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Exposing Indecency

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whiter snow

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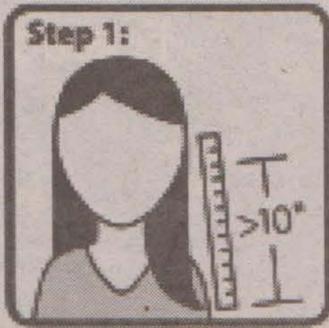
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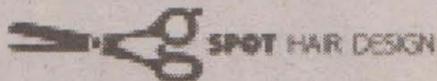
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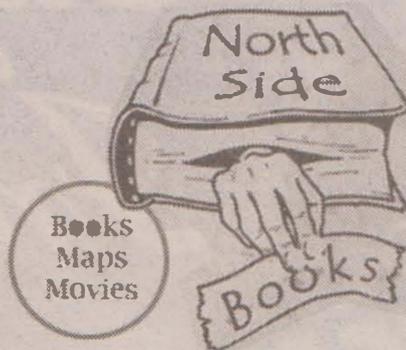
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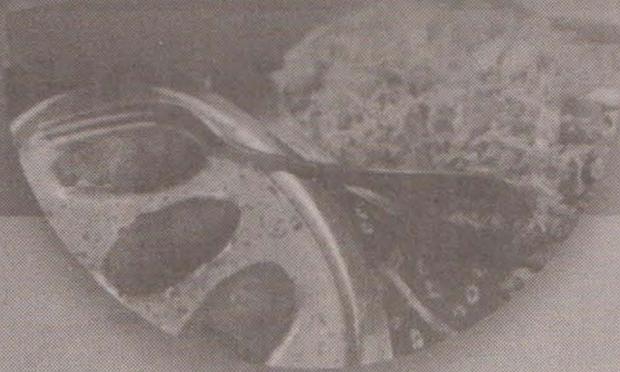
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Letter to the Editors

On January 1st the UI radio station, WSUI, implemented a new broadcast schedule, and without any fanfare, cancelled the late-night jazz show hosted by Jim Dougherty, "Jazz With Jim." Jim started his show, which became a local institution, on WSUI in 1970.

I moved to Iowa in 1970 when I was 12 years old. I became familiar with Dougherty's show almost immediately because WSUI was a clear channel 100 kilowatt station, and was the only one I could pick up in my basement bedroom.

I wasn't much of a Jazzhead at 12, but it was mostly instrumental music I could listen to while doing homework or reading. As I went to high school and college, I developed a real enthusiasm for jazz and all those years of listening to Jim's show took on new significance. As I explored the jazz repertoire in earnest, I realized I'd heard most of it before because Jim had played it for me.

His tastes run a little "whiter" than mine, but every so often (usually on an artist's birthday) he would do shows exclusively of John Coltrane, Duke Ellington or Miles Davis, and you'd realize that he was down with the whole jazz scene and not just Paul Whiteman and Glenn Miller. His inter-song discussions were erudite and mellow, interspersed with his

little mantras of old-school DJ patter ("This is your DJ, JD, Jim Dougherty, with Jazz With Jim.") And Jim didn't just play LP or CD reissues. When he recorded his shows at home, he'd occasionally play an original 78 from his vast collection. If there's anything Dougherty doesn't know about jazz, it's probably not important.

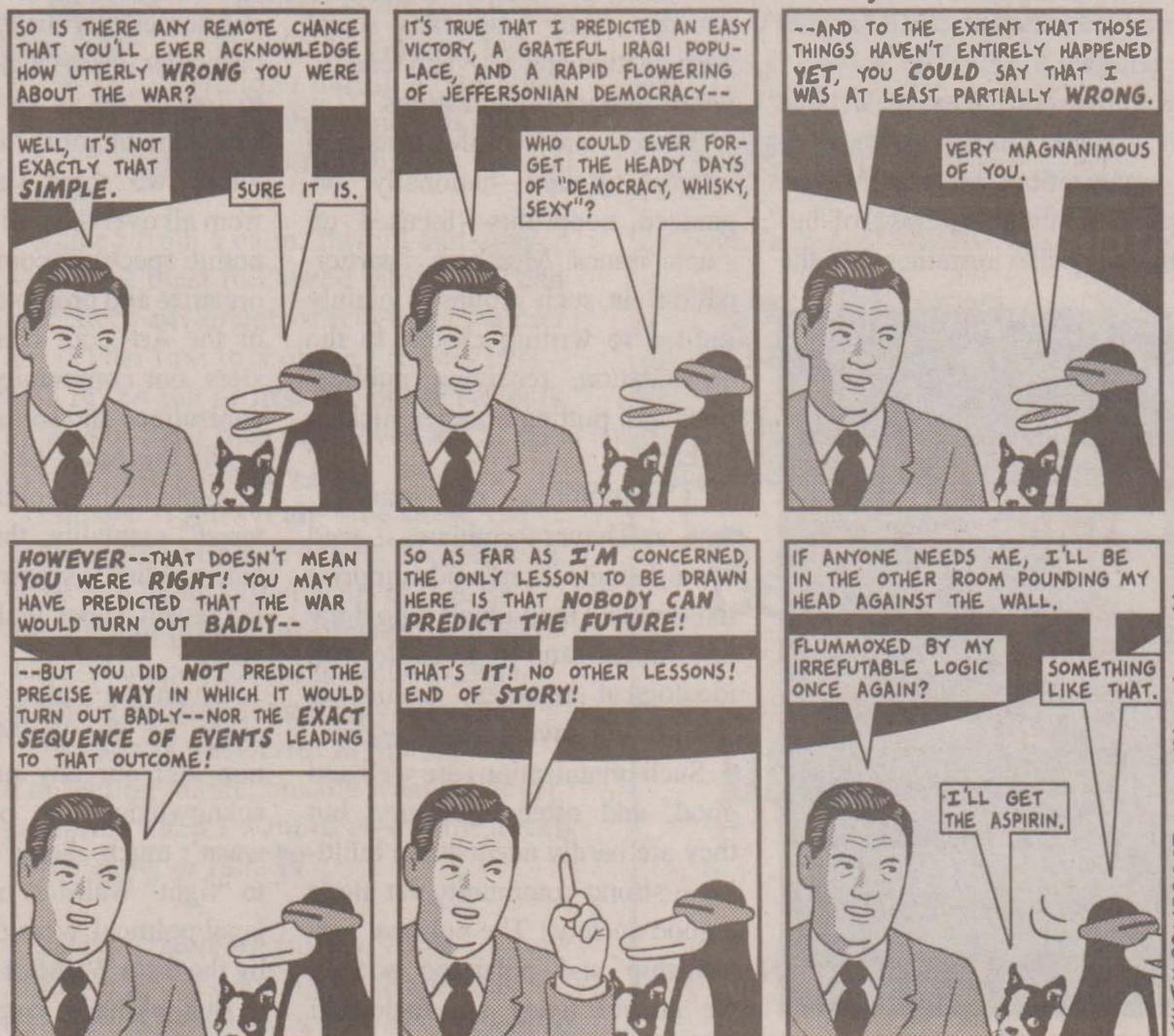
In much later years when I was working sound and DJing at Rotation Dance music events at Gabe's, we'd load out and roll to the after party with Jim's jazz as the perfect chill-out soundtrack after a full night of banging beats. The show's longevity was comforting, one of the few things that remained the same while everything else changed.

For any regular listener, it was a solid education in jazz from the first 78 recordings through the present day. Jim probably never played Archie Shepp or Ornette Coleman, and he probably played a little more Bing Crosby than was strictly necessary, but to listen to Jim late at night was to live in a world where elegance and artistry were the ruling principles. Jim's show may be revived as a podcast on the Internet, but an era in Iowa radio has truly ended.

Kent Williams, Iowa City - LV CD Reviewer

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



Shared Places, Common Ground

Putting IC community before politics

The interests of party-players and their political agendas trump the needs of what's going on right here in Iowa. Why is it person over place in this horse race for political influence?

In his very good book, *LifePlace: Bioregional Thought and Practice*, Robert L. Thayer, Jr. formulates an interesting dynamic in a section of the book called "Reinventing Common Ground." Thayer expands on observations made by Daniel Kemmis, former mayor of Missoula, Montana, in his well-known *Community and the Politics of Place*.

Kemmis laments how, as Thayer summarizes, "People occupying the same geographical region seem trapped by their so-called public posturing to endorse either the myth of rugged individualism or the mire of regulatory bureaucracy in choosing sides during land use conflicts. Meanwhile, the shared values of place and region are ignored."

Kemmis and Thayer believe that government (or any group or organization, for that matter) "should facilitate the best of human civic behavior rather than the

worst—bureaucratic insularity, confrontational stalemate politics, fear of litigation, or public 'hearings' where no one listens."

Thayer posits that we need to move away from bipolar politics, which he dubs "communities of interest," and move towards "communities of place."

The idea of a "community of place" again stems from Kemmis, who suggests that effective civic participation needs a "tangible object," as interpreted by Thayer, a "table" around which people of the community can work to find common ground.

Such an idea works most ideally in the particular rather than the abstract, another argument for our focus in life to be predominantly on the attachment to the local, as I often advocate. Another well-known analyst of civic engagement, Robert Putnam, in his seminal *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, posits a related idea when he discusses how, in recent decades, many Americans' social participation and activism tend toward "tertiary organizations."

These are professionalized interest groups—nationally organized nonprofits—focused on single issues. Members' "participation" in such groups is mainly limited to writing checks to the organization, receiving publications and putting bumper stickers on cars.

"Communities of interest," then, as Thayer formulates it, tend toward single issues and comprise like-minded individuals who draw lines in the sand to do battle with ideological enemies, usually in court or via governmental bodies.

Such organizations are well and good, and often necessary, but they are hardly adequate to building a strong community, let alone a good society. The political partisanship and polarized society we lament today are fueled, if

not caused, by the mindset of the "community of interest."

The "community of place," on the other hand, grounds itself not in ideology or "special interest," as politicians like to say, but in the

On a national political scale, this is why the politics of "security" are such a failure.

wholeness and integrity of our local communities and, fundamental to the bioregional idea, our natural environment. I think our Iowa City community does well as a "community of place" quite often.

A good example is the arts community. Sure, there's disagreement and sometimes strife, but there's a particular idea of and commitment to Iowa City as an arts community—the tangible "table" around which we share values. People from all over the political and economic spectrum come together to organize and promote the Summer of the Arts, our community theaters, our community musical organizations and so forth.

On the other hand, we're not immune to the "community of interest" mentality, throughout the entire political spectrum. Think of the recent Super WalMart controversy.

Given the stakes and methodology of the WalMart corporation and our city government, I acknowledge that perhaps there wasn't much choice in the matter to "fight" WalMart other than the legal/political wrangling initiated by the Stop WalMart folks.

But taking a larger view, the

ultimate goal should be to make these types of battles a thing of the past. No matter who wins out, there is always division and acrimony left over. Such fights, with often specific, positive outcomes (always positive for one side or the other), still create wedges, bitterness and "sides."

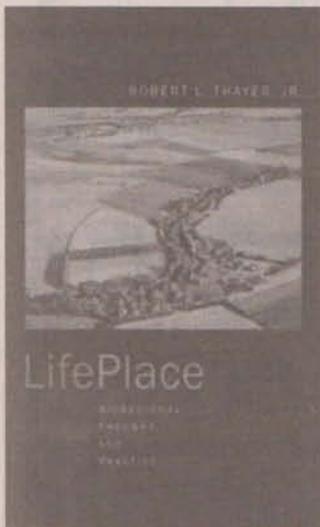
Indeed, both "sides" in such a fight claim that the "best interest" of the community is at stake. But often common ground cannot be found because the competing constituencies fail even to find a modest piece of real estate—a small "table," as Thayer or Kemmis might put it—from which to start together.

