

FLASH

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A SUPPLEMENT TO SIDELINES

Wednesday, February 3, 1999



 Interview with Jon Grayson, host of *The Magic Box*

 SNM on the rocks

CD Review: Maynard Ferguson's *Brass Attitude*

Movie Review: *A Simple Plan*

SIDELINES

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Quotes of the week

**Never complain,
 never explain.
 -Henry Ford II**

If you have any stories you would like to see in a future issue of FLASH!, please call Barry at 898-2917. We'd love to hear about your thoughts and ideas.

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It started with a Simple Plan

Aaron Tallent
Flash writer

A Simple Plan begins with three guys finding a wrecked airplane on a forest preserve. Inside the plane is a bag containing \$4.5 million. The three agree to hold the money until someone comes looking for it.

After this scene, we, the audience, have an idea of the film's eventual ending but are still intrigued. A Simple Plan never lets us lose our interest or concern throughout the film. Of the movies I have seen from 1998, it is one of the ten best.



Brent Briscoe as Lou, friend to Hank and Jacob

The story takes place in a rural northern town during winter. Hank Mitchell (Bill Paxton), his brother Jacob (Billy Bob Thornton), and their friend Lou (Brent Briscoe) come across the plane. Hank says that he will hold the money until he feels that everything is safe.

Hank and Jacob are respectively reminiscent of George and Lenny in *Of Mice and Men*. That is a major part of the problem with the trio's plan. Lou, like Jacob, also behaves as if has a two-digit IQ.

The problems begin when members of the town accidentally come across the group's plan.

Lou also starts trying to squeeze Hank for his share of the money. When these problems arise, sinister acts are committed.

Hank's wife, Sarah (Bridget Fonda), is a variation of Lady Macbeth. Once she finds about the money, she begins telling Hank what he needs to do to protect "their" money. When Hank wants to put the money back, Sarah lays a guilt trip on him about how they will be poor for the rest of their lives.

Another problem occurs when Sarah and Hank find out the money was originally a ransom for a kidnapped girl. The girl was found murdered and the kidnapers were never found. That is another problem they will have to deal with in the end.

There are many elements in *A Simple Plan* that make it a top-notch suspense thriller but the most notable element is the film's screenplay, written by Scott Smith.

Smith's script does not rush into character or story development. We slowly see how they rationalize stealing the money and understand why. We have the same understanding with the other sinister acts that are committed. We may not agree, but we understand. The script also lets us see how the plan unravels thread by thread.

Most of the performances are good. Billy Bob Thornton has rightfully been nominated for several Best Supporting Actor awards and I will not be surprised if he receives an Oscar nomination. Bridget Fonda convincingly shows us how a person

can be consumed by greed.

Bill Paxton's character helps us to see how a good person can rationalize doing evil things. Even though his performance is inconsistent at times, he has come a long way since playing Hudson in *Aliens*.

Sam Raimi's direction is also enjoyable. Raimi's always been known for his intriguing camera shots which enhanced films like *The Quick and the Dead* and *Darkman*. Raimi's best known for *The Evil Dead* trilogy, which has one of the largest cult followings in the country. *A Simple Plan* shows that he does not need flashy shots to make a great film.

Raimi's shots in *A Simple Plan* are not as flashy as the ones in his earlier films. They are very subtle but play a vital role in telling the story. The viewer will notice a good shot even though it is not thrown in his or her face.

A Simple Plan is one of the best thrillers of the decade. Its screenplay should be used as example for up and coming screenwriters.

STARS (out of four) ***1/2



Bridget Fonda as Sarah, Hank's wife.



Lou (Briscoe), Hank (Bill Paxton), Jacob (Billy Bob Thornton)

Grayson smokes the competition

Keith Ryan Cartwright
Staff writer



Grayson doing what he loves.

With Jon Grayson there are two guarantees. First, you can always count on four hours of a well prepared radio show when he sits down at the console. Second, a pack of cigarettes and his lighter are never out of reach.

