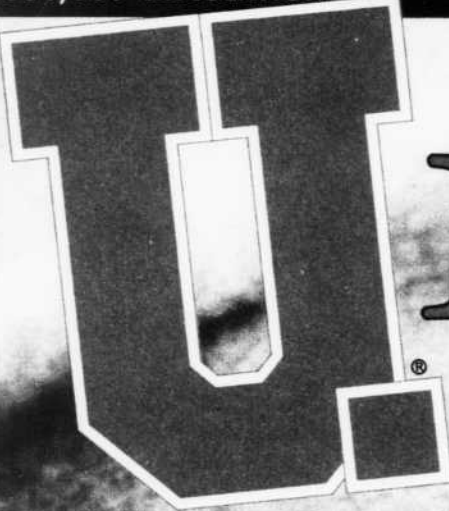


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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1994



The National College Magazine[®]

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Marketing, Research and Promotion

MARKETING SERVICES MGR. MELISSA E. ALGAZE
ADMINISTRATIVE ASST. MARIETTE MERCADO

Main Office

1800 CENTURY PARK EAST #820, LOS ANGELES, CA 90067
TEL. (310) 551-1381 FAX (310) 551-1659 or 552-0836
INTERNET ADDRESS: UMAG@WELL.SF.CA.US
AOL ADDRESS: UMAGAZINE@AOL.COM

PUBLISHER GAYLE MORRIS SWEETLAND
V.P.-GENERAL MANAGER THOMAS J. MITCHELL
ENTERTAINMENT AD DIR. PATTIKAY GOTTLIEB
CLASSIFIED AD SALES MELISSA E. ALGAZE

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U. MAIL

Technology plugs

I wanted to congratulate you on your informative look at some of the amazing alternative media being produced today by college students ["Power Surge"]. I would also like to point out what I see as a problem. The picture of Jonathan Bell on the bottom of page 13 is obviously from a flipped negative. I understand that for the purposes of page layout you want people in a photograph to be looking into a page instead of away from it. But can you honestly tell me there was no way to design that spread so that Jonathan was looking into the page with the photo neg-



"YIKES! HAS IT REALLY BEEN FOUR YEARS??"

Scott Magoon, *Northeastern News*, *Northeastern U.*

ative on its true side?

Marc La Fountain, junior,
U. of South Carolina

Big hair, hot air

In "Poking Holes in the Ozone Scare" (September 1994), you refer to aerosol cans as if they are a common source of chlorofluorocarbons. It might be worth noting that it has been illegal to use CFCs in aerosol cans manufactured in the United States since 1979.

Ian M. McGrath, sophomore,
Dartmouth College

I would like to know why in her article, "Poking Holes in the Ozone Scare" (September 1994), Julie L. Nash feels it necessary to call Rush Limbaugh an "empty-headed demagogue." The fact is — and Ms. Nash's own conclusion supports it — Limbaugh's views are right: the ozone hole issue was blown way out of proportion, and a single volcanic eruption can release more harmful chemicals than all the CFCs mankind can produce.

Alex Carrenza, senior,
U. of Nevada, Las Vegas

Guilty, in my book

["Booked," September 1994], regarding theft of library material from Florida State U., is a perfect example of one-sided journalism that perpetuates the "I am a victim" mentality and underscores the belief of many college students that stealing library books is

not really theft. I'm tired of listening to these tales of woe from students who don't seem to realize that stealing library books is a crime that affects everyone who values knowledge. It's fairly obvious to us when a person has made an honest mistake.

Wendy Schmidt, circulation desk
supervisor, *San Diego State U.*

U. goofs

In "College, Inc." (October 1994), the name for the Oregon State U. student newspaper should have been the Daily Barometer. Liz Foster is the editor in chief at the Barometer. The Daily Emerald is the student newspaper of the U. of Oregon.

In "When the Lights Went Out in Squirrel-town" (Short Takes, October 1994), the University of South Florida was incorrectly referred to as the University of Southern Florida.

This Month's Question

Do you plan to get married?

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U. VIEWS

Student Opinion Poll

Do you expect to graduate in 4 years?

Why not stay in school, have a good time, get a couple of degrees — or at least one? Rob Owens, junior, *Marquette U.* • I did expect to graduate in four years, but that was before I started college.



Stacey Logue, sophomore, *Indiana U. of Pennsylvania* • The day I started college, my dad said to me, "Are you on the four-year plan? I am." Nicole Campbell, senior, *U. of California, Berkeley* • I want to relax. I'm in no hurry for the real world. Angela Alonso, freshman, *California State U., Long Beach* • Advisers here didn't tell me that you need certain credits, so now I have to stay here an extra semester for six credits. Kelly Brown, senior, *U. of Pittsburgh*

Boxers or briefs?

We're talkin' boxers all the way — there ain't no better feelin'. Drake Sorenson, junior, *San Diego State U.* • Boxers are in. Briefs went out when I was in ninth grade. Gabriel Rivera, junior, *U. of California, Berkeley* • Briefs are more user-friendly. Barbara "Bobbie" Brewington, sophomore, *Iowa State U.* • Go for briefs! If they're good enough for my dad, they're good enough for all the guys. Susan "Sassy" Paine, freshman, *Indiana U. of Pennsylvania* • When you see a guy in boxers, especially when they have shorts on and the top

BOXERS BRIEFS



of the boxers are showing — ohh! That's really awesome! Kim Hanlin, junior, *Marshall U.* • Briefs don't take up as much room in the washing machine. Zack Hern, freshman, *U. of Mississippi* • Briefs provide so much more support. Ben de Vulpillieres, freshman, *Cornell U.* • Boxers just don't hold everything in place. Charles Nicotra, sophomore, *U. of Texas, Arlington* • I think the world would be a better place if we all had the freedom to move around. Christopher Navarrette, sophomore, *Texas Tech U.* • When you put your clothes on, the buff is enough. Chris Guerrero, freshman, *U. of Texas, San Antonio* • Underwear, what's that? Freeballin's the way to go. James Reidy, sophomore, *George Washington U.*

Tell us what you think. Letters to the Editor, *U. Magazine*, 1800 Century Park East, Suite 820, Los Angeles, CA 90067; fax to (310) 551-1659; e-mail to umag@well.sf.ca.us or Umagazine@aol.com. All senders: Include name, year, school and phone number. Internet users should include permission to reprint submissions. Letters should be less than 200 words. U. reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity.

Eat Your Heart Out!

(M)CAT got your test?

Forget about the new fall television series *ER* and *Chicago Hope*. The real medical drama is unfolding at the U. of California, Davis, where 57 future doctors are still recovering from the loss of their MCAT Scantron sheets.

Med school-bound students were informed in late May that the machine-scoreable section of the eight-hour exams they took in April — a prerequisite for entrance into medical school — had been lost.

"An in-depth investigation concluded that the answer sheets were lost at the ACT facility," says Davis testing site supervisor Tammy Hoyer. "It was their test, their error."

Officials responded by giving students three choices. Seventeen students chose to have the circled answers in their exam booklets — the booklets were not lost in the shuffle — count as overall test answers; three students took a refund; and 37 opted to retake the exam on any of the five scheduled testing days for free.

But for senior Sandy Zabaneh, with June finals and a summer job approaching, there wasn't time to prepare for the makeup exam. Some students claim to study four to five hours every day for several months to prepare for the test. "I felt screwed over," says Zabaneh, who retook the exam in August.

Zabaneh has formed a student coalition protesting ACT's handling of the case, and she is currently looking for a lawyer to represent the group. "ACT has been rude and not accommodating," Zabaneh says. "We're gonna sue for sure."

Ken McCaffrey, 21-year director of the MCAT program in Iowa City, says the investigation failed to determine where the tests were lost. But he says that one of the five packages delivered by Burlington Air Express arrived in Iowa City already open.

"Obviously, we came up empty, and we've put it behind us now," McCaffrey says.

Burlington's Sacramento manager Mitch Wilson says mishaps like packages opening happen occasionally. "That could have happened, but there was nothing noted on the computer manifest."

According to McCaffrey, this is the first time tests have been lost. "We can't guarantee this won't happen again," McCaffrey says, "but maybe we could get an earlier resolution next time."

If only it were this hard to become a lawyer.

Eric C. Robinson, *The California*

His name has been mentioned on several network halftime shows this season, and he has gotten national news coverage. But it's not for the Heisman watch.

U. of Florida senior Anthony Ingrassia has gotten more press as a restaurant critic than as the offensive tackle for one of the top-ranked college football teams in the nation.

Ingrassia's column, "Anthony Digests," started as a harmless review of local restaurants that was scheduled to appear weekly in the UF student newspaper, *The Independent Florida Alligator*. But the column was suspended due to possible violations of NCAA bylaws regarding endorsements by players. Ingrassia says the column started getting attention only after it was suspended. *USA Today* even mentioned the suspension.

"Once it got there," Ingrassia says, "the controversy just fueled it."

The NCAA ruled in October that Ingrassia could continue to write as long as he receives no funds from the paper or the restaurants he reviews.

What exactly does he write?

In the first column, he details his credentials: "Because I order most of the menu at each sitting, my coverage of a restaurant will reflect a lot."

And he tells of the family dinners he

enjoyed as a youngster in Watchung, N.J.: "I thought there were only three kids in my family until one day my 2-year-old sister popped up from behind a tray of lasagna."

UF teammate, center David Swain, watched Ingrassia tackle 13 bowls of pasta at a local all-you-can-eat spaghetti buffet.

"I ate five [bowls], and I thought I was going to throw up," Swain says. "People in the kitchen started coming out and looking at us. The waitress couldn't believe it. She started bringing him two bowls at a time."

Ingrassia also claims the unofficial Taco Bell national record for eating one of everything on the menu.

"[The column] started out as just a restaurant review. Now it seems like it's turning into a comedy column," Ingrassia says.