On a national political scale, this is why the politics of "security" are such a failure.

Of course our common interest is the safety and security of our people. But the disagreements over definitions and methods are so vast that such a platitude is meaningless. On a more local scale, the recent struggles over The University of Iowa presidential search have all sides saying the common goal is finding the "best president."

Well, of course that's true—who wants to find a bad or mediocre leader? But the real debate, again, is in definitions, methods and needs particular to the local and specific. Even the most modest starting place for common ground—for approaching the problem as a "community of place"—requires some cohabitation on more specific common goals and values, and that cohabitation involves defining, specifically, who we are in this particular place. **lv**

Thomas Dean gets along pretty well with his neighbors, even though a lot of their political campaign yard signs on the east side of Iowa City are usually very different from his.



A love letter to the cold

You're freezing right now, I know, so I'll be careful. February, by far the worst of all 12 months is upon you, a cold, black cupid of a month. Valentine's Day—significant other or not—is no salvation to the woes of short days, midterms and a pipe dream hope for an early spring that never comes.

All this is absolutely true (as true as the statement that glow sticks have always been awesome), which is why it will surprise you to read the following: I badly miss the icy cold.

I currently live along the Mediterranean Coast in Spain's southern region of Andalucia, and it's hot. Mind you, in February it's not hot, like scorching African desert hot, as it is in July and August. Rather, it's extremely warm, with daytime temperatures rising into the low 20s.

That's Celsius, and I still have not figured out a correct conversion equation, so merely trust me when I say the winter weather is more kind here than in Iowa's frozen cornfields.

But there is something large to be said about the cold and the seasons in general for that matter. Of course sunshine and warm weather are nice, but one bright, golden day after another offers no transition from one period of time to another. We need a certain amount of darkness in our lives to put things into perspective. We need change to sort things out.

F. Scott Fitzgerald once wrote "...it was a cool night with that mysterious excitement in it, which comes at the two changes of the year." He was correct (as correct as anyone who believes Paul McCartney to be the most worthless Beatle).

Take, for instance, those first chilly nights that haunt your Saturday fiestas near the end of October. Take Halloween. It is usually frosty, though not bitterly cold, on All Hallows Eve.

And while no one would complain if it were still 80 degrees Fahrenheit and

light outside until 9 p.m., who can deny that Halloween marks the beginning of something new, possibly something grand? It is the maiden night of a long winter ahead, one that in the Midwest often lasts through early April.

A long time indeed, but on those first nights and even occasionally clear through to the end, we relish in some subconscious way the foggy breath that comes with each outdoor word.

After Halloween, you are no longer the person you were over the summer. Now that it is winter, you feel alive again, revived and reborn.

Such is not the case without seasons, without the cold (for the sake of this argument, we will ignore those who live in the bitter Canadian north, and expect that they most definitely do not miss the cold for the three weeks it's warm and light outside at the end of August).

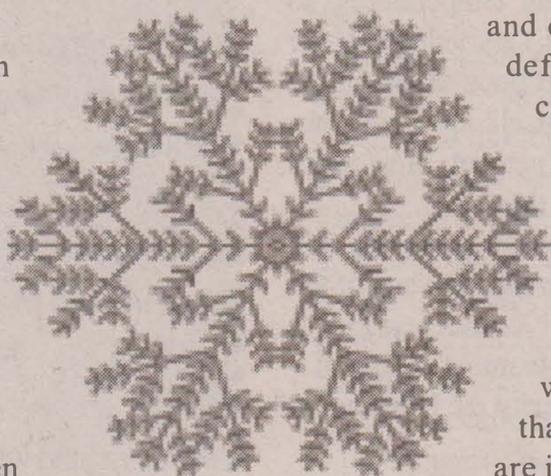
There is one other enigmatic aspect to the tundra chill of winter. While it is true that we go out less and are idler during winter, that faux-hibernation is akin to a charging up of the body's internal battery.

Rested from a calm, flaccid and cozy winter we blast full speed into spring and take more advantage of lengthier, sunnier days. That first toss of the Frisbee, first bath in the sun or first day at the ballpark on a sexy clear blue day never felt as good as it did after a long winter.

I miss it. I miss it all—the snow, the endless pots of black coffee, the peacock coats and haberdasher scarves. I miss the fleeting glint of excitement you feel when you open the blinds on a February morning, betting long on a yellow day.

The sun is wonderful in Spain when I'm feeling manic, but the weather never complies when I want to go out for a walk in the snow or rain. **lv**

Adam Greenberg lives in Velez-Malaga, Spain and can be reached at adamgreenb@gmail.com. Elut in silicaelis. Ti. Efecerentat.

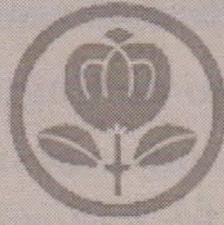


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Preservation Underground

Utilizing yesterday's methods of food preservation in today's world of convenience

Henry David Thoreau, in his seminal book, *Walden* (1854), wrote that the pond was often given to early thaws because of the ice cutters. These men would venture out onto the freshwater ponds of New England with enormous drills and saws and cut away huge blocks of ice. The blocks would be loaded on to carts and taken to Boston, where some of it was used for refrigeration in the

preserving vegetables for extended periods like Iowa's long winters.

There are two key issues to control – temperature and humidity. The traditional ones, like the one in the spookiest, dankest corner of the basement in my Grandmother's old Victorian, are controlled by pure experience, knowing that the floor is colder than near the ceiling and this pot or that is more humid than the other. At the other end of the spectrum are modern, computer controlled contraptions with thermometers and hygrometers and adjustable zones.

A corner of your basement can easily be converted into an effective root cellar, provided you have exposure to at least one (preferably more) subterranean wall. It is important to invest in a thermometer and a good hygrometer to measure relative humidity. Various foods require different humidity levels for optimum storage, as well as different temperatures, so accurate measurements are very helpful. If the space you use still has a dirt floor, the humidity will probably take care of itself. Generally, humidity should be above 80 percent. Most foods will wither with less than that.

There is a great resource for designing and building your root cellar on the Web site of the Walton Feed, Inc. Another useful resource is the list of appropriate temperatures and humidity levels from the University of Missouri at Columbia Web site.

Once you've built it, you can fill it with all sorts of goodies: potatoes, yams, rutabaga, turnips, beets, garlic, even apples and some other tree fruits like root cellars. Then, when it's cold outside and you are just starting to think about your seedlings for the coming season, you can make this sweet potato recipe and remember the words of Mr. Thoreau all those years ago: "He who distinguishes the true savor of his

food cannot be a glutton; he who does not can never be otherwise." **IV**

It's About the Food is a monthly feature of Little Village. Chef Kurt Michael Friese is co-owner, with his wife Kim, of the Iowa City restaurant Devotay, serves on the Slow Food USA National Board of Governors, and is editor-in-chief of Edible Iowa River Valley. He lives in rural Johnson County. Questions and comments may be directed to devotay@mchsi.com.

"He who distinguishes the true savor of his food cannot be a glutton; he who does not can never be otherwise."

- Henry David Thoreau

homes of Cabots and Lodges, and the rest was loaded onto train cars to preserve fish being shipped inland.

While there were hundreds of other methods for preserving food, this was the only method humankind had devised for refrigeration (short of burying food in a snow bank) until quite recently. Each February, when there is precious little fresh seasonal food available in Iowa, I recall the wisdom of the root cellar. Not quite the same as refrigeration, root cellars utilize natural, consistent temperatures of the earth's crust to preserve food. Still in use, they are just as effective today as they ever have been at

Sweet Potato Pavé

- 4 pounds of sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced very thin
- 1 quart of heavy cream
- 1 yellow onion, sliced thin
- 1/2 pound Chevre
- Pinch of nutmeg
- Salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Directions:

- Layer the ingredients in a greased casserole dish. Bake at 350 degrees until tender and thickened (approx 1.5 hours).
- Remove and allow to cool, weighted to press down firm. I use an identical casserole dish and a six-pack for the weight.
- When it has cooled, cut into attractive shapes such as triangles or circles, and reheat for about 10-15 minutes, just before service.

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TRANSMITTING THE TAKE-OVER

Photo by
Roland Wells.



New Fairfield radio station shatters the mold of standard content

Radio has been a dying thing for some time now, the airwaves swallowed up by corporate behemoths like Clear Channel and Infinity. Attacks from iPods, Gameboys and 78-channel basic cable combined with pasteurized/homogenized taste-free content have left the smell of mothballs on the radio industry's ability to capture the public's imagination.

Last summer, I hooked up with two young visionaries named Roland Wells and Caleb Flynn in Fairfield, Iowa. The Australian-born 26-year-old Wells, a community treasure cottage industry unto himself, created and ran a youth center dubbed the Beat Box for five years. I considered myself a liberal, went to DC to protest the folly of Iraq long before the folly began, offered up a daily political blog, organized vigils on our town square, trained in anti-military recruitment with J.E. McNeil, executive director of the Center on Conscience and War, wrote countless editorials, co-hosted a local Film for Thought Series to show social change films, including statewide premieres like the Vietnam movie *Sir! No Sir!*

I would bug Wells from time to time about the radio license I knew his organization had. He didn't strike me as a revolutionary in any obvious way. He was all about doing—not rancorous debating, glib put downs, or volcanic righteous indignation. It was during his tenure as director of the Beat Box that Wells applied to the FCC for a low power radio construction permit, submitting the engineering specs himself. The government only offered these low power licenses (up to 100-watt transmission) once in each region.

Thus, over 700 such stations came into being nationwide. In Iowa, there are about 29. Of those up and running, the bulk are broadcasting Christian content, three are Department of Transportation, a couple are

campus radio stations.

I can't remember why we decided to broadcast 24/7, 168 hours a week, right out of the gate and stream on the Web to boot, but we did—and we are—starting on the day and hour promised: September 30, 2006 at high noon.

When the call was put out for show hosts, they didn't creep out of the woodwork, they overflowed like a pregnant Mississippi River in a downpour. Some 90 show hosts and deejays have risen to the occasion, a few with previous college radio experience, but mostly broadcast neophytes with hearts of gold and a passion to share. Fairfield is known for its progressive creativity and entrepreneurial spirit. Last summer Mother Earth News called it one of the 12 great places you've never heard of. The town is an Iowa Great Places designee this year making it eligible for a \$3 million pool of money divided among six awardees. The committee that selected the winners from 36 entrants praised the radio station for "being a real opportunity to engage the youth of our community."

And this is where the revolution comes in. Not the I'm-right-you're-wrong march on Washington approach; not the change some cheerless fear-leader's POV and hope for trickle down; not bringing the blind to the light, or the reft. I realized the revolution isn't where I thought it was—it isn't in Washington DC, or Cuba or even Des Moines. It's right where you are. It's how we treat our neighbors and deal with our neighborhoods, how well we listen to those right in front of us. You see, radio—at least our version of radio—is all about giving voice to those in our community.

Some people in Fairfield were nervous that a motor-mouth public activist such as myself was in a management position of a radio station.

But a funny thing happened.

We decided on a charter that was neutral. I begged and pleaded to take up Pacifica's offer of Amy Goodman's syndicated talk show, thinking it would be a way of evening the score of the relentless inundation from the right. But Wells had a strong vision. Rather than run syndicated programming, we decided to be true community radio with programming produced by those connected directly to our community. Being "The Voice of Fairfield" is the radio station's mission. And this community is an amazing microcosm with connections to all parts of the globe.

