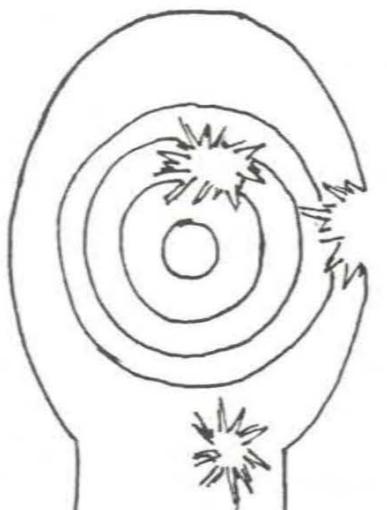


quarter of the N.R.A. spent nearly a quarter of a million dollars on legislative races in the state in 1991, and seventy of its seventy-eight candidates won.



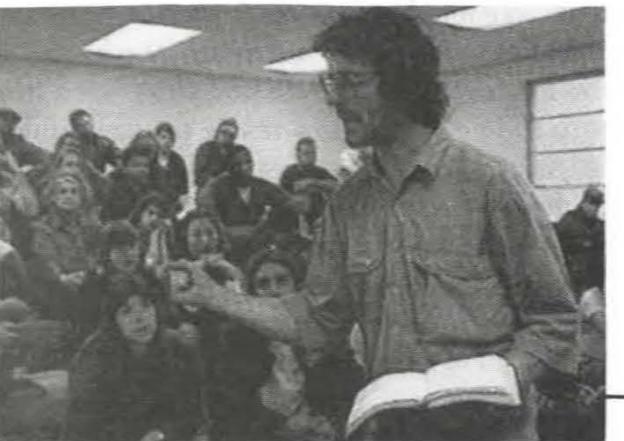
Polls have repeatedly shown that eighty per cent of the population, impatient with such sophistry, wants increased gun control. Small wonder why. More than sixty thousand people have been killed with guns in this country in the last five years.

### *Amendment II:*

*A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to bear Arms, shall not be infringed.*

*Proposed September 25, 1789*

*Ratified December 15, 1791*



## Cult of Death

Holed up in a Texas fortress, Koresh and his followers fervently believe he is Christ—and till death do them part

# The Other Side



# LIBERATION THROUGH



## EDUCATIONAL FORUM

Humanities Auditorium, Scripps

Tuesday, April 27, 7:00 p.m.

### Letter to the Editor

"You can never really see what they see in this country until you have seen where they have been. Then you know why they are here, searching for a new life." But Ms. Payne, do you really, truly know why? I don't think so.

Last month's issue of *The Other Side* had an article that talked about the Latino immigrant workers in Southern California and their experiences here in the United States. The first mistake was to refer to them as "illegals," "beaners," and "wetbacks." I do not think that this story was written with malicious intent to hurt or offend anyone. It was an honest attempt of self-expression. I can see her honesty, but also her ignorance.

You say that "they deserve a medal." Yes they do, but please do not belittle their situation. More than a medal, they deserve a good job with fair wages and proper working facilities. What good is a medal if one cannot afford a mantle to put it on. And maybe you thought you had it bad at Burger King for one year, but that is all many of us have.

You say that "they are happy with the simple meals they eat and the clothes they wear... Because they have their life-priorities straight. They don't need to put much emphasis on material things." Many times they cannot afford to be materialistic and luxurious. I think many would agree that having a plate of simple food and outdated, mismatched clothing is ranked higher on the list of priorities than a pair of Guess jeans or eating out at Spago's.

There are many other things in this article that I did not agree with and found perturbing. But something that I can agree on is that many of us are "pretty darn selfish" and that we do need to "wake up." We can no longer be condescending about other peoples situations. My people. We need to be more than just spectators on the sidelines, but active players in the game. It is going to take more than just a smile to make things better.

Ms. Payne, you asked in your article if this is not the "land of opportunity?" To answer your question, my opinion is NO! This is not the land of opportunity. But that is why we need to work together as people, as human beings trying to educate and inform each other. We need action now, not tomorrow, because tomorrow may be too late. I have taken my first step, now it's your turn.

— Hortensia Balthazar

### Seniors, Graduation is drawing near and decisions must be made!

The Senior Committee has received some suggestions for the senior gift, but we need your input in compiling a final list of choices. If you have ideas or input, contact Elizabeth Jensen c/o The Development Office. Ideas, so far, include:

#### Class of 1993 Scholarship Fund

A substantial scholarship award could be made next year to a deserving student. Like all financial aid at Pitzer, the scholarship would be awarded on the basis of financial need.

#### Sound system for the new Student Recreation Center

The senior class gift money could be put toward the purchase of a sound system in the Student Recreation Center that could be used for live and recorded music in the Center's lounge/party room.

### Free and anonymous HIV testing on campus.

**Tuesday, April 13**

**CALL HEALTH EDUCATION OUTREACH AT EXT.3602 FOR TIME AND LOCATION BEGINNING THE WEEK OF APRIL 5.**



# Editor's Desk

If, after reading the back cover, you feel as though you have just been hit over the head with a sledgehammer, then we did our job. Our society has become desensitized by a deluge of violent imagery. We now dismiss drive-by's, shooting sprees in restaurants and on playgrounds, assassinations, executions, armed takeovers, teachers and students gunned down in classrooms and hallways, riots, and merchants doing battle with would-be assailants as part of our everyday existence. An awful air of permanence surrounds all of these events, as if our society has little interest in and ability to make a change.

I'm not certain why I suddenly awoke from the daze. Perhaps it is because of the macabre, almost ridiculous situation in Waco, Texas. Maybe it was after hearing about the doctor who was shot down by a Pro-lifer for performing abortions. Or maybe it was simply the statistic from the back cover that I came across in an article in the *New Yorker*: Over 60,000 people killed by guns in the last five years. It's an appalling figure. But instead of making an attempt to use our system of governance to curb this bloodshed, our "chosen representatives" kneel before pressure groups which wrap themselves up in laws designed more than two centuries ago.

I'm fully aware that tinkering with the Constitution is a nebulous, dangerous game. However, I see a society today that bears little or no resemblance to that of our founding fathers (a group of men who could hardly have conceived of an outcome as gruesome as the one we face today). As the article went on to state: "The N.R.A. [and, in my opinion, everyone who is opposed to gun control] is still trafficking in frontier mythology in an era when the coonskin cap and the musket have yielded to the crack pipe and the Glock." Our world and our environment are not stagnant. They are constantly evolving, and therefore our laws must react to that evolution: changing when necessary, to insure that those permanent, inalienable rights described are enjoyed by all and abused by none.

Some worry that once you alter one law, others will be vulnerable. They forecast a mad-scramble of legislation that will topple our system and freedoms like the proverbial house of cards. I have more faith in people than they do. And, I must admit, I value human life a lot more than a set of abstract principles. It is high time that we remove our laws from their lofty pedestals, and treat them as they were meant to be treated: as tools. Intelligent acts like the Brady Bill and the outlaw of assault weapons will save lives and shape the society of today, and they will do so without damaging or infringing upon anyone's freedoms. How many more people must die before our citizens and leaders act like participants in our system, instead of paralyzed fools?

## The Other Side

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*The Other Side Magazine* is a publication of the students of Pitzer College. The editors reserve the right to edit or refuse any material submitted, however that doesn't happen often, and we're extremely interested in publishing any responses to articles. As always, we are continuously looking for people who wish to contribute to *The Other Side*. Address any inquiries or responses to:

*The Other Side Magazine*  
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The opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editorial staff, or even in some cases, the writers.

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Tales of an American Lost in Cameroon by David Sperry pg 18

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# Tattoo

by Kim Gilmore

*When I first started to write an article on tattoos, I had a big theory about how they are becoming more and more common because we find ourselves less and less able to control our realities. In the technology driven age of the sound byte, our present seems less and less stable, and we have to process information and quickly move onto the next major world event, brought to us as it occurs from CNN and the other news networks. To get a tattoo then would be to embrace a permanency we find ourselves unable to reach otherwise.*

So much for theories. What I was met with when I started asking people at Pitzer about why they got tattoos was a vast assortment of reasons and answers. First of all, a lot of people that have tattoos don't like answering the question in the first place. "Because I wanted to. I didn't get it for anybody to look at. It's not for display that's for sure. It's not for people to window shop on my shoulder. I don't have to look at it I can feel it. I just know it's there."

Many people weren't happy about being bombarded with this question. After asking one individual about the implications the tattoo possibly could have on her personal perception of herself and on her overall outlook on life, she responded, with a strange look, "I have no idea."

Then, there were contradictory explanations from people I may have presumed would have the same answers.

It may be true that in general, men and women get them for different reasons, that people with the same occupations are influenced by some of the same values and end up getting similar designs, etc. But it is also true that I didn't have the skills or the means by which to try to adequately pattern them. I realized that I would do better to let people speak for themselves.

Some people feel that a tattoo is something personal, that they don't have to explain or justify. "I just felt like it. It's an impulse... I wanted something that I really liked. It's not that they mean anything it's just that I really liked it. Not the way they look on me, just the way the moon looks."

"I had to trust somebody I've never seen. I was just putting myself into this butcher's hands. So it was very scary. But I liked it too. (Do you think of your tattoo as a public symbol or a personal decoration?) Can it be a personal symbol? That's what it is. Oh, and fuck my boyfriend who hates my tattoo."

Another person I asked implied that, by getting her tattoo, she may have been emulating what she found interest-

ing in other people. "I got a tattoo because I like tattoos. It's something kind of rebellious. It's leading, it makes you wonder. It awakens my curiosity in other people."

I thought most people would have a very long drawn out rationale about why they got tattoos, what it meant for them, and how it signified a major change in the future of the world.

(Why did you get a tattoo?) "Because I thought it would look cool."

But mostly, the reasons why people at Pitzer get tattoos, if they care to verbalize them at all, cannot be compacted into a single explanation. "I had been thinking about it for a long time. And I didn't know of a reputable tattoo joint... and I was still having doubts about it, and (my friend) said 'I know this great place in Fullerton, I'll take you there. Let's do it.' I was searching for a reason to get a tattoo, something really important. And I don't think there is one. I think basically what it needs is some intuitive recklessness that pushes you, that says go do it anyway. I'd like to be a writer so I like the idea of having the symbol for creativity on my back."

"I think we all have our own reasons to get tattoos... Other people might have really good reasons to get their tattoos. I didn't happen to, I just thought it was interesting and I didn't want to leave California, I'm from the East Coast, I didn't want to leave California without trying it, so I just said, 'what the hell.'"

"I kind of like having it on my back. (Why do you like having it somewhere where you can't see it?) Well, it's not so much where I can't see it... I just like the symbolism of having it on your back, you're kind of carrying that symbol. It's not so much decorative, as some



sort of weight or responsibility...but not like a burden."

I also somehow came up with the idea that if people got multiple tattoos, they might have meant varying things, but still would have had the same motives behind them. "I got all of them for different reasons. The first one was spontaneous...and I had wanted a tattoo for a long time and I just thought



It'd be a cool thing to do. I was only sixteen I think it was like this rebellious thing. I thought I was all cool. The second one... you become addicted to getting them. I wanted a second one and I just saw a really cool design and just went with it. I thought it was a nice bit of self-expression. For the third one, I was just bored. I needed a little change,

and that did it for me... I don't think I'll ever get another one, three's enough."

The people that I talked to represent a very small percent of the population, and don't touch on major groups of individuals that might choose designs that reflect a sense of identification with a larger group. Mostly, they were people that acted out of personal concerns. "It symbolizes part of where I'm from, as well as things that I value

and care about."

It seemed to me that tattoos have been becoming a bigger and bigger part of "popular culture." Perhaps they are even, as some recent magazine articles have suggested, acceptable. One person with visible tattoos said that, conversely, he had experienced overall dismay from the general public. "For the most part the moral majority would say that no tattoos is enough tattoos."

Perhaps, though, it is unfair to try to give meanings to things based upon how the mainstream media perceives them. Because those are, finally, only perceptions, and are probably far too narrow to adequately define expression. The moral of all this is that unskilled people should try not to go into an experiment expecting certain answers. That is an easy way to eliminate a subject's voice. (And to take away the rights we all have to keep our personalities unpublicized and uncommodified.) Besides, our preconceived answers are often wrong anyway.

