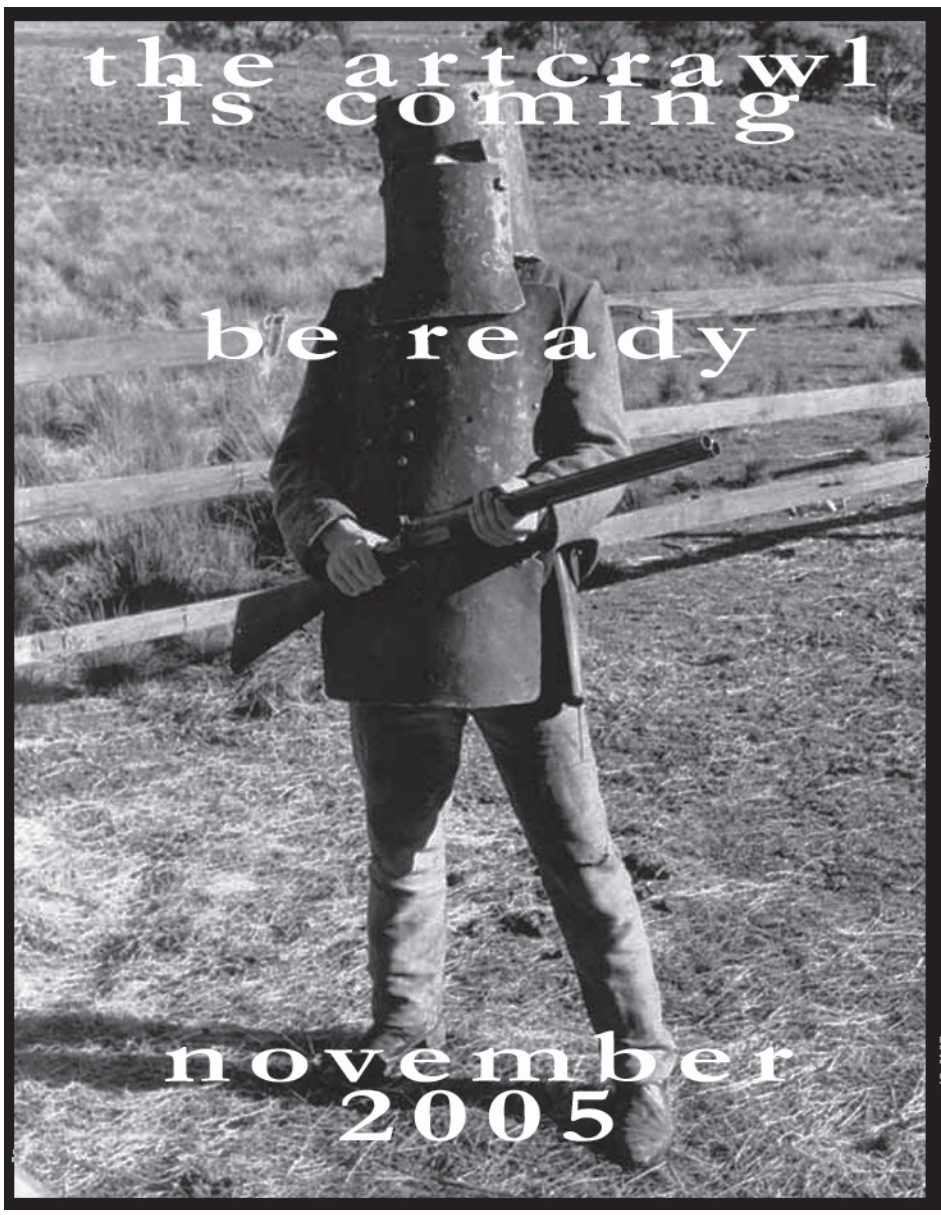
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AWN
ALTERNATIVE WEEKLY NETWORK

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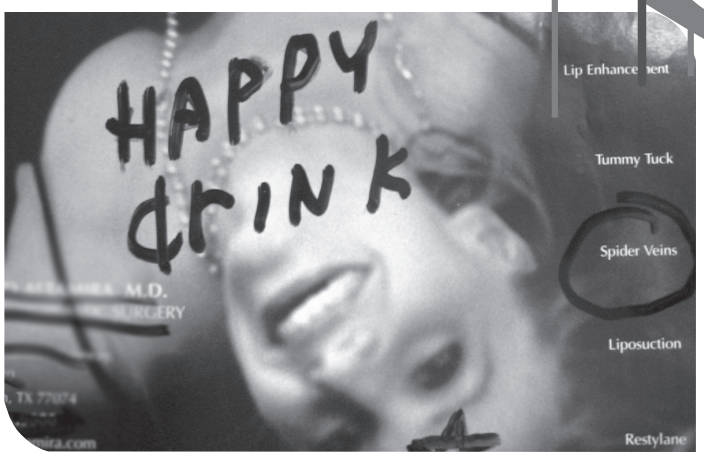

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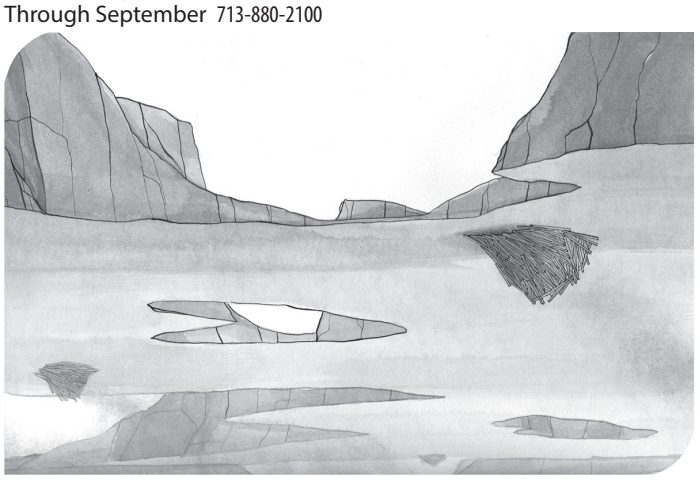

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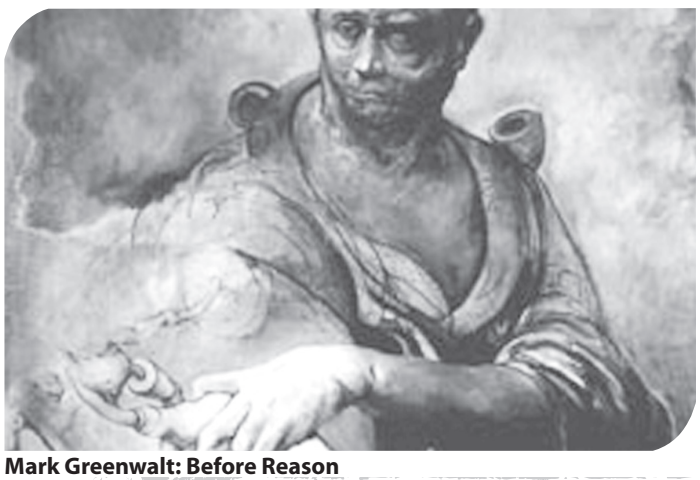
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Debris:
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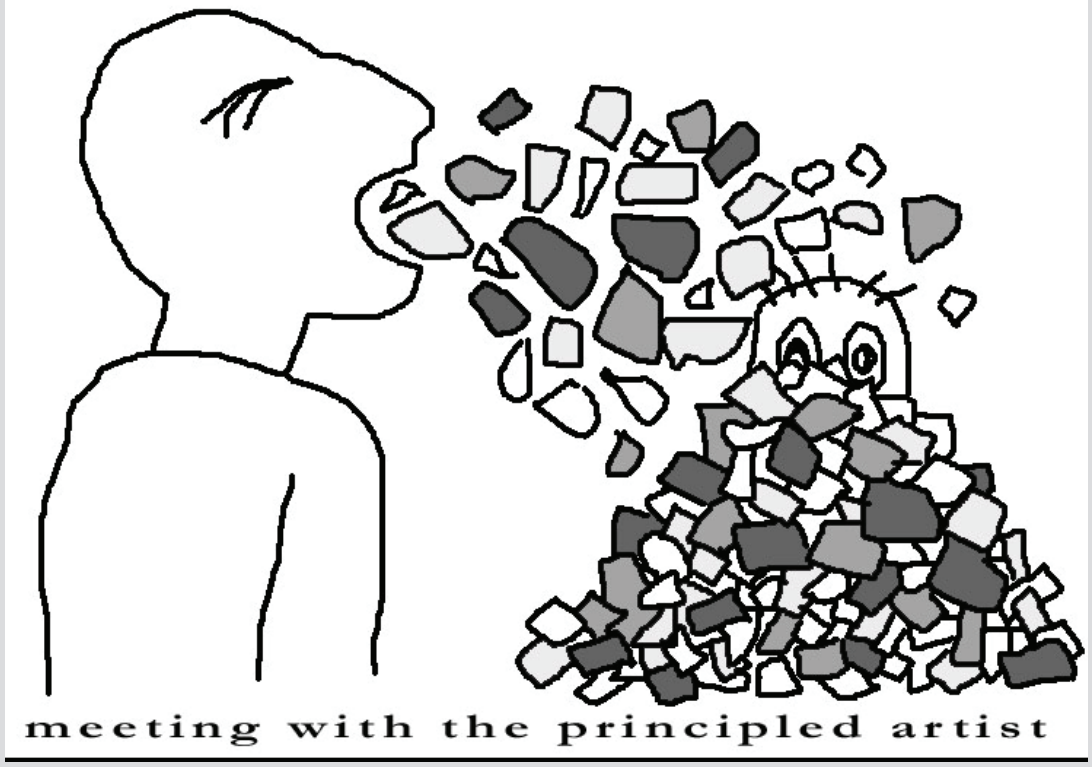
By: Buffalo Sean

The Contemporary Arts Museum kicks hard this October starting with a major show of Andrea Zittel. She is an odd figure in art today for sure. Andrea has been the darling of many a collector and curator from what I can gather; an artist metioned yet not shown. Her early projects are examinations of modular space compacting American space like a Japanese motel room. She ran the A to Z Enterprise as a sort of store, but more to critically examine all aspects of contemporary life, or at least whatever came to mind (groundhogs, food, trailer parks). Moving to the outdoors her environments and site-specific installations attempt to expand 'gallery' definitions to include the whole of a desert environment focused on Joshua Tree, California. Her obscure and challenging work amounts to virtually no sales, not really even constructing salable objects. Taking on architecture, interior design, sales and customer service, and rural open spaces from an artistic perspective Zittel is not a rat-race type artist, surviving instead upon her obsessive personality and the kindness of strangers. She sure must have some mouth on her though, and the pavement-pounding motivation to know and be known by the people at the top before anyone else. It's kind of like if the untra rich and their gallerists had an indie band they obsessed over and no one knew about. It works with their inbred snobbery very well. It's easier to turn up your nose at people if they don't know what you're talking about.

Rumor is that they are hiring more preparators for this installation, and it's the biggest installation at the museum to date. I hope that means they will be installing "A-Z Raugh Furniture", a rocky mountainscape of foam rubber vaguely resembling the outback of Australia. I think you can climb and play on it.

The real purpose of this exhibition is over the heads of Houston and it's peoples; this is a collaboration between Andra Rosen Gallery (a powerful one) and the Contemporary Arts Museum to annoint Andrea Zittel as one for the record books. This is "the first comprehensive solo exhibition of Zittel's work" and the resulting catalog and travelling exhibit will put Andrea on everyone in the art world's radar, setting her up for shows in New York and Amsterdam, Paris and Tokyo. The context these art world elite can observe All this particular episode demonstrates is the importance of networking and personability on one's trajectory in art. Andrea Zittel has captured the ear of a small number, but she got the right ones. For all the fighting for recognition at all levels done by painters, sculptors and the like; it doesn't matter the least compared to one influential supporter. Much as Raphael and Velasquez were subject to the patronage system of their respective cultures, all one may need is a New York 'dutchess' to parlay a name into a Name. The lesson is: go to the right school; con, cheat, and scam your way into the path of an influential gallerist; and mold your personality to be perfectly compliamentary to theirs.

Cynical and painful, yes. Very much like whoring, yes. Is there an upside? No.



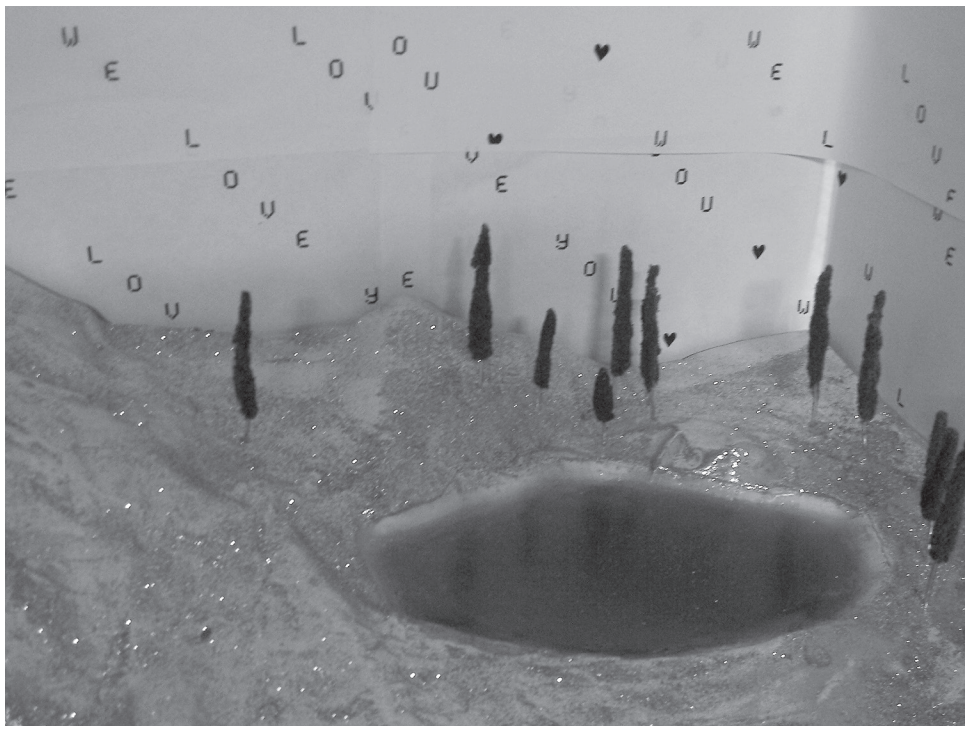
ArtsyFartsy

D.I.Y. Alternative Spaces, and Young Artists

FUBU

By: Brittany Bly

I am conflicted between being a total elitist and being the sharing, giving person that is conveying information via this article. Okay, the elitism is winning. Right now, I'm totally sick of going to the same boring galleries and looking at the same boring "works of art." The thing that I've learned about commercial galleries is that they are there to make money (well, duh) and that most dealers and collectors don't know a thing about contemporary art. Collectors just buy what makes them happy, and for most people that's paintings of bouquets of flowers, watercolors of Italian city streets, and other positively vomitous subject matter.



Thank god, for Aimee Jones' one night only exhibition . . . with friends like these . . . at her studio at Commerce Street Artist Warehouse July 30th, where the only vomitous subject matter was created by someone drinking too much beer. It was the bash of the summer; the bash was hot as hell (no pun intended) featuring artwork by Eric Pearce, Seth Alverson, and the infamous Miss Jones, hilarious fashions by Stephanie Halford, and some good time rock n' roll by Broke Legs and Catapult.

Broke Legs was the best angst-ridden-electro-synth-flash-rock I've heard since they coined the term. The best song was "Airport Weed Confiscation" which was performed with such enthusiasm that I want to believe that one of the band members had had this experience. It almost makes me want to get busted at the airport. It was touching how the song "White Snake" hit so close to home because I am a little afraid of brown snakes and deeply saddened by yellow snakes (if you don't understand this reference you better check out www.kunstfascion.com).

I also loved Amy and Levi Dugat's mini landscape sculpture. The ground was coated in gold glitter, glitter, and more glitter and the phrase "we love you" was repeated in the paper skyline. Little flags of conquest were rampant on the hills and displayed California-meets-fortune-cookie phrases such as "whatever" and "self-induced drama." Little figurines of the artists rested on top of the mountains and a tv screen played jumbled images in the background.

The best part about . . . with friends like these . . . was that collectors were banned at the door. Well, not exactly banned but none of them would put up with no A/C and loud music. The show or more aptly party was a great illustration that we have a claim to our own artwork, articles and art parties. The collectors, galleries, and other bureaucratic art-fun-suckers do not have control over us. It's for us, by us.

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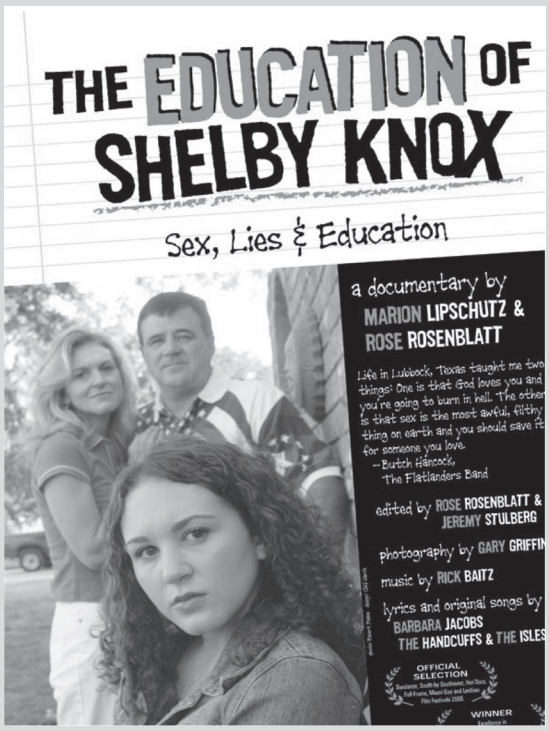
By: Kelly Harris

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Film Reception 6:30-7:30pm
Screening 7:30pm followed by Q&A
RSVP is necessary to reserve your seat

Sex Ed or Abstinence until Marriage? The question is not which will create fewer babies. The question is whether or not our "babies" should be trusted to not act on their natural, human desires, or whether we should teach them how to act on those desires in a safe and mature way. In today's society, sex is everywhere. Every time I turn around I see a billboard with some half naked person on it attempting to sell me a product that will be just as disappointing as the last (an entire other issue that can be tackled at a later date). But what is most disappointing are the people walking around with the idea that they can convince their hormonal teenagers not to indulge in the "forbidden act". Rules are meant to be broken.

The Education of Shelby Knox was created in an attempt to shed some light on the growing need for sex education in this country. With the rates of teenage pregnancy and STD contraction rising at rapid speeds, someone had to take a stand. And someone did. Join Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt for a screening of their award winning documentary The Education of Shelby Knox. Complete with refreshments and an after show Q&A with Shelby Knox, you are sure to leave with a plethora of information and more importantly, a challenge to do something with it.