"I'm no Morten Downey Jr.," said Grayson. "It's not like I'm smoking three packs a day."

Grayson has been with the Gaylord Entertainment run WTN FM 99.7 since September 1997. Monday through Friday starting at 8 p.m., Grayson is the host of his own talk-show, The Magic Box.

His transition from Tampa's WFLA has been a rather smooth one for the most part. The 29-year-old, self-described "hippest, coolest guy you know," enjoys living in Nashville, is relieved that his boss lets him "just do my show" and for once, he's finally working with a producer who "understands what I'm thinking."

There is one little thing he wishes he could change - his Music City crib is a non-smoking building.

"It's something like 15-feet to the door," said Grayson, about the distance he is, when sitting in his chair, from being able to light up. "I get out there about twice an hour during the news breaks."

Puffing aside, The Magic Box is quickly becoming one of the most talked about shows on the radio in the Middle Tennessee area.

From night to night a bevy of topics can sway from the intense "heaviness" of recreating life to the always emotional topic of religion. Grayson, however, does like to mix in light-hearted things like talking about old toys or one-hit wonders you no longer hear on the radio.

"I like having a good time and I like talking about having a good time," Grayson said. "I'm still a kid. I eat

Fruit Loops for breakfast. I love Raviolis and I still play video games."

Despite the fact that Grayson may spend as much as eight hours prepping for any given show, once he's on the air there are no guarantees that listeners will react the way he anticipated. The fact of the matter is, some shows just don't work. "Sometimes you have a good feeling and (the

topic) just dies," admits Grayson. "Nobody calls or it's not what I thought it would be.

"You have to recognize that and move on. Just bail on it."

One reason Grayson has the ability to just dump a topic and move on is that on any given night he can be toying the ideas for up to 60 different topics.

His topics come to mind in various ways and peculiar places including the obvious: newspapers, other radio shows and news events; Even two women in the checkout line at the grocery store can spur four hours of air time.

"I stay away from locking in on what the show is going to be, until just before I go on the air," explained Grayson. "I just try to keep my mind open."

Whatever the case, Grayson has one ultimate goal with each show - to evoke "human reaction."

In a medium that depends on interaction with its listeners, a sure way to gain their attention is by stirring their emotions.

Don't for one moment think, however, that Grayson isn't willing to do what it takes to extract those reactions either.

"Some people won't call unless their sure I'm going to tear into them," Grayson said. "It's like a chess match. I have to be three moves ahead.

"Like a lawyer, not only do I need to prepare my side but I have to prepare for their side as well. I have to ask myself in advance of going on the air, what will their response be? And then, prepare a defense or else you'll get blind sided."

Not only is Grayson unlikely to be blind-sided on the



Lou Sender/producer looking on at Grayson's excitement over being in FLASH.

Staff photos by Claudia Lombardo



In a smoke free building, news breaks also serve as smoke breaks.

air, but also he's not likely to be blind-sided when it comes to his future in radio.

Well schooled in the reality that many radio personalities wind up moving around the country more frequently than they would of had they chosen an alternate career, Grayson isn't afraid of what's in store.

Though he's willing to accept what the future may hold, he's not dwelling on it either. Once you're finally able to get him, however, to contemplate possibilities, you may be surprised at what he aspires to.

"Once I finally retire," Grayson speculated, "I'll probably buy a house (in Rehoboth, DE). It's the most beautiful place I've ever been. It would be one of those summer homes where I live there three months out of the year."

Professionally speaking, Grayson

would one day like to host a show similar to the one Tom Snyder hosted the last time he was on the radio before moving to his current role in network television.

Essentially Snyder would start by interviewing a celebrity guest for an hour or so and then turn the phones over to his listeners and as Grayson puts it, announce with ease, "okay, it's just you and me. The lines are open and we can talk about whatever you want."