Last month we got 100,000 hits on our website at www.kruufm.com Not bad for three months in operation. Over 2500 discreet sites visited us from some 30 to 40 countries. It helps that Fairfield is a little international hub. We've even had some incredible international press, at least blog space, from London-based freelance writer and author Richard Poynder.

But here's the cool thing. The station operates entirely on Free and downloadable software: from Linux and FreeBSD for operating systems, to Audacity and Ardour for audio editing. The motivation goes beyond simple cost considerations. The Open Source movement started a global community project to provide the secret sauce of computing for free.

Our stew of creative hosts used that special sauce to get the right flavor. Add our permaculture food commons, a sprinkling of creative commons licenses, and you now have the kind of dynamite gumbo that fuels real grassroots activism.

They said the revolution will not be televised. They were right. It'll be on RADIO. **tv**

James Moore is station manager of KRUU-LP 100.1 FM in Fairfield. He is also music editor of the Iowa Source, a lightly published poet and an accomplished musician.



It's (Mrs.) Miller Time!

A thorough examination of one of pop music's most profoundly enigmatic songbirds

Mrs. Miller, the singer, and Mrs. Robinson, the character from *The Graduate*, emerged fully formed, leaving a distinct footprint on mid-1960s popular culture. We still remember Mrs. Robinson, either in song or as played by Ann Bancroft, but does anyone remember Mrs. Miller?

For a fleeting moment, Mrs. Miller was ubiquitous, appearing on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson and several other television programs. At the height of her career, Mrs. Miller's debut album—released on Capitol Records, home to the Beatles and the Beach Boys—sold a quarter million copies in only three weeks, a remarkable feat. A hastily recorded follow-up record, “Will Success Spoil Mrs. Miller?,” emerged later in 1966, further fanning the flames of Millermania.

But who was Mrs. Miller and how does one begin to describe her vocal stylings? After all, the grain of the voice is an elusive thing, hard to pin down with mere words. It's like when unimaginative writers resort to describing Tom Waits as having a “gravelly voice.”

Such clichéd descriptions get us nowhere close to the feeling of listening to the iconoclastic singer. When describing Mr. Waits, I prefer what a little Midwestern girl once said—perhaps apocryphally—about his delivery: “like a clown crossed with a cherry bomb.”

Likewise, when it comes to Mrs. Miller, *Life Magazine* hit the proverbial nail on the head in a 1967 article, where it described her as having “the looks of a calico grandmother and the voice of a tubercular parrot.”

That article goes on to explain that,

“Elva Miller owes her fame to her uniquely atrocious vocal style and to the fearless gusto with which she assails—and destroys—a song.”

For instance, her cover of the 1960s pop nugget “Monday, Monday,” originally popularized by the Mamas & the Papas, has all the trappings of an ordinary easy listening instrumental arrangement. Beginning with breezy background vocalists, “Ba da, ba da da da,” it is then supplemented by lilting bass and drums. So far, so good. But at the ten-second mark comes the voice of, well, a tubercular parrot. Ba dada, indeed.

The result is anything but easy or breezy, and in the course of the two and a half minutes, Mrs. Miller succeeds in forging a sui generis musical genre: uneasy listening. Her voice was like a siren, sort of like the police car variety, but more like those of Homer's *Odyssey*. Once it penetrated your ears and your consciousness, it was impossible to turn away—until your brain smashed against the rubble cleared by her voice.

Her first hit was a cover of another popular song, “Downtown,” a number one smash by Petula Clark in 1964. Mrs. Miller's version of the song compresses all that makes her unique: a glass-shattering octave range; an inability to stay on-key or on-tempo (kind of like jazz legend Thelonious Monk, but ... different); a warbling vibrato that dizzyingly vacillates between flat and sharp, like a swerving, singing drunk driver mowing down musical notes; and, last but not least, an otherworldly whistling technique.

She called it “ice-whistling.”

“If you are warm, your flesh is looser, your hands and feet are larger,” Mrs. Miller

cryptically explained to a *Life* reporter in a story titled “A Most Unlikely Lark.” She continued, “But for whistling you need a good tight pucker. To reach the high notes for whistling, I use ice clamped between my lips. I leave it there about 20 minutes. It doesn't hurt. It just freezes up.”

There's a huge difference between vocalists who are merely bad and those who are implausibly bad. The former are a dime a dozen, but the latter can at times rip a hole into another universe, seemingly defying the laws of physics.

Her fan mail, according to Capitol Records, included gems like the following:

*Mrs. Miller, Mrs. Miller
You're a killer-killer-diller,
We love your voice,
And nostrils too,
But do us a favor,
And fill them with glue.*

All of this raises the obvious question, “How in the hell did she land a major label contract, much less have a hit record?” Answer: The same reason why viewers today tune in at the beginning of each *American Idol* season, which features a train wreck pile-up of talent-free, delusional contestants.

When Capitol Records approached Mrs. Miller with a big time recording contract, they described the venture as an “experiment.”

She said, “They told me they believed the public was ready for a new trend, a different

type of sound, a different kind of voice.

‘What is the experiment?’ I asked, and they told me they wanted an operatic type of voice doing rock ‘n’ roll. And they did say I should think it over, particularly about what I should tell my friends who might say ‘My goodness, you’ve always sponsored classical music—now you’re singing rock ‘n’ roll.’” Sadly, she wasn’t in on the joke, at least at first.

“If there’s ever a square lived in this world,” Mrs. Miller said at the time, “I’m it.”

One song written for her, “Granny Bopper,” contains the line, “I guess I’m not that hip ‘cause when I take a trip/ it’s only to the grocery store.”

Mrs. Miller was not a dummy, however, and after picking up on the joke she laughed all the way to the bank. She cleared over \$100,000 in 1966—not bad for a woman who was once excluded from Claremont, California’s First Presbyterian Church choir because, as she put it diplomatically, “I have a heavy voice and they wanted a blend.”

After her four-album run working for the major label system, Mrs. Miller did what many independently minded musicians do. She formed her own record production company, called, appropriately, Vibrato. She went “straight,” attempting to be taken seriously, but the two subsequent singles landed with a thud, and she faded from view.

After that, Mrs. Miller led a pleasant, low-key life—until the 1994 Northridge earthquake collapsed her apartment building (perhaps when she was singing in the shower?). Luckily, Mrs. Miller survived and was moved to a convalescent hospital, but she died two years later, at the age of 90.

To paraphrase Simon & Garfunkel, “Here’s to you, Mrs. Miller...” **iv**

Kembrew McLeod is a certified mail order reverend — and is available for weddings. His Top 10 list of Mrs. Miller songs, as downloadable mp3 files, can be found at kembrew.com/music.



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2007 KEYNOTE
Pete Townshend
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Tangled Up in Tele-Power's Web

Activists in Memphis discuss danger of Net Neutrality

Like a team of media superheroes, over 3000 media policy experts, arm-chair critics, indie media producers, students, professors, bloggers, radio enthusiasts, FCC Commissioners and elected officials—not to mention celebrities Bill Moyers, Amy Goodman, Jesse Jackson, Phil Donahue, Danny Glover, Geena Davis and Jane Fonda—met and shook hands under the optimistic flag of reform.

Before we get too far, let's just agree that the 2007 NCMR was one of those conferences where everybody in attendance thinks there is a problem, and everyone has a different idea of how to fix the problem.

The problem is the "media," and the solution to the problem is obviously to "reform" it.

"Reform" might be an optimistic title—it also sounds a bit cautious. It has a tone of resignation. As though the organizers were thinking, "Well, we can't

start over and level the playing field by redistributing control of the airwaves and the various forms used by humans to communicate, so let's try to reign in the mess of a communication system that ideally informs the populace about the ways of the world and allows the free flow of ideas. And we'll have participants at the conference guess at, argue over and brainstorm a way out of the silly state of infotainment and 'fluffy' journalism and all the advertising that passes as entertainment."

Three things I learned at the conference:

1. Jane Fonda does not like to be called "Barbarella," "Hanoi Jane," or "the former Mrs. Ted Turner."

2. Bill Moyers believes: "We've got to get alternative content out there to people or this country is going to die of too many lies."

3. The Internet is in terrible danger of becoming perniciously controlled.

This last one could happen several ways. Take a second here, what do you know about the Internet?

Yes, the Internet is vast. This is because it can store a massive amount of data and organize databases (or networks of information) effectively. And Google, Myspace, Facebook, Netflix, YouTube and Amazon.com (and others) are databases where much of the data and/or commentary is filled by Jane and Joe Q. Public: the data entry workforce.

Yes, the Internet has narcissistic blogs, cat videos and pornography in mass quantities.

We like to see ourselves and show off our stuff, we like the sound of our own voices, and we like to get real sexy all the time, just like Borat, even if we don't want to admit it.

I heard one person at the conference remark that the average readership of a blog on the web is one, which means people aren't even reading their own blogs.



Rev. Jesse Jackson delivered a fiery keynote speech at the 2007 National Conference for Media Reform. Below: Actor Danny Glover hears a pitch from the self-described "News Dissector," independent filmmaker and media analyst Danny Schechter.



In the same workshop on independent media, Jay Rosen, a blogger (PressThink) and professor at NYU, quoted legendary British sociologist Raymond Williams saying, "There are no masses, there are only ways of seeing people as masses."

He also said there should be no line between bloggers and journalists and that while bloggers were being "treated as pets" by the mainstream media, they recently helped elect a few people including when Senator James Webb defeated incumbent George Allen largely over a racial epithet that was reported by a blogger and posted on YouTube.

The Internet is many-to-many instead of one-to-many. But that may change.

In January of this year, phone giant AT&T sent a letter to the FCC that said it would institute a policy of Internet neutrality on itself voluntarily. That's the good news.

The bad news is that for AT&T this is just a two-year probationary trial period, and after two years, do you think they'll want to be making the SAME amount of money?

About a year ago, one executive at SBC (which was allowed to merge with AT&T only after promising the FCC they would provide neutral internet service) said Internet companies like Google and Yahoo! would be "nuts" to expect carriage for free. Those companies would have to pay a fee for preferred carriage (the fast tubes) or face decreased service in the slow lane.

How do we order the information that is transmitted; how is it prioritized? Currently, it is sent in small bunches, so that the content is distributed equally. The email you send gets the same treatment as an email sent by some rich guy or your senator. You can buy faster services, but once you have your super-fast connection, it should operate equally to the others in your area that have the same connection.

I asked several people at the conference about Internet neutrality. Center for Digital

Democracy Director Jeff Chester said (and he told me to tell you), "Don't trust the big media companies. The phone and cable companies will break every promise."

Radio, television and cable companies, Chester explained, have lobbied very expensively—and very successfully—to change the rules that originally required them to serve communities in fair ways.

"Now the phone companies are engaged in a campaign to deny any kind of public policy that would ensure they have to serve a local area in an equitable way," he said. "But broadband is a lifeline for education, for employment, for culture. Everyone has to have access to it. The phone companies are saying 'We only want to serve the wealthy districts.' But we have to have equitable build-out," meaning the networking infrastructure and wired hardware.

In Bill Moyers' keynote speech, he plugged Chester's new book *Digital Destiny*—the ordained Baptist minister asked those in attendance to, "Make this your bible!" He called it a terrifying book, "because Jeff [Chester] describes how we are being shadowed online by a slew of software digital gumshoes working from Madison Avenue. Our movements in cyberspace are closely tracked and analyzed, and interactive advertising infiltrates our unconsciousness to promote the brand-washing of America."