Must Love Penguins

By: Micheal Bergeron

For the record here are the films released domestically this year that feature penguins: March of the fucking Penguins; Madagascar; the eco-documentary Deep Blue; and the French film Apres Vous, which features an animated title sequence (a la Pink Panther) portraying penguins as tuxedo clad waiters.



March of the Penguins

March of the Penguins had its original French soundtrack and narration changed for the American bow. Although I consider this docu about our flightless frigid friends a second tier film, one cannot knock success - March of the Penguins is the second highest grossing documentary of all time (surpassed only by the over hyped Fahrenheit 9/11).

The Island & Stealth

Of course we live in a time when an apt comment to review a film is to simply say: it didn't suck. Because The Island and Stealth, both considered bombs, were amusing popcorn flicks that didn't suck. They're hybrid films. Island starts out like THX-1138, becomes Bad Boys 3 before morphing into Logan's Run. Likewise, Stealth starts out as a recruitment Top Gun flick; kills off Jamie Foxx in the second reel; hovers into 2001: A Space Odyssey territory with a Hal-like robot plane; segues into Behind Enemy Lines action; splices that with rouge black ops (neocon Pentagon bad, regular Navy good); and finally, when the robot plane helps Josh Lucas escape from an assassination attempt, this Rob Cohen helmed potboiler becomes a balls out revenge flick. No cute penguins though.

Oddly, outside of Hollywood trade papers, the everyday press goes on infinitum about how this summer's opening salvo, Ridley Scott's Kingdom of Heaven was a total bust. Hello, that film has made over $210-million worldwide. Not oddly, The Island, a film about cloning has grossed over $12-million in South Korea the home of the world's first cloned dog (and with one-sixth the population of the U.S. where the film has amassed roughly $24-mill). Meanwhile awesome films like Layer Cake or Cronicas linger a few weeks in solo engagements before disappearing altogether. May your humble columnist suggest that Hollywood rush into production a film about killer cloned penguins, narrated by Morgan Freeman natch.

My Date With Drew

My Date With Drew combines a reality TV ethos with the clock ticking suspense of 30-day docu Super Size Me. Dorky dude Brian Herzlinger scores $1100 on the game show Taboo and decides to use the money to fund a lifelong desire to meet Drew Barrymore. He sets a goal of one month and a screen graphic shows the dwindling budget as he buys videotape ($270) and consults psychics ($75).

L.A., the official city of not returning phone calls, makes Herzlinger's challenge our viewing pleasure. Obviously this docu shot in video has been enhanced with a punched up sound design, film prints, modest advertising and song clearances. The end result has been a crowd pleaser on the festival circuit for the last year (it was made in 2003) due to its sweet natured approach to romance. Anyone looking for foolproof tips on how to crash the VIP section of a post movie premiere shindig will come away with that knowledge. Herzlinger's the kindest stalker one could ever imagine, and unlike Morgan Spurlock he never throws up during his film. There's a crowd consciousness percolating here that makes this date worth checking out.

The Skeleton Key

The Skeleton Key features a great cast bubbling in a New Orleans bowl of hoodoo. That's movie voodoo. Kate Hudson, John Hurt, Gene Rowlands, and Peter Sarsgaard, the latter now moving into villain roles after being the indie It Boy for the last couple of years, rock this film from Brit director Iain Softley and writer Ehren Kruger (no relation to Freddy and the scribe of the Ring remakes as well as the current The Brothers Grimm). While having seen Angel Heart as well as several Stephen King movies I was still blindsided by Skeleton Key's bizarre spine tingling twist ending.

Wedding Crashers & Sky High

While Wedding Crashers has a lock on comedy of the year my personal biggest laugh came during the lightweight Disney flick Sky High. Coach Boomer (Bruce Campbell) wants to get Dr. Medulla (Kevin McDonald) to go out on a double date. "She's not just her twin, she's her evil twin."

Mondovino

Merlot alert. Sideways no longer has the monopoly on wine. Jonathan Nossiter's mixes careers as a docu filmmaker and sommelier and presents an exhaustive overview of the wine industry in Mondovino. The innocent viewer may be surprised how much the hands of corporate influence hold sway over our casual libations. Mondovino unwinds at the MFA, Houston on August 20-22 and 27-29 at 7p.m.

TheDickCavettShow(3discDVD)

"We always had to watch ourselves because if we weren't watching ourselves there was somebody who was," says George Harrison in a candid interview on The Dick Cavett Show, broadcast on November 23, 1971. A three-disc DVD set from Shout! Factory chronicles rock icons that appeared on Cavett's landmark talk/variety show from 1969 through 1974. Not only does this set function as a cool blast from a past when four networks were the extent on the televised universe, the various shows demonstrate how much of an intellectual void we exist in today even in our world of unlimited channels. The musical guests include Stevie Wonder, Paul Simon, Harrison, Ravi Shankar, Gary Wright, Janis Joplin, Sly and the Family Stone, David Bowie, the Rolling Stones, and in an episode recorded the Monday after Woodstock (and broadcast the Tuesday after Woodstock) Jefferson Airplane, Joni Mitchell, Steve Stills and David Crosby (who calls for the dismantling of all oil companies). Hendrix canceled at the last minute from that particular episode. The episodes are presented in their entirety, so that means we see Joplin (seen fronting both the Kozmic Blues Band and the Full Tilt Boogie Band, with her last appearance a mere two months before her death) trading quips with Rachel Welch as well as exchanging fashion tips with a spry Gloria Swanson and barefoot Margot Kidder. For that matter of fact Swanson dishes the dirt on why she had Erich von Stroheim fired off Queen Kelly. Simon ends his segment with a music lesson, and then Cavett brings out the triumvirate of Barbara Howar, Jerzy Kosinski and Anthony Burgess to dish literature. Talk about the convergence of entertainment and culture.

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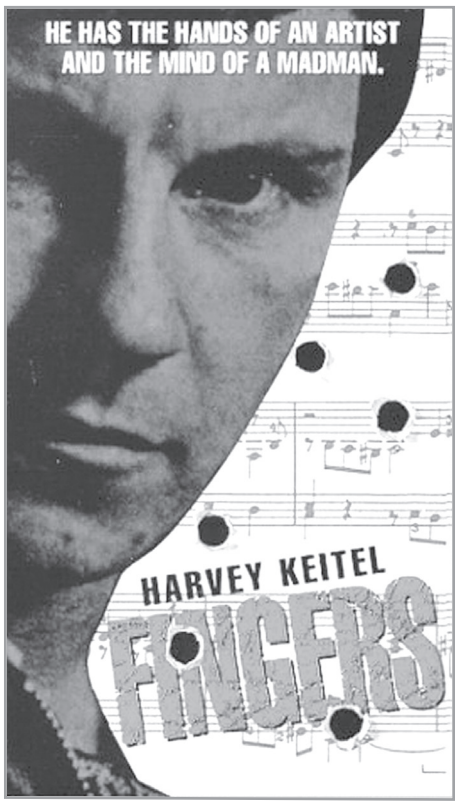
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Fingers Still Crazy After all these Years
Free Press speaks with film-maker James Toback

By: Micheal Bergeron



The French import from director Jacques Audiard, The Beat That My Heart Skipped (De battre mon coeur s'est arete) is a good film. But Fingers, the 1977 James Toback film that Audiard based his movie on, is an excellent film. Fingers ranks alongside Taxi Driver as one of the key films of that era. An argument could be made that Finger's star Harvey Keitel is an essential part of a trilogy of New York's seamy side made up of Mean Streets, Fingers, and The Bad Lieutenant.

"You wouldn't stick a gun in a Russian mobster's mouth and then not kill him,"

Free Press Houston spoke with Toback by phone last week regarding his significant debut film. "Make a right turn at Madison and 92nd," Toback says to a cab driver, as he answers questions on his cell phone while running errands around upper Manhattan.

Both Fingers and The Beat That My Heart Skipped deal with the dichotomy of a character's psyche. In each film the lead character is divided between violent criminal behavior and the artistic ambition of being a concert pianist. Toback explores Jimmy Fingers' (Keitel) through the "fundamental patterns of different worlds."

There is an emphasis in Fingers on diegetic sound or the sound of Jimmy Fingers' environment. When we see Jimmy play classic rock songs on his portable cassette (like The Jamies' "Summertime, Summertime" or the Inez and Charlie Foxx standard "Mockingbird") that is the soundtrack music. Normally in a film, say, Mean Streets, classic songs propel the narrative but as sounds separate from the character's milieu.

Exploring man's dual nature is a trait that runs throughout Toback's films. (Two Girls & A Guy, the psychedelic The Harvard Man, and philosophical-docu The Big Bang are standouts among Toback's films.) So it comes as no surprise when Toback explains how he went from the prestige marriage as the husband of the granddaughter of the Duke of Marlborough to living the wild life at the house of football great Jim Brown. Brown who also appears in Fingers was the subject of Toback's 1971 book Jim. Toback mentions that "Fingers was the only script that didn't change," from completion to production whereas his script for The Pick-Up Artist went through 15 drafts. Toback did delete a scene from Fingers that shows Keitel having a homosexual encounter before he began filming.

Audiard's film follows the template of Fingers but varies slightly in two aspects. Instead of immersing the protag Thomas Seyr (Romain Duris, of L'Auberge Espagnole) in mob politics he is a corrupt real estate mogul. Additionally a pivotal scene where Jimmy Fingers shoots a mobster to avenge the death of his father is changed in Beat That My Heart Skipped to Seyr deciding not to kill.

"That would never happen like that," notes Toback. "You wouldn't stick a gun in a Russian mobster's mouth and then not kill him, because then you would be dead in two days."

The Beat That My Heart Skipped currently unspools exclusively at the Angelika Film Center. Fingers is available as a DVD release, complete with a commentary track featuring Toback plus a conversation on indie film between Toback and Keitel. Also a documentary about Toback making the film Black and White, The Outsider by Nicholas Jarecki, can currently be seen making the rounds at film festivals.

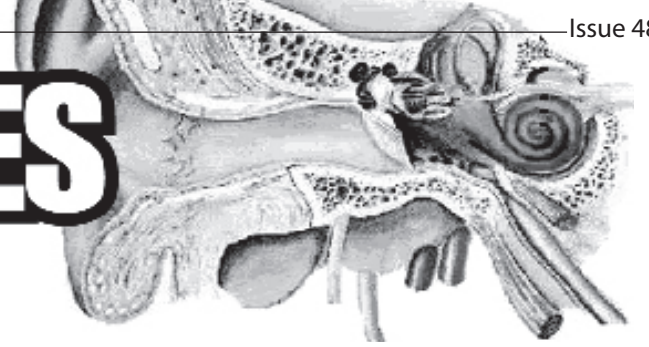
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SOUNDBYTES



You're No Poem Once You Open Your Mouth

Kwame waxes poetic about Iraq, jail escapes, and gives us the Kwame M. Anderson

By: Kwame M. Anderson

Alright. So ,the mother of a soldier who died in Iraq posted herself outside of Bush's Crawford, Texas ranch> She is insisting on speaker with him. The question of whether or not he will speak to her remains. In a response to her request, the President told the media that he "hears their cries." However, pulling the soldiers out of Iraq would be 'the wrong choice.' Well, I'd have to say he's right. You must slowly remove your foot from a quicksand of shit. I think he could have better answered "Oops, my bad. That would have more accurately portrayed his value of young life.

Anyways, some Connecticut couple separated by jail bars and crime convictions committed a daring escape from the police. They freed themselves for 48 hours or something. It got me to thinking: Shouldn't that should have happened on Valentine's Day? That's love! How many of you love the person you're with enough that you shoot the police and break them out of prison? Yeah, it's all great when it's diamond ring proposals at fancy restaurants OR somewhere in a foreign land with a romantic setting. Maybe Italy or France. Or...Denver. How about violins or beautiful opera setting the scene for a woman loading a pistol? Imagine: Break him out of police restraint. That's thick and thin. It's my new defense; "Do you really love me?". It's a rare love that you can't find everywhere. It's easy to move in and shack up. That's a whole 'nother level of the game.

Oh yeah, some CDs came out and people are coming to town. Also, baseball is back!! I actually don't watch baseball. However, in attempt to be inclusive, I three that in. So let me tell what you should do with your money as I am a debt promoter who works for the government. I work in the "Bomb Shit, Spend Money" division.

SHOWS

GREENDAY/JIMMYEATWORLD
8/19/05 Toyota Center

Green Day won a Grammy, they are nominated for 8 MTV awards, and they did an album about death and war. Now if that doesn't make you want to see them; what if I told you that Jimmy eat World was opening the show? How about now, huh? I saw Green day a long time ago at Lollapalooza when Tribe Called quest played. They were alright then. Now they have more money and apparently pyrotechnics. YAY!!!!!!!

DESTINY"S CHILD/AMERIE
8/20/05 Toyota Center

Beyonce is in Destiny's Child. That's really all you need to know. This is said to be the last time that DC will tour which makes it a landmark event. Because...um...well, give me a minute...OK, so Amerie, with her fine self, is opening the show. She also had a pretty popular song this year called "1 Thing." McDonald's is sponsoring the tour. What is a powerhouse female group without a corporation? OK, I don't have much to say here, but that doesn't matter. Why not pay $60-80 to see people sing songs with lights ,backdrops, and costume changes. 10 dollar sodas and 15 to 20 dollar parking? Are you kidding? I am there.

JUDAS BEAR
8/27/05 Fat Cats's

Judas Bear is Thane Matcek's new band. You may remember I listed him as having one of the best albums of last year. Well, his new ensemble is a little more rocking. It's not all acoustic and the band adds a whole new dynamic to the melancholy. They're opening for The Wrens who I hear are big on the West Coast. Judas Bear will be handing out samplers of their new album and that alone should make you go. Also, to witness one of Houston's finest singer/songwriters before he and his problems relocate.

LITTLE BROTHER
8/23/05 Engine Room

If you know anything about cureent hip hop, you know that Little Brother is like the new Tribe Called Quest. 9th wonder ,who's in Little Brother, produced hit records from Jay Z, Destiny's Child, MF Doom, and Buckshot. This will be a good hip hop show to see if you're tired of street lingo, and crack tales, but let's say you want to see girls at a show, they may or may not be there, but a lot of dudes with information ad nauseum about the history of hip hop, the underground, and issues on Allhiphop.com will be in the house. Also, you may see a group of seemingly annoyed women there supporting their boyfriends who brought them there to give out CDs and "network." This sounds like something I'd like to be doing. But seriously folks, Little Brother is really good and I'm sure their show will be great.

COMPACT DISCS

YOUNG JEEZY
Let'sGetIt:ThugMotivation101

Shows



A>S>H>S @ Rhythm Room 8/19



FiveDollarFriend @ Helios 8/20



Little Brother @ Fitzgeralds 8/27



OK Go @ Meridian 8/23



Patrice Pike @ Mucky Duck 8/25



DremntTheEnd @ Fitzgeralds 8/27

Corprate Thugz/Def Jam

This CD has remained in my car and home stereo since the day I bought it. It is gangsta rap at it's finest yet there is also the underlying theme of overcoming obstacles, accomplishing set goals, and not allowing life's setbacks to deter you from what is most important. As Jeezy states, "I don't get mad/ I just get money." It's a singular goal that pops up throughout the album. Just like the best Tupac songs, when he says it, there's a sense of realness that doesn't seem as contrived as others. Yeah, I know, you might not agree with illegal pharmaceutical sales but take that out and put in your own life goals. This CD is as inspirational as say Joel Osteen. While under the tutelage of Young Jizzle, I got a job and a substantial pay check. I'm telling you people; it works! "Bottom Of The Map," "Get Your Mind Right," and "Go Crazy," are the types of songs that sound great blasting from you car stereo as you roll the streets looking for a snowcone stand. So far, my rap records of the year are this one and M.I.A. But hey, what do I know?

JIM JONES
Harlem: Diary Of A Summer
Diplomat Records

Jim Jones is part of a movement called The Diplomats. The Dip Set is one my favorite conglomerates of the moment and it is for this reason that I promote Jim Jones' second album. Not as scatterbrained as his debut; here he seems to blend the street gospel with beats that are a little more, dare I say, accessible. This album is a feel good jam of a time with some hardcore thrown in. It's not bohemian rap but it does have a positive message. Ignore the haters and stack the paper. The government is corrupt and hates to see young cats make money. Some women have questionable motives. If you mess with me, there's a chance you might be shot which I'm sure Donald Rumsfeld would agree with.
Support the movement: Dip Set Dip Set Dip Set Dip Set!!!!

KANYE WEST
Late Registration
Roc A Fella/Def Jam

Kanye West doesn't really need you to call his album a classic because in his mind it is. Yet, I believe this album will be as good as his debut and a lot better mixed. It features everyone from Common to John Mayer to Camron to Paul Wall. It will be diverse to say the least. Since his last album was so well received, I believe this one may be as well but probably a lot quicker. The first single is either about the corruption of the diamond trade in Africa or the perseverance of Roc A Fella. Either way, it's a message. We know how you love rappers with messages. It will be one of the few albums that attempts to be socially conscious and not really conscious at the same time. Dichotomy? Maybe. A bipolar album for a bipolar generation.

Well, I know what you're thinking: Where's the white people? Well, look out for the next issue. I'll have a lot of white people to talk about. Most of the CDs that were coming out weren't hitting the shelves until September and proximity is important to the labels. I've already written about albums months in advance . This is sort of pointless. But the next issue will have releases from The EX, CocoRosie, and some shows from Inara George, Alasdair Roberts, and other thangs. Also, I recently was hanging out backstage at a show where a caterer told me a story of mothers administering fellatio on roadies to get their daughters backstage at the Justin Timberlake tour. He says that was nothing compared to the Limp Bizkit shows. Mmm-hmmm...



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Heavier Than You
Talking with High on Fire

By: Ruben Dominguez

With the release of Blessed Black Wings, San Francisco-based High on Fire have served notice that they are one of the heaviest bands on earth. Their two previous releases, The Art of Self Defense and Surrounded by Thieves, were almost instant classics and showed fans and critics alike that they were capable of making music that sounded like a bulldozer crashing through an elementary school. It would be safe to say that they have created a masterpiece worthy of Tony Iommi's respect.

I spoke with drummer Des Kensel a few days before the band was scheduled to leave for their European tour. He's pretty unassuming for a guy that beats the cans for such a hard-charging unit -- no rock star pose, just a guy that likes to play really heavy music.



Thanks for taking time to do the interview. What's going on your end?

Des: Just getting ready to go to Europe. So we're having to buy all our guitars strings, drum heads, get our merch order in, and that kind of thing.

When do you guys leave?

We leave next Tuesday or Wednesday, so we have to take care of paying our taxes and all the other blah, blah, blah.

How long will you be in Europe?

Ah , I think like 30 shows in 35 days. We'll be over there for just about five weeks.

Where does the tour start?

We start in the U.K. and do about two weeks there. Birmingham, London, Glasgow, and a bunch of places that I've never even heard of. Then we go to the mainland and play Berlin, Hamburg, Vienna, and then a couple of shows in Denmark, and Paris.