"Tom's a goof. A friendly guy. Really, he's such a geek that he's almost cool. It worked because it was him. He was approachable and that's what allowed people to call in. He had been around so long he could get away with doing that. So, I think I have a ways to go."

Where ever Grayson may go, listeners are sure to lend an ear.



Grayson evokes a little "human reaction" in his listeners.

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S.N.M. on the Rocks

Lamont Gholston
Special to Flash

Welcome to another fun-filled, hardcore edition of SNM on the Rocks. This week, I have good news and bad news. Let's start with the bad news, specifically more rappers in trouble with the law. I thought I was writing a hip-hop news column, not a crime report. Maybe next week I won't be writing about any MCs or DJs getting pulled over or locked up (Yeah right.) But until then...

Bizzy Bone from Bone Thugs in Harmony was cleared from assault and disorderly conduct charges on January 25 in Columbus, Ohio. It was alleged that Bizzy had dragged a barber school student down a flight of stairs for spreading rumors about him. He was found innocent after four days of testimony. The defense maintained that Bizzy's bodyguards, who were not charged, were responsible for most of the injuries to the plaintiff, Terrance Harden and that Bizzy Bone was only minorly involved in his physical abuse. Harden's lawyer, Robert Caplan says they still intend on filing a civil suit against the rapper and his bodyguards.

Can I get a Wu-BANG! Compounding the Wu-Tang Clan's infinite legal problems with ODB, the rest of the Clansmen might soon be in trouble with the law. ATF agents and local police are investigating the deaths of two Wu-Tang affiliates, one in Ohio and one in NY, in connection with gun running charges. According to the New York Post, the Killa Bees allegedly hired friends to purchase guns in Steubenville, Ohio (RZA's family hometown, where various Wu members have been known to engage in target practice) and bring them back to NY, both for personal protection and sell to their friends. Coming back to the music, all of you that can't get enough Wu-Tang in your tank will be checking for the "Wu-Chronicles" to be released in March. It will be a compilation of previously released, hard to find joints. In addition, two new joints will appear on the LP. The featured tracks will include collaborations with Biggie, Mobb Deep, The Alkaholiks, as well as some of the Clan's banging solo cuts. I'm already trying to get my copy now.

The world famous DJ Premier has been busy since the release of the new Gang Starr album "Moment of Truth." Last year he did remixes for D'Angelo and Janet Jackson, and this year he finished lacing tracks for Nas and Charli Baltimore, and is preparing to work with Sauce Money, Big Shug, and Rakim. Let's not forget the two new tracks for Gang Starr's greatest hits album. Yo it looks like Primo is going to stay blazing 'til the year 2000!

In other news... Word on the street is that WWF tried to get Big Pun to wrestle or just make an appearance. Pun declined the offer, but the WWF may still have a chance to get the rapper in the ring. Can you imagine Pun teamed up with "Stone Cold" Steve Austin? Where's my "PUN 3:16" shirt?...Krazy Bone's debut album is slated to drop in April. It will feature guest appearances from Treach, Fat Joe, Big Pun, Cuban Link, Juvenile, Eightball & MJG, and Mariah Carey. This looks like some hot ish!...De La Soul is trying to release a three album series later this year, one in June, the next in September, and the third in December. The album will feature mad guests, some not artists. Stakes is high. Well that's all the hip-hop for this week. Tune in to SNM for more hip-hop news, music, sex, mayhem and other assorted S#\$! every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 4-6 PM on 88.3 WMTS.