(P.S. Please practice safe tattooing. We all know that needles equal danger if not properly sterilized.) □

## COMMUNICATION

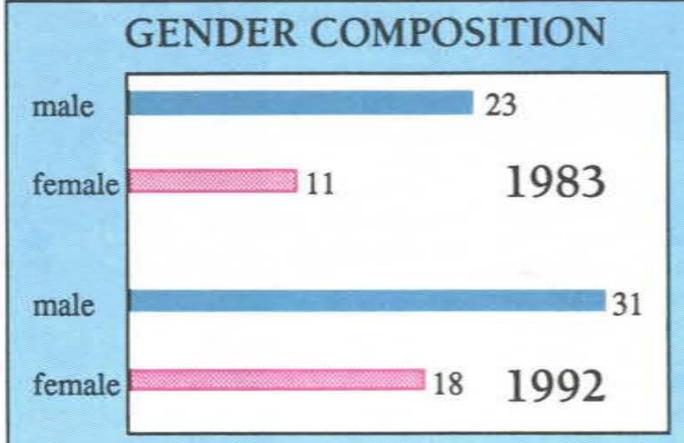
## BREAKDOWN

By Andrew Starbin

What is the first image or impression that pops into your mind when you see or hear the phrase "Board of Trustees?" One might conjure up a vision of a cold, crusty collection of suits squabbling over finances while, simultaneously, enjoying a five-star banquet. Perhaps you would picture a group composed entirely of males; a supposition that could certainly be reinforced by the messages of television. Maybe the answer is "complete disinterest." You would lump the "board" into a nebulous category labeled "the administration"; a category that assumes the physical characteristics of a barrier, blocking student freedoms and impervious to student interests and ideas. I would suggest that this last impression is the most dominant on the Pitzer campus. Recent events, such as the Alexander Hall takeover and the creation of the Liberation through Education movement, in combination with well established feelings of uncertainty and distrust clearly demonstrate that students and administrators inhabit two, distinct spheres.

When I was first thinking about this article, I had a pretty straight forward premise. I wanted to find out about the board. Who they were, what their function was, and how much impact they had on our school were the questions that I wanted to answer. But larger issues soon presented themselves. Are there effective ways for students and administrators to communicate on this campus? Is there a system in place, and are both sides taking full advantage of that system? In any communication system there must be movement in two, equal directions. That is not the case at the present time, and we all need to understand why.

First, let me dispel some of the erroneous impressions.



I found the members of the board to be a concerned, caring group—and one that was fairly diverse as well. Their commitment to this school is not to be taken lightly: each person is elected to a three year term, and with that responsibility comes the expectation of making, each year, a minimum gift of \$10,000. From the beginning, finances are ever-present worries on the peoples' minds. You may be surprised, though, at how that concern manifests itself. The board's "obsession with money" revolves around solvency, increasing endowment, and making more aid available to a larger number of students. Indeed, keeping tabs on each other's gift-giving (failure to make a gift is not grounds, in itself, for removal) creating special perks or luxuries, and other petty activities never see the light of day.

This mindset relates directly to the specific duties of the board: the hiring and firing of the President, fund-raising, and insuring that the school is both fiscally sound and "run in an appropriate and good way for the students." It was very telling to me that the board members, who don't have the authority to interfere in the academic arena, are the ones who can be sued should the school fall into bankruptcy. Conceivably, they would have everything to lose and "nothing to gain." However, input and understanding are achieved via the sub-committee system. When meetings occur (presently 5 times a year, though this may decrease), reports emanate from various groups: budget, investment, academic, student, development, and composition and procedures. Two deserve special attention: the composition and procedures committee, which is in charge of finding new members, and the student life committee, which meets in Holden. If given the proper attention and focus (by both sides), these are dependable instruments for creating change or airing grievances. They are direct channels, immune to the virus of bureaucracy that plagues most administrative endeavors.

Those are the basic workings as I understand them, but why not let the members, themselves, tell you what their roles are? I prepared a survey and sent it to all of the trustees: 35 or so active trustees, and the life members, who do not enjoy a vote but are historically important. Some stressed the business/financial responsibilities: "The board of directors is responsible for policy direction and fiscal soundness. It chooses the CEO of the organization, monitors performance, and determines financial direction." Another commented that, "The most important thing is to raise money, then set policies and oversee the finances." At the tail end of that statement came, interestingly, "...and be a sounding

board to the administration." Some members, however, stressed other elements. For instance, one person felt that, "the board gives the institution leadership and direction." This was reflected in another comment, "We offer advice and counsel to the President and senior administrators." One person corralled all of the duties into one word: "oversight."

The most interesting responses usually involved a combination of all of the duties. One member stated that, "if the school is operating at equilibrium, raising funds is the most important [role]." They did not describe what that equilibrium was or the process that would have produced it. Perhaps the most interesting comment made was this, "The major role is fundraising and community outreach. Secondary is a reality check for the 'real' world vs. academia." I was startled by that adversarial comparison, and the dissonance that it seems to represent. Who inhabits this nether world of academia? If the board stands as a separate, dose of "reality," does that, then, create a common bond amongst the faculty, students, and even the administration?

Another question that I asked was, "If you could choose anyone, who would you suggest to be the 'perfect' member for the Pitzer board and why?" The catch phrases here were "rich" and "forward thinking." One person was of the opinion that "no one's perfect." Still, some specific individuals were cited: Michael Ovitz of C.A.A. ("intelligent, brilliant, rich, liberal, resourceful, not bound by convention"), Frank Ellsworth ("prudent, fiscally sound, egalitarian ideas"), Eleanor Roosevelt ("for her brilliance and humanitarian spirit"), Lynn Harris ("an alum who was on the board several years ago—I believe that she is an attorney and I've always admired her thinking"), President Bill Clinton ("influential in every way, would attract donors and other leaders"), Colin Powell ("well respected person of color who could probably generate a lot of interest in and money for the college"). Along with General Powell's recommendation came a proviso: that he "be interested and involved in the 'Pitzer' type of education."

Other questions were designed to "flesh out" the trustees. I asked, "what other boards or similar functions have you participated on?" Here, the responses were particularly varied: the Music Center, Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Philharmonic, the Griffith Park Observatory Board, Human Options (a shelter for battered women in Orange County), Designing Women (the main support group for the art institute of Southern California), two editorial review boards for professional journals, a federal advisory board,

and the Beverly Hills and Los Angeles Bar Associations were all represented. There were also references to hospital organizations (the Speech, Hearing, and Lynn Sage Breast Cancer boards at Northwestern, and the USC med. school) and educational establishments (the Boy Scouts, the California Student Aid Commission, two national boards for university based centers, and several schools).

It was not until the final question, "What changes would you like to see?" that the communication issue began to present itself (or perhaps it was even earlier than this: of 47 questionnaires sent, only 12 were returned). Some members, through their responses, made the link explicitly: "More student-trustee communication", "more college activities involving trustees," "more access," and "more attendance during board meetings of the members."

Other members raised the issue in a more subtle fashion: "[I would like to see] a better understanding, [by] the entire community, of budgetary realities and how the demands in the budget limit various groups' achievement of goals." Along these lines came the statement, "more appreciation from the students of Pitzer's sharing governance." There were members who wanted to see "more minority and female academicians and trustees," "more alums and people of color on working groups," and "more support for President Massey." Are any of these changes possible under the current system? If the answer is "yes," then how can all of the groups involved voice their opinions?

I will begin with the actual board meetings. I attended one on March 8th, my second in three and a half years at Pitzer. Compared to the rest of the student body, it seems, that is a pretty good record. There are usually fewer than ten students and faculty in attendance at the meetings. At the March 8th gathering, the only other students there were attached to a specific committee (Dean of Students search, Dean of Faculty search) and therefore had an "operational function" (arguably so did I—gathering data for this piece). Many of the members and faculty with whom I spoke wanted me to clearly state that "the meetings are open to students, and that [we have] committees on which students are actively participating." I can't help but feel, though, that this will largely be ignored, just as the student government office, student senate, and other avenues are also ignored (including the school's newspaper, the so called "voice of the student body," which has not received a letter with only one more issue to go). Clearly, the bulk of the student population remains separate and apart from any form of administrative contact. It is therefore legitimate to wonder how the students can truly understand the intricacies of a



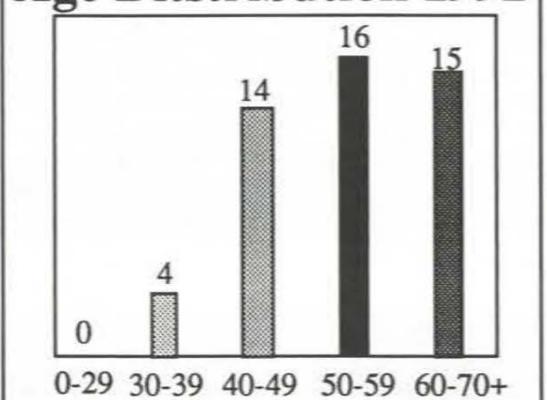
problem or how the administration can feel the intensity and desire of student thoughts, if there is no interaction between the two.

Just as important as "who is missing," is the question of, "what is being said?" What are the impressions that the board members are getting, and are they accurate? I happened to be sitting in on a special meeting, where the members were dispersed among students and faculty. An event had been organized, where new faculty members would meet the trustees and discuss their impressions of the school, what subjects they teach, and so on. The professor at my table made the interesting remark that, going in, she had been warned of "an ethos of Pitzer as a place of individuality." We were discussing student-teacher interaction and communication. I asked her how she found student participation in the classroom, specifically classes with over thirty people. She stated that, contrary to the warning, students were very involved and she was quite happy with the amount of interaction. It was sometimes necessary to break the class into small groups, but on the whole ideas came forth pretty easily. Both she and the members at my table agreed that student involvement was not a major concern.

My experiences here leave me dubious to that impression, and an incident later that week reinforced my suspicions. Just before spring break, I entered my class which should include fifty other people (about 37 are Pitzer students). When everyone is in attendance there are not enough seats to go around, but that day (as was the case for 90% of the semester) half of the seats were empty. The professor handed back papers which he felt were really substandard. He felt that our effort had been poor, the instructions had not been followed, and that the probable cause was a failure to show up to class. Although he stated that those who needed to hear that the most were probably absent, he asked us what had gone wrong and how things could be changed. When no one responded, he simply dismissed us after only ten minutes.

Obviously, in this instance, the interaction described at my table at the meeting did not exist. I don't know whether or not the Pitzer student body is too "individualistic." I am concerned that the board members, and perhaps the administration, are proceeding through false assumption. They may be hearing one thing, while in actuality, an entirely different situation exists and this can be true of many aspects beyond class participation and student involvement. The students are not

## Age Distribution 1992



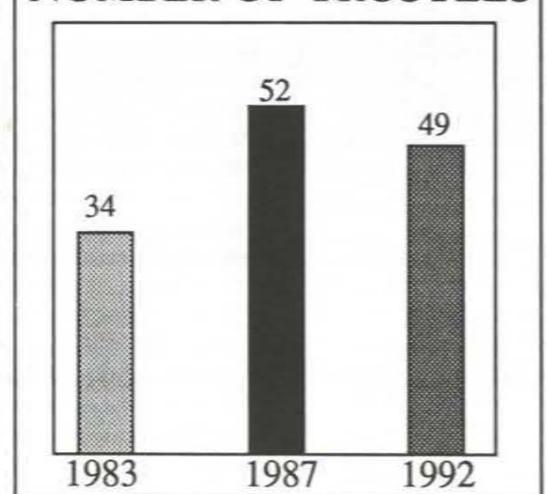
there to offer their version of "the truth," and the board members are given impressions which cannot be verified (because they are not there to see it happen) and which may, in fact, be wrong. If this is the case, then I would find it both dangerous and terribly frustrating to make policy under these conditions.

So, we have witnessed problems of "lack of input" and of "misrepresentation." I propose a few changes. At the moment, the board system operates under the assumption that communication ought to go through the President and not directly to the board. I feel that direct channels are vitally important, and at least one should be created. One already mentioned, the student life committee, should receive more attention. I have heard complaints of "not enough student involvement" and "trustees not being there frequently enough." Both problems, it seems, can be easily repaired. I don't believe that the number of meetings should be reduced, and I would like to see more members on the various committees (even on a part time basis). Both the Dean of Students search and Dean of Faculty search committees lack board members. The trustees and the students must become more active, and work in concert through the various means available (i.e. through traditional mechanisms and others emanating from within the student community).