This isn't the first time that you have toured Europe; you toured on the last record, right?

It's been a while since we've been over there. It's been a little over two years. We toured there when our last record came out. We went over there with Mastodon, and hopefully this time it will go good.

Let's talk about the new album. It seems all the reviews have been really favorable.

Yeah, we seem to be getting a lot of good press, and all the reviews seem to be good. Nothing but positive stuff since the record came out.

Up to this point, producer-wise, you guys have worked with Billy Anderson, but for Blessed Black Wings, you worked with Steve Albini. Was that a big departure from the way you guys were used to recording?

It was a hard decision to make, because Billy is a good friend of ours, and we did not want him to take it personally. We just felt like it was time for a change. The style of the music is starting to be a little different, you know? So we thought it would be good to have some different ears.

Was it hard getting him to produce the band?

I actually called out to the studio to try and reserve some time. And it was pretty funny, because I got a call back from one of the guys at the studio that said, "uh, Steve really wants to work with you, but there is already a band booked for that time slot. But we are going to make calls and see if we can't get them to reschedule." I told them that they didn't have to do that, but Steve called back a few days later and said, "I don't want to give you a big head, but I really want to work with you." Which was cool, because I wasn't sure how he was going to be about it.

Let's talk about the songwriting process for the band. Do you just jam on riffs and build a song from there, or does one person bring in finished ideas?

Usually Matt [Pike, guitarist/vocalist] and I will go into the studio, and he'll have a couple of guitar riffs. Then I'll give him some input on which way it should go as far as the drumming or envisioning the sound or whatever, and we'll just jam on it. But you know, a lot of it starts as just riffs with some drums, you know? It almost just writes itself after that. In a way, it just evolves on its own.

Was this record fun to play on as a drummer?

Yeah; drumming-wise, I still wanted to make it as heavy and crushing as possible. I wanted to make the beats make the riffs sound as heavy as possible, but I still wanted to get more intricate and faster in some parts. It's definitely a lot of fun to play, you know?

With all the buzz about the band and the new record right now, if a major label comes calling and wants to dump mega money in your lap, are you guys ready to make the jump?

I don't really know, it all depends. I definitely don't want to change anything we're doing, you know? Obviously, we're not writing songs for radio or the mass public. I mean, these days there are major labels picking up bands that are playing shows like Ozzfest and whatever. But if the deal is right for us, yeah, maybe. We're not going to just sign on the line because it's a bunch of money.

Will you guys be swinging back through Houston soon?

Well, we played Houston not that long ago, and it was really good show, so I hope so.

Courtesy of www.spacecityrock.com

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Numbers Turns 27
Saturday, August 20th

by Jeffery McGaven



300 Westheimer Rd, Houston, TX 77006

Happy Birthday to the most notorious and celebrated venue in Houston. Number's on Westheimer celebrates it's 27th anniversary. The club opened in 1978 and has since hosted thousands of national, regional, and local acts. The first recorded act to play there was the Village people in 1978. Such notable acts as Delerium, Daft Punk, Marilyn Manson, Underworld, Xymox, Beastie Boys, Bjork, Nine Inch Nails, Chemical Brothers, Lords of Acid, Moby, Cystal Method, Filter & KMFDM, and new bands such as White Stripes, Miss Kitten, The Hives, Fischerspooner, Basement Jaxx, The Faint have graced their stage. Located in the nerve center in Montrose, the club is situated just a stones throw from Helios, La Strada, and where the Oven was (R.I.P shithole) . Also, they are gonna give away free stuff. Marvelous! Synopsis: a lot of musical history has been made in this club and a great shindig is being thrown to commemorate it all. You know the drill.

Lots of Prizes. DJ's. Cheap drinks. Mysterious women-folk.

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A HUNGER ARTIST

AUG 24TH:
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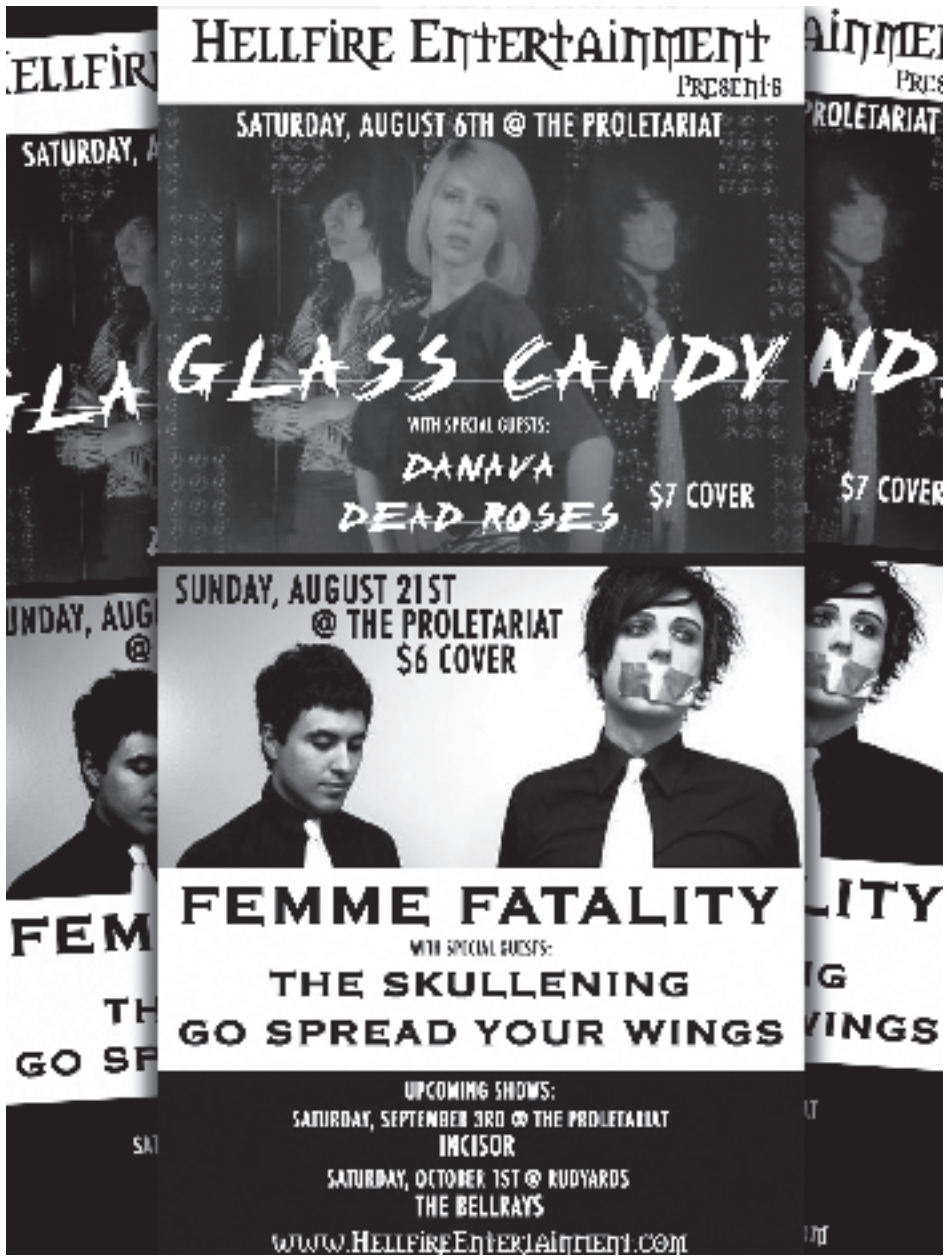
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JON CROCKER

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SHOWS

8/16/2005 9:00 PM
Taylor Davis cd release, Shwa, Glenn Eliot

8/17/2005 9:00 PM
Revel, Conner

8/18/2005 9:00 PM
Dan Dyer, Sonnier Brothers, Brandon Stanley

8/19/2005 9:00 PM
Spoonfed Tribe, A>S>H>S

8/20/2005 2:00 PM
Joe's Roadhouse Live presents Gene Kelton & the Diehards

8/20/2005 9:00 PM
Structure, The Machos, Stalking Chloe

8/23/2005 9:00 PM
Georgia's Horse, The Black Spoons

8/26/2005 9:00 PM
Dubtex

8/27/2005 9:00 PM
Sean Refer & the Resin Valley Boys, The Squishees, Red Letter Print

8/31/2005 9:00 PM
Dynamite Club, Irene (tour kick off show!)

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Saturday, August 20th, 2005

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YUNA
MY LAST WAR
SINCERELY YOURS

Walter's 4215 Washington

Monday, August 22nd, 2005

THE NUMBER 12 LOOKS LIKE YOU
THE BLACKOUT PACT
THE JONBENET
ETERNAL LIFE

MaryJane's FatCat 4216 Washington Ave.

Tuesday, August 30th, 2005

THROW RAG
LOS SKARNALES
SEAN REEFER AND THE RESIN
VALLEY BOYS
HELL CITY KINGS

MaryJane's FatCat 4216 Washington Ave.

Monday, September 5th, 2005

EVERGREEN TERRACE
WINTER SOLSTICE
AS CITIES BURN
THE BURNING SEASON

MaryJane's FatCat 4216 Washington Ave.

Thursday, September 8th, 2005

YOUTH BRIGADE
COMPLETE CONTROL
KRUM BUMS
THE GHOULS

MaryJane's FatCat 4216 Washington Ave.

Saturday September 10th, 2005

BLACKLISTED
CAST ASIDE
DOWN TO NOTHING
MY LUCK
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SATURDAY AUGUST 13 ORCHESTRAL FUNKABILLY
GIANT BEAR


GIANT BEAR 8/13


INDOFIN 8/12


JACEY SAUCEDO 8/6



The End of the Emo Haircut???

Flash video bravely takes on the emo haircut

By: Tour Face

First off. Check out the video at:

www.filecabi.net/v/file/1118219367/wmv.com



The makers of the film claim that the emo haircut is "a virtual plague on our society that must be stopped." They present dozens of emo haircuts which were very easily procured from Myspace.com, and cleverly juxtapose them with hair metal folks from the eighties. The film asks "Is this how you want to be remembered?" It seems this plague has infected many youngsters in the Houston area. The doo is characterized by the excessive frontal hair being shifted in one direction as so evidently shown by the examples on this page. Sources credit Swedish band Refused as the god-fathers of the haircut. The bastards! If you have a friend with the sinister style, please urge them to cut their hair and let them know that the emo haircut is the new mullet.

"It seems this plague has infected many youngsters in the Houston area."

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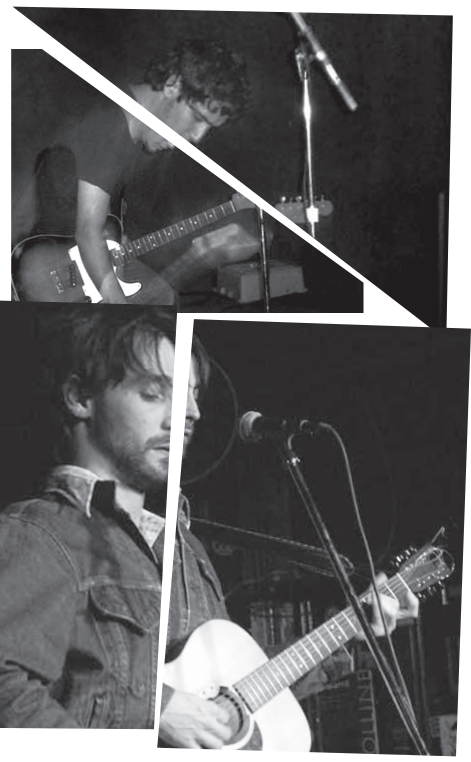
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Intimate Duress

Arthur Yoria, Tody Castillo, and Lanky pop Houston's collective boil

By: 'the' Chris Stevens



After passing through a lively down-home neighborhood bar and a kind woman at a $6 cover fee entrance, the ascension up the stairs will not bring you to the great heights from which the show is delivered. Nothing goes that high. The setting: three musicians on stage, blank torn paper on the tables to be handed in for Q&A of the performing musicians. The audience rules the stage through torn paper fiat. Tony Castillo and Lanky (with his matchless enthusiasm) sit stage left of the refined and road-tested Arthur Yoria. The artists never leave the stage for the entire set, even when they are not playing, which is two-thirds of the time. This translates as: the listener is spotlighted, with slight discomfort. Castillo, coming off the high of his Houston Press nominations, poses an arm across his silent guitar, bulging a bicep for the ladies and a few couples in their final stage of dissipation. The other men (those who weren't brought by their girlfriend) hover around the vulture bar, while the coupled ladies send their men over for drinks as to avert lusty talons. Lanky finishes a song, and Castillo and Yoria suddenly move, proving they are not statues after all. They absolutely lack interaction. In fact, Lanky's flamboyant attempts at doing so fall to the wincing disapproval of Arthur and subsequently, Castillo. Though the impulse to interact is understandable, a stand-in improvisational guitarist would be appropriate. Lanky, named appropriately, kindly smiles and looks over each shoulder for validation of the veterans. Though Houston's pop talent (good looks, 1-4, or 2-5-3-1 chord progressions and a bearable tenor with occasional falsetto) presents itself on this local stage, it lacks the magic of Bruce Springsteen's explanation of "I'm on Fire" or "Born to Run." VH1 Storytellers varnishes classics through applying actual knowledge of the song into an already solidified personal concept of a song. This concept does not work for a group of up and coming artists whose names ring a very small local bell and resonates without reference to their actual songs. "I'm Prepared to Make Several Mistakes in a Row," divines itself from Yoria's mouth, not a collective conscious. Not that pop chord progressions transmit themselves through Cecelia or Pan and in through the hands of these performers. The material of pop is the din and drone of monotonous motors and empty chatter, the endless routine. Lanky's trying to change the routine, but the audience needs a little time to warm up and accept the intimacy left bare in the absence of façade. This applies to the performers as well. August 25th at Rudyards. David Mead. Dress intimately. $6.

Q: What is the strangest thing to inspire you?

Y: Taking a dump.

L: What color underwear are you wearing? (homophobic chuckles)

Y: Colombian flag.

Q: Ask a real question!

Y: We don't want those.





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FAT CAT's

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Soilent Green, A Perfect Murder, Into The Moat
Watch Them Die

Tuesday 16
Stretch Armstrong, Haste The Day, Still Remains
Kane Hodder

Saturday 20
Koufax, Limbeck, Spain Colored Orange

Tuesday 23
Kult ov Azazel, Teratism, Bloodstorm, Horn of
Valere, To Scaled The Throne

Sunday 21
Pride Kills, Pale Horse, Colin Of Arabia, Ten
Crowns

Monday 22
The Number 12 Looks Like You, The Blackout
Pact, The Jon Benet, Eternal Life

Tuesday 23
Kult ov Azazel, Teratism, Bloodstorm, Horn of
Valere, To Scaled The Throne, + 1 TBA

Thursday 25
The Wrens, Jim Yoshii Pile Up, Thane Matcek an
his Band

Saturday 27
Madison, A Day At The Fair, The Mile After, A St
In Asia, B Team Starter, Beligerous

Tuesday 30
Throw Rag, Los Skarnales, Sean Reefer and the
Resin valley Boys, Hell City Kings

Wednesday 31
Fall Of Troy, The Letters Organize, America Is
Waiting, Shots Fired, Rhinosaurus

Walter's
On Washington

Thursday, Aug 18 - Mitch Vegas

Thursday, Aug 25 - Mitch Vegas -
Mitch's Birthday Party!!

Friday, Aug 26 - The Appleseed Cast,
the pAper chAse, Criteria

Saturday, Aug 27 - Day At The Fair,
Madison, The Mile After, The Suicide
Pact

Sunday, Aug 28 - The City On Film, Je
Hanson, Bring Back The Guns,
The Tremula

Friday, Sep 2 - Claret Martyr, Contr
Highwater Waltz, Rhinosaurus, Eterna
Life

Monday, Sep 5 - Against All Authorit
O'doyle Rules, O'pioneers

Wednesday, Sep 17 - Heavy Heavy Lov
Low, Maida, Blueprint Car Crash, The
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ANY DRAFT WE HAVE!

THURSDAY AUG. 25
2ND NATURE
$2.50 HOUSE MARGARITAS
& DOMESTIC BOTTLED BEERS

FRIDAY AUG. 26
GLENN ELIOT
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The Jessica Fletchers
Less Sophistication

By: Patrick Schab





The Lighter Side of Derivative

Despite the fact that it's often painted into a corner of the musical map, there is a broad range of styles that fly under the banner of "psychedelic pop". No matter what aesthetics they had in common, Jellyfish and Neutral Milk Hotel were distinctly different in execution, just as the music of the '60s and '70s that inspired them was hardly a homogenous blur of sitar and wacky organs.

So while it's easy to lump the Jessica Fletchers into the psych-pop category -- for they certainly belong there -- it's hardly an adequate description for the band's sound. The variations in psych-pop exist even in loosely associated band collectives, and there's a distinct difference between, say, Of Montreal and Dressy Bessy.

The Jessica Fletchers first garnered North American attention with the release of What Happened to The?, 2003's pitch-perfect approximation of a groovier time in rock that offered a platter of British psychedelia with the up-tempo celebration and eminently danceable energy of the mid-'60s Kinks. And while the group had been slowly building a reputation in their native Norway for a few years, that North American debut helped cement the notion that some of the most exciting stuff to currently happen in pop and rock is happening in Northern Europe. Coming out of the gates matured and confident in their ability to replicate the good time feelings of the past in a modern setting, it was difficult for anyone exposed to their debut and their live shows to avoid getting sucked into the party. What Happened to The? was winningly exuberant, and sometimes that's a breath of fresh air no matter how old the sound.

With the Jessica Fletchers' follow-up, Less Sophistication, things are slightly more subdued, though the general spirit of the band is maintained. Whereas the sound of What Happened to The? was boisterously bright with an affable grin, Less Sophistication takes its time to linger in the shade a bit and smile casually. It's not that the songs themselves have deliberately slowed down, but there's an element of the production that's softer, paradoxically adding a level of sonic sophistication to the Fletchers' usual balls-out love explosion.

Rather than starting with a huge, bold statement like "Bloody Seventies Love", Less Sophistication eases in with "It Happens Tonight", and the dark, staccato rhythm of the first lyric: "To look / At your face / Rearranged / I wouldn't miss it for the world". The provocative fight song is a thick slab of organs, bass, guitars, and "aahhh" vocals, but it's all compressed on the low end, letting Thomas Innstø's vocals coast on top of the song while the music kind of rumbles ominously below. .

With Less Sophistication, the Jessica Fletchers prove that their simple but effective formula holds up for more than the one novelty record, and moreover, the disc stakes their claim to rightfully stand beside the Hives and the Soundtrack of Our Lives as some of the finest pop and rock to come out of the burgeoning Scandinavian scene. v Less Sophistication may not be quite as deliciously quenching as the Jessica Fletchers' debut, but it's still a long, cool drink of lemonade on a hot day.