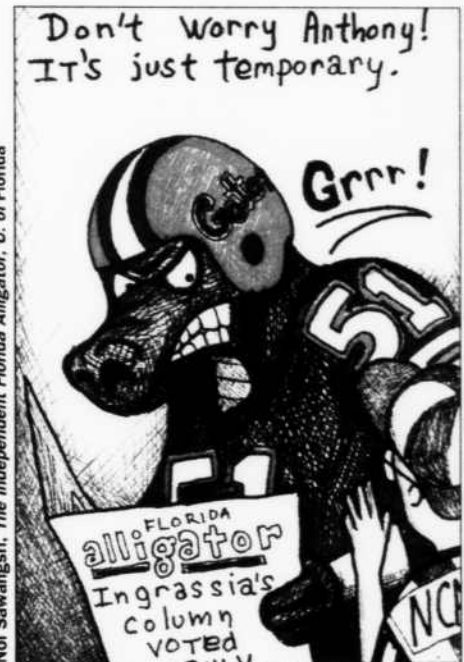
"I think you can't take things too seriously all the time. If you can keep a good balance between being loose and getting serious when you have to, that's a good quality of life."

Ingrassia says he keeps that attitude on the field, too.

"I'd say it goes back and forth," he says. "In the huddle, especially during a TV timeout, I think the line has a lot of fun.... But once you get to the line [of scrimmage], for those few seconds of the play, we become focused. I don't think I'm that nice a guy at that time."

Can he give any examples?
"Not that I can say," he says. "They're inside jokes."

■ **Jim Peery, *The Independent Florida Alligator*, U. of Florida**



Nol Sawangsi, *The Independent Florida Alligator*, U. of Florida

U. of Florida students couldn't stomach column's suspension.

Coed or Dead

Students at Middlebury College in Vermont are still talking about the Delta Kappa Epsilon 1994 homecoming party. They're saying it was the greatest party of the year. But DKE will never party again at Middlebury. Ever.

The fraternity fell victim to a Vermont Superior Court decision banning all single-sex social organizations from campus. In 1989, Middlebury mandated that no social group can discriminate in any way, gender included. DKE — an all-male fra-

ternity — had been battling the school since the policy was introduced.

Because the DKE members refused to enter the coeducational "social house" system — created to replace traditional fraternity and sorority systems — they have been living under risk of expulsion for what college officials say is "fraternal activity."

Rumors of secret, off-campus meetings have run rampant. But senior Nicholas Stacker says, "What we do now is nothing. I've heard lots of fanciful stories about us, but we have no interest in being expelled. We do not function underground."

A former DKE member claims the school waged "witch hunts" to find out who was a member, tapping phones and intercepting mail to find "outlaw" brothers. But Middlebury dean Don Wyatt says that isn't so. "We're not doing anything in the form of harassment," he insists.

David Mitchell, a current DKE member and a senior, calls the administration's actions "tyrannical" and "crazy." "We're just frustrated that we can't do things that other friends do," he says. "It might be construed as 'fraternal activity.'"

Senior Eric Schroeder, president of Delta Upsilon, thinks the school is stalling so there won't be a pledge class this year. Middlebury is strongly suggesting that the

house meet a 50-50 male-female ratio standard, while other social houses need only one-third membership of either sex. "We've submitted a proposal for reinstatement, but it doesn't look like they liked it too much," he says.

DU was suspended in 1993 for hazing, dorm damage and gender inequity. But, as stated in the DU proposal: Example and experience are life's greatest teachers.

"We're trying to get more women to join. If we don't, it could be the end of DU [at Middlebury]," says senior and DU member Nicole Wood.

The Middlebury social scene is taking on a new identity — to the relief of some and to the chagrin of others. "Any social option is a benefit to this campus, because the campus is limited," says senior Peter Greatrex, president of Omega Alpha.

Because Middlebury is isolated from larger cities, social houses are currently the main outlet for weekend entertainment for many of Middlebury's 2,000 students. But now DKE, once reputed to be the "most social" of these houses, isn't social at all.

At the former party house, the second floor has been converted into faculty offices, and it's dark inside every Saturday night when students pass by it on their way to the shiny, happy social houses.

The last of the mess from that final bash has been cleaned up, and at Middlebury College, DKE is dead. The party's over.

■ **Ryan D'Agostino, *The Campus*, Middlebury College**



Brian Perry, Middlebury College

Idea Man

When you care enough to send the very best, consider sending a BekBe Card. With messages like "Stop calling me," "I'm horny, come visit" and "Not interested," you'll be able to tell that certain someone exactly how you feel. That's what Indiana U. of Pennsylvania junior Fred Marshall hopes, anyway.

"I was seeing this girl, and I wanted to win her back. I thought about getting her a card, but I couldn't find anything appropriate," he says. After scouring card stores,

15 MINUTES

Marshall made his own card for \$3.50 at a machine. The sentiment didn't save the relationship, but it did start a company, BekBe Cards, which sells in-your-face greeting cards.

These cards say what other cards are afraid to say — they're the bad boys of the greeting card business.

"BekBe Cards are situational, not occasional," Marshall explains. "The situations depicted are as varied as the actual college experience."

Featured in the cards are LynnBee and Bort, two amorphous lead characters who have no race, gender or class distinction.

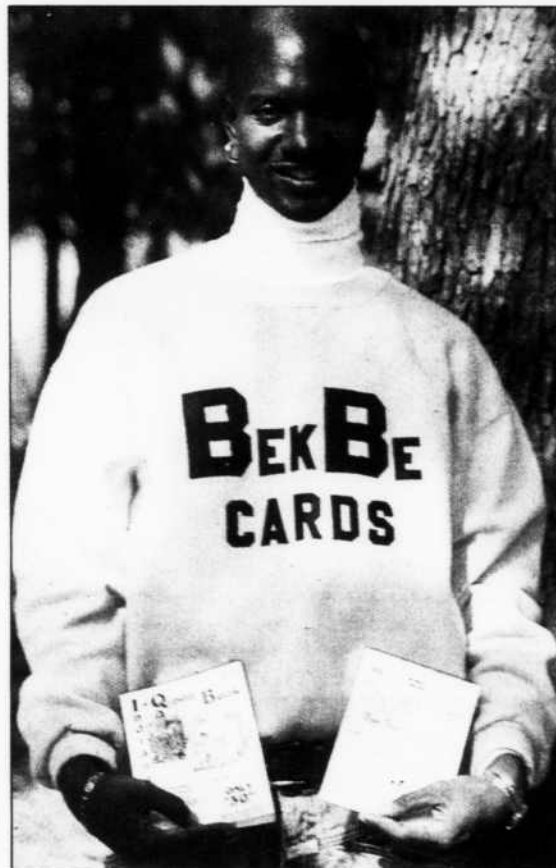
The names of the characters and company were inspired by the woman Marshall bought that original card for — odd terms of endearment, huh? "She thinks I'm psycho for naming my company after her," he says.

It wasn't until Marshall reached college that he launched his first marketed venture, a coupon book for retailers in the IUP vicinity. "I've always had ideas," he says. "I research everything before I do it — before BekBe, I researched Hallmark."

BekBe Cards are currently sold at a local bookstore and at SACO, a Greek merchandising shop. Ruth Moss, co-owner of SACO, says, "I see Fred as a person with viable entrepreneurial dreams, not fluky ideas."

Marshall plans to expand his business by marketing the BekBe characters on T-shirts and other merchandise. And with the help of a sales representative, he hopes to get shelf space in up to 1,000 college bookstores after graduation in May 1995.

Don't expect Marshall to be sending out his résumé come May. "After I graduate, this will be my income," he says.



Fred Marshall

Jessica Kirschbaum, The Penn, Indiana U. of Pennsylvania

"My cards and coupon book are much better [financially] than working somewhere else."

■ Ronald R. McCutcheon, *The Penn*, Indiana U. of Pennsylvania

U NEWS

ALARMING STUPIDITY

Columbia U. — Wars, tornadoes, bombings, floods — reporters stop at nothing for a meaty story. Ruth Halikman, now former editor in chief of the *Columbia Daily Spectator*, was no exception when she pulled a false fire alarm in a building on campus.

The reason? To get a photo of the fire department's new truck. Hey, maybe CNN can take a lesson from this. Need a shot of a Russian nuclear missile?

NOW WHO'S THE ASS?

U. of Idaho — Bet'cha never knew that a full moon could make you almost a millionaire. At least that's what one U. of Idaho student hopes will happen. He's bringing a suit against the university after he fell three stories from his dorm window, which broke as he was allegedly mooning some friends. The student, who is seeking \$940,000, claims that the university and its employees are at fault in the accident. Hey, buddy, where were you when the R.A.s held the responsible-mooning-while-hanging-three-stories-above-the-ground workshop?

ALCAPIGGYTRAZ

U. of Florida — A pot-bellied pig with a runny nose and a bad temper was taken into custody by Gainesville police when Phi Delta Theta fraternity members called in a report of a "pig at large" in their house. "It scared the crap out of me," says freshman Dominic Freshwater.

A representative from Animal Services says the pig will be detained in the facility for three days, until its health and temperament can be evaluated for the pig's possible adoption. Reports of the pig's wife attempting to smuggle a nail file into the facility via a mud pie are unconfirmed.

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE'S UNDERWEAR

Ohio State U. — Do you smell boxers burning? That's what members of the Columbus Fire Department must've asked after being called to a fire in an OSU dorm. The cause of the blaze? Not a natural gas leak. The smoldering skivvies were found in a microwave, reason unknown. The two summer residents — out of the room at the time — said they'd locked the door before leaving. Gives a frightening new meaning to Mom's threat about your clothes being dirty enough to walk by themselves.

College Camporee

Your first abode. The home away from home. It's a dream come true, but what do you do when your landlord — oops — forgets to put the door on its hinges?

Thirty student renters at Kansas State U. were forced to find unique places to temporarily store their belongings — and themselves — when they found out that their new apartment complex had not been completed over the summer. The renters

didn't even have a chance to be late with the rent or have a wild party busted before they were out of an apartment.

Deb Taylor, property manager at Chase Manhattan Apartments, says that during the summer, several letters explaining the situation were mailed to future residents. Chase Manhattan Apartments offered the residents some options: they could cancel their lease and get their deposit back, stay in a hotel until Sept. 1 while paying a portion of the rent or stay with friends or relatives until the complex was completed. What a choice.