Perhaps the greatest positive change needs to occur in board meeting attendance. This is a critical time for the trustees. At the moment that this is being written, two members have left. A search is in progress now for ten new members, and there is a keen emphasis on selecting persons from marginalized groups. A chance for a new direction is here, if the system is used to its potential. The formulation and creation of policy can be affected, as the five college policy on sexual offenses is attempting to demonstrate. At the very least, though, these meetings can be a valuable source of information. By attending one meeting, I gained a better understanding of: the total operating expenses of the college (almost \$22 million, while our surplus is \$5,625), the breakdown of the combined faculties of the Claremont Colleges (42% of the professors teach humanities, but 55% of the students get their degrees in the social sciences and are supported by only 32% of the total faculty), and how our system compares with others around the nation (we have almost as many language instructors as Princeton, yet Princeton offers their students courses in 36 languages). I saw

(Continued on page 29)

## NUMBER OF TRUSTEES



# The Media's Swing Between the Two King Cases

## Preparation for King Verdicts Gains Urgency



Look, for instance, at the way the racial aspects of the arson and looting were covered in the early days of April 1992, as opposed to the way that they are covered now. Immediately following the verdict and the riots, reporters tended to cover the story as a matter of blacks and whites. In the past year, the newspapers have learned to take better account of Angelenos' ethnic variety.

The print coverage now tends to make note of the issues as they affect our Latino and Asian-American citizenry, as well as the African-American and Anglo angles. This can only be considered an improvement over the initial falsifying simplification.

Secondly, the print press has learned during the past year to portray Rodney King as a human being—or, at least, they've made notable progress in that direction. Do you remember when he was referred to only as "motorist

How has the press coverage changed, you might ask, between the two Rodney King cases? Nothing ever stands still, in this culture, and those of us who follow the media have noted a variety of changes in the past year: some of them possibly good, and others pretty definitely bad. Let's start by distinguishing the three daily media — print, radio, and TV — because people have a tendency to lump them all together, and that tends to obscure some crucial distinctions. In its coverage of the issues surrounding the trial of the officers who were videotaped in the act of beating Rodney King, I'd say that over the past year, the print media are now doing a better job.

Rodney King" and we were told repeatedly that he had probably been under the influence of "angel dust"? Thanks largely to the fact that the prosecution in the present federal case put King himself on the stand, and let him tell his own story, readers around the world have a much clearer image of the touchingly vulnerable human being whom we've all watched too many times in the videotaped beating.

In the same year that has elapsed since the first verdict, however, the quality of TV news has gotten noticeably worse. TV enjoys two inexhaustible powers to captivate our attention, both of which are denied to print: the power of moving pictures with sound; and the power to show us something "live," as it happens. These are great virtues, of course, which we rightly value — but they can be abused in order to capture our attention. What's happened with TV news in the past year — as anyone knows who's been watching — is that we are getting more and more freeway chases aired live from pursuing helicopters.

These chases grab viewers because of their actuality, and because they have the compelling visual quality of a familiar video game. But they are completely devoid of any information, of course, and they put the viewer in the police perspective of pursue and arrest without any sense of what or why. In

If you're driving down the freeway and there's been an accident on the other side, it's natural for you to slow down to take a look. But if you're asked what's important to you in life, you're not going to say that it's road kill!

fact, live TV short-circuits the chance for any rational thought. But on TV the visual equivalent of Gresham's Law kicks in; just as bad currency drives out the good, bad TV journalism uses up what precious little time there used to be on the air for thought.

The reason that bad TV drives out the good is the crushing obligation to get ratings on TV. Newspapers are sold largely by subscription, and don't have to handle every story in the most sensational way possible to sell or to stay alive. But the TV viewer is constantly tempted to switch channels, and even the TV news program must do everything it can to keep you from wanting to do that. The result is that on TV we have a news delivery system that is ratings-driven — whose sole purpose, that is, like the rest of commercial television, is to deliver eye-balls to advertisers.

And the result of that obli-gation is a news delivery system that gives us not what we need to know, but what we'll watch. If you're driving down the freeway and there's been an accident on the other side, it's natural for you to slow down to take a look. But if you're asked what's important to you in life, you're not going to say that it's road kill! Yet because of the ratings-driven environment in which it's forced to operate, TV news gives us the visual

equivalent of a steady diet of road kill. And it's gotten worse in the past year, because the TV news environment has gotten even more competitive. More of the local stations — KCAL, KCOP, and KTLA among others — are devoting more time to news broadcasts now than they were a year ago, and they're also having to compete with more cable services, and more videotapes! Everybody wants you to watch, and so the TV news gets more and more sensational. (It's not just the news, of course, but the televised culture in general that's being twisted into new extremes of sensationalism by the heightened competitive pressures. Is it a proud year for our culture when we have three major docudramas on the Amy Fisher story?)

While print has been trying valiantly to understand the verdict in the first case, and

print. Radio is also in the middle in the sense that, since the first Rodney King trial, as a medium it has neither improved nor declined in the quality of its coverage.

Ra-fur-

dio the straddles the gap between print and TV in terms of the depth to which it can pursue any given topic. Print gives its writers space, and at least a little time in which to reflect on events, while TV gives no one any time for reflection at all. Talk is cheap on the radio, and so that is now where people turn to sound off — to vent their emotions on the AM call-in shows, just as they tune in to hear music that mollifies them on FM. Curiously, just as Aristotle said 23 centuries ago that there are three categories of rhetorical appeal — the intellectual, the emotional, and the charismatic or authoritative — so our three media seem to specialize accordingly. TV gives us the instant impact of the event; radio allows people to vent their emotions; and in the following day or week, print eventually comes along to allow for the intellectual analysis of the event to take place. What Aristotle calls pathos, logos, and ethos turns out to be what distinguishes radio, print, and TV.

Perhaps the greatest difference between the media's coverage of the two trials — the state and the federal — is that the story has gone, in the intervening year, from a local story to a global story. Everyone had seen George Halliday's video the first time — well, nearly everyone. One of the jurors in the federal case said he never saw that tape before the second trial began. But the state trial itself was not that closely followed outside of California. The two nights of fires and looting last April

'The people in the community can get edgy hypothesizing what's happening. It's like the unknown is worse than the known.'

LAURIE LEVISON  
Loyola University law professor

the arson and looting that resulted, TV has been showing the police in combative training maneuvers and quoting gang members who sound eager for new opportunities for violence. It's hard not to begin wondering whether a news delivery system that is ratings-driven and commercial in its shape and form can ever do justice to our society.

In the middle between print and TV, in more ways than one, stands radio. Radio can reach us "live," like TV; but it's restricted to words without the benefit of moving pictures, as is

a ga-

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know, but what we'll watch. If you're driving down the freeway and there's been an accident on the other side, it's natural for you to slow down to take a look. But if you're asked what's important to you in life, you're not going to say that it's road kill! Yet because of the ratings-driven environment in which it's forced to operate, TV news gives us the visual

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*Under the current ratings-driven regime, the media and the press are obliged to show people the worst that humanity has to offer. Another of the cynical but perhaps still accurate slogans about current news is that "If it bleeds, it leads."*

changed all that, and riveted the world's attention on this story.

The result is the formidable array of live broadcasting technology that assembled outside the Roybal Courthouse in Los Angeles during every day of the federal trial. And because only the defense attorneys and the defendants — that is, the police officers and the lawyers paid to defend them — would speak to reporters after each day's session, the audiovisual public got a very slanted impression of what was happening inside. This was much less of a problem in the state trial, when the cameras that were allowed in the courtroom provided a more balanced version of what was actually happening. Print reporters, again, were unswayed by the one-sided visuals of the defense's spin control, and so

trol, pro-  
vided a  
more accurate  
count.

TV news writers are trained to "write to the picture." That means that a story's importance derives directly from the quality of the visuals that are available to document it. One of the rules of local TV news, in fact, goes like this: "If there's a fire, it'll be covered. If it's a fire at night, it'll air." In the present case, the local news directors have not been able to resist the easy urge to keep airing visuals of Rodney King being beaten over and over, now nearly two years after the event. And in many cases, they are still playing it over and

over in slow motion.

I've been arguing, in a number of national publications and on public television, that slow motion radically distorts our experience of any filmed or taped event, and that it is one of the primary ways in which the Simi Valley jury was misled. The theoretical underpinnings of this argument are extensive, but they have to do with the fact that the temporal dimension — that is, time itself — is as crucial to reality as are the spatial dimensions of height, width, and breadth. There is, furthermore, a detectable hypnotic element to slow-motion replays, as you can tell by noticing how widespread is their use in TV commercials for everything from breakfast cereals to shampoo to banks.

our best  
rid of  
what threatens it?

Under its current organization, we have a news delivery system — call it the media or the press —

that people mistrust and resent. Why is that? Perhaps because, under the current ratings-driven regime, the media and the press are obliged to show people the worst that humanity has to offer. Another of the cynical but perhaps still accurate slogans about current news is that

"If it bleeds, it leads." A system that is detached from the need to grab viewers, that is detached from the obligation to deliver audiences to advertisers, and that would therefore be freed from the duty to be as sensational as possible, might well serve its culture much better. The scandal over Dateline NBC's falsified truck explosion exposes as clearly as the rest of these examples how our information-delivery system has been betrayed by the profit motive, lured away from fact and into the waiting arms of entertaining fiction.

Unless and until we can find some way to emancipate the tube from its enslavement to the commercial, ratings-driven beast, print will stay the only medium that minds its p's and q's — while TV's only interest will remain the tease. □

Brian Stonehill  
Associate Professor of English  
Coordinator of Media Studies  
Pomona College  
campus ext. 2218

'Stacey Koon makes or breaks this case. If the jury believes Stacey Koon, we all walk. If the jury doesn't believe Stacey Koon, we're all in trouble.'

MICHAEL P. STONE  
Lawyer for Officer Laurence M. Powell

we allow the weeds to grow rank, or do we take a hand in encouraging what we care about, and doing to get

our best  
rid of  
what threatens it?

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that people mistrust and resent. Why is that? Perhaps because, under the current ratings-driven regime, the media and the press are obliged to show people the worst that humanity has to offer. Another of the cynical but perhaps still accurate slogans about current news is that

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# Monkey Man Speaks

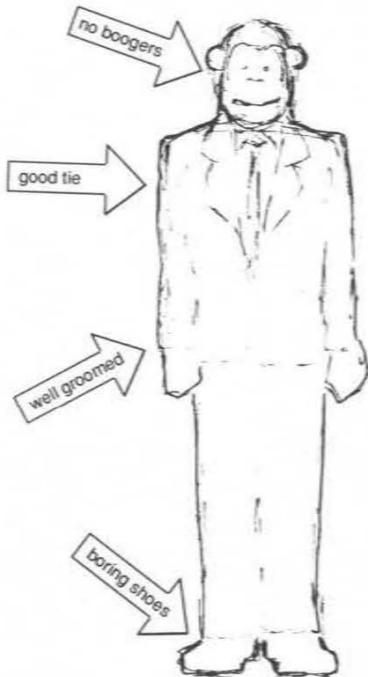
by Alfie Alschuler

I am a well trained monkey. I am wearing the right clothes, my shoes are polished, my handshake is firm and there are no boogers hanging from my nose or other signs of poor personal hygiene. I smile and tell him that I am very glad to be here and I'm happy he has taken the time to see me. He looks me over. He runs down the mental checklist. I am well groomed, have a good handshake, good taste in ties, but my shoes are boring, at least there are no boogers. Five out of six isn't bad.

He asks, "Why do you want this job?" Immediately I am confronted with a moral dilemma. I can either answer honestly and maintain my integrity and immediately blow my chances for getting the job, or give him the answer he wants to hear. To answer honestly seems silly. Why would I tell him how I really feel if I know that would be the end of his consideration of me as the candidate of choice? I decide to go along with the game and give him the answer he wants, and in so doing sacrifice my integrity.