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TUESDAY
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$2 Domestics & Wells
$3 Premiums & Imports All Night



WEDNESDAY
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THURSDAY
Ladies Night
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FRIDAY
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AUGUST

MUSIC AND EVENTS

MONDAY

- The Medicine Show, The Trade @ Helios
- Dum Dum Crue @Proletariat
- Open Mic Comedy @ Laff Stop
- Soilent Green, A Perfect Murder, Into The Moat, Watch Then Die @Fat Cats
- El Orbits, Free Soul Food @Continental Club
- The Mighty Orq @The Big Easy
- The Actual, Chris Hamlet @SHFL
- Soulphilia@Dean's Credit Clothing

15

- The Medicine Show, The Trade@ Helios
- Dum Dum Crue @Proletariat
- Open Mic Comedy @ Laff Stop
- Pool, Darts, Ping Pong @ Fitzgerald's
- El Orbits, Free Soul Food @Continental Club
- Texas Jazz @ Red Cat Jazz Cafe
- John Evans, Open Mic @ Mucky Duck
- The Mighty Orq @ The Big Easy

22

- The Medicine Show, The Trade@ Helios
- Dum Dum Crue @Proletariat
- Open Mic Comedy @ Laff Stop
- Pool, Darts, Ping Pong @ Fitzgerald's
- El Orbits, Free Soul Food @Continental Club
- Texas Jazz @ Red Cat Jazz Cafe
- The Mighty Orq @ The Big Easy
- John Evans, Open Mic @ Mucky Duck

29

TUESDAY

- Free Pool(all day) @Proletariat
- Rock Jam @Dan Electros Guitar Bar
- Bellydancing@ Helios
- Taylor Davis CD Release @Rhythm Room
- DJ Sun@Onion Creek
- Laughs Bayou Comedy @Fitzgerald's
- Industry Night@Scout Bar
- City Council Public Session

16

- Georgia's Horse, The Black Spoons @Rhythm Room
- Bellydancing@ Helios
- Kult of Azazel, Teratism, Bloodstorm, Horn of Valere, To Scaled The Throne @Fat Cats
- DJ Sun@Onion Creek
- The Redwalls, The Colour @Meridiian
- Laughs Bayou Comedy @ Fitzgerald's
- Industry Night@Scout Bar
- City Council Public Session

23

- Free Pool(all day) @Proletariat
- Rock Jam @Dan Electros Guitar Bar
- Bellydancing@ Helios
- Soulphilia@Dean's Credit Clothing
- DJ Sun@Onion Creek
- Laughs Bayou Comedy @ Fitzgerald's
- Industry Night@Scout Bar
- City Council Public Session

30

WEDNESDAY

- Tim Northern @Laff Stop
- British Invasion Night with The Dreambreakers@Rudyards
- Mushroomhead@ Number's
- Nick DiPaolo @Laff Stop
- Psychodillos@Dan Electros Guitar Bar
- Commune Music @Proletariat
- Potroast@ Last Concert Cafe
- Poetry Night@ Helios
- Revel @Rhythm Room

17

- Soaking Rasps, Leslie Keffer,Tusco Terrror, With a Pink Cloud @SHFL
- British Invasion Night with The Dreambreakers@Rudyards
- Carlos Alazraqui@Laff Stop
- Breakfast Club@ Number's
- Nick DiPaolo @Laff Stop
- Psychodillos@Dan Electros Guitar Bar
- Commune Music @Proletariat
- Potroast@ Last Concert Cafe
- Poetry Night@ Helios

24

- Baby Calender, The Darlings, Burke, O Pioneers, Buxton @SHFL
- Los Gallos @Continental Club
- Felipe Esparza @Laff Stop
- Breakfast Club@ Number's
- Nick DiPaolo @Laff Stop
- Psychodillos@Dan Electros Guitar Bar
- Commune Music @Proletariat
- Dynamite Club @Rhythm Room
- Poetry Night@ Helios

31

THURSDAY

- Tim Northern @Laff Stop
- Mitch Vegas @Walters
- Dan Dyer @Rhythm Room
- Blues Jam @Cosmos Cafe
- Underworld@ Numbers
- Open Mic @ Helios
- The Hightailers @ Last Concert
- Beetle @ Continental
- Blues Jam @Dan Electros Guitar Bar
- DJ Q-Bert @Meridiian

18

- The Aquabats, The Eyeliners @Meridian
- Carlos Alazraqui@Laff Stop
- Mitch Vegas @Walters
- Blues Jam @Cosmos Cafe
- Underworld@ Numbers
- Open Mic @ Helios
- The Hightailers @ Last Concert
- Beetle @ Continental
- The Knitters @Continental Club

25

FRIDAY

- Classic Fridays@ Numbers
- Blendt, Zwee, Ray Younkin @Meridiian
- DJ Keith@Scout Bar
- Karaoke @Proletariat
- The Addictions @Rudyards
- Leo Nativity Fest @SHFL
- D.R.U.M @ Helios
- Spoonfed Tribe, A>S>H>S @Rhythm Room
- Tim Northern @Laff Stop

19

- Classic Fridays@ Numbers
- Dubtex @Rhythm Room
- The Appleseed Cast, the paper chase, Criteria@Walters
- DJ Keith@Scout Bar
- Karaoke @Proletariat
- Walkabout, Twenty After @Rudyards
- Whitman, Sybris, The Dimes @SHFL
- D.R.U.M, Sonic Red @ Helios
- Carlos Alazraqui@Laff Stop

26

SATURDAY

- 27th Anniversary@ Number's
- Thor, Hognose @Rudyards
- The Cocker Spaniels, Head of Femur, Spinto Band @SHFL
- Friends of the Enemy, Black Math Experiment @ Helios
- Koufax, Limbeck, Spain Colored Orange @Fat Cats
- Spiracell, Dine Alone @Meridiian
- Los Skamales, Kitty Kitty Bang Bang @ Continental Club
- Tim Northern @Laff Stop

20

- Danseparc @Numbers
- The Ian Moore Band @Continental
- Southern Backtones, Black Tie Dynasty @Rudyards
- Grassroots Campaign SkillShare @SHFL
- Friends of the Enemy, Thorton and Spencrer @ Helios
- Day at the Fair, Madison, The Mile After, The Suicide Pact @Walters
- Carlos Alazraqui@Laff Stop
- Madison @Fat Cats
- Rent @Meridian

27

SUNDAY

- Femme Fatality, The Skullening, Go Spread Your Wings@Proletariat
- Felix Madison Jam, Battle of the Bands @ Rhythm Room
- Gypsy Market @The Old School House
- Texas Live BUZZ 94.5 Broadcast @ Scout Bar
- Friendly Bears, Alan George Ledergerber, Wurm @SHFL
- David Fahl @ Last Concert Cafe

21

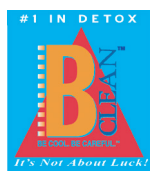
- The Riverboat Gamblers @Rudyards
- Grassroots Campaign SkillShare @SHFL
- Texas Live BUZZ 94.5 Broadcast @ Scout Bar
- Felix Madison Jam, Battle of the Bands @ Rhythm Room
- The City On Film, Jeff Hanson, Bring Back The Guns, The Tremula @Walters
- Gypsy Market@The Old School House
- David Fahl @ Last Concert Cafe

28













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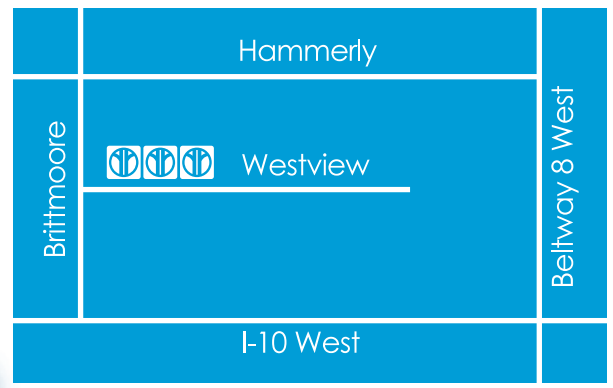
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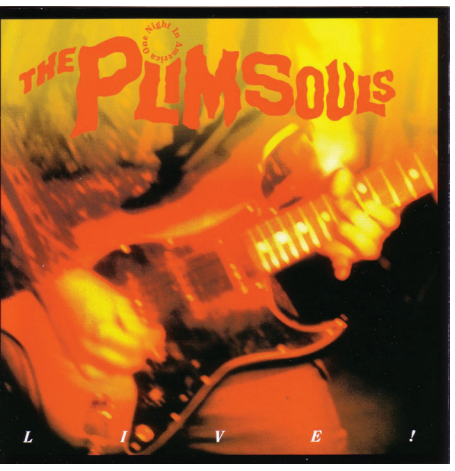
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Down in the Groove

By: Timothy J. O'Brien



The Plimsouls
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Oglio

The Plimsouls were Peter Case's pop vision that sparkled brightly in the early '80's. After some serious wood shedding, street busking and learning his craft while living as a homeless nomad around San Francisco, Case met Jack Lee and formed the Nerves in the late '70's. The Nerves tune "Hanging on the Telephone" ended up on Blondie's debut album. In conjunction with this release Case declared that people that called the Plimsouls a power pop band didn't get it. Labels are for critics, record stores and industry types. What you call it isn't important. The disc is an excellent snapshot of a superior rock and roll band cranking out a magical set when they were young and hungry and reaching for the brass ring. Rock bands are a dime a dozen, excellent songs are what distinguishes the great ones from the also rans. That the material holds up this well twenty plus years later is a testament to Case's songwriting. The Plimsouls have carved their spot in rock history annals for posterity and are still inspiring young bands today. Its Case's contention that the Plimsouls' studio albums never did the band justice, there's no doubt that this disc does. Pick it up at oglio.com.



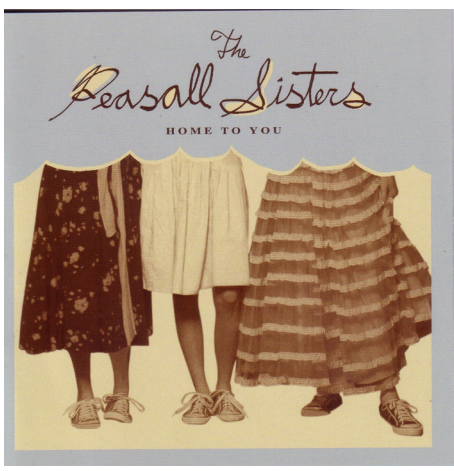
The Bloody Tears
Downhanded
Licorice Tree Records

Garagey soulsters the Bloody Tears are a bit of an Austin super group. The members include folks from the Sons of Hercules, the Crackpipes and the Transgressors. This is their first full length and was produced by the much sought after Jim Diamond. All these ingredients promise a full plate of satisfying soul stew. Unfortunately the mix doesn't quite bake into a hearty meal. There are some tasty morsels sprinkled throughout though. The record gets off to a blistering start with the harmonica driven "C'mon Up" that gets you dancin' right out of the chute. The disc continues in the high energy R&B vein before slowing down for "Talkin' to Your Baby." "C'mon and Swim" is the obligatory learn this new dance tune that sounds like the Woggles and all the bands that inspired them. But despite the strong cuts at the beginning of the record they can't sustain the momentum for the whole disc due to the weaker tracks all bunched at the end. There's little doubt that Tears are great live band and few weak tracks shouldn't scare you off from checking them out if they ever get down to Houston. What is it with all those Austin bands that can't make a two and half hour trip to Space City anyway? Available at licoricetree.com.



The Downbeat 5
Victory Motel
Hi-n-Dry

As their name alludes to the Boston band Downbeat 5 play garage rock. A closer look at the personnel reveals lead guitarist and main songwriter JJ Rassler who a member of the late 70's punk greats DMZ. Rassler also played in a version of the Queers. Female vocals are courtesy of Jennifer D'Agora. Their 2003 debut "Ism" on the Sympathy for the Record Industry label was a powerful start but its promise isn't fulfilled here. Their music is built on the 60's garage punk sound but it's the 70's hard rock edges that make it sound too generic. Overall the songwriting is strong but D'Agora has a tendency to over sing the up tempo tunes. The music works better when she reels herself in as she does on the cover of the midtempo "Out is the Streets" which sounds like a 60's girl group pop tune done garage style. Another cover, the poppy "Dum Dum Ditty" also suits D'Agora's vocal style. The band would be better off dumping the mediocre hard rock stylings and pseudo garage sound and sticking with the poppy material which is their strength.



The Peasall Sisters
Home to You
Dualtone

The Peasall Sisters, Sarah 18, Hannah 14 and Leah 12 have tasted a large amount of success this early in their careers. They've won Grammy and Country Music Association awards for their part in the "O Brother, Where Art Thou" movie and soundtrack. They've also performed at Carnegie Hall and the Grand Ole Opry. Seems there's no place to go but down now that they've already reached such heights. Luckily there is no sign of decline on their second record. Their beautiful voices and uncluttered arrangements make the tunes, a mix of traditionals and originals, sound like they were recorded by a Dixie angel's choir. Except for two cuts there aren't any electric instruments Producer John Carter Cash uses mandolins, banjos, fiddles and accordions to keep a pure and traditional country and bluegrass sound. Guitarist Randy Scruggs also played a strong supporting role in the recording. The original tune "Gray County Line," a story of a girl leaving home is a particularly strong cut with a sympathetic fiddle line played by Leah Peasall. The gospel numbers especially their arrangement of "The Old Account" really showcases their angelic voices.



Classic Album **Metallica's** Ride the Lightning

By: Jarvis Jarvis Jones

Man- these guys really use to be worth their weight in arpeggios. Ride the Lightning just may be Metallica's best album. The album features such quintessential material as Fight Fire with Fire, For Whom the Bell Tolls, Creeping Death, Call of Ktulu, Trapped under Ice, and the title track of course. All the songs were epic compositions of no less than 8 minutes a pop. Metalicca broke ground back then addressing issues like capital punishment, suicide, and lots of destruction. This is also the last album Cliff Burton played on before dying in a bus crash and being memorialized in the world of bass guitar. This album is heavier than the heaviest. Back then, James Hetfield sounded more like a demon than his post Black album Elvis persona. There were solos. Then more solos. And most importantly, 2 finger tapping.

Ride the Lightning may have charted the road for metal for the subsequent 8-10 years. This may be because this is also the only album the band produced themselves. Illegally download it today!

TECH-KNOWLEDGE

Gadgets, Games and Gear

By: Greg Tefry



PSYCHONAUTS
Xbox & PlayStation 2

Emotional Baggage

Without fail, whenever people discuss narrative in games, someone brings up the red herring, "Can a video game make you cry?" What about this question makes it stick in people's minds? Neil Young, Electronic Arts' Vice President and Executive in Charge of Production, opined at last year's Game Developers Conference and again this month in Wired, saying, "I think we'll crack that problem in the next five years and it'll be a watershed event for our business." It is an interesting issue. However, I do not believe we are framing this discussion properly, causing us to overlook some incredible narrative work already available, such as Tim Schafer's new game, Psychonauts.

Perhaps the question should be reframed, "Can a computer game manipulate your emotions?" And the answer clearly is yes. They already do. Nothing makes me angrier than losing to the lowly Bengals in Madden. This is clearly the intent of the designers. They want to excite and frustrate me just enough that I will play again.

This leaves me refining the question again, "Can a computer have a well written narrative?" Of course, the narratives in games are immaculately constructed. The stories must fit together believably as the player encounters events in different sequences. The scripts may be clichéd or corny, but they are written with care. So then what is the central issue at stake? Why do so many people lament the state of narrative in games?

The problem stems from the fact that game narratives more closely resemble the narratives of epic poems, than novels. So let us refine the question once more, "Can a computer game reveal the interior life of a character?" The answer is yes, if the makers approach narrative in a way that plays to the structural strength of games: exploration. Tim Schafer's Psychonauts provides a wonderful template for effective narrative in games. Schafer is not new to creating interesting game narrative, having written Monkey Island and the widely praised adventure game Grim Fandango. Psychonauts does not strive to make you cry, but instead engages the player through character development and laughter. The game literally interprets the interiority of characters in the narrative, making personality into physical space.

The milieu of the interior world provides rich terrain for gameplay. Each personality affords a different version of the world and a new gameplay dynamic. From the disco infused party world of Raz's levitation instructor Milla, to the warped streets in the mind of a paranoid security guard, personalities become physically tangible. Exploring these worlds provides a unique and engaging way to experience character. Not only are you given good dialog, but the characters' personalities manifest themselves as landscapes for the player to explore.

By using recognizable character typeBut narrative wields a double-edged blade. Does a tight narrative preclude repeat plays? By forcing a dynamic system into a narrative arc does the game simply become a retread on replay? Psychonauts provides enough stimulating dynamics to warrant further play. But equally importantly, Schafer spins a compelling and engaging story that also rewards revisits. Game designers take note: we don't need to cry, we just need to be engaged.



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Friday 26: 9PM Downstairs: Sonic Red and Nervewreck

Saturday 27, 9PM, downstairs: Thorton and Spencer and Casey McPherson. Upstairs: Volatil (spanish rock band)

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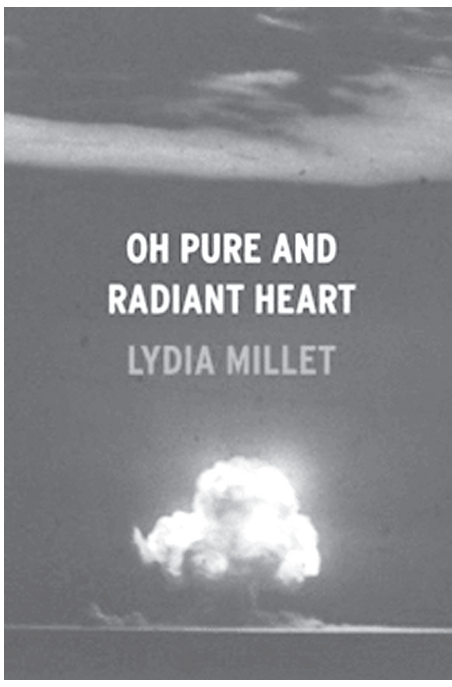
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Reading Books&Shit

Anne K. Radiant's
Oh Pure and Radiant Heart

By: Anne K. Yoder



On July 16, 1945, the first atomic bomb was detonated in the New Mexico desert, causing six kilograms of compressed plutonium to blow up in a fireball, in a blast felt by observers watching 20 miles away. The heat warmed their arms, and some experienced partial blindness for up to fifteen minutes, even though they had been watching through tinted glass. The explosion's force was equivalent to the strength of twenty thousand tons of TNT. No one knew what to expect when the bomb went off -- until this point, this godlike power of destruction had not yet been conferred to man. And what if the blast had somehow caused three of the physicists responsible for the bomb's creation to be transported to the future, to present day? What would they think of the post-atomic reality they introduced?