Tired of the runaround, sophomore Linette Heintz and her roommates decided to break their lease. It took almost a week for them to find another apartment. "There wasn't anything left," Heintz says. "Chase Manhattan didn't even offer to pay for storage while tenants waited to move in."

Kelly Neufeld, a junior at KSU, moved into his new pad at Chase Manhattan Sept. 1, while construction continued from 6 a.m. to midnight. "There are little splashes of paint on my car, too," he says.

Freshman Rene Brooks kept some belongings in her car while she waited for her apartment to be finished. "I had stuff stored in about 1,000 different places. I

constantly felt like someone was going to break into my car."

And the saga continues. Now there are problems in at least two of the seven new buildings. Taylor attributes this to "new building syndrome." She says, "The mad gods of unluckiness are on us or on the kids in that complex."

Taylor found that nails had gone through some unlucky water pipes. The water proceeded to flood the unlucky basement in one of the unlucky buildings, to the dismay of some unlucky kids.

"They've had to shut the water off about 1,000 times," Brooks says. Workers have come to her apartment to fix the microwave because the screws that held it up were falling out.

Neufeld says that workmen had to come in and drill peepholes in the door after he moved in. "We don't have screens either," he adds.

Some advice to prospective renters from Neufeld: "Before I would do this again, I would make [the landlords] promise that they were going to provide free housing until the apartments were finished." Or at least provide a raft.

■ Lola Shrimplin, *Kansas State Collegian*, Kansas State U.



Craig Hacker, Kansas State Collegian, Kansas State U.

Kansas State U. freshman Rene Brooks is ready to move in.

TRIPPIN'

The gods have dropped a Lite Brite in the middle of the northern panhandle of West Virginia. In a bizarre perversion of Thomas Edison's invention, light bulbs

Oglebay Winter Festival of Lights.

The festival, now in its ninth year, is open nightly from Nov. 1 to Jan. 8 and the last three weekends in January. It attracts roughly 1 million tourists every year. Each vehicle that passes through the lights display is requested to make a donation (of money, not light bulbs), since the show is funded by contributions.

"Dinosaur Dell," "The Determined Fisherman" and "Willard the Snowman." (Not to be confused with rocker man Del Shannon, fisherman Babe Winkelman or weatherman Willard Scott.)

Visitors can thrill to the splendor of a horse of lights jumping a fence of lights, gasp with delight as a light bulb circus train filled with light bulb circus animals

lights]. It is about riding through and seeing them all."

Nearly 3,500 buses are expected to pass through the park this year, and if you are driving through the area, expect to be caught behind one of them. Oglebay once again projects more than 1 million visitors.

The first time someone had the patience to hang bunches of lights in the Oglebay area was in 1980. That year, several thousand multicolored lights were displayed at the park's "Good Zoo" to celebrate the holiday season. "The Good Zoo Lights up for You" was the initial stage of what has become one of the biggest light shows in America.

In early 1985, the winter darkness of Oglebay was officially brightened with a giant lights festival. That year, the show covered 125 acres and included 125,000 bulbs.

Since then, the show has more than doubled in size to 300 acres and 500,000 points of light. Take that, George Bush.

Tripping the light fantastic is never done so literally as when visitors go to Oglebay on a Saturday night in the winter. The lights festival stands as a testament to patience, wiring and an odd sense of taste.

"The lights are good for Bethany students because they don't have anything else to do," Cooley says. "[They] get you in the Christmas mood, especially if you're far away from home."

■ James A. Walker, *The Tower*, Bethany College
Courtney Davis, *The Tower*, Bethany College, contributed to this story.

Bright Lights, Little City

come together to form pictures in the spirit of the coming holiday season.

When area college students feel the need to be partially blinded by a cavalcade of lights, they make a trip to Oglebay Park resort, north of Wheeling, W.Va., for the

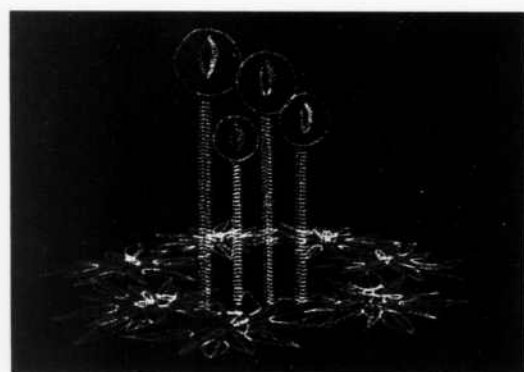
This display, reminiscent of Clark Griswold's decorations in *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*, was named last year as one of the top 22 international tour bus destinations by the American Bus Association. It includes such displays as

comes into view and weep with happiness at Cinderella's carriage, frozen in lights on the way to the grand ball.

There are lights for the patriotic (a large American flag and Liberty Bell), lights for Christians (a nativity scene), lights for the Jewish celebration Hanukkah (a menorah and dreidel) and lights for people who really like candy canes.

Brian McCord, a Bethany College senior, says that some of the lights are special to him. "My favorite set of lights is the one of the golfer teeing off. It reminds me of my dad," he says.

Bethany sophomore Christy Cooley says she can't decide on a favorite display. "It's not the point of just seeing one [set of



Oglebay Park's thousand poinsettias of light.



Cinderella has fun storming the castle.

POP

Don't hate him because he's country. Robert Earl Keen is fun for the whole dysfunctional family.

Setting up shop amid the cheese of the mainstream country music world, Keen is

"Merry Christmas from the Family," from Keen's latest release, *Gringo Honeymoon*, is a tale straight from the Keen family album:

Fran and Rita drove from Harlingen/ I can't remember how I'm kin to them/ But when they tried to plug their motor home in/ They blew out our Christmas lights.

Keen first picked up a guitar while attending Texas A&M U., where he

songwriting, Keen breaks the country music standard of worshiping the western tradition, a tradition that Keen says fails to give good advice about life's questions. "Dreadful Selfish Crime," also from *Gringo Honeymoon*, is a song about watching your life go by as you live in the fast lane:

Stayin' up till dawn strummin' old guitars/ Sleepin' all day long just like the big

rock stars/ Barely livin' off the money from tip jars... I am guilty of a dreadful selfish crime/ I have robbed myself of all my precious time.

Keen says he's not worried about being accepted by the mainstream.

"I'm not looking for universal appeal. I just want an audience for my songs."

■ Andrew Tomb, *The Collegian*, Kansas State U.

Keen-Cut Country

more than just a spokesman for the trailer park and gun-rack crowd. "I've become the hero of dysfunctional attitudes and behavior," Keen says.

Despite little airplay on country radio, Keen has managed to rise to cult-figure status among country music — and even some noncountry — fans. Through five albums and numerous live performances, he has carved a loyal fan base, particularly in the Southwest.

Ed Skoog, a graduate student at the U. of Montana, has been a fan of Keen's for several years. "Robert Earl's appeal is in his unwillingness to adapt to whatever the current fad is," Skoog says. "He would do just fine as a Garth Brooks or Travis Tritt, but that's not his style."

Literally, Keen often uses humor to illustrate his stories.

traded licks with classmate and longtime friend, Lyle Lovett. After graduating with a degree in English, Keen took to playing the folk and western club circuit. Now he tours with a full band, playing about 200 shows a year.

"It's a rowdier crowd lately," Keen says. "They don't listen as close as when it was just me and my guitar, but it's still a lot of fun."

Proving he's more than just a redneck court jester, Keen includes songs about guilt, strife and emptiness on his albums. Not your typical country scenario of wife/dog/horse leaving you, Keen's lyrics are often taken from his own life. "I don't have to go any farther than my front door for material," Keen says.

Known for his narrative style of



What a country (singer): Robert Earl Keen.

unlearn.

a film by John Singleton

HIGHER LEARNING

question the knowledge

COLUMBIA PICTURES PRESENTS
A NEW DEAL PRODUCTION A FILM BY JOHN SINGLETON HIGHER LEARNING STARRING JENNIFER CONNELLY ICE CUBE DEAN KAY MICHAEL RAPAPORT
KRISTY SWANSON AND LAURENCE FISHBURNE WITH STANLEY CLARKE AND DWIGHT ALONZO WILLIAMS COSTUME DESIGNER JOHN SINGLETON AND PAUL HALE EDITOR JOHN SINGLETON
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COLUMBIA PICTURES