I think to myself that I don't really want this job, it sounds stressful and the company is in the city (I don't want to live in the city). I do want the job because I am qualified and therefore I can get it. This means a paycheck, health insurance and stability. I reply, "The opportunities this job offers dovetail perfectly with my interests and experience. I am very excited about the prospect of working here. Blah blah blah."

His next question is about as surprising as the dining hall being open



for breakfast. "Why should we hire you for this job, as opposed to one of the other 900 qualified applicants?" I realize that someone else is probably more qualified than I am and also more deserving of the position. They probably shouldn't hire me because I'm not very excited about the job. I answer with conviction, "I have unique qualities that I can offer this institution. My ability to...blah blah blah."

After I finish talking, my confidence level has increased. I feel good about how my response sounded. His nods of agreement and apparent pleasure buoy my confidence. At the same time a hole in my stomach has developed. I have allowed myself to distort the truth. I have molded myself into the cookie cutter dimensions of the perfect applicant. My integrity and self-esteem have been forced down to places which I can only reach when I take the stupid tie off that I'm wearing.

He sees a well polished performance, a mastery of all the unspoken rules and mores of an interview. His mental checklist has been running. He

thinks I communicate well, I am very well matched with the position offered, I am confident, and sincere. He believes that I am a great person for the job. He doesn't know how wrong he is. I did communicate well, but the message had nothing to do with what I felt. That makes me a liar and a sell-out. Who wants someone like that for an employee? He certainly doesn't.

Suppose I had chosen to be honest and forthcoming with my real thoughts and personality. I would have lost the job before the interview began. First off, I would have worn sweat pants and a tee-shirt. I would have questioned his questions and explained to him that it was my strength and weakness to lend a critical eye to everything. He would have left the interview in shock, dismayed at my gall and inappropriateness. It would not occur to him that I was an individual with integrity and honesty. A person who was willing to stand up for what he believes in.

On the other hand, he may not want such a moral individual. Perhaps the interview process is indeed effective. It allows him to establish who is the best ass-kisser. This may be the quality that will lead to success in the world of business.

Either way I question the endeavor I am undertaking. A successful job hunt will result in the loss of what I value more than anything else in myself. Performing a good interview and securing a job means denying my own integrity and honesty. As a result I have decided to be honest in my interviews. This conviction has already resulted in the loss of a chance for one job. At the end of May I could be jobless, but I'll have my integrity and self-esteem.

Everyone will face these choices eventually. They may not realize they have a choice, but they do. I'm not advocating blunt honesty over selling of the soul, the issues and situations are never that clear. I just hope that people survive the ordeal with some self-respect. I have certainly struggled. □

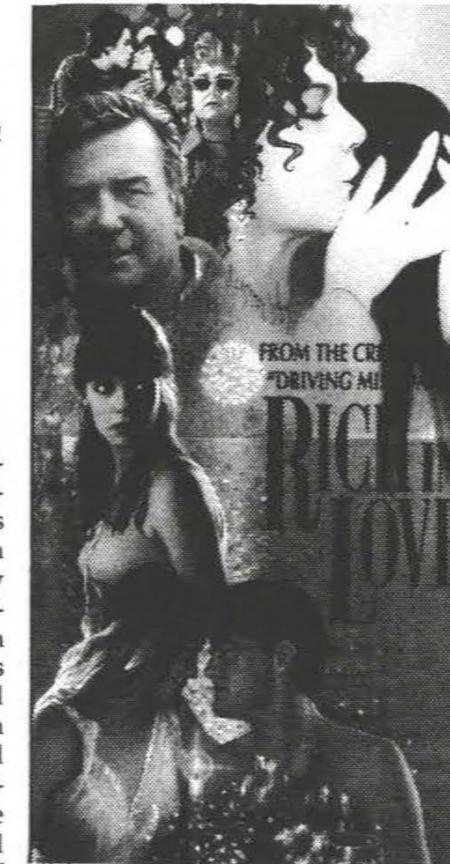
# A Movie, Rich in Love

by Joanna Garfein

*Sometimes in life we are thrown an unexpected curve. In "Rich in Love" there is no apparent distinction between reality and the movies. An appropriate phrase here would be "You just never know."*

"Rich in Love" is simply a heart-warming tale of family and relationships, interwoven with the usual twists in plot. For any of you who have seen "Man On The Moon," this is strikingly similar at close glance. From the creators of "Driving Miss Daisy," this film is full of charm and nostalgia, as well as a strong dose of sentimentality. It could easily be labeled a family film, as "Rich in Love" explores the experiences and disappointments of love across the generations of one family. But this is done in an effective fashion, and I found myself curious about the outcome of the characters' interaction with each other. Quite often I find that movies lack relationship development, and this film successfully portrays the trials and tribulations of love in a realistic manner, evident through believable characters.

Veteran actors Albert Finney and Jill Clayburgh are the separated parents of Kathryn Erbe, a newcomer to the screen who gives an accurate and convincing performance as the confused and hormonal daughter. "Twin Peaks" actor Kyle MacLachlan is the smooth, emotionally ambivalent husband to Suzy Amis, the irritable older sibling. Alfre Woodard ("Grand Canyon" and "Passion Fish") provides a liveliness to the film in her small part as a friend of the family, as does Piper Laurie, Finney's new interest. And Ethan Hawke ("Alive") gives a refreshingly familiar teen awkwardness to the



film, as Erbe's boyfriend. "Rich in Love" handles sexual relations with taste, and leaves a lot to the imagination, which is a nice change for the film industry.

Kathryn Erbe's character kept me wondering, and her fluttering emotions and reactions allowed for a watchable film. This is not a "chick film," nor is it a tearjerker, but it makes you feel good and will probably stir something inside of you and make you think. I wouldn't recommend "Rich in Love" if you're looking for an exciting experience at the movies. It is a romantic drama with a fresh perspective about life and love, and a touching story filled with sentiment and reality.

If you want to know the truth, I was going to also review the movie "Matinee." However, it was, at its best moments, not high quality entertainment. I saw it at a drive-in with some friends to add to the novelty of watching a

movie where the characters are watching a movie. I don't think that this movie would be a hit at even a dry-cleaning convention. The only highlight of the film is Kellie Martin (Life Goes On), and it's unfortunate that she isn't more visible on the big screen and beyond the television drama series.

And as for the Academy Awards, all I have to say for "Unforgiven" and Clint Eastwood is...SYMPATHY VOTE! Anyone who hasn't seen "The Crying Game" or doesn't know the big secret should still definitely go to see it. Rent "My Cousin Vinny" and enjoy Marisa Tomei's comedic performance for which she received a Best Supporting Actress Oscar. Or simply venture out of Claremont in search of "Passion Fish" or "Love Field."



So until next time...in the infamous words of my favorite women and yours, the Indigo Girls: when you're looking back at your life in retrospect, have a good laugh. Don't let the weight of the world be in your hands. Your actions will follow you full circle round. Plant a seed and watch it grow. Oh, and treat yourself to some Ben & Jerry's ice cream. Have a slumber party. Find a room of your own and write fiction (it worked for Virginia Woolf). □

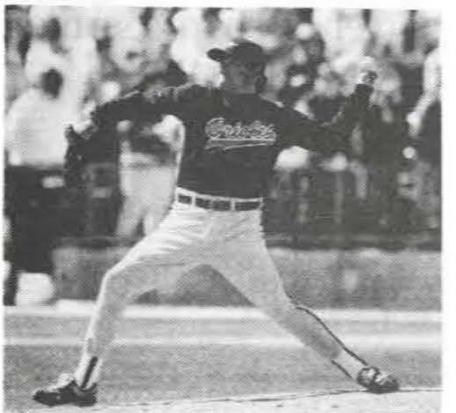
# SPORTS

by David Stolber

A fan of the Swastika, Marge Schott (Cincinnati Reds owner) demanded justice when her poor, helpless dog was unfairly banned from the Cincinnati Reds' ballpark. Although it was a noble effort, Ms. Schott's behavior indicates to me that her regard and compassion toward her dog far exceeds that of her fellow man.

This is an odd numbered year (1993). This is great news to Kansas City Royal hurler Brett Saberhagen, who is 74-30 in odd-numbered years since 1985. Bet the farm; Saberhagen will once again have a big, odd year.

**Comeback Kids:** Fernando "the Grande" Valenzuela is back. His cheeks look a bit puffier, the pace on his pitches may have slowed slightly, but Fernando has found a home on the Baltimore



Fernando Valenzuela finds a home with the Baltimore Orioles.

Oriole pitching staff, after running off 14 scoreless innings this spring. After hitting machine Wade Boggs hit .86 points below his career batting average last season in Bean town, he knew drastic measures were necessary. The most superstitious player in baseball is now

fitted with a pair of glasses a new team (the Yankees) and a guarantee that he will hit over .300. I would think twice before doubting a man who hit .345 over 10 seasons and won five batting titles.

**The big questions entering the 1993 Baseball Season**

Which team will finish second, after the Atlanta Braves run away and hide from the rest of the pack in the National League West?

Do Dave Stewart and Paul Molitor have anything left in their tanks or will the Blue Jays' off season facelift prove unproductive?

Will a fast start by the New York Yankees keep "the Boss" from tampering and tinkering with his ball club, or does George Steinbrenner's arrival simply indicate the Bronx Zoo is again alive and kicking in the Big Apple.

Will Eric Davis and Darryl Strawberry find baseball enjoyable again in Dodger Blue? Consequently, will Tommy Lasorda be able to ride off into the Dodger Blue sunset after this year a happy thin man instead of a sad fat man?

Will Bert Blyleven manage to catch onto another club and get his 300th victory?

Will the balls actually fly higher and farther in Colorado's new, airy ballpark?

Will Bo be Bo again?

Will "Doc" Gooden be "Doc" Gooden again?

Will the usually thrifty Houston Astros make their surprising, off season acquisitions and investments pay dividends this season (they signed pitchers Doug Drabek and Greg Swindell and re-signed Craig Biggio, Steve Finley and Ken Caminiti to long-

term deals)?

**The NBA Rookie Watch:** The quest for the Rookie of the Year Award is a two man race. It's the Shaq, and his moments of domination mixed in with spurts of recklessness vs. the steady, composed play of Mr. Mourning in Charlotte. These monsters both are putting up huge, MVP type numbers, but there is



Darryl Strawberry will be key to the Dodger's success.

only one "Shaq." With all that's riding on him, the NBA would be brain dead to give the award to anyone other than O'Neal, especially with the departure of both Bird and Magic. M.J. may be the NBA now, but nobody lives forever.

The Shaq is the future in the NBA and deservedly so. Hopefully, the aura of the Shaq will not detract from the quality play of other youngsters like Mourning, Tom Gugliotta, Christian Laettner and Clarence Weatherspoon. □

# The Other Side

## Calendar

### The Arts

Meg Rowntree

April 19-23

Reception for the Artist

Tuesday, April 20, 7-10pm  
Claremont Graduate School,  
East Gallery

Arleen Chikami

"veiled flesh"

April 26-30

Reception for the Artist  
Tuesday, April 27, 7-10pm  
Claremont Graduate School,  
East Gallery

Marc Pally

Diptychs 1985-1992

April 12-16

Reception for the Artist  
Tuesday, April 13, 7-10pm  
Claremont Graduate School

Rachel Learn

Paintings & Ceramics

April 5-10

Salathe Gallery

R. Emmett Suess

Grassworks

April 5-9

Claremont Graduate School,  
West Gallery

### Special Events

Friday, April 9

Balch Auditorium

Friday at Noon

Music of Brahms, Pasatieri,  
Nin, and Ginastera

Saturday, April 17

Bridges Auditorium

The Claremont Chamber  
Orchestra, The Concert Choir,  
Pomona College Choir, and  
community choirs

Hayden "The Creation"

Friday, April 30

Balch Auditorium

Fridays at Noon

Music of Beethoven  
and Debussy

Friday, April 30

Balch Auditorium

Graduate Recital

Angela Brand, conductor  
with members of the  
Claremont Chamber Orchestra

Music of Copland and  
Stravinsky

### Sports

Saturday, April 10

Women's Water Polo vs CMS 9am  
and vs UC San Diego 12 noon

and vs UC Redlands 4:30 pm

Softball vs Christ College 12 noon

Sunday, April 11

Men's Tennis vs Emory 2pm

Tuesday, April 13

Softball vs Pt. Loma 2pm

Wednesday, April 14

Women's Tennis vs Cal Lu. 2pm

Friday, April 16

Track invitational 10am

Saturday, April 17

Baseball vs Occidental 11am

Men's Tennis vs LaVerne 9:30am

Softball vs CMS 12 noon

Wednesday, April 21

Women's Tennis vs Cal Tech 2pm

Friday, April 23

Baseball vs LaVerne 3pm

Saturday, April 24

Softball vs Redlands 12 noon

Women's Tennis vs Alumni 1pm

Saturday-Sunday, April 24-25

Women's Waterpolo Tournament

Sunday, April 25

Baseball vs Alumni 12 noon

Wednesday, April 28

Women's Tennis vs CMS 2pm

# SHORTS

*John Bracken is currently studying in Costa Rica. He took some time out to drop us a line and give us his impression of the country. Thanks John.*

I've been most surprised by the degree of what might be called "cultural imperialism." I mean, I've seen more Bulls hat here than I do in Chicago. Television is dominated by bad programming from the states, such as Beverly Hills 90210, Cops, Rescue 911, and, yes, Saved By The Bell. I tell the brothers in my host family that I've never seen a high school as squeaky clean as the ones they see on T.V. They don't seem to care-- I guess it's nice to idolize someplace. Of course, "cultural imperialism" does have its benefits--like the weekly NBA games. However, Encino Man is the hottest thing in the movie theatres now.