And so begins Lydia Millet's Oh Pure and Radiant Heart, with J. Robert Oppenheimer, Enrico Fermi, and Leo Szilard transplanted to 2003, an arrival hazily foretold in a dream. Ann, a smart, thoughtful though slightly melancholic librarian, lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with her gardener husband Ben, and dreams one night of Oppenheimer, the "father of the atomic bomb," as he witnesses the Trinity bomb explode. She awakes with an odd prescience that something is about to happen. And it does: a random gunman enters the library with a submachine gun and begins firing rounds; he keeps on until a bullet ricochets off a pipe and penetrates his skull. Ann emerges unscathed physically but mentally jarred, and shortly afterward begins her slightly surreal sightings of a middle-aged Oppenheimer and Fermi at various establishments around town, even though both are known to be over 40 years dead.

The plotline sounds hokey when giving a straight recap, but it doesn't come off that way when reading it. The beauty of Millet's sentences coupled with the recurring tableaus of atomic destruction -- of bombs exploding and skin melting; of testing bombs within the continental US; of mutated fetuses, "hearts that beat slowly in shapeless bundles of tissue," resulting from nuclear fallout--ground the story. The need to set aside the notion of impossibility is acknowledged from the beginning: "And it should be admitted, the concession must be gracefully made: in the moment when a speck of dust acquires the power to engulf the world in fire, suddenly, then, all bets are off. Suddenly then there is no idea that cannot be entertained." Try to imagine New York City tomorrow, a ravaged, burnt-out shell of a city; it's not beyond the realm of possibilities in our nuclear age. Of course, this is fiction, so the need for suspension of disbelief should already be presumed. But unlike J.K. Rowling and the fantastical realm of Harry Potter, Millet's story deals very much with history and the world at hand.

It's fascinating to consider what the human forces behind the bomb would think of their work now, 60 years after the Trinity Test and the bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Even though Leo Szilard helped launch the Manhattan Project and played a role in convincing the US government of the necessity to develop such a weapon, by the time the first atomic bomb was tested, he opposed its use in warfare and petitioned the government to show restraint. Oppenheimer and Fermi, unlike Szilard, remained with the project to the end and witnessed the Trinity Test in person. The consequences of their actions, the unforeseeable results--the nuclear arms race, the continued, increased testing of bombs, the mass carnage and destruction at Hiroshima and Nagasaki -- had yet to hit them, or perhaps had yet to register as a significant consideration beyond the immediate, the end of the war.

Oh Pure and Radiant Heart gives life to the three physicists -- Oppenheimer, learned and refined, Fermi, quiet and pensive, Szilard, boisterous and curious -- and portrays them as complex

thoughtful men, more than just the faceless names forever connected to the bomb. They reside at Ann and Ben's house (they lack funds and Ann has taken an invested interest in their presence), and plan a trip to Japan to visit the sites of atomic destruction, thus setting off a journey that defines the remaining two-thirds of the novel. And this is where it spins out of control.

Funded by Larry, a Japanese trust-fund adult who looks and behaves like a perpetual 20-something even though he's two decades older, and accompanied by Larry's partying crew, the scientists take off on a mission to prove their identities and to confront the UN and urge global peace as the only sure way to guard against further use of nuclear arms. They travel to the test sites in the Marshall Islands, to the Trinity site, and then take off on a lengthy road trip around the United States, where they acquire such a following they nearly become immobilized. And then, as if everyone and their brother hasn't already joined the massive caravan, the evangelical Christians begin deifying Oppenheimer and extolling his presence as proof of the Second Coming. The misguided Christian right hampers the scientists' mission by turning it into their mission, and all the while the delicately intense novel degenerates into a chaotic expedition populated by the multifarious characters who swarm within it. Attention is drawn away from the core of the book, from the scientists and their mission, from Ann and Ben, their role in this protest and the burden it places on their relationship.

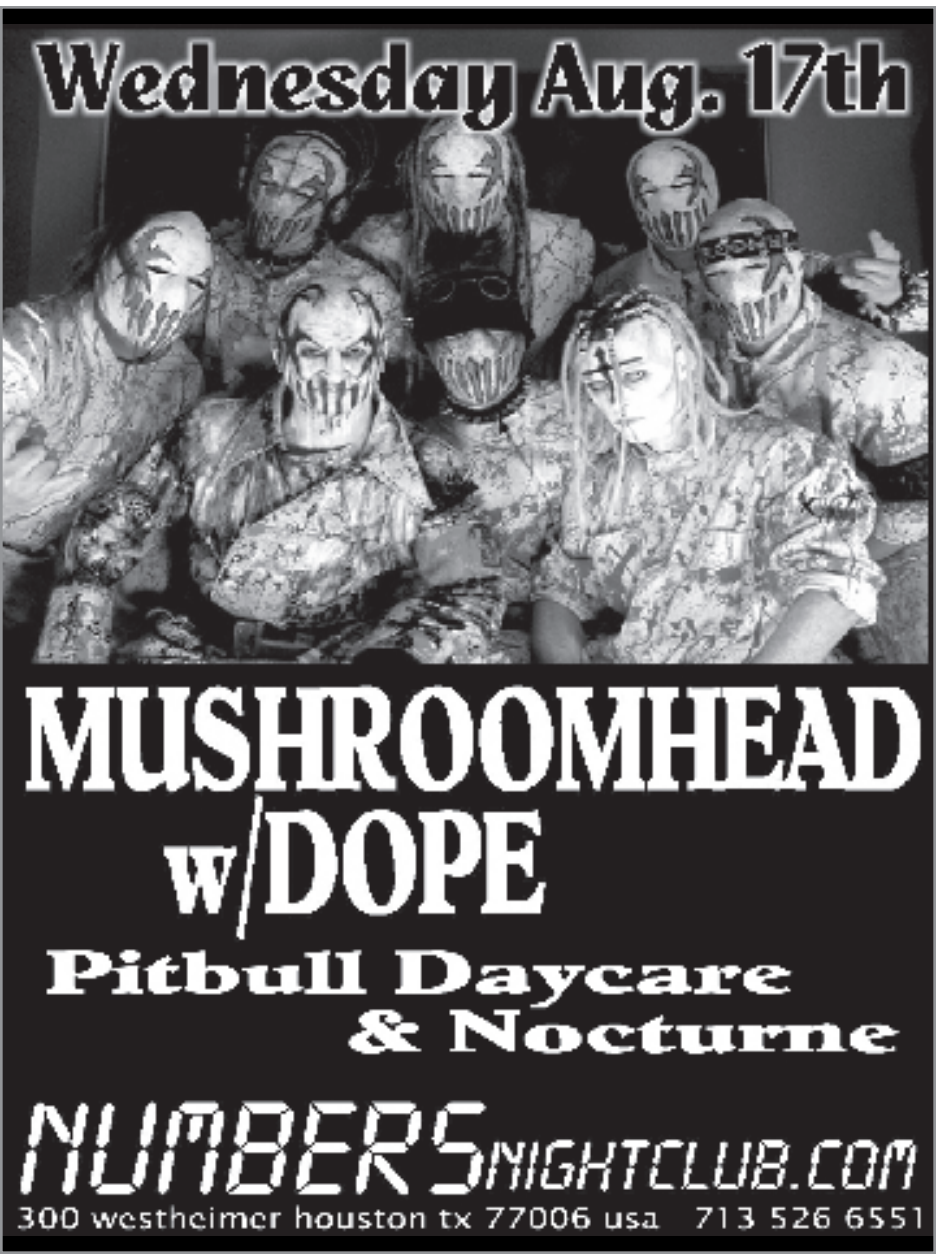
Millet attempts to cover too much ground and the novel suffers. In addition to tackling the profound and overwhelming subject of the atomic bomb, its development and impact on the postmodern world, she also attempts to take on celebrity, the human tendency to deify what cannot be understood, and the Christian right. It's almost as if uncomfortable dwelling on the complex thoughts and detailed interaction of the three scientists, Ann, and Ben for too long, there's a reactionary pan-out to a large, rowdy crew and their ensuing road trip to liven things up. And while a shake-up occurs, the novel turns from a lively one of ideas, character, and chance circumstance, to one propelled by action. The novel starts so beautifully, so adept in its ability to put forth ambitious ideas and traverse deep, difficult issues with energy and imagination, that the prattling, happenstance midsection is even harder to tolerate. A good reigning in (and a good proofreading for that matter -- even the year of the scientists' arrival switches from 2003 to 2004) would have served the novel well.

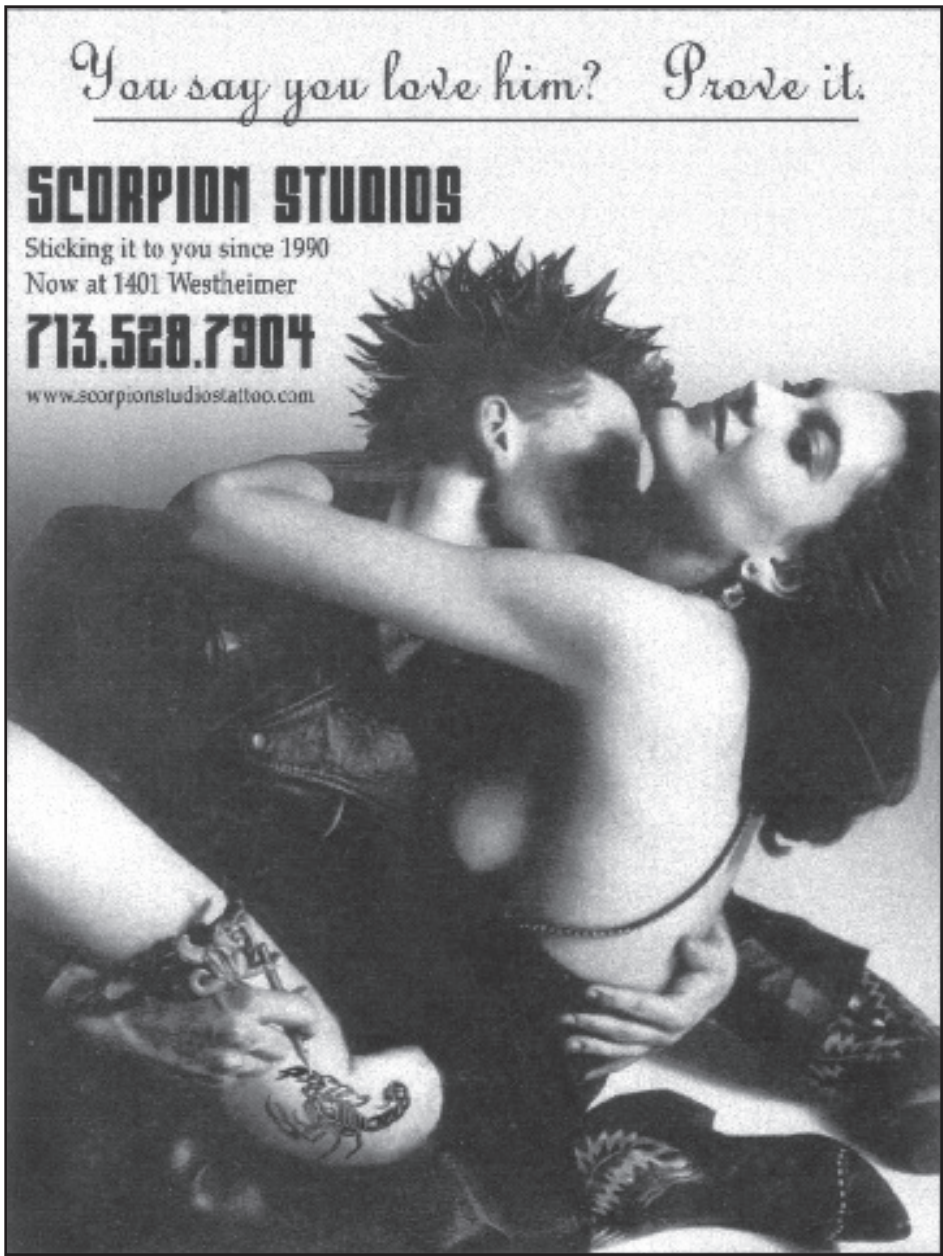
But regardless of the problems that persist, by far the most sustained and riveting voice is the echo from the past, the interspersed vision of destruction and the uncovered sins of the US government in the nuclear arms race, for the horrors are seemingly unreal. Oppenheimer on the hundredth anniversary of his birth makes a speech at the celebration Larry orchestrates, and remarks:

That was what shocked us most... That it does not shock you, that it does not stun you all and send you reeling with horror, this long death of civilization unrolling before your eyes.

A sense of hopelessness and inevitability resonates throughout the novel, as over and over again the campaign to restrain the use of nuclear weapons is thwarted, and usually for individual purposes and the pride of the powerful. The narrow width of human vision has taken the atomic bomb, intended as a safeguard against further war, and made it a status symbol of nations, a denotation of extreme power. It has become the most plausible means, far above greenhouse gases and global warming, of our own self-destruction. There are no whispered platitudes and false reassurances found here.

"...imagine New York City tomorrow, a ravaged, burnt-out shell of a city"





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WORLD VIEW

Persistence of Vision

By: Alex "Trenchfoot" Wukman

Alex Wukman broke his foot and is getting indigent care from BenTaub. He will tell you about it next issue; In the meanwhile- he spits rhetoric about this here and that.

Here's an exercise; go up to a floor on any skyscraper in any city—the higher the better—and look out at the city spread sprawled out to the horizon like a child in bed. At a 'scenic height' the city will fool people into believing it's almost civilized.

This is because the higher a person goes the less they see. The view from the thirty-second floor bears no relation to the one from the second floor. Once eight stories are cleared the connection to the street is lost.

After the connection to the street disappears the city looks like an accomplishment, not the monster it is. With a 'good view' the roads and freeways intersect and define the buildings, however the traffic and accidents can't be seen or if they are seen they are ignored. The people appear to be ants scurrying to and fro, but the homeless, muggers and other 'undesirable elements' seem to melt into the shadows.

The rivers, creeks and bayous meander majestically through the heart of the city; they provide natural beauty to a man made environment. However, with a 'bird's-eye perspective' the pollution and defilement of these waterways is overlooked.

The only thing that can be seen more clearly at thirty stories than pounding the pavement is how out of touch with reality many people are. How afraid they are to get close to those they see as 'being beneath them'.

How a business executive will overlook the man who serves him his lunch as he discusses the future of a merger and how it will affect profit margins, while his waiter is struggling to pay rent. How a new tenant who has moved into a recently gentrified portion of the city does not know the storied history of the old neighborhood. These can only be seen in the surreal world of the upper levels of society.

The world that exists in the upper strata of the city is not the same world that is inhabited by those who seek to eke out a day to day living. In the top floors of the skyscrapers, that thrust like erect penises from the streets below, a world exists that is so far removed from reality as to almost be laughable.



"The concerns and problems that keep these Nuevo-yuppies awake at night are problems that the poor wish they had."

The concerns and problems that keep these Nuevo-yuppies awake at night are problems that the poor wish they had. Problems that seem inconsequential and trivial compared with the mounting crises of global AIDS, hunger, homelessness and poverty.

The executives worrying about layoffs are not those hit hard by a recession. They are not the ones in danger of losing everything to a minor dip in the market like those who are living day-to-day, paycheck-to-paycheck and hand-to-mouth.

The families who are just getting by, those without a nest egg to fall back on, will never be able to have a nest egg to fall back on. The working poor most likely will become the out-of-work poor. The rapidly shrinking middle class will inevitably shrink more and more.

It will keep going until the entire nation looks like Austin, TX; divided between the incredibly rich and the incredibly poor—a place with nothing in between. Since no one wishes to be on the poor side, everyone wants a high-paying job.

Already students go through college not worried about learning something they love, are interested in and can get a job that allows them to pay their bills; they major in things that, in their mind, will allow them to make $100,000 or more a year.

An entire generation is seeking to make money simply for money's sake. It seems that many people do not go to college to educate themselves; they go simply to 'learn a skill' that will allow them to make money.

Colleges have changed from bastions of higher learning into glorified trade schools. Everyone seems to be majoring in the same things; subjects designed not to better their understanding of the universe—but to make them more marketable.

The attitude is, "if it doesn't directly apply to getting a job why study it?" Is this what we have become, a nation, and yes a people, so concerned with our own pocket-books that we fail to seek knowledge for it's own sake?

Parents push their children to forego liberal arts degrees simply to ensure that they will have a job in some 'booming' industry. We no longer encourage our children to pursue their passions, leaving them to fall by the way side as they 'grow up.'

Our culture has brainwashed us into believing that people who do not aspire to make money, who wish to do other things, are somehow damaged. They are as Aristotle phrased it, "defective." Of course he was speaking about something slightly different but the ideas can be readily co-opted.

The message we cram down a six-year-old's throat during primetime television is one of materialism, consumerism, and anti-intellectualism. Define yourself by your job, do one thing and do it well.

Apparently the concept of the Renaissance man perished with Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. No longer do we want people to be multitalented and very well educated. No longer do we want warrior-scholars or athletic intellectuals.

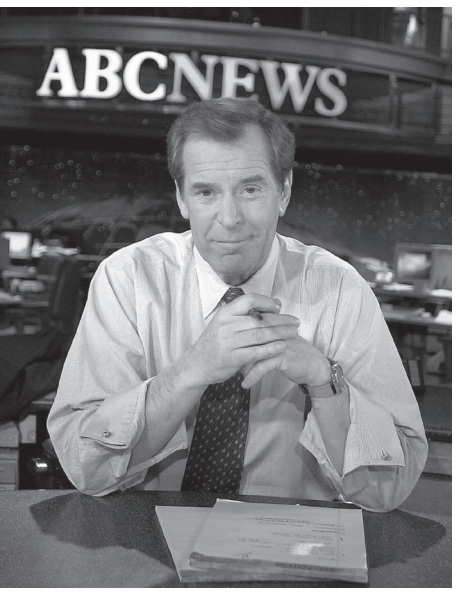
We are more concerned with a person's earning potential than with their understanding. Fathers do not put as high a priority on the boy his daughter is bringing home as they do on his parents' bank balance.

The media have proclaimed Gen-Y as the saviors of America even before the majority are out of junior high. It will be interesting to watch these 'saviors of America' deal with what will become another Vietnam, a recession and a loss of civil liberties and rights unequaled since WWII.

Perhaps we should not look to the children to save the world from our mistakes. Instead we should take the reigns ourselves and re-examine our own culture.

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Remembering Peter Jennings
by Leonard Jensen

Alcohol and Drug Deaths
One of the more consistent misguided justifications for leaving tobacco on the market is a comparison of tobacco to alcohol and drug related deaths and morality. The facts are that alcohol related driving deaths in 2004 were 16,694 (and dropping); while tobacco deaths always tarry near 400,000; each and every year.

The uniformed also like to emphasize that the moral degradation of alcohol and drugs is more of an issue that tobacco. This thinking is also misguided. While drug and alcohol addicts may be counseled and reformed, most tobacco induced cancer patients are simply dying or dead. Additionally, while quitting smoking has many health benefits; a reduction in the risk for lung cancer is NOT one of those rewards. About 50% of new lung cancer patients are former smokers.