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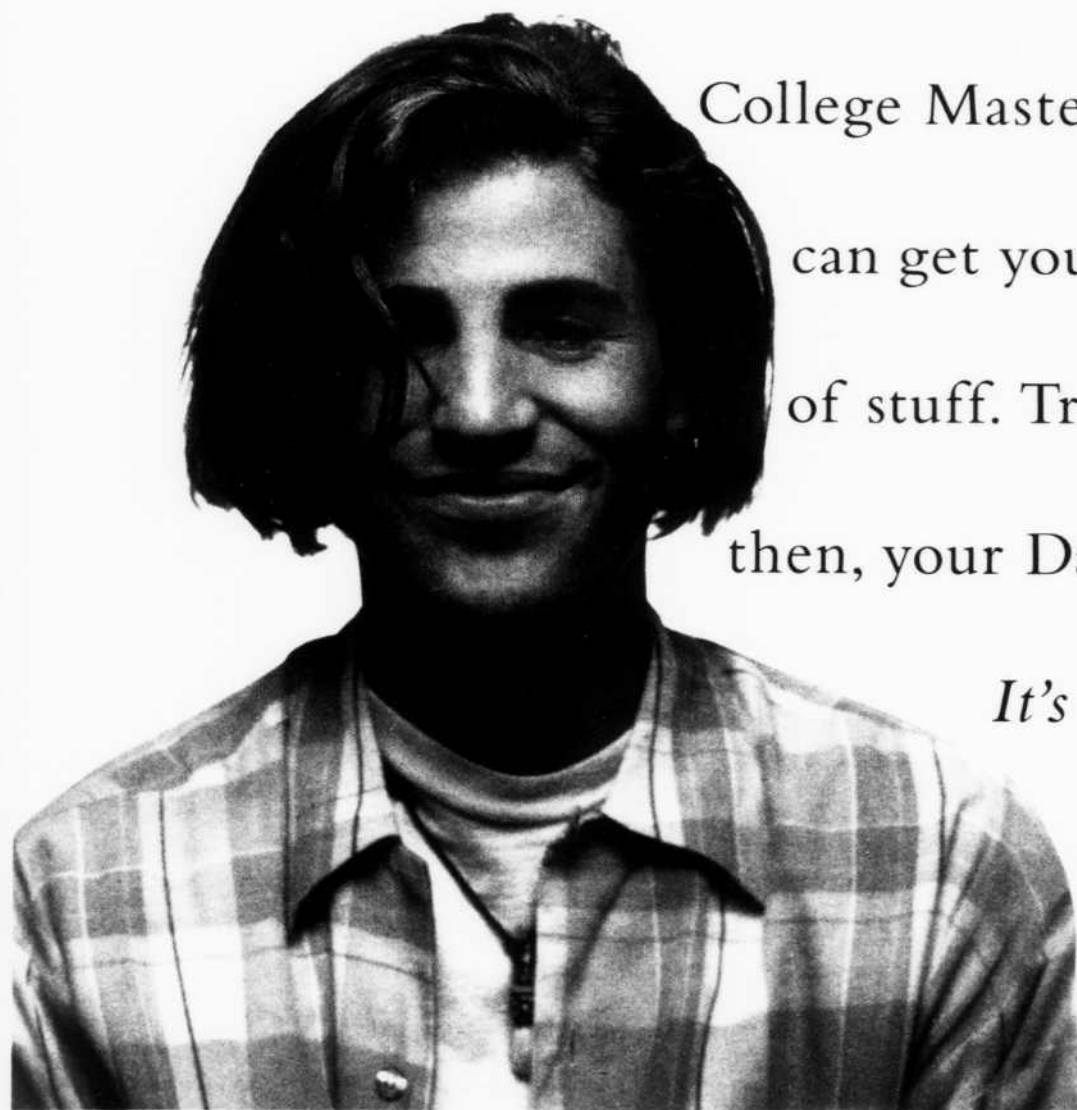


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Stoners, rock stars, suicidal yuppies, serial killers and vampires. These are the denizens of Bret Easton Ellis' world. That is, at least, the world contained within his novels.

In the '80s, Ellis made a career of satirizing the petty beliefs and gaudy desires of the beautiful people. His first book, *Less Than Zero*, was published in 1985 when he was just 21 and still attending Bennington College in Vermont. It depicted the world of Los Angeles' young elite — spoiled by wealth and jaded by drugs and sex. His second novel, *The Rules of Attraction*, published in 1987, took that same crowd and placed them in an Ivy League environment.

However, it was his depiction of a yuppie serial killer in 1991's *American Psycho* that brought Ellis infamy. A satire of the morals of New York City's movers and shakers, its graphic descriptions of murder and mutilations raised eyebrows and voices in protest.

The controversy over *American Psycho*, which is now being made into a feature film, seems to have died down, but Ellis is still asked to justify the greed-and-death epic. "If anyone could have protested the book," he says, "it would have been yuppies and serial killers. They were the ones I was depicting."

The 30-year-old Ellis, now in the midst of a promotional tour for his latest book, *The Informers*, is not taking advantage of the perks one would suspect come with a tour. Rather than spend his time wading in the surf that breaks mere feet away from his Miami hotel, he has chosen to hole up in his room and work on one of his numerous writing projects.

Exiting the hotel lobby elevator, Ellis wears a plain T-shirt, shorts and an L.A. Kings hat. He admits, "I'm not very comfortable with [interviews]." We settle in the hotel's restaurant and attempt to break the ice by chit-chatting about writing and the interview process.

Sufficiently defrosted, we sit at a table surrounded by countless pictures of the restaurant's owner, Burt Reynolds. Ellis may not like going promotion for *The Informers*, but he must — as his character Sean Bateman could say in *The Rules of Attraction* — deal with it.

U.: Are you nervous about your promotional tour?

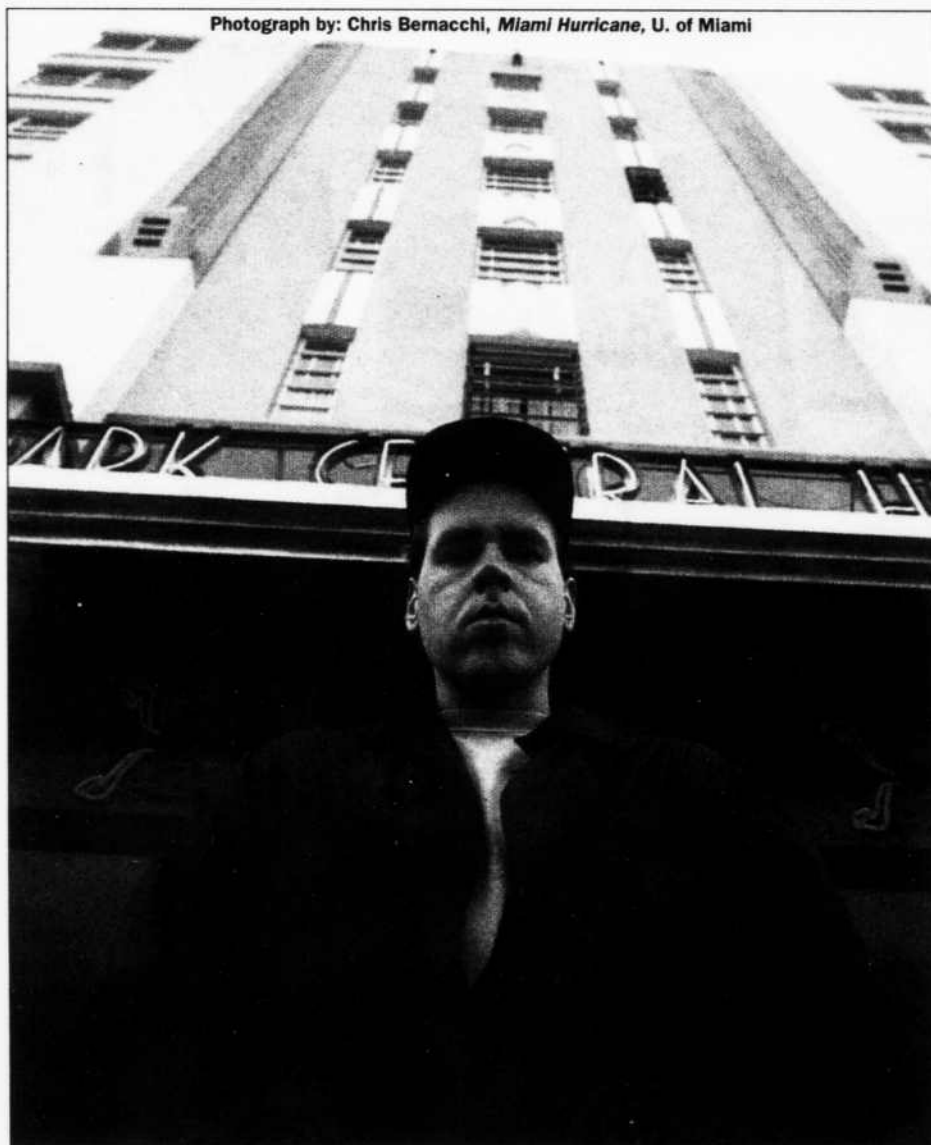
Bret Easton Ellis: This is the third day on tour. Yeah, I'm incredibly nervous.

U.: It's a lot of pressure?

Ellis: I'm finding that out. I've never done a U.S. tour before. Never. I don't understand how rock bands can do it.... I mean, all I have to do is stay in my hotel room and then come down and talk to people. But the traveling — going to a city a day — is hard.

U.: Why have you avoided doing a promotional tour up until now?

Ellis: Because I'd heard how hellish they are. When my first book was published, I was still in college, so I could use that as an excuse. Then, as disgusting as this might sound, I had sold enough copies of my first book to be able to tell my publisher, "No!" when my second book [*The Rules of Attraction*] came out. Then with *American Psycho*, no one was



Photograph by: Chris Bernacchi, Miami Hurricane, U. of Miami

Days of Whining Poseurs

willing to send me out on tour.

U.: Because you were too busy defending it?

Ellis: Well, not only that, but we were getting death threats. We take those pretty seriously.

U.: It's been almost 10 years since *Less Than Zero* was published. What made you decide to write about L.A. again?

Ellis: A total accident. I was working on another novel after I finished *American Psycho*. It's this very long, very complicated book. And every time I had writer's block, I would go to this huge folder of stories I was working on.

The Informers was a book I never intended to publish. It was just something to work with on the side, a project to relax me and loosen me up whenever I couldn't work on another book.

U.: There are so many characters

in *The Informers*. What do they all have in common?

Ellis: The milieu they all share — having money, looking really good, having nice cars, tans, plus a willingness not to fight against apathy and passivity, which I think hurts them in the end.

I think there's too much mellowing out and too much carelessness among the characters. Everyone's too laid back. The combination of not being alert, not being aware and not having to struggle for anything is really dangerous. I think it leads to the violence and brutality in the book.

U.: Your books are written in first person. Is there a reason why?

Ellis: Yes, but I really don't know why. I'm just comfortable with that mode.

U.: After *American Psycho* was published, what was the weirdest letter of support you received?

Ellis: (pauses) A guy in prison sent me

a fan letter with a picture of himself and asked me to send a picture of myself back.

U.: You've done a great deal of research on serial killers. What was your opinion of the movie *Natural Born Killers*?

Ellis: I didn't care for it. I found it to be a very loud and grating movie. It was very unrealistic and also very unfrightening. And there were no real performances. What Quentin Tarantino [who wrote the original script] was trying to do [Tarantino has said it was supposed to be a Bonnie and Clyde road movie] got lost in all the changes.