Chester portrays his book as "a warning or wake-up call for the U.S. public," because, "Many people hope that the emergence of digital communications will be more democratic—more diverse—that it will give us the news that we are not getting now and be owned by many more people. But if we're not careful, we might end up with a digital system that doesn't serve the public interest."

Jeff Chester and others at the conference want the masses (that's us) who are concerned about the future of the Internet to weigh in on the subject.

How can you do something to change

the media system and protect the Internet? Letters to the FCC, letters and phone calls to your representatives and elected leaders can change the imminent tides of media concentration, consolidation and control. It just might keep digital media and the Internet open for the most revolutionizing form of communication: many-to-many dialogue. **lv**

Adam Burke wishes he could give Jane Fonda a hug (someday!) and likes to pronounce the word "blog" as "blaaarrrgg!" as in "Aye Aye Captain! I'll blaaarrrgg about those pirates on my nautical-theme blaaarrrgg!"

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FINDING OBSCENITY

Scholars, critics, and artists from across the U.S. search and seize taboo—in Iowa

The University of Iowa's Obermann Center for Advanced Studies is sponsoring this humanities symposium from March 1st through 4th, which traces the vulgar, the salacious and the indecent through cultural perspectives of obscenity.

"Who's to say literature shouldn't turn you on?" said by Loren Glass, UI assistant professor of English and organizer of "Obscenity: an Interdisciplinary Discussion."

Perhaps the phrase "turn you on" "gets lucky" when it comes to semantics: It gets the best of both the colloquially virtuous and lasciviously suggestive worlds. A college student can be turned on to Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as by Henry Miller.

As far as determining whether something—be it book, film or photograph—is porn, Glass referenced anti-porn feminist Catherine MacKinnon's interpretation of it.

"If the text seems to be designed to turn on the reader, usually assumed to be a male viewer or reader," he said, "than our tendency is to place it in the pornographic category. Whereas if it's more meant to sublimate those desires, right—it's more meant to lead to some sort of contemplation—than it's literature."

Glass' research for his upcoming book, *The End of Obscenity: Vulgar Modernism and Literary Value*, inspired the conference. His research on literary modernism has led him to conclude that the words art and obscenity are a "semantic cluster."

"There aren't clear definitions on either side," he said. "But to clearly designate what falls on one side or the other always mires you in semantic difficulties and paradoxes."

Anthropologist Mary Douglas' 1966 cultural classic *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo* provided the framework for the call for papers, Glass said. The book was the first of its kind to dissect the different relationships cultures had with dirt and their fears thereof.

Dirt, whether that dust bunny in the corner or a pornographic picture, somehow earned special notoriety in "proper" American culture, and so the latter example needs a critical mass of subversives in order to assert any sort of legitimate presence in a community.

In U.S. law, the variable "community standards" is the judge and jury of what qualifies an expression as legally "obscene."

And what standards does the Iowa City and Coralville Corridor uphold?

Academic ones, apparently.

Take, for example, CineKink, an avant-garde film festival dedicated to the freedom of sexual expression based in New York City and exported to Minneapolis and San Francisco. These cities have the population to support a cinematic portrayal of prurient subjects.

The Bijou did bring to Iowa City *The Notorious Bettie Page*—a film that portrayed the preacher's daughter as naïve to the implications of leather and spreader bars, which CineKink also featured—and *Shortbus*, John Cameron Mitchell's teetering on the balancing beam between art and porn. Does the image of homosexual men in a naked threesome instantly qualify the film as porn, or must it have distinctly hard cock shots?

This would be a question for Linda Williams, a professor at the University of California at Berkeley who is often credited as the founder of porn studies and who will be speaking at the symposium.

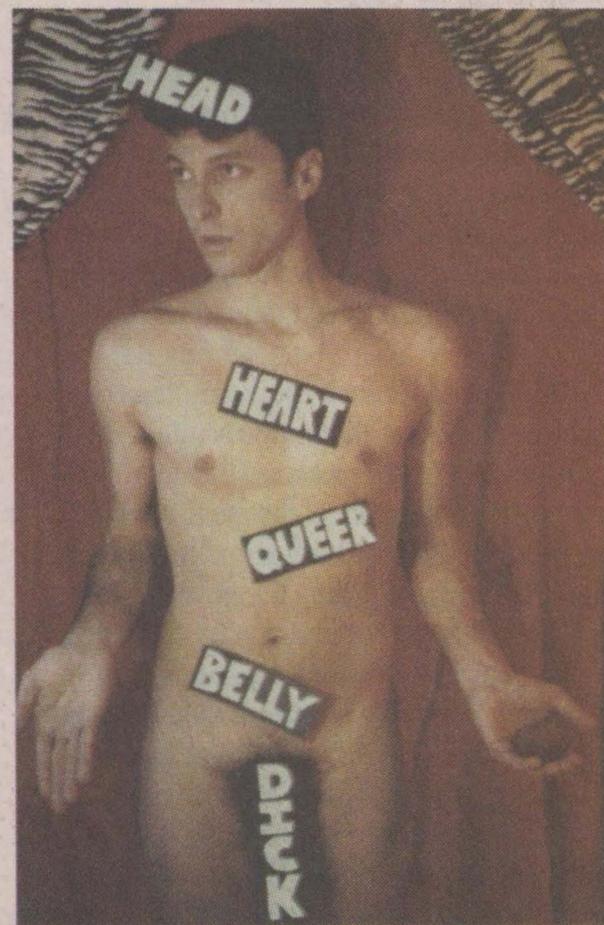
"We have moved as a culture, from an earlier era of 'ob/scenity,' in which explicit sexual images were kept off-scene for the consumption of men and private elites in the era of the stag film, and a more contemporary, and increasingly electronic era of "on/scenity" in which pornographies of all sorts become available to wide varieties of consumers, including those to whom it was once forbidden," she said via email.

She said that she considers *Shortbus* to be "Hard Core Art," which is the very subject she will be speaking about at the Obermann conference.

Almost 20 years after Williams published her intellectually inaugural and culturally daring *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the "Frenzy" of the Visible*, The University of Iowa is hosting this conference on all sorts of obscenities.

The promotion of pornography as a sex-positive, body-positive venture is another complicated subject. For example, the 2005 book *Naked Ambition: Women Who Are Changing Pornography*, edited by Carly Milne, contains an essay by the daughter of 1980s porn photographer Suze Randall and praises the sex-positiveness of the daughter for being cool with it and learning the craft.

As Glass said, "Many people, Laura Kipnis



among them, began to argue that you can't get a full understanding of the pornography industry unless you understand it socio-economically and not just aesthetically."

Jayne Swift, who received her master's degree in Women's Studies from the UI, will be presenting her take on the anti-porn/sex-positive debate about whether the naked media empowers or violates female bodies.

Swift says she became that cliché where the women's studies student morphs into the sex-worker—and still doesn't have control over how friends and family view her.

"In short, they've read me through a harsh lens of caricature," she said. "And friends who ostensibly consider themselves 'sex-positive' have reacted to my work as if it's not really work but rather an excuse for them to come down to my place of employment and get a cheap thrill or feel discomfited when I discuss my job—whether I'm complaining or extolling its virtues."

In Swift's opinion, people see sex-workers as obscene because of the perceived invalidity of the psychological skill involved in the service. She sees it as an "other-ing" of sex-workers.

"You work with your body and not your mind," she said referencing other people's perceptions of sex-work. "And in middle-class cultures that's considered something pretty dirty and dishonest."

Glass was clear to point out that the conference would be about obscenity issues outside of the sexual politics realm.

Even in academic settings, the word holds more power than the person speaking it.

Just ask UI law professor Gerald B. Wetlaufer, who claimed in a May 12, 2006 letter to the DI that his career could have been damaged by the published reaction to his use of the word in a lecture. He said he was quoting the testimony of a civil rights worker at the 1964 Democratic Convention, and the hubbub that followed was ridiculous.

“Several scholars view the Abu Ghraib photos as similar to late 19th and early 20th century lynching photographs,” he said via email. “My research shows that designating them as ‘obscene’ is one effective rhetorical strategy that justifies their lack of circulation and publication, and the fact they are interpreted as pornographic makes the images even more difficult for the American public to comprehend.”

David Levi Strauss, writer and critic on faculty at Bard College in New York, will be speaking on the photographs that Friday.

Since the end of the Modern era, and even after the post-Modern one, the struggle to define “obscenity” is as ambitious as ever.

Do you know it when you see it? **lv**

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Left: Margaret Stratton, Matrimonial Shrine, Santa Maria Della Anima Del Purgatorio, Naples, Italy, 2002. Archival pigment inkjet on rag paper. Courtesy of the artist

GRINNELL COLLEGE

Under the Irish Sun of Sobriety

Roddy Doyle

Paula Spencer

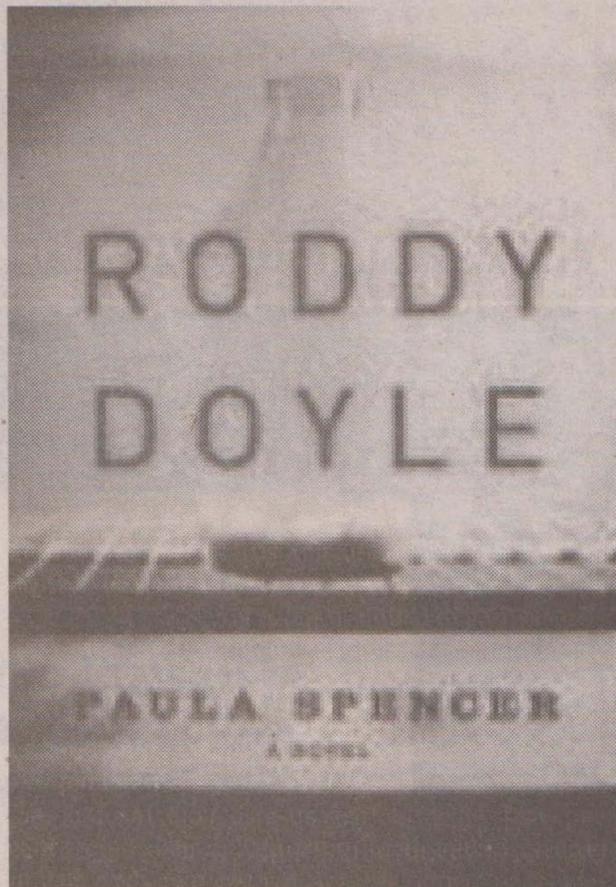
Remember Roddy Doyle? Remember *The Commitments* (movie and book)? The wonderfully poignant laugh-out-loud adventures of a blue collar Dublin garage band tearing around the nether edges of town, full of the confidence of youth, claiming their failures as successes. Doyle wrote the screenplay, too. Rent the movie. Doyle is one of Ireland's under-appreciated geniuses stateside, although *The Van* (1993) has sold as well as most of the novels short-listed for the Booker Prize. In 1993, Doyle outdid himself with *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*, a richer, less funny tale of a small child learning standard and not so standard lessons on the way to becoming a medium sized human being. The reviews rolled in, and *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha* won the Booker Prize.