Peter Jennings
The most well know advocate of anti-tobacco efforts was Peter Jennings of ABC News. ABC News broadcast several of his specials on tobacco that exposed key members of tobacco's congressional blockade and colossal mistakes by leaders of the FDA and even the Surgeon General. However, the public did little to respond to Jennings' specials; even though the specials focused on Rep. Joe Barton (R-Tx) and Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Tx). While it is sad that tobacco killed Peter Jennings; it is also ironic that the public, unknowingly, has continually supported and re-elected Barton and Hutchison. It is even more ironic that Barton and Hutchison represent a non-tobacco state. What do think their motives are?

Action and Advocacy
While there are a lot of efforts to reduce tobacco deaths (re: Anti-smoking campaigns); those efforts are typically countered by the innovative marketing techniques of the tobacco industry. As in any conflict you must be able to go through the blockade or defense to inflict damage to the enemy. If the tobacco industry is the enemy, then the blockade is surely Rep. Barton and Sen. Hutchison.

If the citizens of Texas have any morals at all; they will discontinue their support of Barton and Hutchison.







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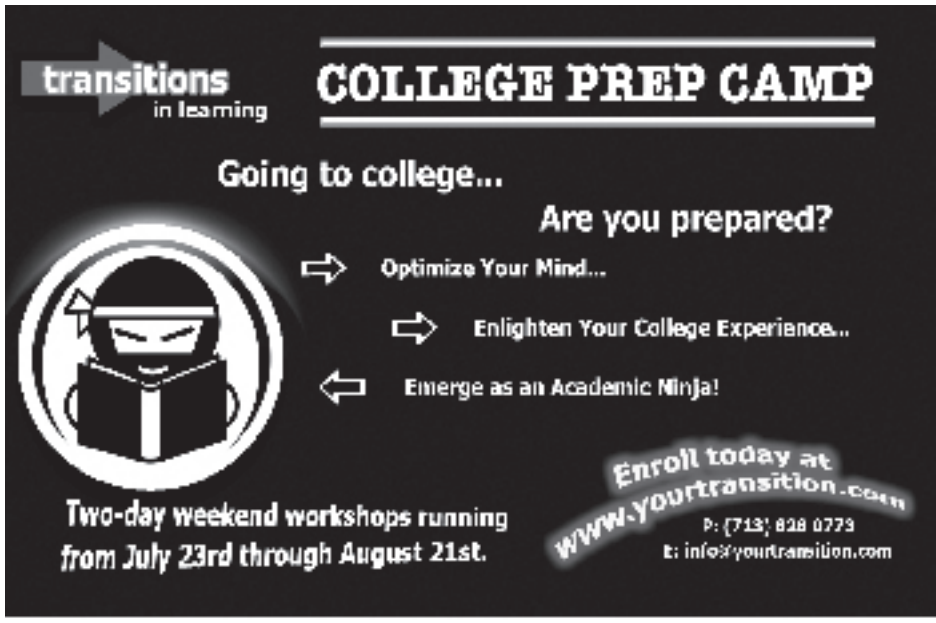
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The Hayden Plan
Containing the Anti-War Movement

By: Stan Goff

I feel compelled once again to be a skunk at the party, but it's a role I'm growing into. Cindy Sheehan's squatter's camp has re-energized the antiwar movement, but just as it has done so, it has also re-energized the herd dogs of the Democratic Party who fear nothing more than an independent mass movement.

Cindy plopped down outside the Bush gopher ranch on a 98-degree day. The cops told her to leave. As tactfully as she could, Cindy advised them in less scatological terms to piss up a rope, putting the cops, the Bush administration, and the Democratic Party in a dilemma.

Neither the cops nor the admnistration wanted to be held responsible on camera for dragging away the grieving mother of an Iraq war fatality (her son, Casey). For a moment, they were hopeful that there would be an untimely end to this little action when Cindy collapsed from severe dehydration on the first day; but alas she re-hydrated and re-appeared the following day and began attracting mad media.

For the Democrats, of course, of whom exactly one elected offical (Maxine Waters) has deigned to visit "Camp Casey," this presented quite another problem -- the same problem that the whole movement against the war presented prior to the last electoral farce in 2004. The masses were moving to their left and threatening to expose this moribund Weimar formation as the waste of both money and oxygen that it has repeatedly demonstrated itself to be. But Joshua Frank did an excellent job recently on this site of describing the Democratic Party.

I want to talk about something more specific, and that is one of the tactics being employed by the partisans of this rotting political edifice to try and contain the newfound energy that exploded onto the scene at Crawford and threatens to fill the DC Mall with malcontents on September 24th.

And that is the "exit strategy" proposal drafted by Tom Hayden and being vigorously pimped by by policy-encrusted liberals all through cyberspace, the print media, and soon enough on television. This is the oral fomulaic appeal to "reasonableness and realism" of weak-kneed liberals every time a mass movement threatens to gain any momentum -- we have to present a "reasonable" alternative (always a POLICY alternative, of course), and we have to face the fact that we can't "move" "our" agenda without accepting a "realistic" (read: watered down) approach. You kiddies have acted up enough now; go on and play; leave the rest of this to Daddy and Mommy in Congress.

Republicans, of course, are only at risk of losing a tiny sliver of their base among the strictest libertarians over the war.

The Democrats are already grooming a few 2008 candidates, including the execrable Hillary Rodham Clinton who has stated her desire to beef up the war against Southwest Asia. Let's not forget that her husband presided over an Iraqi holocaust that George W. Bush is still trying to match. The Republicans are secure for now with their white nationalist popular base. An active and increasingly militant left is a more immediate threat to the Democrats ¬ who have prospered from Republican reaction for decades now by capturing social bases that feel they have nowhere else to go. That dilemma is real, but it is also predicated on the notion that to "go there" we need to contain ourselves in electoralism and pluralist policy fights that are engineered by corporations and NGOs.

That's why Sheehan and others who propose the radical option of simply leaving Iraq are now being surrounded by the friendly faces of "progressives" who will try and redirect this newfound mobilization along the acceptable policy-debate paths.

Enter Tom Hayden with his "proposal" for disengagement in Iraq. Hayden's proposal appeared recently in the LA Times, where he explained:

"The rallying cry of 'out now' expresses the belief that the Iraq war is not worth another minute in lost lives, lost honor, lost taxes, lost allies. But its very simplicity makes the demand easy to ignore or dismiss."

Oh thank you, oh wise one, for instructing us on the finer points of political realism. And thank you for putting words in our mouths that have us express precisely the kinds of chauvinist horse manure being shoveled out of the DP stable. Most of us oppose the war because it is a cynical, amoral, imperial crime. To hell with allies and "honor." And don't worry. We will not be dismissed. Cindy Sheehan, one of those naifs who say "out now" isn't being dismissed, now is she? Except by Tom Hayden, who in a patronizing tone, calls Cindy's "bring them home now" position a "moral stance."

Tom says that we "deserve a hearing," and that this means we will have to propose an exit strategy of our own... which is actually Tom Hayden's. By they way, Tom, we intend to be heard one way or another, unless you mean we deserve to be heard -- with our respectful hats in our respectful hands -- by the venal "leadership" of elected official-dum.

Your statement is a non sequitur, by the way. There is not anything about our deserving-ness that in any way suggests we have to propose some abstract, unenforceable, debatable-for-the-next-five-years "exit strategy." But thank you oh so much for validating us in our deserving.

Tell the surviving families of those thousands of Iraqis whose corpses rotted under the rubble of Fallujah that

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they "deserve a hearing." Where do you people learn to talk like that? Is there some kind of secret school for Democrats where they get a graduate degree in Weasel Wording?

Here's Tom Hayden's "plan":

"First, as confidence-building measures, Washington should declare that it has no interest in permanent military bases or the control of Iraqi oil. It must immediately announce goals for ending the occupation and bringing all our troops home - in months, not years, beginning with an initial gesture by the end of this year."

Tom, old boy, I can't help myself. This is bullshit.

Are you joking about this? Guarantees from the US? You been to Pine Ridge lately? Ask them about guarantees from the US government. Perhaps you can explain to some of us why this adminsitration would ever offer a guarantee to turn its back on the central goal of the whole Iraq invasion. Let me propose a different confidence building measure to reach out to Iraqis. We make the political cost so high in the US for continuing the war that it threatens the entire US state with destabilization... just an alternative suggestion, you understand.

More of Tom's "exit strategy":

"Second, the U.S. should request that the United Nations, or a body blessed by the U.N., monitor the process of military disengagement and de-escalation, and take the lead in organizing a peaceful reconstruction effort."

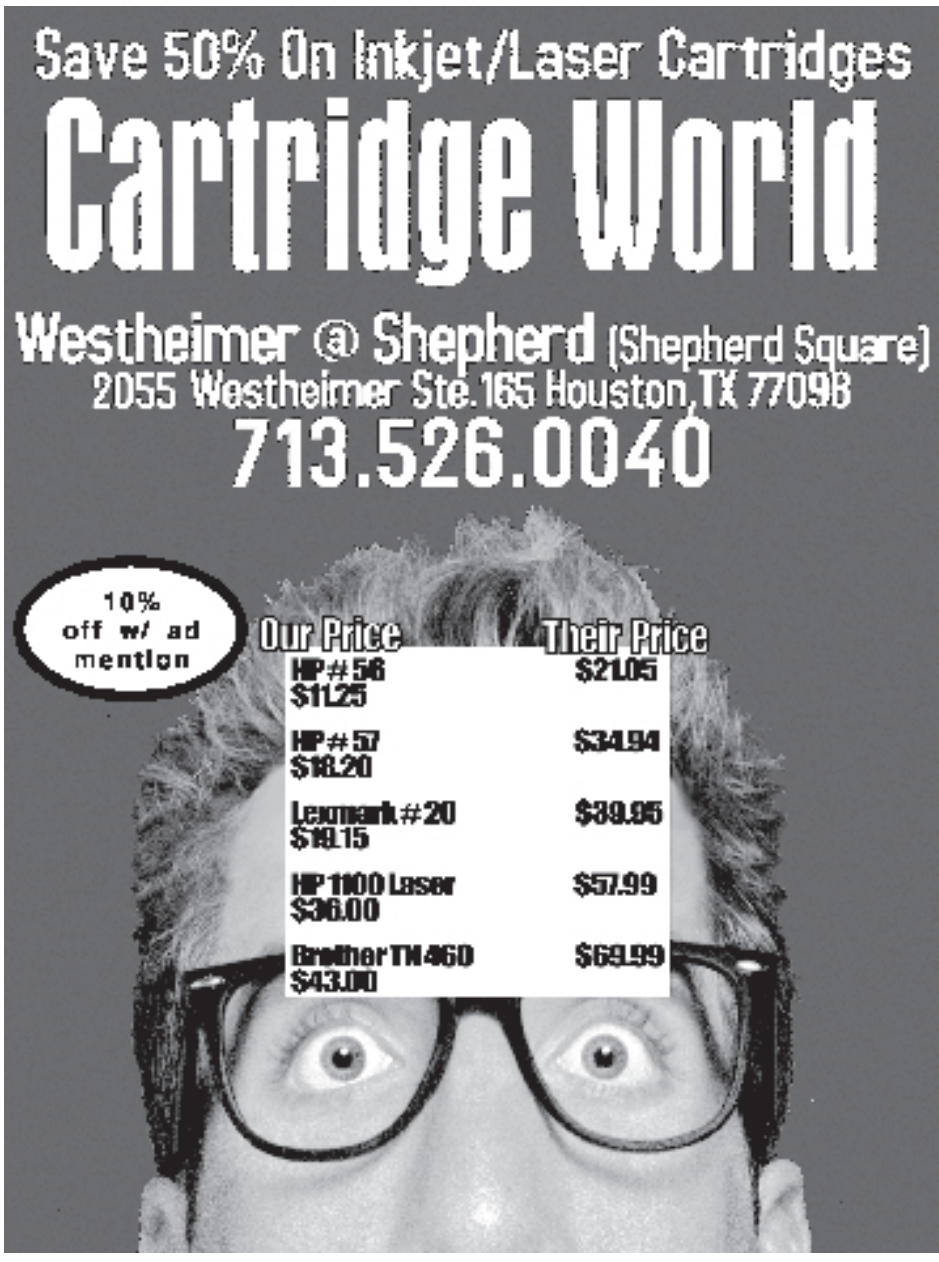
Tom, are you having a mescaline flashback? The United Nations? What nationalities, pray tell, will be under those Carolina-blue K-Pots? Or does the UN employ angels? Moreover, why in the world would the US or the Iraqis need anyone to "oversee" a disengagment? Here you propose a plan that is allegedly going to conform to a set timeline, yet it is utterly dependent on the script being followed by actors over whom the US exercises little to no control. I can't help remembering a similar notion that was enacted by Richard Nixon in 1969. He did get out of Veitnam, however, six years and a million dead bodies later with people clinging to the skids of UH1H helicopters.

Let me just say something about how to withdraw. This is my plan. Hey, if Tom Hayden is qualified to write up exit strategies, why not an old grunt like me, eh?

The Plan: The National Command Authority orders all US forces redeployed out of Iraq within one month and out of the theater in two months. Any commander that fails to meet the deadline will be summarily relieved, and replaced with a commander that will thereby be placed on a shorter timeline. I can promise anyone who has no experience of the military that this is perfectly feasible, and that with that kind of command emphasis, the mission can and will be accomplished.

Here, of course, is where we discern the liberal pre-occupation (pun [illegible] with "overseeing" disengagement [illegible] poppycock. Oh [illegible] will declare. What then will become of these simple-minded brown people who [illegible] nothing more than to drink each other's blood? At the end of the day, a liberal can be every bit as much the white nationalist as any rock-ribbed Republican Confederate. They really believe that the United States is the be[illegible] we have s[illegible] that the br[illegible] cupation is an aberration -- the antithesis of our true natu[illegible] Under all this verbiage is plain, [illegible] erican Kiplingesque wh[illegible] Remember the "white man's bu[illegible] to civilize the dark races?"

Tom, here is a delivery from the [illegible] were doing algebra and [illegible] some of our European anscestors still believed that a bath would leave you vulnerable to evil spirits -- number one clue. Having smart bombs doesn't make you smarter. It just makes you meaner. Get over your chauvinist self. Number two clue -- the primary catalyst for intensifying violence in Iraq right now is... the US military presence. Tom, you say





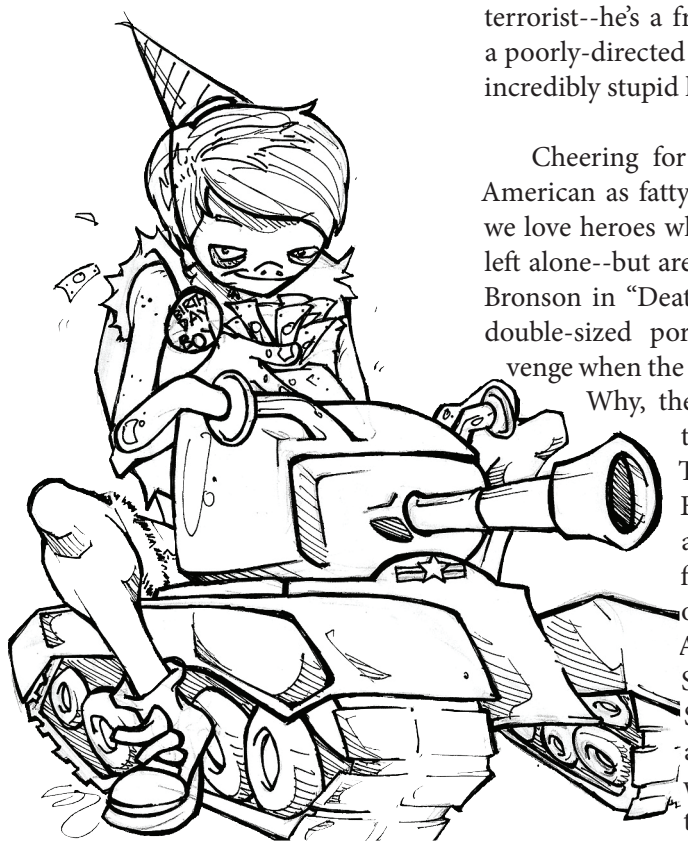


Got Empathy?

Americans Cheer Fictional Insurgents, Real-Life Invaders

By: Ted Rall

Sounds like a movie, huh? "Red Dawn" is a classic document of Reagan-era jingoism filtered through Cold War paranoia. Audiences cheered American nationalist insurgents as they blew holes through on-screen Soviet conscripts in 1984. Rent it today and you will too.



The mid-'80s were good for fictional American resistance movements. The miniseries "V," which premiered in 1983, was followed by a 1985 sequel and eventually a full-fledged weekly TV series, focused on a cell of underground resistance fighters who bombed police stations, government offices and important infrastructure--including an oil refinery!--in the course of a long, brutal and desperate war against reptilian invaders from outer space. (The clever creatures disguise themselves in human form to get the locals to cooperate.) The series' writers kept things interesting by writing lots of moral ambiguity into their scripts. Some aliens form a "fifth column" allied with the human resistance movement while some earthlings sell out their neighbors and relatives, but none of that matters in the end. You still root for the men and women the government and official media call "terrorists."

1985 saw the widescreen release of a remake of the '50s Red Scare flick Invasion, U.S.A.," this time with mullet-tressed action hero Chuck Norris deploying heavy weaponry against fiendish commie saboteurs wreaking havoc in the streets of, inexplicably, south Florida.

The more stuff Chuck blows up, the louder we applaud. After all, he ain't no terrorist--he's a freedom fighter, albeit a poorly-directed one clumsily reading incredibly stupid lines.

Cheering for the underdog is as American as fatty food. In the movies we love heroes who simply want to be left alone--but are willing, like Charles Bronson in "Death Wish," to dish out double-sized portions of blazing revenge when the baddies cross the line. Why, then, don't we pull for the Iraqi insurgents? They are, like Clint Eastwood in his '70s and '80s action flicks, fighting back against overwhelming odds. And most, like Patrick Swayze and Charlie Sheen in "Red Dawn," are high school kids who, at first resigned to the U.S. invasion, take up arms in disgust at an increasingly abusive and hostile army of occupation. Americans play opposite roles in the two scenarios, yet we identify with Americans in both. Where the heck is our sense of empathy? Why can't we see ourselves in the faces of those kids firing RPGs at convoys of Halliburton trucks stealing Iraqi oil?

Here's the rub: Iraq's resistance fighters are breaking a lot of eggs to cook their omelet of liberation. They kill other Iraqis. They kidnap and execute foreign aid workers, truck drivers, businessmen, even diplomats and children. Americans, we tell ourselves, would never resort to that kind of terrorism--not even to free ourselves from occupation.

Wouldn't we?