U.: You attended college at Bennington with Donna Tartt (best-selling author of *The Secret History*, published in 1993). Did you have anything to do with her getting a book deal?

Ellis: Not a lot. I mean, someone with her talent isn't going to need a lot of help. That book would have been published anyway. The stuff I read today, 90 percent of it is crap. Publishers are starving for young talent to sign.

U.: Your first four books satirized the 1980s. When you start satirizing the 1990s, what's your first target?

Ellis: That's actually what I'm working on now. It's about models and the fashion world and how our society is obsessed with glamour.

U.: Music references have always been common in your work. Do you listen to anything when you write?

Ellis: Not anymore. I used to be able to write with both the stereo and the TV blasting. Now I can't do that. It's hard enough to write without having any type of distraction. But on the other hand, I like all that stuff... really, I like all types of music.

U.: Style-wise, can you see yourself doing the same type of writing in 20 years?

Ellis: It depends. I like to write from the mouths of narrators. I guess the style has been the same through all four books because it's the same sort of people. I

think with tiny adjustments, it will be the same style.

U.: Are you comfortable being labeled the voice of a generation?

Ellis: It really doesn't mean anything. I'm not writing for other people as much as I am for myself. If I stood on the street on a soapbox and claimed to be the voice of a generation, who would listen? What I write about is a small snippet of society.

Besides, a phrase like that is really only used to sell books. It's like how publishers take a young author's first book and put it in the same sentence with *Catcher in the Rye*.

U.: You're 30 years old and coming out with your fourth novel. Do you feel fortunate?

Ellis: Incredibly fortunate. It's very rare to be able to make a living off your writing. Other writers I know are either independently wealthy or have other jobs and write in their spare time. I really have nothing to complain about.

By Joshua Mann, *The Catalyst*, Miami-Dade College South



The Business Of Comedy Is No Laughing Matter

Every six or seven years, it seems, a new brand of genuinely innovative comedy arises: Monty Python, *Saturday Night Live*, George Bush, *Kids In The Hall*. We're so damn happy when someone funny comes along — remember junior high? How much easier were those formative years thanks to Eddie Murphy's ice cream man routine?

During the dry spells, though, we're left to fend for ourselves among tired stand-up comedians ("What's the deal with airline food?"), lazy sketch comedy ("It's Pat! Is a he? Is it a she? Whoo-hoo!") and increasingly irrelevant satire (*National Lampoon Magazine* — "Humor for Privileged White Men"). These things make us *unhappy*. Crime rates skyrocket. Middle East tension rises. You get cavities.

It's a good thing we 20somethings are such renowned self-starters, or we would be forever at the mercy of these fickle comic winds. Whether in stand-up, sketch comedy, improv, satire or television sitcoms, the newest and best comedy these days is coming from the young 'uns. These productions may not be as slick as *SNL* or as big as Roseanne, but they've got a powerful ace-in-the-hole: They're funny.

Thinking Feller's Onion

One crew of adolescent malcontents is in the process of mounting a full frontal assault on comedy convention — Onion Inc. What began as a self-described "floundering, text-heavy rag" [satirical weekly newspaper to you] is now a syndicated creative think tank with ambitions in radio, television and film. They're sort of like the Illuminati, only with bathroom humor.

Founded in 1988 at the U. of Wisconsin, *The Onion* is the mothership publication around which the group's various interests revolve. Distributed on half a dozen campuses, *The Onion* draws its writers and contributors from a pool of full-time students, semi-students and ex-students in the Madison/Milwaukee area. Typical headlines include "Sad Platypus Learns to Like Himself" and "You Were Adopted." [See slacker priests exposé below.]

"We've had six or seven years of solid funny stuff," says publisher Pete Haise. "We have a core of people writing and editing in Madison. We're inundated with ideas all the time."

Haise says this saturation level has kept *The Onion* fresh, so to speak, while other satirical publications have wilted. (Incidentally, *The Onion* does not, as a rule, condone vegetable metaphors in its articles.)

"The *Lampoon* is very weak now," he says. "What was once a thriving bed of creativity is not even close to what it used to be. The incredible energy that comedy requires is just not there."

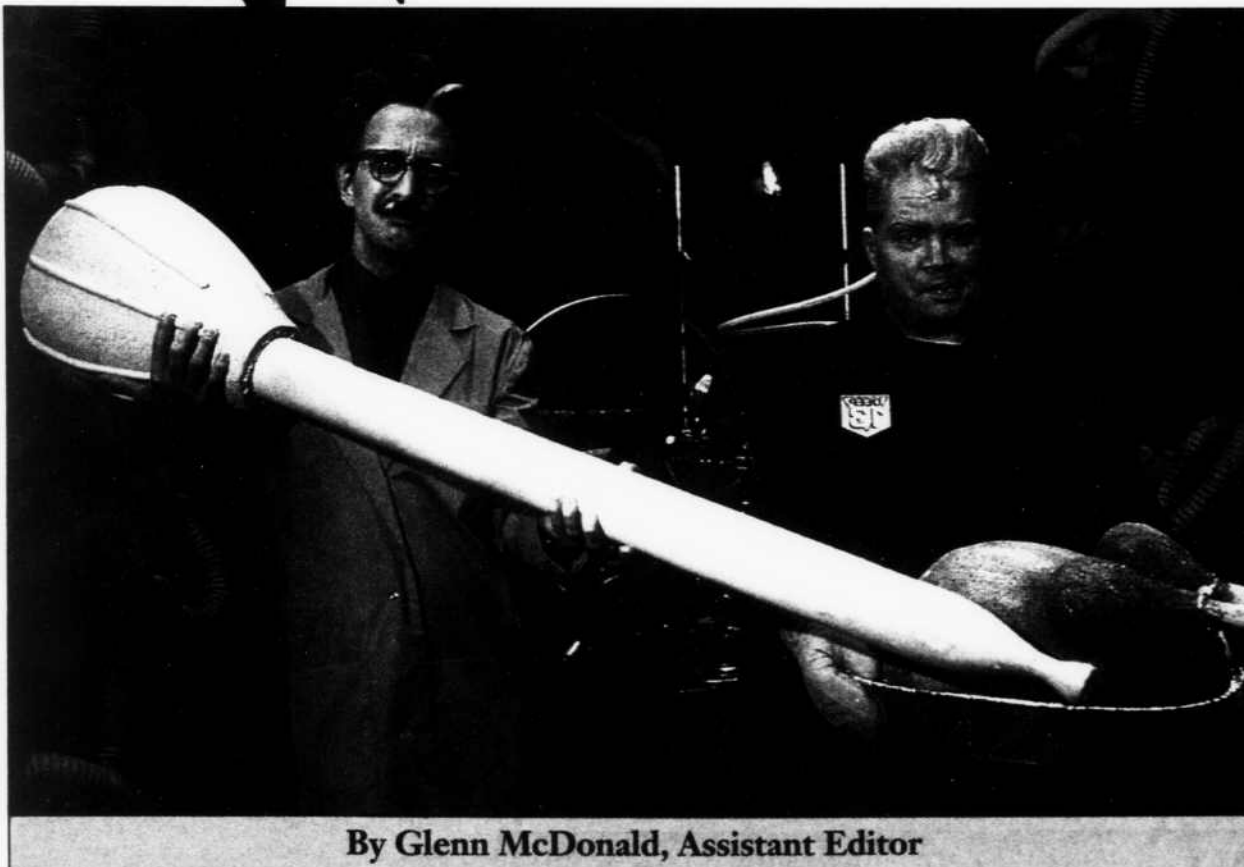
Onion Inc.'s latest attack is the TV sketch offensive *The Comedy Castaways*. Drawing equally from absurdist maestros Monty Python and more contemporary sketch formatting, the *Castaways* rely on inspired premises and consistently funny dialogue. It may be the best-written sketch show around.

"I think what sets us apart is we've intentionally formed a tightly knit group of funny performers," says Scott Dickers, *Castaways* executive producer. "A lot of these other shows are created by 50-year-olds, written by 40-year-olds and performed by 35-year-olds."

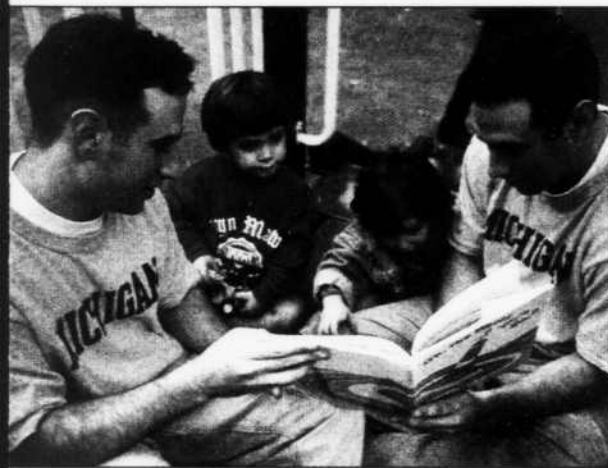
Dickers says the group is currently in post-production on the first two episodes and is pitching the pilot to NBC, Fox and HBO. Dickers denies rumors that Onion Inc. secretly wants to rule the world.

White Men Can't Tell Jokes

Another tired convention that's quickly crumbling these days is the traditional male dominance of comedy. Betsy Boyd, a senior at Brown U., has been working with her sketch comedy troupe *Hard To Kill* for two years. Last summer, she interned at NBC's *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*.



By Glenn McDonald, Assistant Editor



Fred Northrup, Washington Square News, New York U.

Stand Up In The Place Where You Live

In the '80s, it seemed you couldn't swing a rubber chicken without hitting a comedy club. But stand-up is experiencing a major downswing, with only a handful of innovators pacing an army of mediocre talent telling dick jokes.

Identical twins Jason and Randy Sklar recently relocated from St. Louis to New York City to pursue their stand-up careers as the Comedy Twins. (Insert "Wonder Twin powers activate!" joke here.)