Where do you go after you've won the Booker? First you work very hard for three years. Then you write a very different kind of novel. You choose a character quite unlike yourself, and you dig your heels into an edgy first-person narrative. Three years later you finish a short novel about a battered alcoholic woman called *The Woman Who Walked Into Doors*. Paula Spencer cleans houses for a living, as do many women in their thirties in her side of Dublin and is happy to have a job. Her mistake, and a character like Paula Spencer is bound to make a mistake or two, is Charlo, who she thinks is the love of her life. He's a crude sort, who drinks more than his share,

Here was a blatantly feminist novel written by a working-class male, from the point of view of a female protagonist. A beautiful novel about things that are in no way beautiful.

which is a lot in Dublin, and beats the living daylight out of Paula whenever he feels like it. She tells police and doctors she's walked into doors. Another mistake she made was her alcoholism.

Here was a blatantly feminist novel, written by a working class male, from the point of view of a female protagonist, told with deep sympathy and sharp observation. A beautiful novel about things that are in no way beautiful. This novel was published in 1996 to rave reviews but, alas, no prizes. Since then, Doyle has published a couple of more novels, some plays and a few things for children, but his new novel from Viking



makes it clear that the character of Paula Spencer has never left him.

His new novel is: *Paula Spencer*. He's moved his first-person narration to third to gain a bit of perspective. She is 48 now, and Charlo is 10 years dead, killed in an attempted robbery. Paula is still cleaning offices, living from paycheck to paycheck, four months sober—one day at a time as they say. She is dealing with the wreck of the long-term alcoholic's life. One son, John Paul (yes, after the pope), is a recovering heroine addict living in a trailer with a wife and son. One daughter, the one who

Where do you go after you've won the Booker?

did the parenting during Paula's alcoholic absence, has become successful in business and continues to parent Paula, searching her house for hidden bottles. Living with her is a daughter in her twenties, already showing signs of alcoholism, and a 16-year-old son whom she worries over and watches closely.

One day at a time, she does not drink, and during this chain of days, a kind of painful introspection enters her life. She watches the people in her life—her children, her two sisters—and comes to an understanding of the sorrow she has brought to herself and to those she might have provided for.

It's more than four months since she's had a drink. Four months and five days. One of those months was February. That's why she started measuring the time in months. She could jump three days. But it's a leap year; she had to give one back. Four months, five days. A third of a year. Half a pregnancy, nearly. A long time.

Paula Spencer begins like it will be a serious downer, and for a ways, it is. Introspection is a slow process. Paula is condescended to by those whom it amuses or soothes or aggrandizes. She remembers painful things, and she remembers that there are some things that are forever lost to her. We come to like her toughness, and her understanding that there is nothing left to do but forgive herself and move forward. Her sister has breast cancer, and it turns out her own ordeals are useful to a loved one—that she even has loved ones.

The novel comes to no glorious ending, but by the time Paula turns 49 and meets a man who's probably not right for her but nice all the same, a kind of joy welled in the heart of this moved and fascinated reader. My suggestion is to read *The Woman Who Walked into Doors*, still available in paperback, and dive directly into *Paula Spencer*, and then if you know what's good for you, you'll sample Doyle's Dublin in

some of his other fine novels. I've read six and liked them all.

Roddy Doyle lives in the neighborhood he grew up in and is known as a kind of saint among his fellow Irish writers. **IV**

Paul Ingram is a short man who lives in Iowa City. He has an overbite caused by his mother's fear of orthodontia. She has since died, leaving him with no chance to confront her about the effect this has had on his life. Most people see him as an introspective low-testosterone male, who has been known to make them laugh. All the rest is books.

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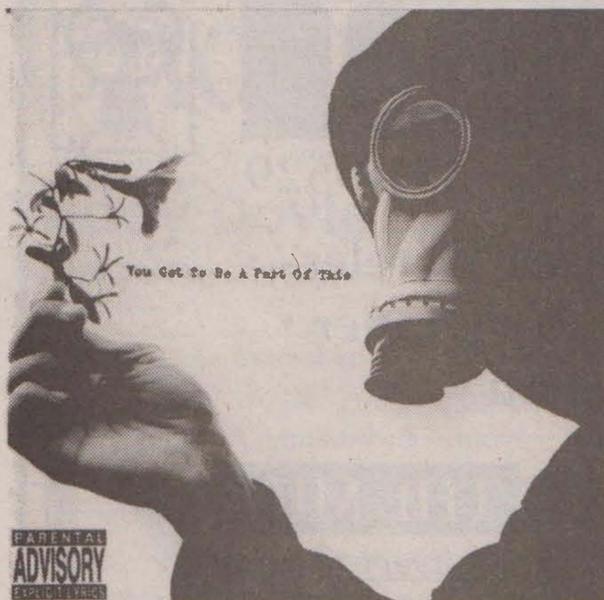
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P-Tek

You Get To Be A Part Of This

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Thirty years of hip-hop in America has been an extremely long, strange trip. From Brooklyn and the Bronx to every corner of the world, from an underground offshoot of Disco to the Top 40, hip hop has expanded and mutated from the particular circumstances of its birth into being a lens people everywhere focus through to interpret and explain their own lives. So if P-Tek is a white kid who went to Iowa City High, any discussion of 'authenticity' is beside the point. While it was originally an African American form of expression, hip hop has always been a meritocracy. The only question any hip hop fan will ask is, can the boy write? Can he flow? Does he bring dope beats?

Short answer is a qualified "yes" on all counts. "Straight Rap," as an example, paints a humorous picture of Iowa City night life: "Ladies grab your Soho Skirts, and babies tell your man to bring along a polo shirt ... there will be no party rap for you, I will not dance in circles for drunk buffoons..." "Straight Rap" comes off as an Op Ed critique of the IC scene and lavishes scorn on the drunk and drugged up nightlife. To the extent that it's a boast rhyme, P-Tek comes off curiously modest. "The Spectacle" is an orchestrally driven beat P-Tek rides with a distorted vocal that takes on pretty much everyone from people who don't vote to people who cheat on their spouses: "Jesus is spelled with a dollar sign for an 'S' if Jesus could see this he'd turn the tables in the temple..." "Buffy" is a love song to a dog: "Everyone who has ever loved your dog get

'em all up/Every dog who's ever loved a man throw your paws up."

So P-Tek writes clever rhymes and has a smooth vocal style that rides the beat with confidence. He also avoids the worst excesses of white-boy rap -- nasal Beastie Boys emulation, cringeworthy Eminem imitations or self-consciously geeky polysyllabism. As an MC, P-Tek shows a lot of promise. His crisp enunciation, relaxed rhythmic sense and varied rhythmic stresses keep things interesting musically, and he's a decent writer.

The more political tracks here could maybe use a lighter touch, but he always has at least a few funny or arresting images to keep things from collapsing under their own seriousness. The only complaint I have with "You get to be a part of this" is that the beats, while competent, tend to feel generic. Since I feel the same way about the beats used by a lot of international hip hop stars, I can't really say they're weak. But I hope that as P-Tek hones his craft, he is able to find or make some music to back his rhymes that will take him to the next level.



Escape The Floodwater Jug Band

Whiskey Will Fix It

Super Amigos Records

www.myspace.com/escapethefloodwater

You wouldn't think in post-modern, ironic Iowa City that a bunch of young folks would think it was hip to form a jug band and record old classics like "Jug Band Music" and "Tiptoe Through The Tulips." And yet, performing what may be the least hip music possible puts the lie to the whole idea of 'hip.' Why wouldn't goofy pop songs from the 1920s and '30s be hip? Jug bands have a crucial place in 20th century American

popular music. Wikipedia tells me that W.C. Handy learned the Blues from the street corner Memphis bands who played homemade instruments. Jug Band music was revived in the early '60s as part of the popular folk revival, and the Grateful Dead grew out of an earlier group that played Jug and Bluegrass music. Even the robots at Disneyland's "Country Bear Jamboree" comprised a jug band.

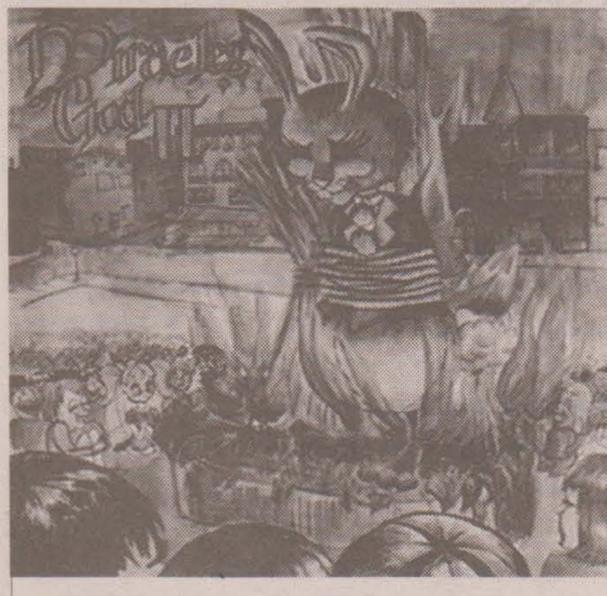
While Escape the Floodwater members aren't reverent revivalists, neither do they hold jug music at ironic arm's length. When they're playing the classics, they play them straight, with plenty of verve and animation. They're not without humor, though; their engaging remake of the Rod Stewart hit "Young Turks" definitely takes the piss out of old Rod. At the same time, the new setting rehabilitates a song thoroughly ruined by Stewart's performance and subsequent overexposure.

They indulge their fixation in "Whiskey Will Fix It," "Whiskey Business" and "Aunties Old Time Whiskey." The operative mood is cartoonish nostalgia, underlined by the comic book in the CD booklet. I can imagine the young members of the band getting their first exposure to their adopted musical style literally from old cartoons, which for someone growing up in the '80s and '90s may be their only connection to the popular culture of 50 years before.

No one will accuse these guys of virtuosity, but neither can their enthusiasm be denied. Given the roots of the genre, it almost works better that there's always something a bit off kilter about their performances. And the Jug, Washtub Bass, and Musical Saw are only approximately musical instruments to begin with. They're able to retain a homely, home made feeling to the music, and whether they're at the limits of their musical skill, or consciously keeping the edges rough, it doesn't matter. They sound like they're having a blast making this music, which makes it fun to listen to. Their vocal harmonies always hover on the verge of going pear shaped. On "Tip Toe Through The Tulips," the backing singers sound like Tiny Tim most of the way through a pint of Maker's Mark. Sure, this music could be played with more precision and finesse, but it would be less interesting.

Packaged in a hand-sewn leatherette CD case, with balsa-wood labels made with a wood-burning iron, the CD is a fine artifact

to have around, as well. In the new millennium, maybe it's time again for folks like Escape The Floodwater to breath new life into an old style. After all, with synthesizers, samplers and digital editing becoming commonplace in pop music, what's more revolutionary than playing homemade instruments and performing without amplification?



Miracles of God

Miracles of God II

Hot Potato Records

www.myspace.com/miraclesofgod

I should say at the outset that I can't really be objective about the Miracles of God, as I've become friends with, drunk beer with, and rented DVDs from these guys. Of course, I know most of the local artists I review in Little Village—Iowa City is way too small a town. All the noteworthy performers in the IC could all fit together on a school bus—a very loud, smokey, dirty school bus, with the driver passed out over the wheel, and puke all over the dashboard.

That disclaimer aside, there's a lot to love about this 7-inch—the crunchy, damaged pop music in the grooves and the delightful cover of a Beatrix Potter-esque bunny in waistcoat being burned at the stake. The songs—“Rape City,” “Torture,” “Shake That Ass” and “You're Evil”—have all either appeared on MOG's CDs or are live staples. What's new about the 7-inch release is a powerful, Hi Fi recording job by Bronson Karaff that brings out more depth and detail in the music. While MOG has always prided itself on a low-fi basement recording aesthetic, the 7-inch proves that its music can survive being brought fully into focus.