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Nashville 24-BLUES

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Murfreesboro 893-7860

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Nashville 329-0024

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Cannery Row
Nashville 251-0979

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DENIM & DIAMONDS
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Madison 868-1557

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Milano 176 3rd Ave. N.
Nashville 255-0073

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Nashville 251-3545

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SOUL SATISFACTION
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STARWOOD AMPHITHEATER
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Antioch 641-5800

STATION INN
402 12th Ave. S.
Nashville 255-3307

3RD & LINDSLEY
818 3rd Ave. S.
Nashville 259-9891

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328 4th Ave. S.
Nashville 259-3288
TEXAS TROUBADOUR
2416 Music Valley Dr. Nashville
885-0028

TOOTSIE'S ORCHID LOUNGE
422 Broadway
Nashville 726-0463

TPAC
505 Deaderick St.
Nashville 782-4000

12TH & PORTER
114 12th Ave. N.
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VERTIGO DANCE CLUB
2146 Thompson Ln.
Murfreesboro 893-3999

WILDHOUSE SALOON
120 2nd Ave. N.
Nashville 251-1000

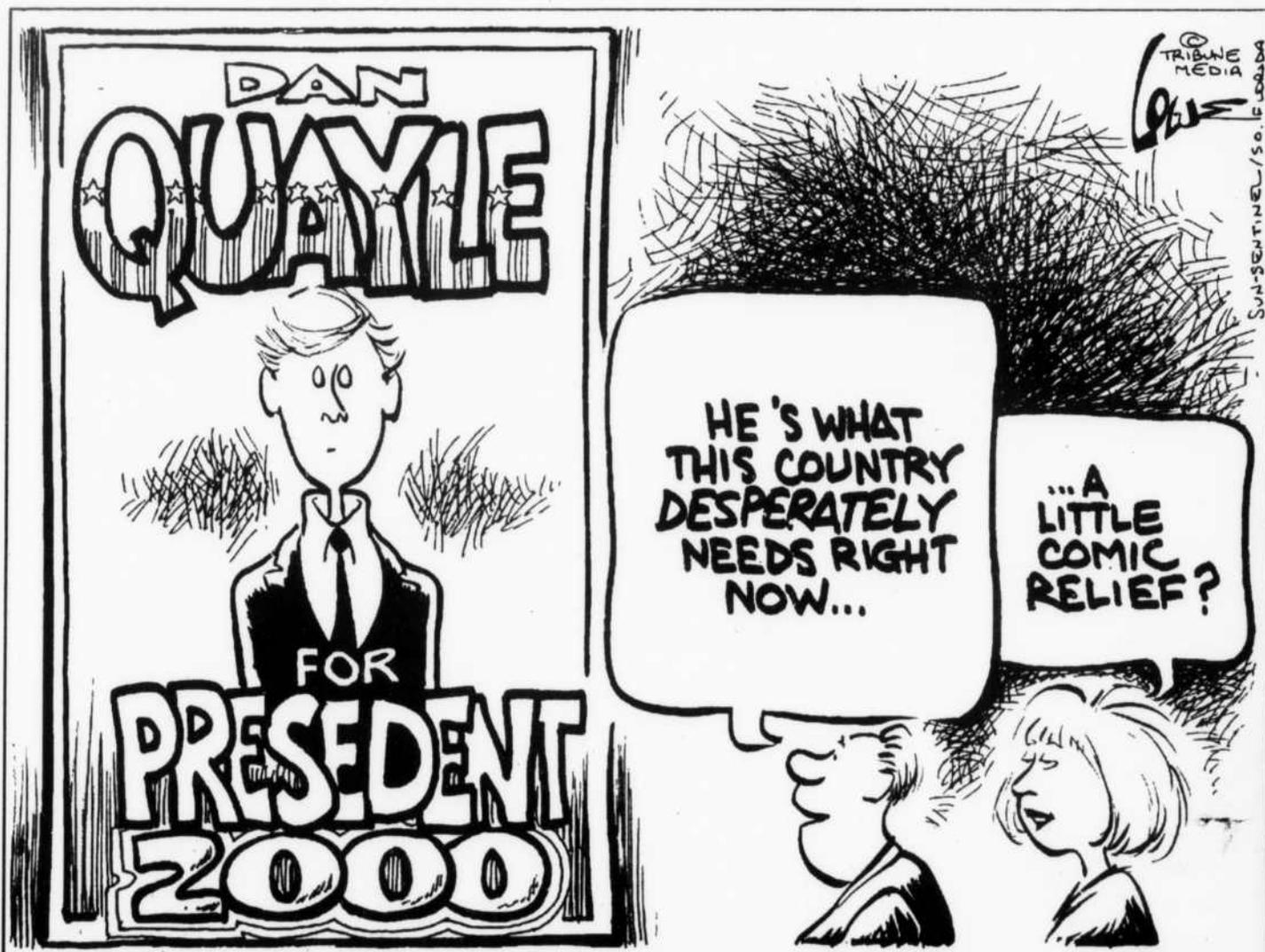
ZANIES
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Upcoming Shows