Imagine America under the jackboot of, say, Icelandic occupation. At first many Americans are happy to see Bush arrested and put on trial, but it doesn't take long before we start to miss him. Promises of rapid rebuilding evaporate. Two years after saturation bombing has leveled Washington, Los Angeles, New York and other major cities, the rubble is overrun with rats and wild dogs. America's natural resources--coal, lumber, oil--are shipped back to Iceland without recompense. Unmarked checkpoints spring up everywhere, transforming a drive to the 7-11 to get water--faucets are dry--into a potentially lethal exercise. Icelandic troops conduct house raids to take away Americans' guns. Since there's no electricity for streetlights, the night belongs to gangs, who rape and hold women for ransom. There are no jobs, unless you count working for the hated police force of the puppet regime, the Unified Nordic Republic of Icelanderica. UNRI lackeys ride alongside Icelandic storm troopers to point out the homes of "terrorists," who are bagged, beaten and dragged off into the night, never to be seen again. Most of the victims are innocent civilians, of course, but the Icelandics don't speak English. They mistakenly trust their toadies, who use their authority to act on personal grudges.

These collaborators, as Karl Rove would point out, are fair game--for attacks by American resistance fighters. As in "V." And "Red Dawn."

A few years pass. The Icelandic government turns over nominal "sovereignty" to its puppet American regime, but nothing changes on the ground. The checkpoint shootings, mass arrests and chaos continue unabated. Almost everyone has lost a friend or family member to the war. There's an "election," but members of the prewar Democratic and Republican parties are barred from participating. America as we know it has been rubbed out.

The humiliation is total. Icelandic forces pass out decks of cards depicting the faces of former senators, governors and generals. They shoot deposed leader George W. Bush's twin daughters and air images of their bloody, mutilated faces on state television. They print photos of Bush, haggard and obviously abused in his secret prison, wearing nothing but underwear.

Adding to the anger of patriotic Americans is the willingness of the rest of the world to forget what has happened. Other nations, including former prewar allies like Great Britain and Italy, reopen their embassies and post ambassadors to the "new America." The United Nations recognizes the collaborationist regime as legitimate and meets with its appointed leader, a man unknown in America because he spent his entire life in exile in Iceland. Carpetbaggers (the collaborationist press calls them "entrepreneurs") pour in from abroad, scheming to line their pockets by prolonging Americans' misery and poverty. Aid groups and other NGOs seeking to help hungry and homeless Americans mean well, but their presence reinforces a sense that things are back to normal--and the collaborationist media points to their presence as tacit endorsement of the occupation.

Obviously the U.S. nationalist insurgents don't want to kill civilians. They prefer that foreigners stay out of occupied America so they can focus on driving out the Icelandics, but naive and greedy intruders ignore their warning not to associate with the puppet regime. Leaders of the resistance are forced to make a brutal choice. They can kill a few diplomats here, a few aid workers there, but since executions serve no purpose as warnings unless their horror is publicized, the American patriots choose to distribute videotapes of the killings. Similarly, they warn their countrymen not to join the collaborationist police forces. But there's only one way to ensure that the jobless won't sell out their country in order to feed their families: suicide bombers who take out as many traitors as possible.

Yes, there would be an alternative to these brutal tactics. The conquered Americans could simply accept that there will never, ever again be a land of the free and home of the brave where the United States used to be. But that would hardly be a Hollywood ending.

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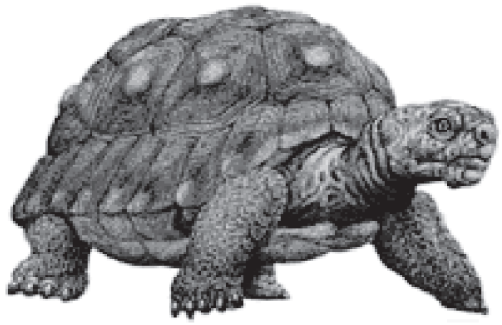
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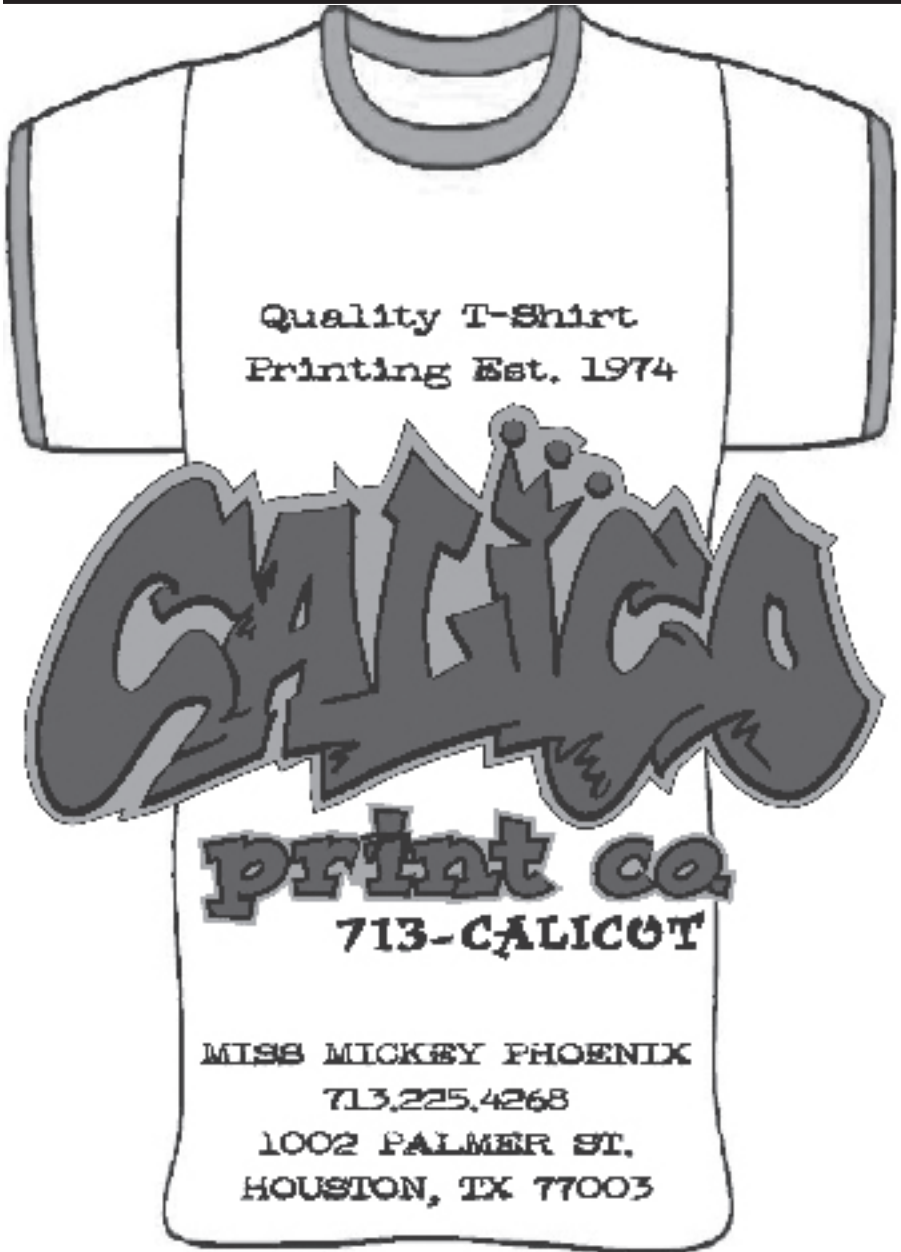
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Unity on what basis?

Antiwar movement debate over Palestine:

By: Lance Selfa

AS GEORGE W. Bush left Washington for his annual month-long vacation in Texas, public approval for his administration hit the lowest level ever. The Gallup survey taken in late July put his job approval rating at 44 percent--a new low. A Quinnipiac University poll had Bush at 41 percent.

It's clear that the main issue sapping Bush's support is the war in Iraq. Having once provided him with the aura of "commander in chief," which he brandished to silence all critics, the war is now proving to be a weight around his neck. The same Gallup survey showed that only 36 percent--most of that the Republican Party's "base"--supported Bush's Iraq policy.

The reasons for the decline in Bush's support are simple. First, he sold the war on a number of pretences that have been proven to be lies. Second, he has proclaimed several "turning points"--from the capture of Saddam Hussein in December 2003 to the Iraqi elections held in January 2005--which, he said, augured better days ahead. Instead, an increase in Iraqi resistance activity has wiped out each of these false dawns.

Independent journalist Patrick Cockburn described the real situation in Iraq today: "For future historians, Iraq will probably replace Vietnam as the stock example of the truth of Wellington's dictum about small wars escalating into big ones. Ironically, the U.S. and Britain pretended in 2003 that Saddam ruled a powerful state capable of menacing his neighbors. Secretly, they believed this was untrue and expected an easy victory. Now, in 2005, they find to their horror that there are people in Iraq more truly dangerous than Saddam, and they are mired in an unwinnable conflict."

These factors have produced a crisis of credibility for Bush, which finds its echoes in many arenas: from declining military recruitment to the investigation of White House aides for blowing the cover of a CIA operative.

Things have gone so badly for Bush that his spin masters are actually trying to re-brand his signature foreign policy rhetoric. Out is the "the war on terrorism" and in is "the war against extremism." Perhaps in the wake of the bombings in London, Madrid and elsewhere, the "war on terrorism" appears to be another war that Bush is losing.



"Iraq will probably replace Vietnam"

THIS DENTING of Bush's armor has helped breathe new life into opposition to the war. One historic marker of this was the nearly unanimous approval of an AFL-CIO resolution calling for Bush to remove U.S. troops from Iraq "rapidly." This was the first time in the 50-year history of the labor federation that it had ever passed a resolution opposing a U.S. war during wartime.

Another indication of the growing opposition is the willingness of some Democrats--and even some Republicans--in Congress to put forward resolutions calling for various plans for troop withdrawals.

But the most hopeful sign of spreading antiwar sentiment are the planned national demonstrations against the war called for the weekend of September 24-25 in Washington, D.C., San Francisco and other cities. The September 24 protests represent a real opportunity to regain antiwar momentum after more than a year in which the public presence of the antiwar movement was sidelined into electioneering for the pro-war Democrat John Kerry.

However, as activists prepare for this show of opposition, a problem has arisen in the ranks of the antiwar movement. The specter of two separate demonstrations in Washington--rather than one, united show of force--hangs over the weekend. Already, much energy has been spent on debates, discussions and "unity" meetings attempting to head this off.

Unfortunately, this isn't a new problem. As far back as the 1991 national demonstrations against Bush Sr.'s war on Iraq, two national coalitions, unable to agree on a common platform, held national antiwar demonstrations in Washington on successive weekends in January.

Echoes of the 1991 split can be found today in the fact that many of the same leaders and political issues have resurfaced in the current division between the liberal United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ) and the more radical International ANSWER-led National Coalition.

It's tempting to write off the squabbling between the two national coalitions as a case of sectarian turf battles and personality conflicts. For many antiwar activists, the chief goal is to forge unity between the two marches and leave the disputes between them to another time.

However, another element--the crystalization of political differences on the crucial question of Palestine--has been added into the debate. This makes it imperative to confront this question--and to make attempts at forging genuine unity on the basis of incorporating demands about Palestine in one united march.

PALESTINE IS not an abstract question peripheral to the war in Iraq. In fact, as this newspaper has demonstrated in numerous articles, U.S. support for Israel's occupation of Palestine can't be separated from the Iraq occupation. Not only do they flow from the same plan of U.S.-Israeli domination of the Middle East, but Israel has actually advised the U.S. on every aspect of the occupation of Iraq, from training Kurdish militias to the torturers in Abu Ghraib.

What's more, leading Arab and Muslim activists have demanded that the antiwar movement take up the issue of Palestine, including endorsing the demand for the United Nations-recognized right of Palestinians to return to their homes in what is now Israel.

In a July 22 statement, titled "Where the Arab and Muslim Community Will Stand on September 24," eight Arab and Muslim organizations and a representative of another wrote: "In its behavior, the leadership of UFPJ is fanning the flames of separation and is unnecessarily pitting trusting movement activists against our community and people. Last year, hundreds of organizations and thousands upon thousands of activists took a clear stand against the marginalization of the Arab and Muslim community, and in favor of a principled political position. Yet here we are again, facing the same attempts of separation by the same leadership of UFPJ."

For its part, UFPJ argued, in a May 23 letter to its supporters, that it limited march demands to make it "possible for the largest and widest array of people to come together in opposition to the war, including military families, Iraq war veterans and other veterans, and the labor movement."

But opinion polls show consistent support among Americans for Palestinian rights, which makes it very likely that military families, veterans and rank-and-file members of the labor movement either already support Palestinian rights in some form, or could be convinced to do so if the antiwar movement gave a lead on the question.

What UFPJ doesn't say is that the people it is more worried about alienating are Zionists in their ranks and Democratic Party politicians, whose support for Israel is a given. UFPJ's leaders would rather sideline thousands of Arabs and Muslims who have been the targets of state repression than a handful of Democrats and their liberal supporters. For a movement that chides itself about the need to attract more people of color into its ranks, this is a curious position to hold.

A "unity" that leaves Arabs and Muslims on the sidelines is no unity at all. It is reminiscent of 1964 Democratic Party convention, when leading liberals sold out the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party--in order to maintain party unity with the Mississippi segregationists who ran the state party. Or of the Northern politicians who told Black civil rights activists that they had to "wait" until there was more popular support for them. The letter from the nine Arab and Muslim organizations makes this connection, quoting Martin Luther King's Why We Can't Wait in support of their position.

The only unity worth fighting for is one that incorporates the legitimate demands of Arabs and Muslims fully into the protest.

A July statement from the Campus Antiwar Network, one of the organizations spearheading the growing movement to get military recruiters out of universities and high schools, gets this right: "As a new counter-recruitment movement is exploding across the country, it is vital for students, teachers, parents, and others who wish to reclaim our schools from recruitment for a war most Americans oppose to be able to march alongside one another. This unity is threatened by the specter of two separate protests in D.C. Therefore, in the interests of building the strongest movement possible to end occupation, we call on United for Peace and Justice to drop its opposition to demands in support of Palestine and civil liberties, so that all of us--including broad segments of the populations most affected by the war at home--can come together as one united protest in Washington."

LANCE SELFA *is a columnist for Socialist Worker and editor of The Struggle for Palestine, a collection of essays published by Haymarket Books. Here, he looks at an important debate in the antiwar movement.*

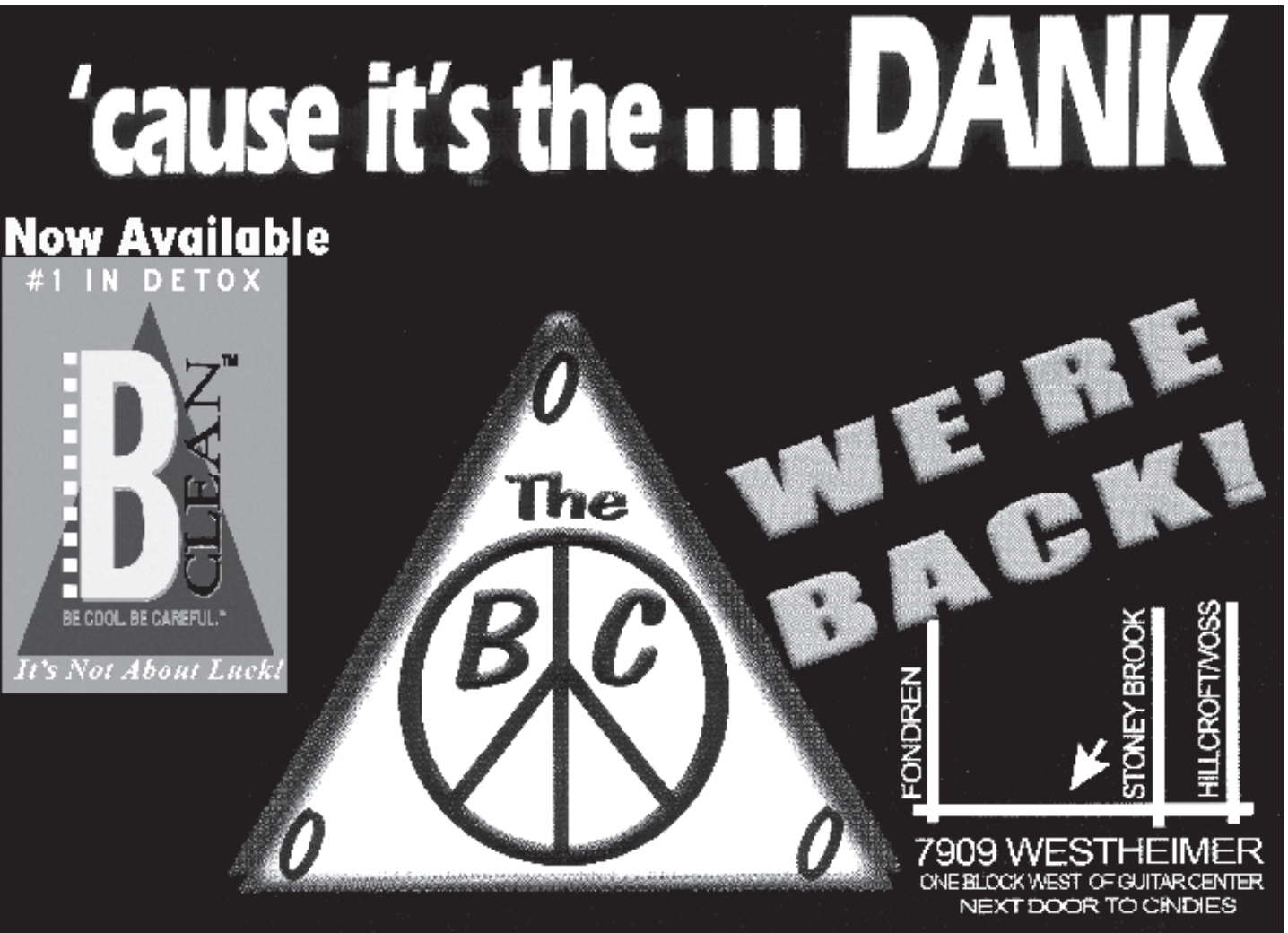
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Tiva is Not Guilty on All Counts



On July 14th, a jury found Tiva not guilty on all counts of "interfering with a public servant" after a 2 day trial. Tiva, as the daughter of a prominent Revolutionary Communist Party activist Travis Morales, may have been targeted, but apparently the jury found the charges ridiculous.
According to Tiva, she spoke with some of the jurors after the trial, and one of the comments, as they wished her good luck, was, "the police really need to clean up their act!" The charges arose from an incident when, witnessing cops tasering her friend Eddie, Tiva says she screamed out several times in protest, "Stop, you're gonna kill him!" She recalled how a man was, not too long ago, killed by a taser used by HPD. Tiva says she was then grabbed and arrested. The charges were interfering with a peace officer, class B misdemeanor. She faced 6 months in jail.