I mean, forcing US culture on the Third World is one thing, but do they have to send so much crap? My seventeen year old host brother, Christian, loves Guns n' Roses, but isn't familiar with James Brown, Bob Dylan, or the Blues. My other brother, Fabian, while listening to one of my tapes last night, was astonished to find a Kid Frost song in which there was Spanish. He listened to it over and over again.

I'm going to Nicaragua soon. Hopefully, the US presence won't be as bad there. Not yet, anyway, or at least in a different form. I'm pretty sure they don't have any statues of US president in Managua, like the one of JFK that they have here in San Jose.

I was thrilled to hear of the victorious protest in Claremont at the beginning of February. Congratulations to all of you! And thank you to all the students: your participation and support, your struggle and risks, no matter the level of individual participation or degree of risk involved. Benefits all of us who were not able to join you. I think thanks should also be given to Lourdes Arguelles, R.W. Gilmore, and

José Calderon and all other professors who supported the struggle.

I had your victory in mind when I attended a talk by 1992 Nobel laureate Rigoberta Menchu at the University of Costa Rica. I was reminded of how the struggle for diversity and justice on campus is part and parcel of Rigoberta's heroism in Guatemala. The difference being the degrees of repression that the struggles face. I imagined what it would be like if Rigoberta were to appear in Claremont, how the schools would milk her appearance (and her struggle) for all it's worth. For example, pictures of her would probably appear in all admissions material for years. Surely the administration would be much quicker to embrace her and her internationally acclaimed movement than they are to acknowledge issues of diversity and justice in their own backyard.

**Amy Champ writes,**  
"Being in Zimbabwe has sparked the poetic beast in me." She wishes us all "bonne chance" on the rest of the semester and asked that we include one of her poems. Thanks for the letter Amy.

Township Night mu Zimbabwe  
Insular pajamas  
secure heat  
trapped by iron-barred windows  
bolted to keep out dogs  
barking.  
Rhumba music gyrates'  
despotically  
back to Zaire;  
a lone cricket's green chirping  
intensifies.

Printed like living room decor  
in Taos, New Mexico,  
cotton trousers  
cling to clammy kneecaps,  
fillin wiht schweet neat's nature  
fluid  
a river of sugar can lies  
that won't shut up  
through my white skin.

Creeks climbing  
up from last year's drought quench  
thirsty maize  
in Matabeleland.  
Women steal bucketfuls  
of end-times' days  
to drown fiery death.

The river rises  
with newly spilled rain  
from clean sun dried gourds  
hanging through the sky.  
Ancestors paint  
silhouettes of forgotten fathers  
on their smooth, round sides.

Clouds engulf the Southern Cross  
illuminating robbers  
stirring gravel lawns,  
jumping fences armed with broken  
glass.  
Death deters not  
the determined.

—Amy Champ

## Tales of an American Lost in Cameroon

by  
David Sperry

"Asiégo," I replied to the young woman who greeted me. As she slyly chuckled, however, I remembered the tonal nature of the village language. I imagined horrendous accent changing the meaning of my friendly greeting to the gravest of insults or a highly inappropriate sexual gesture. Luckily, I remembered that my white skin identified my as a foreigner and therefore an idiot. I was excused.

During my study abroad in Cameroon during the fall of 1991, experiences like these were far too common to have their significance recognized. Perhaps I've just been lazy, but I've finally decided to write something up about my time because it's been brewing in my head for so long. From the beginning, I must say that I describe in this article my own experiences in Cameroon and my own interpretations of those experiences. I will not venture to assume the opinions of other travelers there, and I will especially not say I understand how Cameroonian think. I might have, in some sense, a more enriched perspective than someone who hasn't been to Cameroon, but I won't venture to say I know how Americans think, so I'll never take that liberty with Cameroonian.

My most frequent conversational partner was my homestay father in the city of Dschang. We spent many hours in good-natured, heated argument on a variety of issues, especially dealing with African-Americans and the "nature" of women. In the many conversations I would have with my homestay father in Dschang, he constantly demanded the inside story on African-Americans and their views, attitudes, etc. This made me uncomfortable at first, because I am not a direct authority on the African-American experience by nature of my European-American descent. In many cases, however, I was certainly more informed about African-Ameri-



cans than he was, so I'd try to get him talking, and then dispel myths when I noticed them.

There were a lot of myths. Many of the images of African-Americans that reach Cameroon are romanticized one way or the other, thanks to the wonderful worldwide prominence of American television and film. On the one hand, there's the very popular *Cosby Show*, which, although it shows many of the positive aspects of a successful African-American family, doesn't deal much with issues of racism that African-Americans experience every day.

On the other extreme, there are Hollywood films which often portray African-Americans as criminals and as generally violent people. Even when quality television and film are taken out of their American context, their messages are taken to extremes, and the resulting image evolves that all African-Americans either enjoy rich lives in the suburbs or kill each other on the street. My homestay father had a theory that African-Americans had many frustrations and problems because they were taken from their homeland and their history was stolen from them. I agreed with him. He said that's

why they were so violent. I disagreed with him immediately. I tried to explain to him that when African-Americans are violent, it's usually in self-defense, or it's a result of oppressive socio-economic power structures. I don't think I ever convinced him, but I have a feeling he's still thinking about it.

We spent many more hours debating over women's rights, women's natures, women's capabilities, etc., etc. Again, I wondered at how quickly I took a fighting stance on issues which, in America, I would consider myself an ignorant source at best, misinformed at worst. I rarely entered fierce debates in the States, but from the first time

he argued that men are superior because of their physical strength, I found myself in the thick of it. It was also a running joke that even if basing superiority on physical abilities was appropriate, this man was very short and very scrawny, assuredly marking him as a deficient member of the human species. I never leveled this argument at him; I didn't think he would have found it as funny.

Whenever you're trying to understand anyone, you've got to remember that all people have biases in informing you about themselves. For the first month of my stay in Cameroon, I was living with a single Cameroonian man, and I didn't discover until I talked with many more Cameroonian women that the views he offered me on Cameroon were of a distinctly male flavor (along with his cooking, which quickly encouraged me to eat out). One of his favorite subjects was polygamy: men having multiple wives. He did offer an interesting explanation of the economic arrangements in polygamous families, although in his theories, the men still played the most important economic role. When I asked him if wives in polygamous marriages had relation-

ships outside the marriages, he vehemently denied it. In fact, when I asked his fiancée, in his presence, whether wives in polygamous marriages had boyfriends, she also denied it. When I asked the same question to a group of several women on the street, however, they said "Of course they have boyfriends." It is not as important to determine who is the most reliable source on the subject of polygamy as it is to recognize that all sources have their own interests, their own images to protect.

My first day in the village during my independent study, I walked to the market to get a bottle of water. When I reached the market, I was ambushed by a horde of children shouting "Tangan! Tangan!" I knew French pretty well by this point, but I knew this was a word in the village language, Ongoum. On returning to the house, I asked my homestay brother what Tangan meant. He said it meant "White Man". I said yeah, I guess it would, and felt really stupid. Immediately, however, I asked what the word was for "Small Black Child". He said it was "Tzindi". The next day, when I went to get my water, the same horde of children ran up and continued the fun of calling me "Tangan". Every time they said it, though, I returned at one of them "Tzindi! Tzindi!" They looked puzzled for a moment, and then wandered off and consulted among themselves. They would come up every once in awhile and call me Tangan again just to hear me mispronounce their language so they could laugh at me, but now I would laugh with them. We were now involved in a conversation instead of an American freak show.

This incident was important to me because it changed the way I saw those children by changing the way they saw me. I couldn't hope to learn the language of Ongoum in the three weeks that I spent in the village. What I let those children know was that I was capable of learning it. I wasn't locked up in the world of my Americanness to the extent that I couldn't speak with them and establish some communication. When I conducted my study of oral literature in the village, I considered it very important that for every

folktale I heard, I offered a tale of my own in return, either one that I had learned in Cameroon or an American one. The facilitation of understanding is necessarily a reciprocal process: you must give of yourself to yourself receive.

I learned valuable lessons listening not only to people, but also to the meanings behind my own experiences. The group of American students I was with in Cameroon was lopsided in its gender; there were nineteen women and six men. Our sectioned groups in the cities often were all-female or included a lone male. One night while in Bamenda, a medium-sized city in Northwestern Cameroon, just that happened. I was alone with nine women out for dinner. African cities, like all cities, can be very dangerous at night, especially if you're an obvious target. It's pretty hard to be an inconspicuous group of ten Americans in Central Africa, especially when you're all white, which we were.

As

we were walking down the street, a drunken horde of men came tearing up to our group, shouting at me that it wasn't fair that I had so many women, and that I would have to share them. They began grabbing the women in our group and trying to pull them away. Many things were flashing through my mind at this moment. Was it my duty to try to protect these female friends in my group because I was male? I am not a successfully violent person. The last fight I got in was in the seventh grade when my older brother hit me with a shoe. I used to play basketball in high school, but I didn't think setting a pick on them would do much good. I did manage to peel a few of them off, but luckily, one of the women managed to hail a cab which we stuffed all ten of us into to make a hasty retreat. Luckily, no one was hurt; we were all just pretty freaked out.

That experience had me thinking for days about what my role as a man in Cameroon was, and then about my role as a man back in America. I think my masculinity was noticed a lot more in Cameroon. It mattered more. I'm sure I'd fight to protect anyone I love, regardless of their gender, but putting my life on the line for someone merely because I'm male and she's female? I don't know. Should I have to do that

Like any valuable intellectual exercise  
(continued on page 29)

just because I'm a man? I can say that in America and have some people accept it. I don't think many people I met in Cameroon, men or women, would accept it. They'd think I was a coward. The same type of experience could have happened to me in America, but I don't think it would have held the same weight in my mind. When you're out of your native context, your self-definitions become remarkably free-floating, and you find yourself thinking things about yourself that you never would have expected. The more foreign the context, the more wild the thoughts.

Many of the women in our group experienced the same phenomenon. I saw a different type of feminism in Cameroon. Although there were many Cameroonian women active in the political processes, the driving question seemed to be "How can we be better wives and mothers?" They were well aware of the patriarchal socioeconomic structures that often complicated the lives of women, but they weren't as concerned with changing the traditional feminine roles as they were with performing those roles *better*. Again, I speak here of my own experiences and conversations with Cameroonian women. My relative status as a male undoubtedly shaped much of the information I received through conversation. One of the first questions asked by Cameroonian women to American women was "How many children do you have?" or "How many do you want to have?" I was rarely asked this question. A few of the American women said they didn't want any, and were met with stares of shock and disbelief. Children are seen as wealth and a blessing, so a woman not taking advantage of her reproductive abilities is in many ways seen as a traitor to her family and country. One of the worst fates a Cameroonian woman can have is to be sterile. A man can often get away with being sterile because the defining features of his gender are not reproductive abilities. Sterility is a blemish on male sexuality, but men can often shed this stigma by blaming the sterility on his wife, which works until the wife leaves him and has children with another man. I heard a few scandalous tales that followed this line.