“Shake That Ass” leads off the Jason Hennessy side of the 7-inch, sounding a bit like Neil Young at his most abrasive or perhaps Dinosaur Jr. “Torture” highlights

Jason's romanticism tempered with horror movie bloody-mindedness: “I'd do anything to see you/but goddamned demons put my eyes out.” The song is a well-crafted homage to the Beatles and/or Beach Boys, artfully defaced with slashing distorted guitars. Sam Locke-Ward's contributions, “You're Evil” and “Rape City,” are noisy up-tempo rave-ups that would fit on a lot of late-'80s SST records, but behind the noise are well-crafted pop songs. You can compare the 7-inch full-band version of “Rape City” with the quiet spare arrangement of Sam's demo version (available for download at www.miraclesofgod.net) to get the full flavor of its polluted pop genius.

Still, the Miracles of God are not for everyone, particularly those offended by the thought of a damned-soul fellating the devil. I came across a review online that says, “A lot of people who are too nice to say anything probably encourage these guys. Stop.”

But then, there's no accounting for taste, I guess. You'll either love or hate it, but it will make a strong impression. From my myopic, parochial, completely biased position as both a critic and cheerleader, I say this it's a pretty great little record. If you buy it and hate it, let me know. I'll split a pitcher at the Picador with Sam and Jason, and oh, how we'll laugh!

Kent Williams lives on the north side and works on the west side. He is a Leo and a Master Of Science.



Kelly Pardekooper

Brand New Bag

Sonic Rendezvous Records

<http://kellyp.net/>

www.myspace.com/kellypardekooper

Kelly Pardekooper has been a busy man

since the release of Johnson County Snow, the breakthrough release that cemented his reputation as a hot local singer/songwriter. Released in 2000 on Dave Zollo's Trailer Records, the album featured Pardekooper's rough and rowdy Devil's House Band plowing through a set of country rockers that blended rockabilly sounds with clever, simple tales of Iowa life.

Since then, Pardekooper has moved from his Iowa City home, first to Nashville and then to Madison, Wisc., alternating between gigs fronting the band and more somber solo performances. The Devil's House Band days came to a close, but Pardekooper continued to surround himself with fine musicians, most notably in his harmonious relationship with guitarist/producer Teddy Morgan. With Morgan at the helm, Pardekooper's tunes took on new life, and 2002's House Of Mud revealed a more soulful side of the songwriter.

Brand New Bag, his 5th full-length (not counting the limited edition 2001 Live At Gabe's) features production and electric guitar work by Morgan, as well as some help from musicians on loan from the likes of John Doe and Junior Brown. Fans of Kelly's live shows will miss the presence of his crack-backing band. The only familiar name is original Devil's House Band bassist Atom Robinson, credited with harmonies on one track, but mixed low enough to render them completely inaudible.

The most glaring difference between this and Pardekooper's earlier work is his irritating tendency to sing under his range, mumbling and moaning his way through the ballads. He has never been the greatest country singer in town, but he's always more than made up for it with his unique twang and sheer enthusiasm. Brand New Bag features only three rockers with those lively vocals, and one of them is “Mehaffey Bridge,” a long-time favorite in the live shows. Even the raunchy Son Volt crunch of the title track doesn't really shake, although it's nice to hear Pardekooper's voice rise above the roar, something that won't happen many times during the 10 cuts. Most disappointing is “Crazy Girl,” another up-tempo tune that's been around a long time, redone as a half-speed dirge at odds with the good-time lyric.

And that's pretty much the trouble when it's all over: Pardekooper's lyrics may not be quite as deep as the oh-so-serious production would suggest. The strangely un-hip couplet “She's got the tattooed ankle / She's got the tattooed ass / She's always laughing / Lord, I think she's on the grass” would fit right at home in a charging two-beat country rave-up, but it sounds bizarre in the moody set-

Local CDs continued on page 22

Art/Exhibits

African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center

55 12th Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 877-526-1863

The Peanut and Beyond: The Story of George Washington Carver, through Jun. 30 * *It's More Than Just a Game: African American Sports in Iowa*, through Aug. 31.

AKAR

257 E. Iowa Ave., Iowa City, 351-1227

Yunomi Invitational, Feb. 23 - Mar. 16.

Brucemore

2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-7375

The Families of the Brucemore, ongoing.

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503

The Young and the Restless: Children in Art, through Apr. 15 * *Midwestern Visions: Grant Wood, Marvin Cone and Beyond*, through Sep. 2 * *About Face: Portraiture from the Collection*, through Oct. 28 * *Art in Roman Life*, ongoing.

Chait Galleries Downtown

218 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 338-4442

New Year's Resolution: Have More Fun, Jean Adams, Jeff Jensen, Kathy Thor, Dale Divoky, Art Strong, through Feb. 28.

Faulconer Gallery – Grinnell College

1108 Park St., Grinnell, 641-269-4660

The Living and the Dead: Resurrecting the Neapolitan Cult of the Skull, through Feb. 25.

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site

110 Parkside Dr., West Branch, 643-2541

Holography: History in a New Light, through Mar. 24.

The History Center

615 1st Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-1501

Living along the Tributaries, ongoing * *Timequest*, ongoing.

House of Aromas

118 Clinton St., Iowa City

Incarnation: The Languages of Belief, Proof and Contradiction, through Feb. 28.

Hudson River Gallery

538 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 358-8488

Venus, Gary Kelley, through Mar. 10.

Mercy Hospital

500 E. Market St., Iowa City, 339-0300

Obedient Servant or Expressive Voice: Exploring Calligraphy's Spectrum, Cheryl Jacobsen & students, through Feb. 28.

National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

30 16th Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids, 362-8500

Works by Warhol from the Cochran Collection, through Mar. 11 * *Homelands: The Story of the Czech and Slovak People*, ongoing.

Old Capitol Museum

Pentacrest

UI Campus

Animals Among Us, animal photography, through Jan. 14.

Peter Paul Luce Gallery Cornell College Campus

McWethy Hall

Convection, Leighton Pierce, video installation, through Feb. 11.

Senior Center

28 S. Linn Street, Iowa City, 356-5222

Natural Beauty, Minerals and Crystals from the E.L. Clopton Collection, through Feb. 14 * *Off the Beaten Path*, photography by Ruth Williams, through Feb. 26 * *An Uncommon Eye*, paintings by Louis Picek, through July 30.

UI Hospitals and Clinics

Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417

All exhibits, Patient & Visitor Activities Center, 8th floor John Colloton Pavilion unless noted otherwise.

Dave Phelps, various works, through Feb. 2, Gallery I * *Mother's Day Too Soon*, through Feb. 26, Gallery III * *Trauma Reflected through Art*, Iowa Juvenile Home Students, through Apr. 24, Main Lobby, 1st floor John Colloton Pavilion * *Incidental Theatre*, lithographs by Daniel Maw, through Apr. 26, Gallery II * Sarah & Shawn Nelson, glass works, through Apr. 26, Main Lobby, 1st floor John Colloton Pavilion.

UI Museum of Art

150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727

Dark Matters, print cycle by Max Klinger, through Apr. 15.

Music

Clapp Recital Hall

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160

All music 8pm unless noted otherwise. Maia Quartet, Feb. 1 * Volka Orhon, double bass; Alan Huckleberry, piano, Feb. 3 * Iowa Brass Quintet & members of the Maia Quartet, Feb. 8 * Iowa Brass Quintet, Feb. 10, 3pm * Maia Quartet, Stradivari Quartet, Feb. 11, 3pm * Patricia von Blumröder, piano, Feb. 11 * Einar Rottingen, Feb. 12 * Gro Sandvik, flute; Einar Rottingen, piano, Feb. 14 * Guarneri Quartet, Feb. 15, 7:30pm *

Douglas Cleveland, organ, Feb. 16 * Maia Quartet and other UI faculty, Feb. 22 * Scott Conklin, violin; Alan Huckleberry, piano, Feb. 23 * UI Philharmonia chamber orchestra, Feb. 24, 5:30pm * Benjamin Coelho, bassoon; Uriel Tsachor, piano, Feb. 25, 3pm * Composers Workshop, Feb. 25.

CSPS

1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580

All music 8pm, except Sundays, 7pm.

Harper, Feb. 6 * Girlyman, Feb. 7 * That One Guy, Feb. 8 * The Ruthie Roster Band, Feb. 9 * Storyhill, Feb. 15 * The Ginn Sisters, Feb. 16 * Po' Girl, J.T. & the Clouds, Feb. 24 * The Holmes Brothers, Feb. 27 * Erin McKeown, Jim Lauderdale, Feb. 28.

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 688-2653

Emma Rocks music competition, Feb. 9, 7pm.

First Presbyterian Church

2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City, 351-2660

Eastern Iowa Children's Choral Festival, Feb. 9, 7pm, Feb. 10, 10am.

Hancher Auditorium

UI Campus, 335-1160

Paquito D'Rivera, Feb. 2, 7:30pm * Preucil School of Music String Concert, Feb. 4, 3pm * Honor Band and UI Symphony Band, Feb. 18, 2:30pm * UI Symphony Orchestra & Symphony Band, Feb. 21, 8pm * *Salute to Benny Goodman*, Richard Stoltzman with Johnson County Landmark, Feb. 24, 7:30pm.

Harper Hall

Voxman Music Building, UI Campus, 335-1603

All music, 8pm unless noted otherwise.

"Kierkegaard and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*." Stephen Swansom, baritone; Rachel Joselson, soprano; Lecture by Laird Addis, Feb. 7, 7pm * Einar Rottingen, Chamber music master class, 12:30pm; Piano master class, 1:30pm, Feb. 13 * Desert's Edge: Robert Spring, clarinet; J.B. Smith, percussion, Feb. 13 * Bernard Scully, horn; Joanne Minnetti, piano, Feb. 14 * Peter Kairoff, harpsichord, Feb. 18, 3pm.

Iowa City Public Library

123 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

Hans Christian Andersen Family Concert with the Maia Quartet, Jody Hovland, Kidspectacular, Feb. 17, 10:30am.

The Java House

211 E Washington St, Iowa City, 335-5730

Deathships, Feb. 2, 12pm * Nic Arp, Feb. 2, 8pm * Scott Cochran, Flannel, Feb. 9, 8pm * Andrew McNamara, Feb. 16, 8pm * Bill Bryant, Feb. 23, 8pm.

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529

Open Mike Mondays, 8 pm. All music, 9pm unless noted otherwise.

Josh Davis, Jerry Lorenson, Feb. 1 * Kelly Pardekooper, Feb. 2 * The Gglitch, Feb. 3 * Family Van, Blood Frenzy, Rusty Buckets, Coyote Blood, Feb. 6, 10pm * Adrian Legg, Feb. 8 * Willy Porter, Feb. 9 * Funkmaster Cracker, Euforia Strings, Feb. 10, 10pm * Sweethearts Serenade: Mike & Amy Finders, Al & Aleta Murphy, Annie & Stacy Savage-Webster, The Great Bluegrass Herons, Elena Passarello with Cruz Steele, Feb. 14, 6:30pm * Wheel and the Fence, Ed Gray, Wayne Western, Feb. 15 * Marty Stuart, Feb. 16, 8pm * Wylde Nept, Feb. 17 * Dead Larry, Feb. 20 * Pieta Brown featuring Bo Ramsey, Feb. 23 * Wandering Songs, Her Majesty's Ships, The Heathers, Skursula, Feb. 24 * Burlington St. Bluegrass Band, Feb. 28, 7pm.