Overflow crowd packs Houston's Downing St. Memo Teach-In by Bill

On July 23, a crowd of approximately 225 people packed the largest room at the 1st Unitarian Universalist Church in Houston Texas, for a teach-in on the third anniversary of the Downing Street Minutes (DSM).
Former US diplomat Ann Wright, who resigned because of the US invasion of Iraq, was the keynote speaker. The crowd listened raptly as she discussed the deceit, deceptions, and outright lies that the Bush administration told to justify the invasion. She told how many officers in the military, as well as a huge majority of the State department, were appalled at the US actions as the buildup for war progressed, and even more appalled during and after the invasion. The search for weapons of mass destruction turned up no such weapons but instead demonstrated how the inspections had been working
Ann Wright also told how the diversion of military resources to Iraq actually hurt the search for Al Queda, as they were in Afghanistan rather than Iraq, and how the US occupation of Iraq is decreasing our security because Iraq has now become such a breeding ground for terrorists. She answered questions for over 30 minutes after her talk.
A portion of the documentary "Uncovered" http://www.truthuncovered.com/ by filmmaker Robert Greenwald http://www.robertgreenwald.org/docs.php was shown, to illustrate the lies told by Bush and other administration officials in the weeks leading to the invasion. Excerpts from the recent video "Eyewitness in Iraq: an Unembedded Report" by Dahr Jamail http://dahrjamailiraq.com/ were also shown, from this reporter's trip to Fallujah following the US destruction of that city, to illustrate how the lies from the Bush administration are continuing, as they talk of reconstruction while actual photos show how terrible the situation is in places like Fallujah, which was a city of 350,000 before the US destroyed it.
Postcards were distributed to attendees along with a sample letter, and attendees were asked to send the cards to their Congressional representative with a note asking them to co-sponsor Rep. Barbara Lee's Resolution of Inquiry
http://www.afterdowningstreet.org/?q=node/902 into Iraq War Planning.
These were just a few of over 300 similar events held across the US on July 23, and coordinated by the After Downing Street Coalition http://www.afterdowningstreet.org/ , which is a coalition of veterans' groups, peace groups and political activist groups. It is coordinating these events nationwide, and has launched a campaign to urge the U.S. Congress to begin a formal investigation into whether President Bush has committed impeachable offenses in connection with the Iraq war. Reports on DSM anniversary events from many cities are at http://www.afterdowningstreet.org/ .



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September 14, 2005: Execution of Frances Newton



There are serious questions about the guilt of Frances Newton, whose attorney never interviewed witnesses, and never read the police offense report until he was in trial. How to get involved: Come to the meetings on Wednesday nights at 6:30 PM at 2620 Fountainview, Suite 113 (punch in 113 to have the door opened). This week will be a working meeting and you can join in the media committee or the outreach committee. Or contact: Rabia (rabiatahiri@hotmail.com) or Grace (crazygrazie99@yahoo.com). Media contacts: Art (abrowning@pdq.net), and Bernadine(StrongFlowerDream@yahoo.com). For flyers, postcards, DVD's, posters, contact Massoud (massn@prodigy.net).

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CAFTA passes in the House: 217 to 215

CAFTA is a Free Trade agreement between the US, and the Central American Nations of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua, and The Caribbean Nation of Dominican Republic. It is based on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which passed into law on January 1st of 1994, was met with the uprising of the Zapatista Army for National Liberation. In the decade since NAFTA, we have seen losses of tens of thousands of American Jobs, the growth of Mexican Maquiladora economy, and the collapse of the Mexican agrarian economy, forcing refugees of globalization to seek work in the United States. CAFTA seeks to build on the framework of NAFTA and is seen by many as a steeping stone towards The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a hemispheric Free Trade Agreement.
Early Thursday Morning morning, the US House of representatives passed the Central American Trade Agreement by 2 votes, 217 to 215. 15 Democrats voted in favor of the trade agreement, including 3 from Texas: Henry Cuellar (who stole his election from the more liberal incumbent Ciro Rodriguez using 300 votes discovered in his friend's bank vault), San Antonio/Laredo (28th District): 202-225-1640, Ruben Hinojosa, McAllen (15th District): (202) 225-2531 Solomon Ortiz, Corpus Cristi/Brownsville (27th District): 202-225-7742.
Members of the Stop CAFTA Coalition denounce the approval of CAFTA. According to stopcafta.org, the decision was plagued by apparent voting irregularities. For example, the fifteen-minute voting period was extended to more than an hour to give Republican leaders a chance to turn around the decision. After the initial period, the House had actually voted 180 to 175 to defeat CAFTA. However, Republican congress members who voted no were persuaded by others to switch their vote.
CAFTA has still not passed in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic due to heavy opposition in those countries.
On Wednesday July 27th, a protests called by the Texas Fair Trade Coalition, at the office of Sheila Jackson Lee brought around 30 protesters from Labor and Immigrant Rights groups to declare opposition to the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). They were met there by The Media, Law Enforcement, and Aides of Sheila Jackson Lee distributing a statement declaring Jackson Lee's opposition to CAFTA. Jackson Lee highlights the problems that CAFTA poses for Worker's Rights, Child Labor, and Human Rights as reasons for her decision to vote against CAFTA legislation.

Zeb Mountain Destruction Halted by Anti Mountain Top Mining Campaign

As dawn approached August 15, activists stood on an ancient Appalachian mountain in a dramatic protest against mountain top mining. This is the first time a mountain has been taken over in the struggle to protect the Appalachian Mountains from the devastating practices of mountain top mining. Dedicated citizens are blockading National Coal's strip mine in scenic Campbell County, Tennessee, United States to halt the destruction of Zeb Mountain. Activists affiliated with MountainJusticeSummer.org and Katuah Earth First! are using creative non violent tactics to bring attention to the modern atrocity of mountain top mining.
In an unprecedented non-violent intervention, individuals are blockading the entrance to the mine by locking themselves to a car on the haul road and sitting in a tripod to prevent access to the mine. Other activists have locked themselves to drilling equipment. Citizens are using their bodies to create a giant "no blast" zone across the mountain. These drastic tactics are being used because strip mining companies are not allowed to use explosives when unauthorized people are nearby. "Coal companies bend and break laws in order to blow apart Tennessee's mountain headwaters. Since regulatory agencies refuse to protect our mountains, non violent citizen intervention has become necessary. We stand for the preservation of the mountains, water, forests, and communities of Appalachia" said Maria Johnson of Kingsport, TN.

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STICK IT TO THE MAN



Last Will and Testament
Do I need one?

By: Devin 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 have some stuff. Do I need a will?

Think about it for a second. You are dead. What do you care about your stuff? A will is not for your convenience, protection or peace of mind. A will only becomes effective upon your death, so once you have passed on, what happens to your earthly possessions should matter little to your spirit in the great beyond. A will is for the people, institutions or pets you have left behind. A will is designed to make their life easier when dividing up your stuff. It is to exercise your intentions from beyond your grave for what you wanted done with your property. A will can also be considered a great vehicle for revenge if some child or family member has slighted or offended you. You can get the back at them by "disinheriting" them and leaving them nothing.

A person making a will is called the "testator." If you do not decide what to do with your property before you die, then the state (the courts in Texas) will determine whom or what gets your stuff and in what percentage. Dying without a will is called dying "intestate." Most of the rules regarding who gets what are standardized and written into the Texas Probate Code (available online at; http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/statutes/pb.toc.htm)

Wills can be extremely simple "I, Joe Blow, leave my stuff to Jane Blow" or maddeningly complicated. The requirements for a valid will in Texas are fairly basic. A person must be at least 18 years old, if the person is younger than 18 then they must either be married or in the armed forces in order to make a valid will. The testator must also be of somewhat sound mind and cannot be under "undue influence" or "duress" (someone can't point a gun at your head and demand that you write them into your will, if they do, the will is invalid because it was created under duress). A will must be revocable during the lifetime of the testator and the testator must intend to make a will for it to be valid. There are three different kinds of wills that are recognized in Texas; handwritten, typewritten and oral wills.

A completely handwritten will is called a "holographic" will. If a will is handwritten then no one needs to witness and sign the will, but every single portion of the will must be in the handwriting of the person making the will. The testator must sign it. The handwritten will can be proven in court, as the official will, by two people familiar with the handwriting of the testator.

If a will is typewritten, there are three formal requirements; two witnesses must sign the will, the witnesses must sign in front of the testator and the testator must also sign the will. The rule that witnesses must sign the will is because there needs to be some extra "proof" that the testator intended for the typewritten provisions to be in the will. Otherwise, someone could sneak in new provisions of the will and since it's typewritten no one could challenge who wrote the new provisions since it would impossible to tell.

Oral wills are only allowed in a few limited circumstances. The property being given away can only be personal property (i.e. no real estate, you cannot give away a house in your dying breath). The oral will must have been done in the testator's last breath or "final sickness" (kind of like 'dying declarations' in criminal law where it is assumed that people seconds away from meeting their maker would be less likely to lie). If the value of the property exceeds $30 then three witnesses had to have been present to hear the oral will being made.

Once you die, your estate (the things you've left behind after you've died) goes into probate. People often talk about "probating a will" or "going into probate." In spite of its technical sound, probate merely winds up the financial affairs of the dead person and delivers the remaining assets to his or her beneficiaries. Even if a person dies with a will, the estate still has to go to probate. In fact, the will is not a valid one until a judge says so, but the probate process is often simpler and faster with a will. The probate process has four main parts; 1) collect the assets of the estate; 2) pay off the dead person's debts; 3) pay off any taxes owed; 4) distribute the remaining assets to the beneficiaries.

The "Terri Schiavo" debacle also brought widespread attention to a legal instrument called a "living will" or an "advanced directive." A living will is more or less a will for your physical body if you are on life support and unresponsive or if you are in a vegetative state. A living will is an instruction, conveying your wishes regarding life support (i.e. keep me on it, or take me off it). It is valid if it is made in front of two witnesses, or it can be done orally in front of a physician and two witnesses. Since it's a living will, you can also easily change your mind. You can throw out or tear up your living will or you can orally instruct your doctor to disregard your previous living will.

To recap: If you don't have a will when you die, you won't be around to care one way or the other about who or what gets your stuff. The state will divide up whatever you left behind according to some long-standing rules and your spouse or children will get first dibs and so on and so forth. If you want to ensure that someone or something gets something of yours (or doesn't get something of yours) then having a will is sound and prudent decision. You can sit down and make one in about 5 minutes. Figure out what you have and whom you want to give it to. Just make sure you handwrite all of it and sign it. Doing it yourself may result in higher taxes being paid by your estate and grievous mistakes being made, but at least you'll have something written down for people to figure out. After all, you won't be there to interpret your desires any longer and it's doubtful you'll care at that point anyways.

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



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Nuclear Weapons and Humans Cannot Coexist



A Japanese Survivor Speaks Out

By: Taniguchi Sumiteru

When 60 years ago the United States became the first (and since then the only) country to use atomic weapons by dropping them on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, hundreds of thousands of people were killed. Those at the hypercenter, or ground zero, were the "lucky" ones — they were instantly vaporized. Others died, but not instantly, living their last moments in pain and misery. Their flesh melting off, many perished while looking for water to ease their suffering.

There is no official count of how many people were killed directly by the blasts, except to say that it was in the hundreds of thousands. Over the years, tens of thousands more died due to the effects of radiation exposure.

Another group, today called "hibakusha" (Japanese for "those who suffered an explosion"), survived the bombing, but were never the same again.

Taniguchi Sumiteru, now in his mid-70s, is a hibakusha. He is also a leader of a survivors' organization in Nagasaki. During a session this month at the United Nations sponsored by the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, he spoke of his own experience and his desire for peace. His testimony is reprinted below.

- Dan Margolis

In 1945 I was 16 years old. On the morning of Aug. 9 that year, I was riding my bicycle 1.8 km north of what was to become the hypercenter of the explosion of the atomic bomb. When it struck, I was burned on my back with the heat ray of the fireball, as high as 3,000 to 4,000 degrees Celsius at its center, melting rocks and iron, and also with the invisible radiation. The next moment I was blown off together with the bike about 4 meters and smashed to the ground by the blast. The blast had a velocity of 250 to 300 meters per second. It knocked down buildings and warped steel frames.

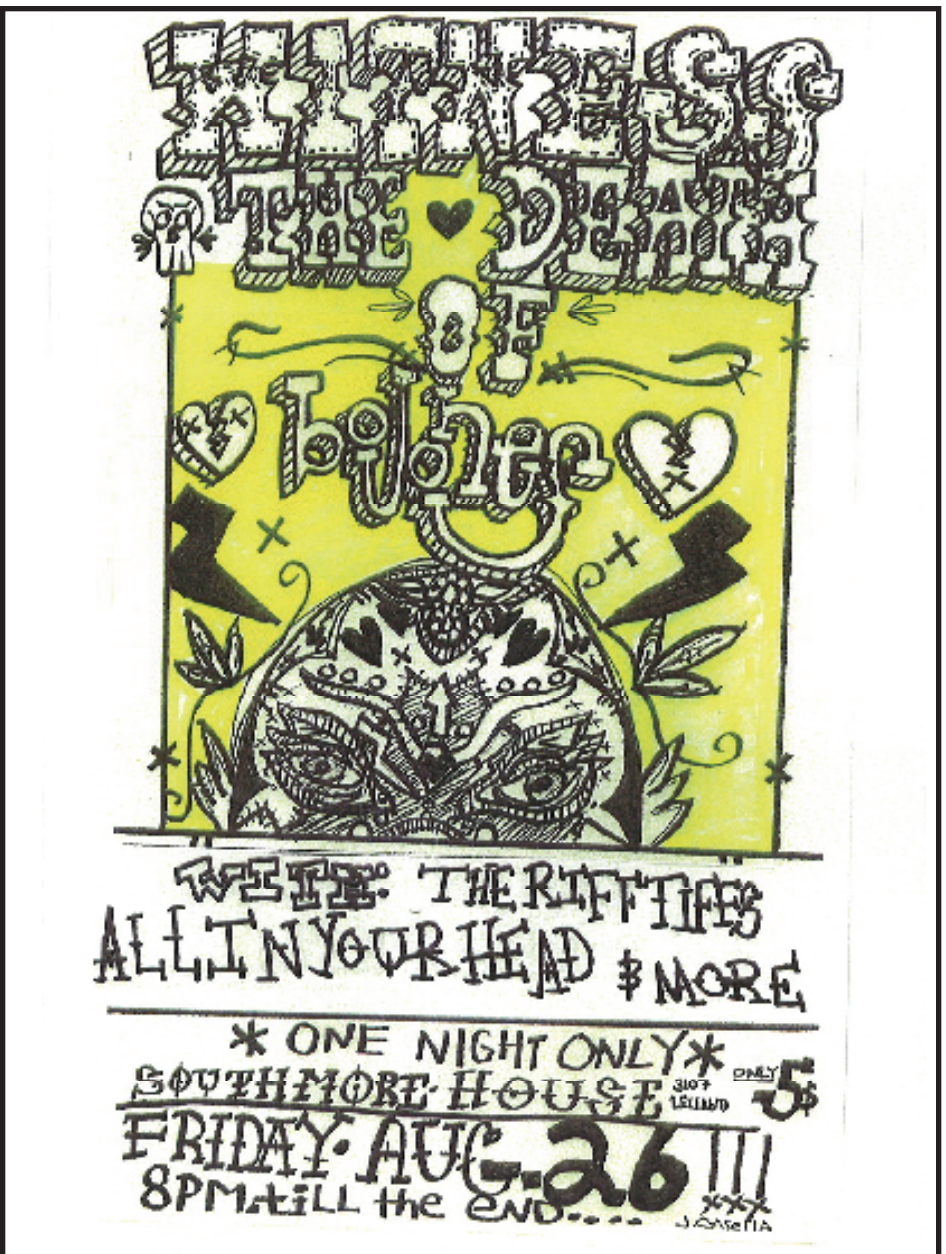
The earth was shaking so hard that I lay down on the ground and held on so as not to be blown off again. When I looked up, the buildings around me had been smashed. Children who were playing near me had been blown down like they were mere dust.

When the commotion seemed to be over, I rose up and found my entire left arm had been burnt and that the skin was hanging from it like a tattered rag. I reached for my back and found that it too had been burnt. It was slimy and covered with something black.

My bike was bent and twisted out of shape, the body, the wheel and all, as if it were spaghetti. Houses nearby were all crushed and fires were breaking out from the houses and on the mountain. Those children who had been away were all dead: some were burnt to a crisp, others looked uninjured.

There was a woman whose hearing was all gone and face swollen to the degree she could not open her eyes. She was injured from head to toe, and groaning in pain. I still recall the scene as if I saw it only yesterday. I could not do anything for those who were suffering and desperately calling for help. I deeply regret that, even today.

Many hibukusha were burnt to a crisp and died while seeking water.





Fat City Yoga

UrbanYogiInstruction

By: Eric Anthamatten

"We should be warned that nature nostalgia detaches us from the urban present and promulgates condescension, disinterest, and eventually hostility. For better or worse, American man is now urban man. Nature nostalgia, no matter how subtle, does not serve him well. It is time for a turning and a celebrating of the dazzling experiences we have but do not witness for all to share. The city is now our home; in the most traditional and profound sense of the word, it is our land."

-John J. McDermott

Note: If doing the pose atop a dumpster or on scorching asphalt, you may want to place your socks underneath the soles of your feet or wear some comfortable shoes. Also, when doing yoga in graffiti-filled alleys, chances are there is a lot of broken glass around. Tread cautiously, for even the most enlightened yogi or yogini is not immune to the piercing power of a Heineken bottle shard.

Virabhadrasana II (Hero Pose, 2nd Variation)

Angry at the death of his beloved Sita, Shiva ripped off one of his dreadlocks and threw it to the ground. This dread transformed into a great warrior named Virabadhra who then set out to seek revenge for his master. Thus, this pose is translated as "warrior" or "hero" posture. First, widen the legs (ideally having the ankles directly underneath the wrists of your outstretched arms). The front foot should turn out a full ninety-degrees, and the back foot should slightly turn in (about thirty-degrees). Bend the front leg so the knee is directly over the ankle, forming a ninety-degree angle between the hamstring and the calf. Proudly (like a hero!) lift the heart and allow it to shine.

Make sure that the back hip is directly behind the front hip, and that the shoulders are directly over the hips. The eyes of the shoulders should not slouch forward, a nuance often overlooked in many of these poses. Though the spine may be straight, many times the shoulders have a tendency to come forward, misaligning the arms and, more importantly, preventing the heart from fully expressing the wonderful gifts it has to share. Engage your "shoulder loop" by rolling the shoulders up and back, drawing the shoulderblades together as if you are gently squeezing a grape between them.

After engaging the shoulders, only then can you fully express the pose by extending the arms. Remember, every part contributes to the whole, so do not forget to radiate through the tips of the fingers and toes. Imagine the fingers are spray can nozzles, shooting rainbow colors, painting beautiful heart onto the drab of brick wall. Gently tuck the chin and look out over your middle finger, gently gazing as if you are viewing the Houston's skyline from atop a balcony. Shine through the heart just a little bit more and hold the pose for 5-10 good deep breaths (inhaling and exhaling through the nostrils only!). Smile. Repeat on the other side.









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with The Attitude Band

Sat Aug 13th:
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Organ Failure
Chim Charoo

Sun Aug 14th:
Abiku, Get Him Eat Him
Over sea Under Stone

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Something Fierce
Borkum Riff

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