# S H O R T F I C T I O N

"Call me later" she says, "Once you get out of class." A smile on her face and she opens the door and walks away. He walks back upstairs, glances back and catches her solemn eyes, herself wanting to look one last time.

He walked all over Cairo the last day without Dave. He finished morning class, grabbed lunch and walked. He ended in the library and walked home. He noticed the sound of horseshoes on pavement and the sharp night shadows of the streetlights on the window arcs of old Victorian Embassies. Where was he now, he wondered. It all looked strangely new, all that which he saw every day. He walked slowly up the ten flights of stairs. Past small piles of trash in the corners and windows staring at the dark, hollow center of the building. He got to the apartment and went for the phone. He felt nervous, he did not know what to say.

"Call me later," Michelle explains in her cab ride home amid the trumpets of chaos of all those black little cabs that dart through their city streets. "I did not know why I said this. I came out... I feel like... I need to yell something to him but I don't know what."

He cooked some dry eggs and lit a cigarette. Every time he brought it to his face he caught a glimpse of his dirty, reeking hands and he looked down at his dirty, faded jeans and stained T-shirt. His feet stuck to something odd and rubbery underneath him. He sweat more so ripped his shirt off and threw it on the bed where it hung on the frame for some days after. He stuck his head out the window and listened to the bagpipes of the police marching band that played nightly underneath his window and echoed through the concrete valley made on the shores of the Nile nearby. All lit by weak and old bulbs that revealed others with their heads arched to gaze and smoke.

He followed her no more. He lost her. He felt honest, that it came from inside him, and he felt conviction. He rifled his thoughts into the air until his pale room echoed with their laughter and their cries. No longer alone he thought. Tired and dazed he felt like fencing like he once used to; a dashing man of

honor enveloped in forms of grace that transcended the blade's purpose. This world could not fit all that, but he wanted it to. He put his walkman on and left her and smoked another. Her rusty brown tan, her hazel eyes, her long black curly hair and strong, short body no longer spoke to him. He heard something, he thought the phone, and turned his tape off after the last ring. Missed it and he smirked.

Later he called. She wasn't there. She left for the airport. Too late. She waited for these last few days; insomnia, sickness. Dave's coming. There's nothing you can do. Dave's coming. Here, to Egypt. We can't change this. Please sit here study with me. Let's share this drink. Dave's coming. He's coming, call me tonight, after class, O.K. Nick?

Those last two hours at the library, like two hours on stage, like two hours suspended up high in a plane talking to the stranger next to you about fiber optics or some shit. Something neither knows anything about but you talk and then leave the plane and ask yourself what the hell just happened.

"You're leaving now?" she asks.

"Yeah, I got some more reading to do... upstairs and I need to return this book.

Her eyes widen and then she looks down, "I'm leaving soon to meet a friend. I guess you won't see me... for a while anyway. She pauses. "I'll be busy with Dave."

"O.K., I'll stay for another fifteen minutes. So where are you going, then?"

"I'm just going to the gate to meet Heather, then to her place. She needs to borrow a dress."

"So I guess I'll just go to the gate."

"I guess," she says, bored, as she studies her paper.

They talk; the strange teenage deaths in her town, drunk driving accidents and weird illnesses. He winces and shakes. "It reminds me of my mortality—fear," he says.

"My Mom tells me that health is everything. If you have good health you have everything". She mocked her Mom.

"Yeah, what am I worried about. I got my health, things aren't so bad."

"You're young, healthy, smart(her eyes lit up) you got direction in your life so far, you're..."

# Michelle

By Pat Dolan

"I'm a good lookin' guy," he chuckles. "You've seen the Sure Thing?"

"No, wait, oh, no. Is there any relevance?" and she paused and added, "Nick?"

"Well this down and out college guy goes to this bar. He gets drunk, and starts feeling sorry for himself. He says, over and over, 'I'm a good lookin' guy' and the more he says it the more he slurs. And he goes to this drunk old guy with a cowboy hat on and tells him he's a good lookin' guy and they all get drunk together. There'd be relevance if you saw the movie. I think. I hope." He smiles and pleads in his voice to her that he is right.

Later they got up, and they said good-bye. He forgot to return his book. He had to go back upstairs to the Reserve. They wouldn't let him out. He never made it to the gate.

He annoyed her, teased her, played with her until she sat tired and confused. He took a nap and hoped that she adored him now that he lay dormant and unaware. He told jokes, told her about himself.

"A month will go by. I'm afraid how much you'll all change." She spoke naively like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz. "I'll miss you guys. The library, the first party where you met me."

"I've been thinking the same thing too." His voice deepened and he felt awkward and he became stiff as a board, "...about you, actually."

"What do you mean?" she asks looking away from her paper for a second.

"What you just said, how much you'll be away. I'll never see you, alone. You'll be doing other things."

"I know," she says, "I know."

They talked about her feet. She was always proud of them. She wore

sandals whenever possible. "I'm so flattered you noticed my feet, its one of the good things about this old body" she belts out with her raspy, sloshy voice that sounds like a shaken drink mixer and slaps her thigh, "It's the arch. It's a beautiful curve." And saying all this is like saying that all Elvis had was his voice.

"Call me later, I'll already be



home by then. Call me later." He did and she wasn't there.

He did everything that day to get her attention. Anything, while she worked at her desk covered with newspapers that overfilled the space made by the partitions that divide such library desks into halves. She cut and cut articles leaving trails of scrap hanging off the edge and her fingers darkened from ink. He sat next to her, hunkered over the desk with nothing else to do.

They walked to the small alley created by two lined up desks where a man checked for books in all the book bags. The man was old and kind and always wore light blue. Short white hair on the sides, and the library lights glared from his bald head. It was cloudy outside, one could tell even through the tinted windows. There was always

"Really?" she takes time to answer in monotones.

He does it again, almost sarcastic, "In 1987, Bush ate steak at The Temaya down the street."

"Huh," as she reads.

"In 1936...."

"Oh," she drawls out irritated, "Do you really have to read the History Review section of each paper? I mean,

I just don't care," and then she laughs and moves closer to Nick.

"OK, fine," he says pretending to be hurt. "There's a sale at that shoe store."

"Great, great," she says tired but happy. And she looks at his face.

All he had left was the smell on his wrist of her perfume when they traded watches and she wore his and he wore hers. I like it she told him. I like the whole set up, and pointed to his glasses. By dinner the perfume wore off.

Whenever he talked to her he smiled; while he spoke, while he listened. His voice quivered like a young violin's, if that could happen. His vocal cords the bow, his body its body. Her eyes would widen. She would lean forward, rest her head on her outstretched arm while he babbled.

It was time to go; time to go to the gate. They talked and she was

late. The gate was outside the library and across the street. They got up from the desk and walked downstairs to leave the library. For some reason Nick had troubles; he kept tripping over the steps and dropping pencils.

They walked to the small alley created by two lined up desks where a man checked for books in all the book bags. The man was old and kind and always wore light blue. Short white hair on the sides, and the library lights glared from his bald head. It was cloudy outside, one could tell even through the tinted windows. There was always

a line and at the end of the alley a metal detector you walked through that picked up metallic strip on books. Nick stood close to Michelle but remained very quiet, but fidgeted with his pen in his mouth and stared back up the steps. He was taller than she was, so she just looked up at him with nervous and inquisitive eyes.

It was their turn. Her bag got checked first and she walked through the detector to the door. She turned and waited. He gave the man his bag and the search began.

The man's eyes caught something and he almost stuck his head in the bag and then pulled out a book. "This book," he said, "This book must be returned upstairs. To the Reserve. It is late."

Michelle frowned and pleaded with the man. Nick turned red on his face and in his eyes. He stood there in line with a book; he couldn't leave and return it later; he couldn't return it to the front desk he leaned his arm on right next to him. They wouldn't let him. People waited behind him to move. Michelle stood there on the other side of the metal detector. He couldn't do a thing. It shouldn't be a big deal he just wouldn't walk to the gate. Michelle and Nick stared at each other through the metal detector. Their faces were emotionless; then they both shrugged their shoulders. They waved to each other, as she faced him as she walked backwards to the door. They smiled and said bye in cheery voices. "I'm sorry," Nick said. She told him to call her.

Nick turned and walked past the people waiting in line. he felt strange; his teeth tapped each other lightly and he looked down at his hands and they felt numb and shaky. He walked up the steps to return the book and halfway up he turned in hope of glimpsing Michelle one more time, through the tinted glass doors. There she stood, amidst crowds of brightly clad students chatting between classes, about to turn the corner, watching him with round solemn eyes as he went upward.

He dropped the book in the slot and slumped into a seat. He closed his eyes until dusk arrived and then he walked home. □

# Thoughts of an Other

by Douglas A. Fidaleo

The sky opens and one falls in.

The flames are burning darker these days. Redder and deeper. He says it's because of the living ones. He says they're changing. I can't really tell what's happening, but our world is changing.

I talked to one of them the other day, one of the living. She told me that no one cared anymore, that they all just seemed like a uniform bunch of self-centered children. I suppose I had to agree with her. They aren't the same.

The sky opens and another falls in.

I wish they'd stop... either dying or living. It's not that I don't want anyone else here, I mean, we have plenty of unused space. It's just that they're changing and I'd rather not have them come through.

You see, they all come here once they die. Regardless of their nature they just drip in from the sky. Little droplets of fluid light. It used to be pretty. Half a century ago we had a shower of them, during one of their battles. Good people came across then. We all came out of our walls to watch them come, to hear their voices as they fell.

It seems funny that I once marveled over their dramatic entrances. They're dying on their side then coming to grow on ours. It seems a little... insensitive, I suppose would be the word they would choose, that I can't sympathize with their losses. It's only because they don't know though. They don't know about us and our world.

Two more fall from an opening in the sky.

It used to be fun to watch them come in, but that was when they were different. Their light kept our world lit with a golden aura. There always used to be someone coming through who would keep the light shining. Not any

more though. They're all dark now. Black ones come through every once in a while, but not too often. For the most part they're crimson, a deep dark crimson. We have very little light here now. All we get is a sort of dim artificial glow hovering above our homes.

Even though they're contaminating us, I can't rightly hate them. They don't have any idea of what they're doing. It's they're society... too self-centered.

I walked to the sea of souls last week. That's where they come and wait to grow. It's sort of the primordial soup of the dead. It has changed also.

I can remember when I was a kid I would go there on picnics with my family. We would find a spot that was shaded by the surrounding walls of the cliffs. Only in those shaded places could we watch the dead swim in pools of light. I even got to swim with them once, but my mom got mad and I had to go home.

Now it's too dark to see anything. Lifeless red waves lap up onto the shores and against the rocks. The place I used to go with my family is still there, but you can't see the forms swimming anymore. Not enough light coming from within.

I went to His dwelling yesterday. We talked long about the fate of the living ones and ours. He says they can't go on living in their state of mind. They are destroying themselves and each other with feeble desires.

The Time is coming He says. Soon.

The moment when the falling images will cease to tame our darkness. When our own trivial pleasure will be wrenched from our grasps. The Time when their existence is equated with our darkness. When we will exist only in a precipitation of desire for what could have been.

Oh what Time will bring.

# hothouse flowers

SONGS FROM THE RAIN

The Hothouse Flowers  
*Songs From the Rain*  
 Polygram

It's hard to describe Hothouse Flowers, especially now after they've just come out with their newest album, *Songs From the Rain*. This Irish band's eagerly awaited first album (*Rolling Stone* once called them the "best unsigned band in the world") *People* came out in 1988, and their second album *Home* in 1990 (their first single was produced by Bono under U2's Mother Records). These albums had a pop/rock sound with a soul influence and Irish flair that often climaxed in rampaging intensity. A good example from *People* is their song "I'm Sorry." They start off with rhythms, back-ups, and a chorus of pure soul, and build to gospel-like level. In "It'll Be Easier In The Morning," lead singer Liam O'Maonlai cuts loose with his deep rich voice and it just blows you away. However, if anything has remained unchanged since their debut, it's that they're a band with a message. Behind both their light-hearted songs and more serious material is an obvious message of belief, faith, and hope. In this new album, Hothouse Flowers has "let inspiration be their sole concern." Says singer O'Maonlai, "I think any music that is written from inspiration, rather than design, lasts."