"Stand-up is really taking some knocks," Jason says. "Clubs are closing all over. I think it's weeding out those guys —"

"— who suck," his brother finishes. Twins can be so cute that way.

As opposed to sketch comedy or improv, stand-up is a particularly solo undertaking. Unless, of course, you share the stage with your twin brother.

"The difference between improv and stand-up is the difference between taking an essay test and writing a term paper," Randy says. "With improv, the audience understands that you're being put on the spot. With stand-up, the material and delivery are all expected to be there. You have to totally dazzle." Ironically, the Sklars forbid academic metaphors in their show.

Actually, the Sklars' routine lands them somewhere on the edge of conventional stand-up. While working the two-person gimmick gives them an almost Vaudevillian dynamic, the routine is peppered with the sort of cerebral pop culture references that Seinfeld pioneered. So what type of comics piss off the Sklars most?

"Shirley Hemple," they answer in unison. "That's the big old Shirley from *What's Happening*," Randy says. "She represents everything we disdain. While we're trying to respect the audience and bring up the level of the show, she's killing a room doing feminine hygiene jokes. It's very frustrating."

Look, life's too short for bad comedy. (It's also too short for light beers, Luther "Luke" Campbell and those crappy Belgian reverse-pulse wattage calibrators.) It's a good thing some people are still fighting the good fight. Quality comedy is essential to a society's well-being — it's rumored that Greek civilization collapsed when shock comic Leviticus "Dice" Palocles launched his 30 city-state tour.

You just can't be too careful.

Jeff and Randy Sklar believe that children are our future.

"It was totally a boy's club," Boyd says. "All the writers are white men in their 30s. John Belushi once said that to write comedy you have to have male genitalia. But that's wrong, as will become obvious very soon."

It's already pretty obvious. With the success of performers such as Roseanne, Ellen DeGeneres and Margaret Cho, all of whom have their own network television shows, the woman's prerogative is in demand.

Robin Bucci, a recent graduate of Michigan State U., has been hammering away at improvisational comedy since 1989. She was one of three women accepted into the inaugural Detroit Second City troupe in 1991.

"When I first started, it seemed as if there were a lot less women [in comedy]," Bucci says. "But now there are a lot more women trying to break in."

Regarding her Second City experience, Bucci says the creative process of a truly improvisational ensemble is the best way to write and perform comedy. That and a head full of vodka. Just kidding.

"Like with *Saturday Night Live* — they have good ideas, but they don't heighten them; they don't take them to that next level," she says. "On TV, you have the actors with performance skills — and then you have the writers. You can have an idea that works good on paper but may not play as well."

"At Second City, the actors are the writers and creators through improvisation."

Reality Bites The Onion

Some say *The Onion* is just an immature, irresponsible and sophomoric rag with nothing going for it other than adolescent impudence. We think people who say that are jerks. As you can see, *The Onion* tackles issues of national — nay, generational importance. So take that, jerks.

A recent expose by *The Onion* into the world of slacker priests:



The Comedy Castaways, *Onion* Inc.'s TV sketch offensive. See, they ran aground on the shore of this uncharted desert isle....

They're the new breed of God's disciples; armed with college degrees, laconic wits and unironed frocks. More and more each day, slacker priests are gaining a foothold in the church and changing the face of Catholicism.

Father David Murdoch, a slacker priest at St. Joseph's Church in Danville, Pa., is a good example of this new phenomenon. Murdoch, 29, is the child of divorced parents and still lives with his mother.

"I would get married, but why bother?" Murdoch says. "Everything about my upbringing has proven to be false. I don't trust politicians, the economy or the family unit. I wouldn't trust God, either, except that it's kind of required because I'm a priest."

A typical Murdoch service begins not with the traditional organ, but with a hit single by Dig, Live or another monosyllabically named indie rock band. Murdoch then walks among his parishioners and randomly references icons from 1970s Catholic-kitsch culture....

"We sing silly hymns that we remember from like, 1973," Murdoch explains. "People freak out when they hear the songs, because they haven't heard them since their first communions and Sunday school and shit."

Most of Murdoch's sermons are based on blaming the generations before him for the ills of contemporary society.

"I'm sick of all the labels: 'Twenty-preachers,' 'Jesus-somethings,' whatever you call us. Besides, I'm not going to be a priest forever. The priesthood is just an easy way to make beer money until I decide what I want to do with my life." (*The Onion*, Sept. 27, 1994)

Tom Servo For Pope

One of the better success stories in the low-rent comedy business is the stellar ascent of *Mystery Science Theater 3000*. Currently in its sixth season on Comedy Central, the show explores what happens when a human and three robots are forced to watch the worst movies ever made. Producer Jim Mallon and head writer/host Mike Nelson talk about launching their satellite of love.

U.: How did you take the show from an independent UHF station to Comedy Central?

Mallon: We did 22 shows at KTMA [TV23, Minneapolis]. Then we thought it might have [a wider] appeal, so we brought it to an agent in New York City. HBO picked it up, and we ended up on the Comedy Channel, which became Comedy Central.

U.: What's the bottom-line worst, most aesthetically offensive movie ever made?

Nelson: I would have to say, pound for pound, it couldn't possibly get any worse than *Eegah*. It's about a caveman who lives in the desert. This teenager hits him with her car, and he comes out and meets the modern world. It's obvious the father is having an affair with [his] son's girlfriend. Weird. Pedophilic.

U.: Does Best Brains (MST3K's production company) have any other productions in the works?

Mallon: Yeah, we're working on two new shows. Also, Universal wants to make a movie of *MST*. They've optioned it for right now, but the film industry is weird. Until you see a check, you don't know what's happening.

U.: Any advice for young writers and performers?

Nelson: Do your own thing — try to get your own show going. Don't put yourself at someone else's mercy.

Mallon: If you want to be a writer, write. You don't just magically get to be a writer. Identify what you have to say. Take advantage of the four-year liberal arts free ride you're on — even if it's cable access or a camcorder. Enjoy college while it lasts — the harsh and foreboding real world awaits.

Nelson: Unless you happen to work on a puppet show.



Chris, Mike Nelson, and Tom Servo — *MST3K*

James
Wab Wab
Mercury Records



Mercury, James' record label, wants you to know something: "Please, please, please... know that James has not gone off their rocker and dramatically changed their musical style. This is simply an experiment... a one-off for the fans."

Okay, got it? Good. Now forget it, because all it means is that James' newest release *Wab Wab* is so fresh that not even the band's label knows what to do with it. Originally intended as a dual album to be released with 1993's *Laid*, *Wab Wab* features a raw authenticity that many bands would kill for. This album is exhilarating, marginal, uncompromised and yet somehow central to our times. With layered atmospheres, eccentric guitars and the tweaking and production of Brian Eno, *Wab Wab* proves that commercial success needn't mean mediocrity.

■ Brent Busboom, *Sagebrush*, U. of Nevada, Reno

Paris
Guerrilla Funk
Priority Records



Paris, hip-hop's premier Black Panther rapper, lets loose the funk on his third release, *Guerrilla Funk*. The Oakland-based rapper and college graduate raised more than a few eyebrows with his controversial *Sleeping With The Enemy* CD back in 1992.

This time, Paris comes back with the same hard-hitting, pro-black and anti-establishment lyrics that made him famous — but to a different tune. Instead of his trademark relentless, guitar-laced beats, Paris drops some good old-fashioned funk bass lines on this CD.

The title track (and first single) drops a famous Funkadelic bass line behind typically revolutionary rhymes. On "Bring It To Ya," Paris gets some lyrical help from protégées the Conscious Daughters. Longtime fans and new ones alike will not be disappointed by Paris' venture into the Oaktown sound.

■ Paul Sargentini, *The Maneater*, U. of Missouri, Columbia

Cranes
Loved
Dedicated/Arista



Cranes' Alison Shaw has a smooth, gorgeous voice, but in the band's latest album, *Loved*, it's impossible to understand what she's singing about. And that's a good thing — her indecipherable lyrics shift your focus from meaning to pure sound.

Ghostly, she croons like a lost spirit on a dark road, a Gothic pixie's song mistaken for wind through the trees. It's a mix of the Sundays' fragile songstress Harriet Williams and Cocteau Twins' ethereal Liz Fraser. The rich texture of Shaw's voice, a melancholy acoustic guitar and ominous bass lines create the relentless rhythm and almost supernatural urgency of songs like "Shining Road" and "Reverie."

Majestic sweeps of synth add romance to this British band's latest album. The three last tracks are bonus remixes by Flood (U2, Depeche Mode) and Michael Brauer (Belly).

■ John Youngs, *Daily Campus*, U. of Connecticut

Megadeth
Youthanasia
Capitol Records



Listen up all you closet head-bangers. It's time for another Megadeth album. Got your poodle haircuts and spandex? All right, let's begin.

On *Youthanasia*, Megadeth's latest release, we see the band trotting out its old aggressive guitars, tortured vocals, driving beats — you get the idea. The only problem is that this time around, the music sounds a bit, well, housebroken.

Unfortunately, *Youthanasia* never achieves the heights of the band's last album; instead it falls into all the worst speed metal clichés. It always seems like Dave Mustaine is this close to being relevant — then he reveals himself once again as a heavy metal warlock.

If Megadeth's not careful, they could easily end up becoming the Sha Na Na of speed metal. Hmm... Bowzer meets Dave Mustaine — now there's an idea for a concept album.

■ Brent Busboom, *Sagebrush*, U. of Nevada, Reno

★★★★=Scooby Doo ★★★★★=Shaggy ★★★=Velma
★★=Fred/Daphne ★=Scrappy

Various Artists, CBGB's 20th Anniversary Album — This legendary New York club can make any band sound cool — from old-schoolers the B-52s and The Damned to fresh blood like Helmet and J Mascis.

Various Artists, Jock Rock — All those testosterone-jacked songs that drive muscle-heads crazy — "We Will Rock You," "Na, Na, Hey, Hey," "I Feel Good." Don't let the title turn you off — it rocks! Dude!

The Murmurs, The Murmurs — Kinda Moon Zappa squared, kinda Bananarama, but weirder, more punky. We dunno... Tinkerbelle Rock.