Old Brick

26 E. Market St., Iowa City

D. Anthony Live: Big Band, Feb. 24.

Old Capitol Museum

Pentacrest

UI Campus

Piano Sundays: Shared Student Piano Recital, Feb. 4, 1:30pm * Piano Sundays: Student Showcase I, Feb. 18, 1:30pm.

The Picador

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 354-4788

Physical Challenge Dance Party, Thursdays, 9pm. All music, 9pm unless noted otherwise.

Thunderbirds are Now!, Oxford Collapse, Apteka, Feb. 1 * Count Bass D, Talbleek, Verbal Kent, Coolzey, Feb. 2 * Alesana, Bless the Fall, A Day to Remember, Feb. 3, 6pm * Karaoke with Bil Francis, Feb. 3, 10pm * Heartless Bastards, Beaten Awake, Feb. 7 * Rhys Chatham, The Lichens, Feb. 9 * Quietdrive, Feb. 10, 5pm * Backyard Tire Fire, Deathships, Shametrain, Feb. 10, 9:30pm * Grizzly Bear, The Dirty Projectors, Feb. 11, 7pm * Fall of Troy, Potrugal the Man, Damiera, Tera Melos, Feb. 13, 6pm * Tony Brown, Feb. 15 * The Honeydogs, Matt Grimm & the Red Smear, Brian Troester Band, Feb. 16 * Liquid Soul, Grooveship, Feb. 17 * Lakeshore, Last Tuesday, Signal Home, The Switch, Feb. 18, 6pm * Post-Mortems, Superdanger, Dillweed, The Clique, Feb. 19 * Yip Yip, The Show is a Rainbow, Redbeard, Feb. 20, 6pm * Phoenix Morning, This Moment, Of Hearts and Shadows, Feb. 21, 5pm * Sparta, Mewithoutyou, Aloha, Feb. 23, 6pm * The Spinto Band, Feb. 25 * Richard Buckner, Six Part Seven, Feb. 26.

Paramount Theatre

123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888

Metropolitan Orchestra Festival, Feb. 3, 7pm * Masterworks V, Cedar Rapids Symphony, Feb. 17, 8pm

Riverside Casino & Golf Resort

3184 Highway 22, Riverside, 648-1234

Delbert McClinton, Feb. 9, 8pm * Tim Cunningham, Feb. 10, 8pm * Little Big Town, Feb. 23, 8pm * The Wreckers, Feb. 24, 2pm * Mustang Sally, Feb. 24, 8pm * Josh Gracin, Feb. 25, 4pm.

Trinity Episcopal Church

320 E. College St., Iowa City

Duo Geminiani: Stanley Ritchie, Baroque violin; Elizabeth Wright, harpsichord, Feb. 10, 8pm.

UI Hospitals and Clinics

Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417

John Colloton Pavilion Atrium, 12pm, unless noted otherwise.

UI Museum of Art

150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727

Music at the Museum: "Baroque!" Feb. 18, 2pm.

Uptown Bill's Small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-0401

Open Mic Night, every Friday, 8-11pm, all other performances, 7pm.

Sam Knutson, Feb. 3 * Ben Schimdt, Feb. 10 * James Bunde & Rosie Smith, Feb. 17 * Kimberli, Feb. 24.

Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 337-6464

Blues Jam, Sundays, 9pm; Throwdown: Free Dance Party, Tuesday nights; Open Jam, Wednesdays, 10 pm. All music, 9pm, unless noted otherwise.

Patrick Bloom, Sleeping Planes, Feb. 1 * Public Property's Bob Marley Birthday Bash, Feb. 2 * Dennis McMurrin & the Demolition Band, Feb. 3 * Diplomats of Solid Sound, Feb. 9 * The Glowing Glass, Skursula, The Red Lining Aspects, Plane C, Feb. 9, 5pm * The Return of Spencenter, Slaughterhouse 6, Skursula, Feb. 10, 8pm * Duwayne Burnside & the Mississippi Mafia, Feb. 15 * Cornmeal, Electric Junction, Feb. 16 * Lunatix on Pogostix, Spare Parts, Nickelbagofunk, Feb. 22 8 Hunab, Soul Fusion, Feb. 23.

**Theater/Performance/
Dance/Comedy**

CSPS

1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580

Cooking con Karimi, Feb. 2-3, 8pm.

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 688-2653

Liars Holographic Radio Theatre, Feb. 3, 8pm * Harry the Dirty Dog, Feb. 10, 2pm.

Hancher Auditorium

A-LIST

Emma Rocks!

Englert Theatre

Feb. 9, 7pm to 9pm

Emma Rocks! is a musical competition and fundraiser for the Emma Goldman Clinic (EGC) held on Friday, Feb. 9 from 7pm-9pm at the Englert Theatre.

If you're not familiar with EGC, you should be. EGC is a non-profit organization that prides itself on quality reproductive health care, active education and the promotion of women's voices in public policy.

Collaboratively with the Emma Goldman Clinic, the Englert Theatre, Dave Zollo (Trailer Records), United Action for Youth (UAY), The Guitar House, West Music, Summer of the Arts and Tisch Jones from the UI Theatre Arts department have all made it possible for Emma Rocks! to ROCK!!

The audience will vote for the top three performances out of the 15 musical acts and the panel of judges: Dave Zollo,

acclaimed local musician and owner of Trailer Records; Sam Schlesinger, United Action for Youth volunteer; and



Tisch Jones, associate professor of directing and theater history,* will choose the winner.

The winners have a chance to win a day with record producer Dave Zollo in the UAY studios to record a demo CD, as well as an Ibanez acoustic guitar from The Guitar House, voice coaching from Rebekah Ness, and a one-hour set at the Iowa Arts Festival 2007.

The performers are as follows (chosen from the application process):

Iron Hymen, Nathan James, L. Armadillo, Kate Feldmann featuring Amanda Swygaard, Factor X, Milton Wigdman, Tammi & Rich, Broke Out Steppers, Jeffrey Morgan, Harvey, Emily Louise, No Prettier Thing, The Keepers of Peace, Dead Larry and Marv Hain, Jr.

Be a part of it and come out and show your support of local talent and the Emma Goldman Clinic!

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UI campus, 335-1160

The Producers, Feb. 6-8, 7:30pm * *Romeo & Juliet*, Aquila Theatre Company, Feb. 13-14, 7:30pm * *Lunar Sea*, Momix, Feb. 27, 7:30pm, Feb. 28, 10am.

Old Brick

26 E. Market St., Iowa City
USA Ballroom Dance, Feb. 2 * UI Swing Dance, Feb. 9.

Paramount Theatre

123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888
17th annual Broadway Maybies, Feb. 2, 7pm * *Harry the Dirty Dog*, Feb. 9, 9:45 & 11:15am * *Lisa Lampanelli*, Feb. 10, 8pm * *Harriet Tubman & the Underground Railroad*, Feb. 15, 9:45 & 11:15am.

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672
Guys on Ice: An Ice Fishing Musical Comedy, through Feb. 18.

Space/Place Theatre

North Hall, UI campus, Iowa City
Faculty/Graduate Dance Concert, Feb. 1-3, 8pm
* "Dances with the Maia," Feb. 16-17, 8pm, Feb. 18, 3pm.

Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592
Thursdays, Fridays, & Saturdays: 7:30pm;
Sundays: 2:30pm.
Christmas: Hans Christian Andersen, Dec. 1-3, 8-10, 14-17.

UI Theatres

Theatre Bldg., UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
Into the Woods, Feb. 1-3, 6, 8pm, Feb. 4, 2pm,
E.C. Mabie Theatre * "Take 10," 10-minute play
festival, Feb. 9-10, 8pm, Feb. 11, 3pm, Theatre
B * *Returns*, Feb. 15-17, 8pm, Feb. 18, 3pm,
Theatre B.

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Words

Art Building West

UI Campus

"Classical Music in a Digital World," Feb. 8, 6:45pm, rm. 240 * "End of an Empire: Archaeology and the Collapse of Urartu," Feb. 28, 8pm, rm. 116.

Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 688-2653

"Know the Score Live," Joan Kjaer, Jane Smiley, Feb. 25, 3pm.

Harper Hall

Voxman Music Building, UI Campus, 335-1603

"Can Our Music Curriculum be Saved?" Feb. 7, 12:30pm * "Niels Bohr and the Origins of Modern Physics." Feb. 21, 7pm.

Iowa City Public Library

123 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

"Inspiration and Cultural Relevance," lecture & concert by the Maia Quartet, Feb. 28, 7pm.

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529

Talk Art Cabaret, Feb. 7 & 21, 9pm * The Big Idea, Feb. 28, 10pm.

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 337-2681

All reading 7pm unless noted otherwise.

Rae Meadows, Feb. 1 * Amy Stewart, Feb. 2 * Jeffrey S. Copeland, Feb. 8 * Mark Kreidler, Feb. 9 * Massimo Pigliucci, Feb. 13 * Daniel Alarcon, Feb. 14 * Richard Burgin, Feb. 21 * Lia Purpura, Feb. 22 * Steve Kuusisto, Feb. 23 * Jane Smiley, Feb. 25 * Modern Love: Brian Goedde, Robin Hemley, Bonny Ruff, Kerry Reilly, Feb. 26.

UI Museum of Art

150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727

UIMA Writer-in Residence Reading: Nick Kowalczyk, Russell Valentino, John D'Agata,

Feb. 15, 7:30pm * "Through the Green Threshold," Adriana Méndez-Rodenas, Feb. 22, 4pm * "Elizabeth Catlett," Kathleen Edwards, Feb. 23, 7pm.

UI Theatres

Theatre Bldg., UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160

Langston Hughes Read-In, Feb. 1, 1pm, Theatre Building Lobby.

Film/Video

Art Building West

UI Campus

Rm. 240

Ignmar Bergman's *Through a Glass Darkly*, live music, Feb. 6, 7pm * Ignmar Bergman's *Winter Light*, live music, Feb. 13, 7pm * Ignmar Bergman's *The Silence*, live music, Feb. 20, 7pm * Ignmar Bergman's *Autumn Sonata*, live music, Feb. 27, 7pm.

Bijou Theatre

UI Memorial Union

UI Campus, 335-3258

2007 Oscar Shorts & *Black Orpheus*, Feb. 16-22 * *Dixie Chicks: Shut Up and Sing*, Feb. 16-18 * Grand Opening Reception & Bijou Birthday, Feb. 23 * Oscar Viewing Party, Feb. 25.

Iowa City Public Library

123 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

An Unfinished Life, Feb. 2, 6pm, Rooms A, B, & C.

Uptown Bill's Small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-0401

Movie Night, Sundays, 6pm.

Misc.

Robert A. Lee Recreation Center

220 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 356-5100

Rollerskating & Family Swim, Saturdays, 6-8pm

Family Fun Night, Feb. 17, 4-8pm.

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Feb. 17 James Bunde

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Feb. 24 Kimberli

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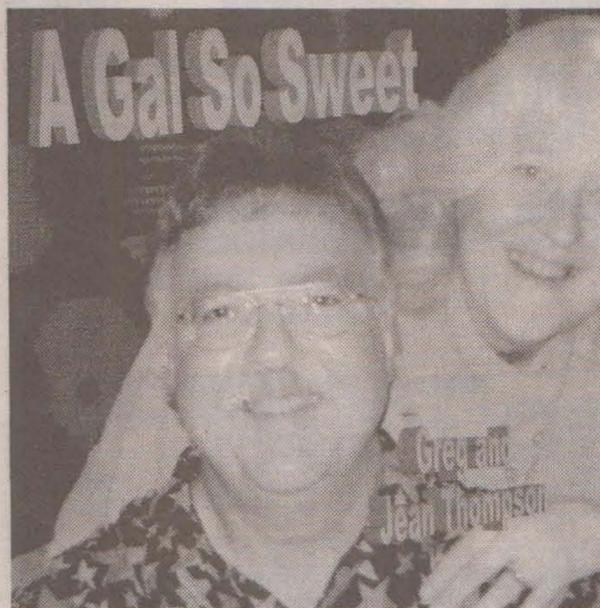
Local CDs

continued from page 17

ting. Likewise the reworking of "Crazy Girl," which details the hilarious troubles of dating a party gal ("Another weekend, you throw up on my lawn", etc.), yet is delivered with the same strange solemnity.