The band may have done a bit *too much* soul searching since their last album. While they've been writing upbeat, entertaining music through which their message was adequately communicated, *Songs From the Rain* seems to be an attempt to cut straight to the meaning. While according to Polygram, the band was going after "simple, unadorned" songs that reach "deep down," it unfortunately comes out sounding too obvious, like the way self-reflection is spelled out to us in "This Is It (Your Soul)." "When your world falls down around you/Not the most comfortable place/You've been



looking into a room full of strangers/But now you recognize one face/It's a reflection on the water/It's the word that's in the street/Say it now is the time to listen/Take the time to meet/Your soul/This is it /This is your soul."

The song writing for *Songs From the Rain* shows the influence of their collaborative efforts with lyricist Will Jennings and the Eurythmics' Dave Stewart. Their base tracks were recorded mostly live in studio under producer Stewart Levine, who's worked previously with artists such as Simply Red and BB King. What they seem to have lost is some of the spontaneity, some of the wildness and ability to just cut loose. Even though you might feel the first two albums were a bit preachy as well, it was foot stomping, hand clapping jump up and shout gospel preachy. These may be more meaningful ballads, but they've lost some of the energy. They don't seem to be giving themselves enough room. The rhythms are at times simple and at other times can be very clever, but with less opportunity for lead singer O'Maonlai to let loose and wail as he was able in his first two albums. He approaches that intensity in "Thing of Beauty," but it still lacks the wild tempo that allows him to reach his capabilities.

For all this I have to admit that the album, like the first two, is growing on me. It would've been impossible for this album to blow me away like I expected it to do from day one. In my

opinion, it's a slight departure for them, perhaps in the way *Soul Cages* was for Sting. And if you've never heard this band you really ought to. Pick up either of their first two albums, which I simply can't be enthusiastic enough about without sounding cliché. It's not easy to claim, with all the different musical sounds around today, that this band's sound is unique, but the way in which this band combines their different musical and lyrical influences makes for some damn good music.

— Seth Winnick



Living Colour  
*Stain*  
*Epic*

Living Colour has grown up. The New York based quartet has returned with an album filled with an unprecedented amount of aggression, anger, and vengeance. Living Colour approaches its music with unrelenting integrity and intensity which makes their third full length LP titled, *Stain*, as hard as it is satisfying.

Working with new producer, Ron St. Germain (Buffalo Tom, Soundgarden), and new bassist, Doug Wimbish (formerly of Tackhead), the band has channeled their energy towards a new and more effective hard hitting sound. After bassist Muzz Skillings left the band due to "musical differences" it was difficult to predict which path Living Colour would take. *Time's Up*, the outfit's sophomore LP, was critically acclaimed but did not fare quite as well with the fans. Many people considered *Time's Up* to be a disappointing follow-up to the band's

platinum debut, *Vivid*. After peaking at number two on the charts, *Time's Up* took a swift plunge as the record failed to yield a hit single. Almost a year after the release of *Time's Up*, Living Colour put out a six song EP which included interpretive covers of James Brown's, "Talkin' Loud And Sayin' Nothing," and Jimi Hendrix's, "Burning Of The Midnight Lamp." Unfortunately, the EP titled, *Biscuits*, was even less appreciated than *Time's Up*.

Muzzy parted soon after Living Colour completed playing to fans across the nation as one of the prime draws of the inaugural Lollapalooza tour. Surprisingly, Living Colour was not greeted with a great deal of enthusiasm by the "alternative" Lollapalooza crowds who considered the band to be too "mainstream." Fortunately, these obstacles did not phase Living Colour, a band who has always been more committed to breaking down the barriers of popular music and redefining hard rock than they are concerned with satisfying the masses. *Stain* is no exception to this rule.

Living Colour's success lies in the band's willingness to experiment and its refusal to fall victim to the clichés which make most heavy metal so predictable. The four member outfit consists of drummer Will Calhoun, a graduate of Berklee School Of Music who relies on unorthodox beats and furious drum rolls, the newly added Wimbish who plucks and slaps his way through *Stain*, frontman Corey Glover whose highly melodic and emotional voice is the perfect compliment to the group's frenzied style of play, and finally, quicksilver guitar virtuoso Vernon Reid, who can shred with the best that music has to offer. By combining elements of rock, jazz, blues, house, metal, funk, thrash, hip-hop and any other brand of music imaginable, the four members of Living Colour have successfully created their own genre of music.

But do not think that Living Colour's masterful mix of sounds is the only positive attribute to the group's song writing prowess. Their tunes are informative and educational. The lyrics which Living Colour produce are more intuitive and effective than your average sociology textbook. With *Stain* the band has become more self-investi-

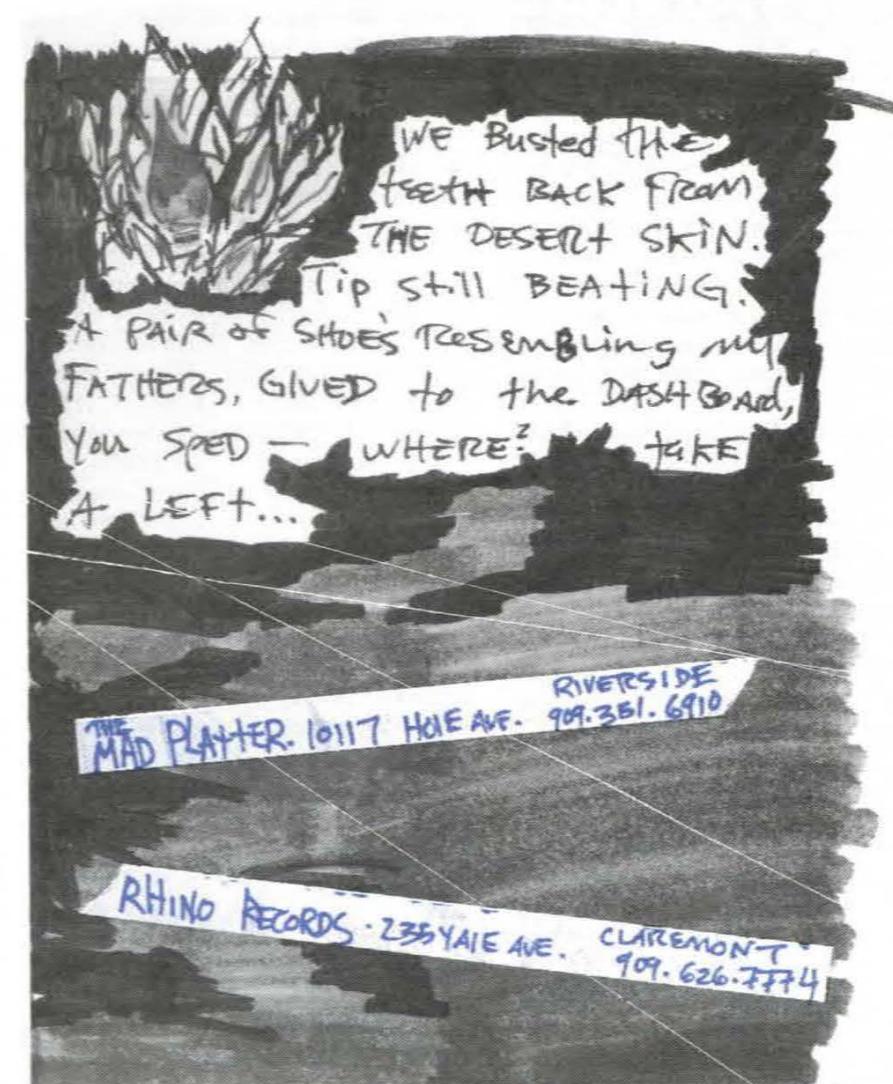
gating and soul searching. In the tracks "Mind Your Own Business," "Go Away," and the up-beat single, "Leave It Alone," the group confronts their own frustrations and anti-social emotions. However, there still is plenty of political commentary leftover for tunes such as the highly melodic, "Bi," a light-hearted and humorous look at bisexuality and "Aüslander" (German for the word foreigner), which is a reaction to the wave of xenophobia which has engulfed Germany.

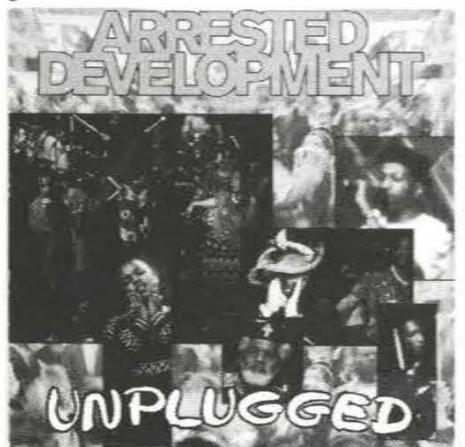
The thirteen track LP kicks off with the ferociously hard-edged "Go Away," and the band's thrash and burn intensity never lets up. Tunes such as "This Little Pig" and "Postman" have the potential to rip you out of your seat and kick your ass all over the room. How-

ever, the highlight of *Stain* is actually its mellowest track. Recorded at four o'clock in the morning with Mr. Glover singing into a satellite disc rigged with a microphone, the eighth track on the CD, "Nothingness," captures the feeling and intensity of the band without the help of the group's hard-rocking and frantic signature sound.

The tunes on *Stain* flow more smoothly than on Living Colour's other releases and this is an essential element to the effectiveness of the album. The tracks on *Stain* are tough, and Living Colour does a fantastic job of flaunting it. It may take a few listens before the strongest aspects of *Stain* leak out, but when *Stain* sinks in it leaves an indelible mark.

— Jordan Kurland





**Arrested Development**  
*Unplugged*  
Chrysalis

Speech, the lead singer of Arrested Development, sings about "raining revolution." In fact, it is raining. It's raining praise and acclaim for the music that has transcended hip-hop into the mainstream top 40. Whether or not that is positive for the band's reputation is a marginal issue. Their music is a social commentary for the issues that pervade our culture. Social liberation and environmental consciousness are prevalent themes in their songs. Respect for one another and the elements are aspects that the band prides itself on.

The album *Unplugged* is an addendum to the previous release titled "3 Years, 5 Months and 2 Days in the Life of..." The disc *Unplugged* was a product of a gig that they did on MTV's unplugged show. It was a definite experience to see the band live. The episode had a lot of energy and had the crowd jumping to the beat supported by the drummer, conga players, and the mixmaster in the house. What a sight! The entire band took over the stage and the studio. They carry many members including dancers and an old man who provides wisdom and life experience to the band. He generates an abundance of positive energy for the whole stage performance. This man plays no musical instruments. Rather, he is a symbolic figure that is a definite positive addition to the band and its message.

What is so different about this band,

one may ask? Well, it is the positive social commentary that the band offers to the African-American community. "Give a man a fish/He'll eat for a day/Teach a man to fish/He'll eat forever," is an example of the brilliant commentating lyrics that the band sings about. Examined simply, the lyrics are catchy but it carries a very important underlying tone. Take for example someone out in the streets who asks for a quarter. An innocent passerby hands him a ten dollar bill which seems like a generous contribution to the person down on his or her luck. That person spends the money frugally, buying food for a week. But after a week, the food is consumed and the money is gone. Instead of supporting someone in such a manner, as the song suggests, one should teach this person a skill in order for that person to support himself/herself and get another opportunity to render the fruits of his labor. It is a lasting offer rather than a momentary solution to a problem.

Arrested Development strays from the current trend of smoking blunts and killing cops. Rather, they are more concerned about the civil rights of the 90's. It offers the listener an alternative to our current trend in hip-hop. They carry good beats, good lyrics, and positive vibes. *Unplugged*, to many listeners of acoustic sets, offers a different sound to the ultra digitally engineered effects of the studio. Therefore, it is a slightly different sound to the songs in their previous album. Interesting and entertaining, relaxing at the same time thought provoking, Arrested Development is bound to remain popular to its newly found listeners.