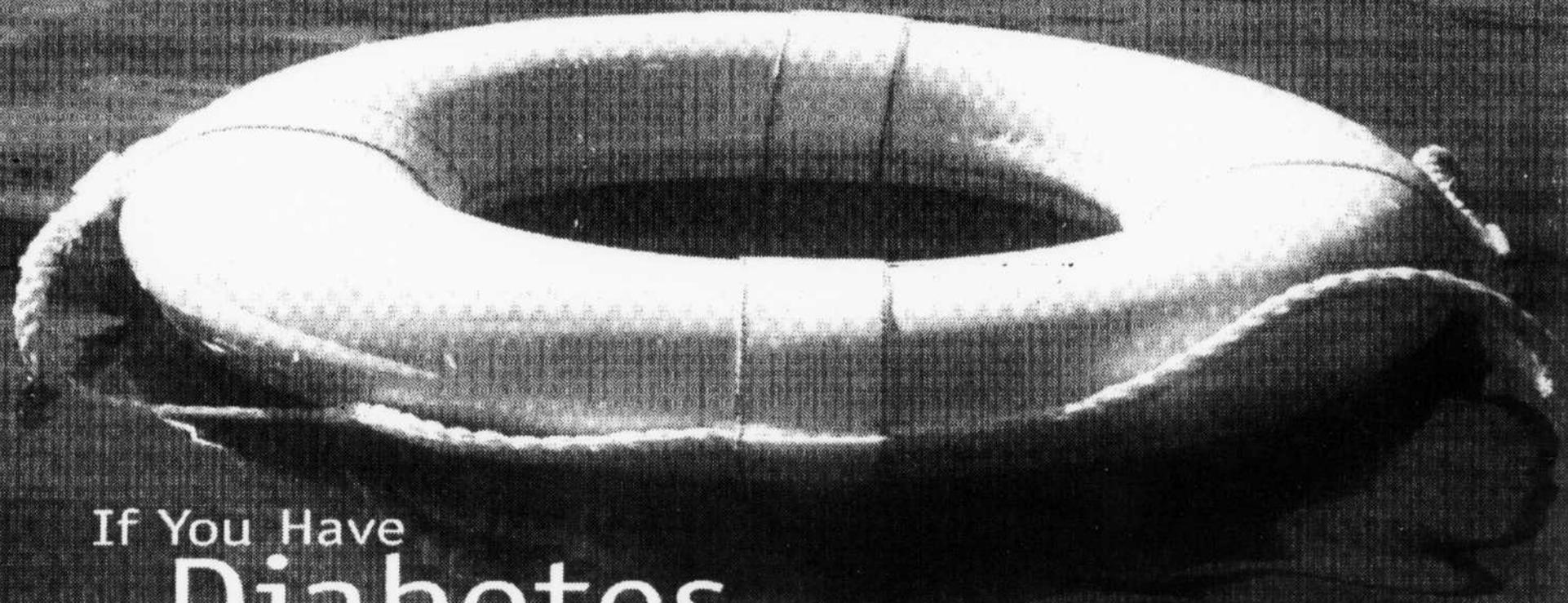
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