Life Like Feel, Life Like Feel — Last heard on the Rock The Vote benefit CD *Propaganda!*, LLF was down with the original Seattle scene — heavy pop. Plus, they're mysterious 'cause we can't figure out the name.

Pete Droge, Necktie Second — Droge writes hook-laden rock songs with a surprising emotional depth, proving that white guys with guitars can still be interesting.

Da Lench Mob, Planet of the Apes — By remaining lyrically positive, Da Lench Mob provides the truly hard line — solidarity and self-knowledge. It's the end of an era — G-Funk, that is.

Pocket Band

Johnny Socko

Mix Parliament, Madness and the Clash, and you get **Johnny Socko**. Backed by a trumpet, saxophone and trombone, Socko race through funk, ska and hard-core punk riffs in wire-tight fashion.

Like most ska-influenced bands, Socko have been bombarded with Fishbone comparisons. "I guess it's more flattering than comparing us to a Flock of Seagulls," says lead vocalist Trout.

Sax-man Joshy-Boy jokes, "We're more like the Banana Splits." No kidding. Dressed in garb ranging from a Taco Bell uniform to an *Eight is Enough* football-jersey nightgown, Socko unleash high-voltage silliness on their audience.

At an Indianapolis club, Trout recites a few lines from *Pulp Fiction* and verbally hazes a local band for having personalized guitar picks — and sticks a pick up his nose. While the audience laughs, the band goes into a speeded-up version of the theme from *Sanford and Son*.

"You get so high from playing, you forget it's got to end," Joshy-Boy says. The owner of the club tells them twice to close it out.

Labeling their live performance a circus act isn't far off the mark. Trumpet player Damien once antagonized lions under the big top, and guitarist Hombre Rana swung from a trapeze.

All clowning around aside, Socko's love for funk-ska runs rampant on their debut album, *BOVAQUARIUM*. Their funk flavor appears strongest on "Dick Wagner's Rinse Cycle," which sounds like the background music for one of the *Shaft* movies. They even pay homage to their Hoosier roots in the country-song spoof, "I'll only smack ya (whenyagitouttalline)."

When asked if their enormous confidence reflects their current monetary success, the entire band laughs, and Trout says, "Do you know what a musician without a girlfriend is? Homeless."

■ Mike Dawson, Indiana U.



Listen Up!

U. Radio Chart

1. **Liz Phair, Whip-smart**, Matador

2. **R.E.M., Monster**, Warner Bros.

3. **Thinking Fellers Union Local 282, Strangers From The Universe**, Matador

4. **Sinead O'Connor, Universal Mother**, EMI

5. **Compilation, If I Were A Carpenter**, A&M

6. **Sugar, File Under Easy Listening**, Rykodisc

7. **Smashing Pumpkins, Pisces Iscariot**, Virgin

8. **Cop Shoot Cop, Release**, Interscope

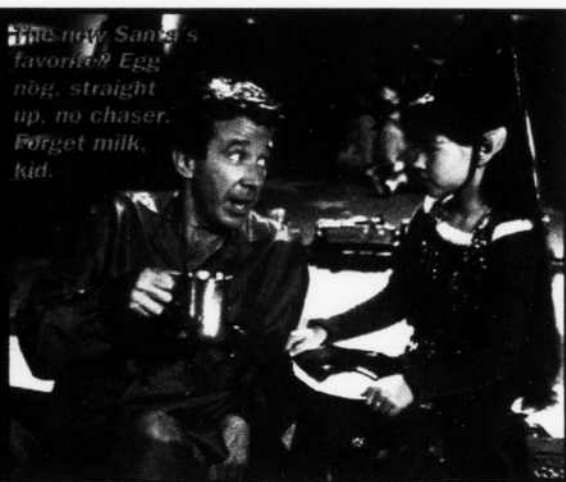
9. **Daniel Johnston, Fun**, Atlantic

10. **Shudder To Think, Pony Express Record**, Epic

Chart solely based on college radio airplay. Contributing radio stations: KJHK, U. of Kansas; WFAL, Bowling Green U.; KTRU-FM, Rice U.; KALX, U. of California, Berkeley; KUCB, U. of Colorado; WRFL, U. of Kentucky; KUOM, U. of Minnesota.

If you don't read our movie previews this month, the chubby, white-haired, bearded guy is gonna get it. (Santa, not Kenny Rogers.) So, even if you're not a Trekkie or a Lyle Lovett fan or a suicidal holiday-hater, bite the bullet and read on. Do it for Santa. Or Kenny. Whichever.

The new Santa's favorite? Egg nog, straight up, no chaser. Forget milk, kid.



The Santa Clause

Woolly Pictures

Tim Allen trades in his tool belt for a Santa suit after accidentally — and literally — scaring the pants off the jolly old man on his rooftop. Scott Calvin (Allen) puts on the suit of the mysteriously vanished Santa and takes a sleighing joy ride to the North Pole. He finds out that a few stipulations are attached to being the wearer of the coolest costume since Mrs. Doubtfire's duds. Upon further inspection of the getup, Calvin finds something other than the "dry clean only" tag — the Santa clause, which states that whoever wears the jacket has got to deliver the goods. And we don't mean pizza.

Star Trek: The Next Generation — The Movie

Paramount Pictures



But where else do they boldly go? They've already been everywhere. This time it will be like an awkward class reunion, bringing together members of the original *Star Trek* crew and the members of the *Next Generation* with Patrick Stewart as Captain Stubing, and Captain Picard.

Dumb and Dumber

New Line Cinema



Granted, the title doesn't offer much reason to run out and buy tickets, but *Dumb and Dumber* does offer audiences the humor of Jim Carrey (*The Mask*) and Jeff Daniels (*Speed*). As

the two gel heads travel across the country to return a briefcase full of money to its rightful owner, it is the audience's responsibility to figure out who is dumb and who is dumber. Teri Garr and Lauren Holly (*Picket Fences*) costar in this movie that's very likely for Jim Carrey fans only.

Drop Zone

Paramount Pictures



Impossible. How could a movie have a sequel after only a month? Oh, never mind. This isn't *Terminal Velocity II*. It's just another high-action skydiving movie. In this movie, the bad guys try to kidnap another bad guy from a Boeing 747 while it's in flight. Seems people will do just about anything to get their hands on those little packages of salted peanuts. Director John Badham (*Saturday Night Fever*) keeps up his tradition of thrillers — let's hope this one doesn't involve polyester, too.

Nell

Twentieth Century Fox



Jodie Foster stars as a backwoods oddball who created her own language after being raised by her verbally impaired mother. Liam Neeson (*Schindler's List*) plays a doctor who tries to decide if the fragile woman should be brought into society. That's easy. Just ask Tarzan if he ever adapted to civilization. He took one taste of fat-free frozen yogurt and headed back to the jungle.

Prêt-A-Porter

Miramax Films

Director Robert Altman brought together a large and varied cast to work on his new movie, set in Paris, about the intriguing and comical world of fashion. The cast includes Sophia Loren, Lyle Lovett, Julia Roberts, Kim Basinger and Tracy Ullman. Let's hope the movie will last at least two hours — about half an hour longer than Julia dated Lyle before they got married.

The Perez Family

Samuel Goldwyn



Two Cuban refugees slip past the Coast Guard's nets for director Mira Nair's new movie about romance and destiny. Juan (Alfred Molina) has just been released from a Cuban jail and has not seen his wife (Anjelica Huston) in over 20 years. Who could blame him? Did you see *Adams Family Values*? On the way to America, Juan meets Dottie (Marisa Tomei), a dreamer who thinks America is all rock and roll and John Wayne. Try minivans and food dehydrator infomercials, sweetie. Alienated from his family, Juan finds a close relationship with Dottie.

Trapped in Paradise

Twentieth Century Fox

Trapped in senseless Christmas movie plot land, audiences can look forward to seeing Nicolas Cage, Jon Lovitz and Dana Carvey in a movie about kindness knocking out crime. Three brothers from New York visit the small town of Paradise at Christmas time with the hopes of robbing the residents blind. But hey, it *is* the time of year for overpriced gift wrap, gift sets of stinky hand soaps in red cellophane and, of course, the punching power of piety. Who

knows? The good people of Paradise may just knock these bad boys on their butts.

Speechless

MGM/UA



Michael Keaton and Geena Davis star in *Batman and Louise*, an intriguing movie about a dissatisfied housewife and a misunderstood 6-foot-tall bat who trek across the country. Wait — wrong plot. Kevin Vallick (Keaton) and Julia Mann (Davis) — political speech writers for opposing candidates — meet over a box of Nytol in a convenience store. Then the chemistry begins, causing Mann's would-be fiancé (Christopher Reeve) and Vallick's ex-wife to complicate matters for the debatable couple.

Mixed Nuts

TriStar Pictures

Steve Martin stars in another one of this season's attempts to put a twist on the whole good-will-toward-men thing. *Mixed Nuts* is about a group of people working at a suicide hotline on Christmas Eve. That must be one of the busiest phone lines of the night — who doesn't put the suicide hotline number on speed dial when they know they'll be trapped in a room with relatives for hours?

Higher Learning

Columbia Pictures

John Singleton (*Boyz n the Hood*) directs as a group of college students face issues concerning identity, diversity, sexism and racism. Most of us confront all these things just selecting an item from a vending machine on campus. Ice Cube and Laurence Fishburne star in this schoolbook drama of college life.

■ Erin Laskowski, *The Oracle*, U. of South Florida

On the Set

Fury Duty

There may be an image change in store for America's favorite weasel. Pauly Shore, best known for his dim-witted antics on MTV and in the flick *In the Army Now*, will play a hapless loner who charms Tia Carrere, upholds justice and saves the day in *Jury Duty*.

Is Shore really trying to carve out a persona as a romantic hero? Not likely. His character, Tommy, is merely the latest variation on a successful theme. *Jury Duty* should contain enough of the familiar, goofy, Shore-type antics to please his fans and broaden his appeal. "My other movies were 'Pauly the son-in-law' or 'Pauly in the Army,'" Shore says. "This is more of a comedy-romance. We're not billing it as 'Pauly on jury duty.'"