To Kelly's credit, he's making attempts to throw away any remnants of that bar band sound and to mature in the same way that Bo Ramsey has done, but it's a poor fit for his compositions. It's no wonder that the recent live shows feature close to the entire Johnson County Snow album and covers of honky-tonk standards like "Give Back The Key To My Heart" while only briefly touching on the new, slower material. Brand New Bag is certainly a more mature record, but it comes up short without the lively snap and pop of his most well-loved songs.

William Fare lives and works in Cedar Rapids, Iowa where he plays music, writes about music and lives in harmony with his piles of records.



Greg & Jean Thompson

A Gal So Sweet

Harmony Lane Studios

www.myspace.com/146267940

Listen up, all you would-be folk-lovin' Iowans and armchair audiophiles, and get ready for a brand-new musical treat. Work on Greg and Jean Thompson's latest release, *A Gal So Sweet*, is now complete, and word has it that Harmony Lane's latest production shows all the signs of an irresistible and enduring folk classic, with the kind of songs you'll find yourself singing along to, time and time again.

From the bouncy, tongue-in-cheek title number spoofing the roles of men and women in relationships, to the gentle lechery of "The Nasty Thing" and "Women Like Trucks," and the pithy, witty political humor of "Democracy in Disrepair," "Rambo Jesus" and "Hummer," this lively collection consistently shines, like the pure home-grown gem that it is.

And when I say home-grown, I mean home-grown: Greg Thompson not only authored both music and lyrics for eleven songs, he also plays all guitar, bass, keyboards and rhythm instrumentals on the album and produced the CD in his state-of-the-art home-based Harmony Lane Studios.

Greg's wife, Jean Thompson, contributes some wonderfully warm harmony on several cuts. A former rock 'n' roll diva and accomplished singer in her own right, Jean's musical résumé includes a memorable stint in the late '80s as the purple-haired powerhouse vocalist with the band, The Movies. Jean also co-wrote "Hummer," along with Greg, Matt Kearney and Jamie Frederickson, and designed the graphics for the CD and jewel case.

The image of an afghan she made, featuring a colorful splash of guitars floating on a field of black, graces the cover art, serving as a backdrop for the couple's glowing faces. Inside, the liner notes read like a casual conversation with Greg, the text interspersed with light-hearted snapshots of the pair clowning around with funny hats and socks. But please don't let the Thompson's warm and fuzzy presentation of a cozy domestic bliss fool you into underestimating their genius.

The truth is that this album's a smart, hip, adventurous compilation of sophisticated arrangements, clever wordplay, penetrating social satire, kick-ass guitar riffs and great humor, stylistically expressed through the genres of traditional folk and country blues. Lately Greg's been working full-time on honing his skills as a singer-songwriter-guitarist, and man, it shows.

Copies can be ordered directly from Harmony Lane Studios at 319-337-7722. And when you folksters hear the CD, I guarantee

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that from the very first musical appetizer, "A Gal So Sweet," all the way down through the fifteen selections to the last and tastiest little morsel, "Peace Guitar," you'll be savoring the flavor of a truly delightful, one-of-a-kind musical experience—the kind that warms your heart and makes you want to tap your feet, smile and nod at perfect strangers.

Kathy Dee Saville is a native Iowan currently residing in Albuquerque, NM. A graduate of the UI and a singer/songwriter herself, she lived in Iowa City for nearly 20 years and has many fond memories of participating in the vibrant local music and art community there.



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FORECAST FOR FEBRUARY 2007

♈ ARIES—Your own hopes for the future and the achievement of cherished personal goals are seriously challenged by disruptions caused by those younger than yourself. For some, this could involve people with whom you are romantically involved or creative projects. There is an urgent need to impose order on this situation. It is holding up progress in many other important areas. Your life-partner also demands your urgent attention. The good news is that the resources are readily available to reach a fair and lasting solution. Love is on your side.

♉ TAURUS—It's a tough balancing act. The demands of home and profession are at odds. Both are important to you, and both are making heavy demands. The planets suggest that things will work out best if you strike out in a different, innovative, unexpected direction. This will provide a new vision, a new motivation around which to synergize your ideas and your efforts. From this, a new and more sustainable work/life balance will be reached. Long-term savings and investments will help you leverage the transition and keep on growing, too.

♊ GEMINI—You are burdened by chores, responsibilities and disruptions on the local scene while the exciting action is somewhere else on the map. Boring, daily obligations keep you from rewarding opportunities in distant places. However, associates who might have been controlling, manipulative or self-serving in the past are feeling more generous. They also have more to share. Cooperation with them holds the key to resolving your own difficulties and bringing your larger goals within reach. Helping resolve thorny local issues might be just what's needed to spark their generosity.

♋ CANCER—The emphasis is on balancing routine expenses against long-term savings and investment needs. If push comes to shove, your daily expenses will have to be reduced somehow. Your work income should provide the money you need. No need to cling to the tried and true, either. The planets are supporting change and innovation. Reach out into the world. Expand your horizons. Try something new. There is a solid path to your financial goals. Don't be discouraged or frightened off if the path is a little complicated or unfamiliar.

♌ LEO—How do you get a galloping camel through the eye of a moving needle? How do you manage complex, urgent, multi-layered simultaneous changes? Leo needs to know. An important part of the solution is figuring out how much responsibility is really yours and how much isn't. When that's done, figure out how many of the things people want to do are legitimate, wise or necessary. Then make sure everything will last. The planets suggest that you can count on the support of youthful, creative people to make it through.

♍ VIRGO—This month's events highlight Virgo's need to bring order to your inner life. Only staunch adherence to sound principles will get you through rapidly unfolding, unpredictable and confusing events. Family will provide greater support than they have in recent times and home will be more of a sanctuary. Maybe you had to struggle in recent years to keep your home life harmonious, but the battle is about over. Family life should provide the support you require to achieve the psychological stability you need to get through this big transition.

♎ LIBRA—Many things that have been developing in the background and in the backs of people's minds will begin to manifest, rapidly, but not without resistance. Libra's creative ideas and efforts are no exception. Librans are under a pretty manipulative, power-freaky influence right now, and you could find yourself stepping on toes and sparking resentment. It really isn't necessary. The planets are with you, and you have an especially important role to play. So make a special effort to be open and fair in your dealings. Set the proper tone.

♏ SCORPIO—Amidst overwhelming activity and some big decisions, Scorpio has an edge. Your ruling planet is nicely placed. It will provide leverage in important negotiations. It is important that you obey the rules and not use your leverage unfairly even if you feel like, despite your contribution, you are being put at a disadvantage. Don't let yourself be manipulated and don't give in to the temptation to manipulate. In fact, you might be the one who has to insist that everyone play fair. You could get caught between warring factions.

♐ SAGITTARIUS—Sagittarians are in the middle of several complicated situations at once with people expecting them to play a crucial role in each one. And fortunately, for the most part, you can bring something beneficial to each situation. Your own family or home situation is also challenging at the moment. The planets indicate that you need to express love in ways that are more consistent with the high spiritual principles that motivate your love. You might need to start from scratch and build a new foundation for loving family relations.

♑ CAPRICORN—Capricorn will feel deepening relief, optimism and self-confidence as supportive, healing influences take hold in their inner lives. They will feel even better as they realize that their healing process grants them the ability to help others grow and heal. Capricorns can also help resolve some fairly thorny, concrete issues in their financial lives because of this newfound confidence and optimism. In fact, conflict, challenge, opportunity and growth are ongoing in all financial houses and the house of community relations. This foretells effort and successful expansion in those areas.

♒ AQUARIUS—Aquarians have a strong inclination to stay strictly within their own mental cocoons under present planetary influences. However, this month you will reach out. Your own personal ideals will be of real, concrete help in resolving friendship and partnership issues in your life and in the lives of those around you. Subtle but intense power struggles are indicated with someone in your life who is feeling powerless. Things could get a little testy. These struggles are related constructively to your spiritual growth and the expansion of your personal horizons.

♓ PISCES—You are a mystery and a bit of a puzzle to many. This month brings opportunities to reach out and explain yourself to others in a loving and supportive way. Such explanations would be very helpful in resolving any questions or difficulties you are experiencing in the search for the proper job or profession. But all that glitters is not gold. Pay attention to those who have some experience and expertise. Don't simply shrug off the advice of those in positions of authority. Build sound, mutually beneficial relations instead.

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A Day to Remember

Sat. Feb. 3 -- 10pm
KARAOKE!! with your host
Bil Francis

Wed. Feb. 7 --
Heartless Bastards
Beaten Awake

Fri. Feb. 9 -- Rhys Chatham

Sat. Feb. 10 -- ALL AGES 5pm
Quietdrive Ronnie Day Melee

Sat. Feb. 10 --
Backyard Tire Fire Death Ships

Sun. Feb. 11 -- 7pm
Grizzly Bear The Dirty Projectors

Tues. Feb. 13 -- ALL AGES 6pm
The Fall of Troy
Portugal the Man Damiera Tera Melos

Fri. Feb. 16 --
The Honeydogs
Matt Grim & the Red Smear

Sat. Feb. 17 --
Liquid Soul Grooveship

Wed. Feb. 21 -- ALL AGES 6pm
Phoenix Morning
This Moment Of Hearts and Shadows

Fri. Feb. 23 -- ALL AGES 6pm
Sparta / Mewithoutyou
Aloha

Mon. Feb. 26 --
Richard Buckner
Six Parts Seven

Mon. Mar. 26 -- 7pm
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Friday, February 23: Grand Opening Reception and Bijou Birthday Bash - A FREE event to celebrate the Bijou's anniversary and new theater.
A catered reception, followed by an exclusive advance screening of an independent film.
Sunday, February 25: Oscar Viewing Party! The Academy Awards on the big screen! Food, drink and music will precede the Awards broadcast. Contests and prizes.
March 2-8: OLD JOY | MIDNIGHT MOVIE SERIES on Saturday nights starting February 24

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FOCUS BODY PIERCING - Jewelry and piercing by Bill
THE KONNEXION - Smoking accessories (remember your I.D.!)
RUSTY RECORDS - Vintage vinyl, used CDs, tapes and hip threads
VELOCIPEDE - Bicycle delivery service and Infoshop
WHITE RABBIT - D.I.Y. art and apparel store/boutique/gallery

Live Music At The Hall Mall !!

Feb 2 2007 - East Side Gang, Dillwood, Wax Cannon, Western Front, **Feb 3 2007** - MR. LIPP The Corp Benefit: NY Collective
Feb 8 2007 - Miracles of God, Petit Mal, A-Bomb Chop Shop, and Lipstick Homicide, **Feb 9 2007** - Unstaged Theater,
Feb 10 2007 - Great Lakes Acoustic, Gilded Gate, **Feb 17 2007** - Natal Naxia, **Feb 22 2007** - OUTSOUND: NY&OR, Evan Miller

Check www.myspace.com/hallmall for updates and more details....