All in all, *Unplugged* is a good album. What matters though, is that the listener gets introduced to the music of Arrested Development. Whether or not a listener purchases the original album or the *Unplugged* version is beside the point. The main issue is that the band plays good music. Either discs would definitely be a good purchase and well worth the money paid for it.

— Orangellough



**Chris Kowanko**  
*Kowanko*  
Morgan Creek

As popular music has moved towards a much harder and aggressive sound over the last few years, people have lost sight of the idea of listening to music as a form of relaxation. In today's grunge-dominated music industry, Chris Kowanko's debut album titled, *Kowanko*, is a breath of fresh air. For those individuals who do not feel that distortion and power chords are necessary for music to be inspirational, Chris Kowanko's album is for you.

Chris Kowanko is an honest and communicative musician. With a lyrical presentation reminiscent of both David Byrne and Gordon Gano (of the Violent Femmes), Kowanko's music is as deep as it is heartfelt. Producer Lenny Kaye (Suzanne Vega and Soul Asylum) has assisted Kowanko in completing a deceptively simple yet unique album.

With an extensive background in art, Chris Kowanko is not afraid to experiment either lyrically or musically. Despite his limited vocal range, Kowanko's music possesses a great deal of flavor and vitality. By incorporating the violin, cello, viola, and even the Egyptian fiddle into his songs, Kowanko brings a different approach to each track.

The Australian born musician refers to his music as "quasi-spiritual personal politics." The songs on the album deal with a variety of themes including homelessness, God, and death. "Modern Daze," "Wallflower,"

and "One Too Many Times," are perfect examples of his refreshing and intelligent approach to music. However, as with any musician who displays a knack for experimentation, not all of the songs on *Kowanko* work. "Turn Me Down," and the first single released, "Grey Crayon," simply do not fit into the greater musical scheme of the compact disc.

*Kowanko* is an album one can unwind to, but the music is far from boring. Chris Kowanko proves that mellow music does not have to be depressing and reminds us that a song does not have to be loud in order to be powerful.

— Jordan Kurland



**Ice-T**  
*Home Invasion*  
Rhyme Syndicate Records

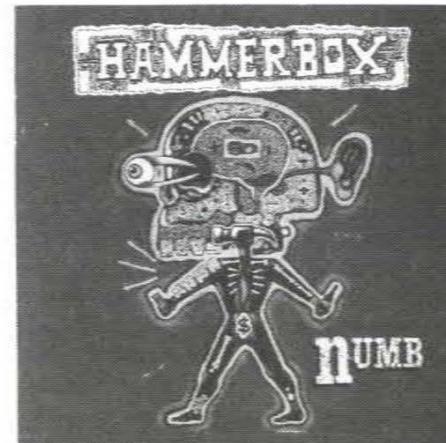
Ice-T's always gotten props for his off-kilter, lyrical presentation. He himself likens his lyrical style to poetry. However, on T's new album, *Home Invasion*, he finally stretches that style too far. On many of his cuts he gets off beat or pushes past the end of a phrase. The resulting effect is that it's hard to get into the rhyme flow. When I first listened to *Home Invasion*, I was hit by BASS: this album was definitely made to bump in someone's trunk. The problem is that the first six tracks all sound the same, and they all sound like other shit he's done, the only difference is the bass. I was surprised by T's lack of originality, given that songs like "Colors" help put rap on the map for the majority of America's youth.

One of the things that hurt T's ef-

fort was his attempt to come up harder than ever. In earlier albums, he was hard as hell, and never talked much about it. Also, throughout the whole censorship media-hype circus surrounding *Cop Killer* (which, incidentally wasn't rap, it was hard core), T came off as an artist who just wanted to get his message out. On *Home Invasion*, though, T continuously jocks himself as a hard ass O.G. mutha fukah, who gets props for fighting the system. So, basically he tries to create this image of a self-styled, rap-guru who has gone deep underground to drop this shit. He even goes as far as to say that only his REAL fans will understand why *Home Invasion* came out the way it did, and that other listeners don't matter; after all, according to T, somebody white's gonna criticize it anyway.

Well, I'm white, and I ain't buyin' it, so I guess he's right, cause I think most of the shit on this album is well below the level of what T's capable of producing. T proves it with the few dope tracks that really bump. What bugs me is that T hasn't evolved as an artist. There are only five or six tracks that really get your head nodding. But, hey, I'm biased. I like more bass than just bass drum, and I crave jazz or funk to keep the flow goin'. I'm just not down for any more new old-school style gangsta' rhymes; if that's what your into, and your one of T's REAL fans, then this album's for you. The tracks that really deserve a good listen are the ones with that funk flavor that I savor. If you buy the album listen to tracks eight through twelve, and pretend that *Home Invasion* is really just a maxi-single.

— Zach Taub



THE OTHER SIDE

**Hammerbox**  
*Numb*  
A&M Records

There is a fine line between success and failure when a band brings a poppy approach to a fusion of metal and punk. Hammerbox's major label debut, *Numb*, walks, rather sprints along this line. *Numb* is a consistently powerful album.

The band plays with a large degree of feeling and fury, however, at points Hammerbox seems to hold something back. On a number of tunes, Hammerbox can not quite finish off the rage which they have unleashed. It appears as if the band is afraid of falling and subsequently plunging into undesirable territory on the wrong side of the line which they dare to balance upon.

The Seattle based outfit (no, they do not sound like Nirvana) indulges in a distinct brand of music which has helped them to attract a wide and diversified range of listeners. The charge is led by lead vocalist, Carrie Akre who sounds a bit like Pat Benatar or the Divinyls' Christina Amphlett. The rest of the band consists of bassist James Atkins, flexible guitarist Harris Thurmond, and drummer/singer Dave Bosch.

Hammerbox maintains a collective approach by collaborating on each tune. The four musicians thrive of each other and display a great deal of tightness. The sixth track on the CD, "When 3 Is 2," is a perfect example of the group's approach. The tune fluctuates between heavy metal and mellow rock while still being able to maintain fresh and poppy overtones.

Lead vocalist, Akre, belts out lyrics concerning her own experiences and observations throughout *Numb*. The cuts, "Hole," and "Trip," are about inspiration and independence. However, as Akre admits, some of the tunes confront more simplistic subjects: "Our song 'Blur,'" says Akre, "is about someone getting fucked-up, making an ass of herself and knowing it." Drummer Dave Bosch has a chance to demonstrate his singing ability in a duet (sort of) break during, "God." The song, which is about feeling emotionally alienated from loved ones, is probably

the strongest on the disc.

Hammerbox's *Numb* is solid and with a little more experimentation, it could be an excellent work. Hammerbox is a gifted band with the potential to be great. The talent which Hammerbox displays on *Numb* will impress even the most ambivalent listener.

— Jordan Kurland



**Nudeswirl**  
*Nudeswirl*  
Megaforce

Begin with a generous portion of churning feedback, add a twist of heavy metal, a dash of acid-rock, a smidgen of frantic rhythms, and a heap of distortion. The end result is New Jersey's answer to innovation—Nudeswirl. Unfortunately, there is one significant problem with this seemingly delectable recipe—someone must have left it in the oven for too long.

Nudeswirl's self-titled debut album is a noble attempt to merge many powerful and prevalent genres of music together, however the compact disc falls short of reaching its goal. Not only is the album too overproduced, it lacks originality. Many of the tunes closely resemble, almost shadow, tracks from the Smashing Pumpkins' debut album, *Gish*. For example, take the second track of the album, "F Sharp." This song would be impressive had I never heard, "I Am One," by the Pumpkins. Where the Pumpkins use the bass and drums to create a twirling and circular effect, Nudeswirl substitutes the wah-

wah peddle. "F Sharp" sounds like a Smashing Pumpkins song on steroids.

Nudeswirl is undoubtedly a talented outfit. The LP does contain a few flashes of splendor. "Gordon's Corner," and "Now Nothing," are strong tracks which highlight the band's positive qualities: intensity, unity, and even some degree of creativity. The group is able to pull off drastic speed and tempo changes while retaining coherence at various points on *Nudeswirl*, a feat normally reserved for more recognized artists.

With a voice resembling Ozzy Osbourne, lead singer Shane M. Green adds an interesting dimension to the album but Nudeswirl loses a great deal of ground in their standard heavy metal cliché choruses. Nudeswirl has been making waves in the underground New Brunswick scene since they began in 1989, and I am sure that they display a great deal more power and aggression on stage. As for the album *Nudeswirl*, it merely fizzles into mediocrity. □

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## Board of Trustees

(continued from page 10)

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I would like to thank Sharon Kaatmann, Vicki Selk, Sandra Reeves, and Marilyn Massey for their assistance in gathering data for this article. □

## American in Cameroon

(continued from page 20)

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Cameroon was a place of discovery which expanded my horizons on issues such as multiculturalism, feminism and diversity, but my travels were more importantly an inner discovery of how those issues played roles in my life and how they make up my personality. These inner and outer journeys are inevitably and effectively intertwined. In a geographically and culturally foreign context, I found what my essential physical, emotional and social needs were to survive. A necessary and complementary contradiction was born while I was in Cameroon. Although I was forced to make compromises in order to function socially and learn academically, those issues on which I would not compromise became clear as the essential values of my personality. Personal adaptability is the key to effecting change in the world, because before you can change others, you must be willing to change yourself. □

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I have lived too long to be this young,  
And white folks still whisper nigger and bite their tongue.  
18 or 80 I'm just a boy,  
Half white half black I'm under fierce attack.  
Put a noose to my neck and hang me from a tree,  
It better be more than that if you would like to stop me.  
Feathers and tar, hit by a car,  
Shot by a gun, or castrated for fun.  
Don't stop there because you still haven't won.  
That glass dick was a good trick,  
But I'm far too smart to take a lick.  
Don't be surprised to realize, that through your lies,  
I have kept my eyes on the prize.

— Peter Harper

To Batya, Happy Birthday

Continuous fences of rhyming and reason  
Are barbed with trendy conventions of season  
To differ from those who are forging the rules  
Is to typecast yourself as a villian or fool

Remember to tell those who show you "the way"  
You're feeling a little bit different today  
Encourage those others to wander astray  
To say what they feel and act as they may

— Tobin Steers

flowers

They smell so sweet, but why  
buy flowers for a someone  
you've never met before?  
There is no pleasure in the  
sure hues—they are pretty  
but not for me. I prefer  
you. Lustful lush, those liquor-drenched  
words you spill about me round, silk  
and thin. They fall like petals  
from your lips to tumble  
stickily across your tongue.  
Close your eyes,  
flowers smell sinful. Nothing  
should ever be so evil as perfumed dark.

— Cati Payne

### Looking Back

When my ancestors  
looked back  
they saw  
green hills  
wild elephants  
pyramids rising from the  
desert

When the children of my  
ancestors  
looked back  
they saw  
the coast of Africa  
mourning relatives  
sharks trailing the ship

When my forebears in  
this country  
looked back

they saw  
plantations  
separation  
anguish

When my great grandparents  
looked back  
they say  
Reconstruction  
Black Codes  
the Klu Klux Klan

When my grandparents  
looked back  
they saw  
migration  
segregation  
mis-education

When my parents  
looked back  
they saw  
desegregation  
Black Power  
Revolution

I look forward  
to looking back  
and seeing  
green hills  
wild elephants  
pyramids rising from the  
desert

— Yusef Omowale

My roommate had this fishtank set on the ledge next to the window. We used to get lots of direct light through those windows. It could get hotter than hell in that room. I used to sit there anyway; you couldn't do anything but sit and watch the tank. There was nothing better to do. The fish tank used to chronically grow huge spots of green-brown algae on the glass. We told him the water was too hot; that's why the algae always grew. Advanced photosynthesis in my room. Maybe one day the Yeti would crawl out. We told him to move the tank. He said algae was a healthy sign. Things were growing. It got so bad you barely saw inside the damn thing.

His fish started dying. They were pretty exotic looking fish, so he dried them on top of the tank when they died and kept them. Maybe it's an exotic fish equivalent to a Viking funeral. Maybe he wanted a necklace. He still wouldn't move the tank. He was probably infamous in the fish world; Neo-biblical fish hater.

My friend walked in one day and saw a fish that was all dingy and dark and it didn't move much. I think it wanted to sweat. A Sea Horse dangled from a weed by its tail.

"Once the fish get dark, I get out," I told her.

— Pat Dolan