Co-star Carrere is content to leave the joking to Pauly. Best known for her turns as the sleeky babe in *Wayne's World* and the seductive villainess in *True Lies*, Carrere plays a law student serving on the jury with Tommy. "I wouldn't even presume to be funny," she says. "I think that's the hardest thing in the world."

Carrere doesn't have to worry. With Shore at the helm, *Jury Duty* may not have trouble courting viewers — just be glad you're not on the witness stand.

■ Lael Loewenstein, *The Daily Bruin*, U. of California, Los Angeles





Mother Gert Boyle, Chairman of the Board, Columbia Sportswear

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-Tim Boyle, President, Columbia Sportswear

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The Bible is thousands of years old and is one of the most influential books in the world — next to *Iacocca*. It permeates our culture, even making its mark on American cinema: Charlton Heston portrays Moses in *The Ten Commandments*, Max Von Sydow plays Jesus in *The Greatest Story Ever Told* and Barbra Streisand pretends to be God in *A Star is Born*.

With all of this PR going for it, it would seem the Bible could last thousands of years more. But what if it were submitted for publication in today's fast-paced marketplace? How would a typical book editor critique it?

THE LAST TEMPTATION OF AN EDITOR

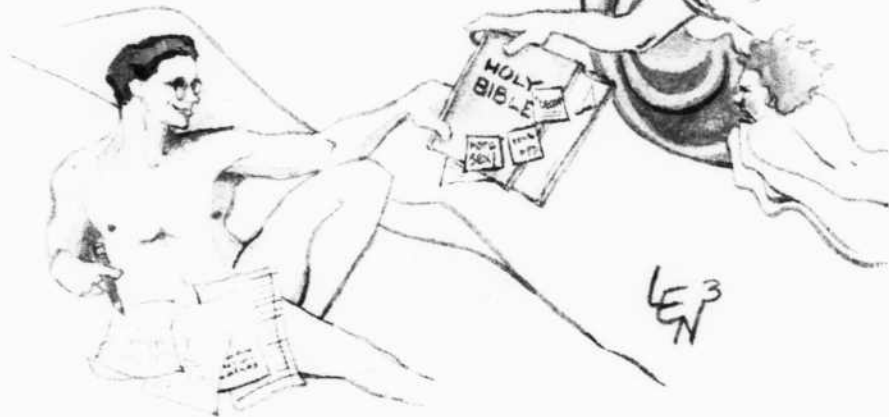


Illustration by: Louis Nosce, U. of Pennsylvania

Dear Author:

I've read your manuscript, currently titled *Holy Bible*. First off, I'd like to say that I enjoyed reading it. It's a decent story with a lot of potential. I do, however, think it needs a little more work. I have some suggestions that might improve it. I hope we can get together and discuss them in more detail. For now, though, here are a few general comments.

- First of all, I am having difficulty with your writing style. Narratives told in poetic prose are not very commercial these days. Keep in mind your target audience — adventure stories involving miracles and mystical beings usually appeal to the 15- to 25-year-old market.

- You need to develop your characters more — particularly God. I'm having trouble identifying with him in the story. Since you describe him as being all-powerful, readers won't feel much sympathy for him. I lose him in other areas of his personality as well. You say that he created Heaven and Earth, but what is his motivation? Is he lonely? Flesh him out more.

Also, characters need to go through some kind of change in the story. God, however, stays the same from beginning to end. We'll get together later and discuss "character arcs."

- Your plot is unorganized. There are four parts to any story: exposi-

tion, complications, climax and denouement. Your story goes all over the place. One minute it's about Adam and Eve, next it's Moses, then on to Jesus — blah, blah, blah. You need to simplify what you want to tell your readers.

- Don't muck up your story with meaningless characters. In several parts of your manuscript you go on with pointless details about who "begat" who. Who cares? Get to the meat of the story as soon as possible.

- Chapter four of Genesis, major problems: you have characters appearing out of the blue. In 4-17, you mention Cain's wife — where did she come from? The book begins with Adam and Eve, then Cain and Abel. There wasn't any mention of another woman!

- Your sex scenes need some work. I believe eroticism and subtlety work well together. On the other hand, Adam "knew" Eve doesn't exactly get my motor running. Give more detail.

- Theme and plot sometimes contradict one another. You wrote that sexual intercourse is "original sin," but several of your holy characters indulge in sex.

In the Ten Commandments scene, you wrote, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife," yet in another scene you have the Holy Ghost making moves on Joseph's wife, Mary. (Maybe they weren't neighbors.)

- Problems with repetition. You might consider combining the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, since they are basically the same story.

- Think about renaming Judas. I see him more as an Ernest.

Overall, I think it's a wonderful book. A little preachy in parts, but otherwise very powerful. It has a lot of commercial potential. With some rewrites I think it could even outsell *Sein Language*.

We'll keep in touch — *Editor*

■ **Ryan Garns, *The Pointer*, U. of Wisconsin, Stevens Point**

HOLIDAY GIFT WISH LIST

U. asked 550 students at 22 schools what they want this holiday season. The results, in order of preference:

Academic Tools

1. Computer
2. Printer
3. Software

Communications

1. Answering machine/
Cordless phone (*tie*)
2. Stationery and stamps
3. Beeper
4. Phone



Audio Equipment

1. CD Player
2. Speakers
3. Receiver
4. Digital compact cassette
5. Headphones



TV/Video Equipment

1. Color TV
2. Camcorder
3. VCR
4. Laser disc player
5. Video games

Entertainment Items

1. CDs
2. Concert tickets
3. Movie videos
4. Books
5. CD-Rom

Photography Equipment

1. Film
2. 35mm camera

3. Lenses
4. Instant camera
5. Disposable camera

Transportation

1. Car
2. Bicycle
3. Motorcycle
4. In-line skates
5. Truck

Vehicle Items

1. Car stereo
2. Car speakers
3. Tune up
4. Tires
5. Anti-theft device



Sports/Fitness Gear

1. Athletic shoes
2. Hiking boots
3. Camping gear
4. Weights
5. Workout clothes



Clothes/Accessories

1. Jacket/coat
2. Jeans
3. Shoes
4. Sweaters
5. Shirts/blouses

Survival Gear

1. Cash
2. Microwave
3. Refrigerator
4. Towels
5. Pots and pans

Personal Care

1. Glasses
2. Perfume/cologne
3. Cosmetics/
contact lenses (*tie*)
4. Hair dryer
5. Suntan lotion

Charities/Churches/Causes

(These are groups to which students would consider donating money, clothes, food or other goods in lieu of receiving a gift)

1. Children
2. AIDS
3. Homeless
4. Veterans
5. Disabled

In Your Dreams

1. Car that never breaks down
2. All expenses-paid trip to California to hang with U. editors
3. Guest on Letterman
4. Tickets to Academy Awards



5. Be on MTV's next *Real World*

Holiday Wishes

- A job
- World peace
- A trip to Australia
- To make my own Hollywood film
- To get a cool tattoo
- For Al Davis to move the Raiders back to Oakland
- Win the lottery
- A date with Kathy Ireland
- A big ol' graduate school fellowship
- For my iguana to breed 4.0 GPA

CONTESTS & SPECIALS

U. CAPTURE THE NIKE SPIRIT CONTEST

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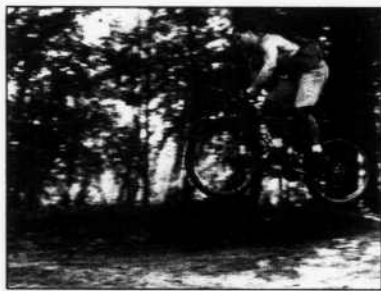
Grab your camera and capture those outstanding Nike moments in sports and everyday life.

Maybe you and your Nikes will hike to the most awesome place on Earth, or climb the biggest mountain or steepest rock, catch big air (with or without wheels), ride the rapids, backpack into a canyon, run around (or into) a lake, bungee jump off a bridge, rappel (or leap) the tallest building on campus. Or maybe you own the World's Oldest Living pair of Nikes, or the most battered pair still alive, or can get the most pairs of Nikes in one photo with people attached. You decide and **JUST DO IT!**

Each month, the best entry will be published in *U*. Winners of the month will win \$50 cash.

All Capture the Nike Spirit contest photos will be entered in the judging for the Grand Prize award. The Grand Prize winner will win \$1,000 cash AND the winning entry will be published with Nike's ad in the January/February issue of *U*. Runner-up prizes will be awarded too.

Send your entries on color print or slide film, labeled (gently) on the back with your name, school, address, phone number (school and permanent) and a brief description of the Nike spirit you've captured (who, when, where, doing what, etc.). Mail entries to *U. MAGAZINE, Capture The Nike Spirit Contest*, 1800 Century Park East, Suite 820, Los Angeles, CA 90067-1511. Deadline for entries is **December 1, 1994**. Entries cannot be returned. There is no limit on the number of entries you can submit.



Entry by: Shane Johnson, Stephen F. Austin State U.

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U. PHOTO CONTEST: Win \$1,000 Cash!



Entry by: Alison Torrillo, Cornell U.

U. needs lots of color photos of the faces and facets of college life on and off campus... and we'll pay you \$25 for every one published in *U*.

PLUS, we're offering four \$1,000 cash grand prizes for the best photo entries submitted in four categories: Campus Life; All Around Sports (from mud to varsity); Funniest Sights; and Road Trippin'.

Photos can be of anyone or anything on or off

campus, from normal (whatever that is) to outrageous. For best results, keep the faces in focus and the background as light as possible.

At least one entry will be published in each issue of *U*. The Grand Prize winning entries will be featured in *U*'s May 1995 issue in our third annual College Year in Review special section.

Send entries on color print or slide film labeled (gently) on the back with your name, school, address, phone number (school and permanent) and info on who, when, why, what and where the photo was taken. Include the names of the people in the picture if possible. Entries cannot be returned and become the property of *U. MAGAZINE*.

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