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April '07

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sprouts*

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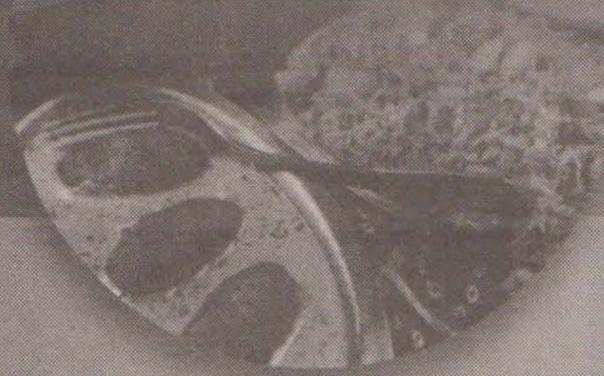
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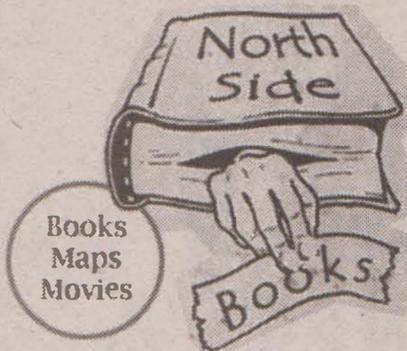
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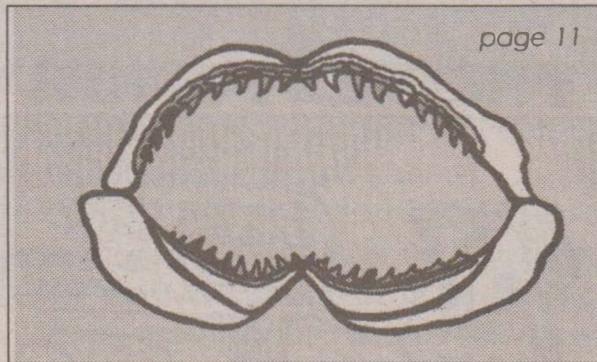
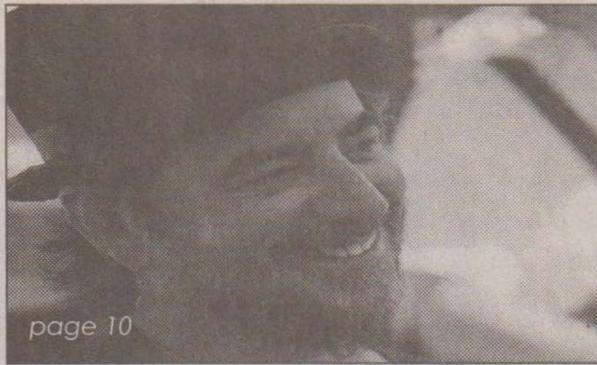
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

THE SPIN: THE PATRIOT ACT IS A VITAL COMPONENT OF THE WAR ON TERROR WHICH WILL NEVER, EVER BE ABUSED BY ANY GOVERNMENT AGENCY.

ANYONE WHO DOUBTS THAT PROBABLY WANTS THE TERRORISTS TO BEHEAD US ALL!

WHY DO LIBERALS HATE PEOPLE WITH HEADS?

REALITY: ROBERT MUELLER ADMITS THAT THE FBI HAS ROUTINELY ABUSED THE PATRIOT ACT; SAYS "MISTAKES WERE MADE."

UH--YEAH, WELL, MAYBE SO--

--BUT DIDJA HEAR ABOUT THE FAKE WALTER REED SCANDAL?

THE SPIN: CONDITIONS AT WALTER REED WERE BLOWN OUT OF PROPORTION BY A FEW SLOVENLY MALCONTENTS AND THEIR ENABLERS IN THE BUSH-HATING MEDIA.

THE MICE WERE ATTRACTED BY ALL THE DIRTY DISHES AND TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS THEY LEFT LYING AROUND!

WHY DO LIBERALS HATE NON-BEHEADED PEOPLE WITH CLEAN ROOMS?

REALITY: TWO TOP ARMY OFFICIALS ARE FORCED TO RESIGN; FORMER HEAD OF WALTER REED IS FIRED; TELLS CONGRESS THAT "MISTAKES WERE MADE."

UM--WELL--MOVING RIGHT ALONG--

-- DIDJA HEAR ABOUT THE FAKE U.S. ATTORNEY SCANDAL?

THE SPIN: EIGHT U.S. ATTORNEYS WERE FIRED FOR COMPLETELY LEGITIMATE PERFORMANCE-RELATED REASONS HAVING NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO WITH PARTISAN POLITICS.

YOU'D HAVE TO BE A TINFOIL-HAT CONSPIRACY NUT TO FIND ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS IN THAT!

WHY DO LIBERALS HATE CLEAN, NON-BEHEADED PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE WHAT THEY'RE TOLD?

REALITY: ATTORNEYS WERE BEING RANKED BY THEIR LOYALTY TO THE BUSH AGENDA; ALBERTO GONZALES NERVOUSLY ADMITS THAT "MISTAKES WERE MADE."

OH, ENOUGH ALREADY! WHY DO LIBERALS HATE PEOPLE WHO MAKE MISTAKES?

TO ERR IS HUMAN-- TO FORGIVE REPUBLICANS, DIVINE!

CERTAIN TO BE CONTINUED!

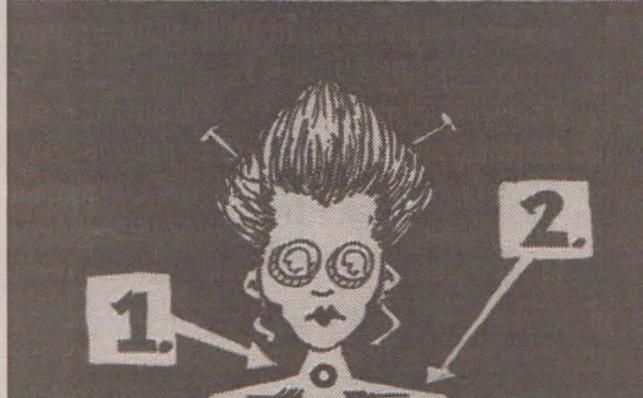
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EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT! DR. WILLIAM DEERFOOT KILLS HIS WIFE IN FRONT LAWN SHOOTOUT! HE SAYS SHE SHOT FIRST, BUT HE ESCAPES UNHARMED! DEERFOOT TO STAND TRIAL FOR MURDER! READ ALL ABOUT IT IN:

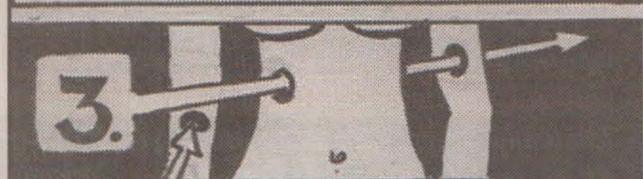
IA. Confidential

ALL INFO FROM THE SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 1913 ISSUES OF THE IOWA CITY DAILY-PRESS

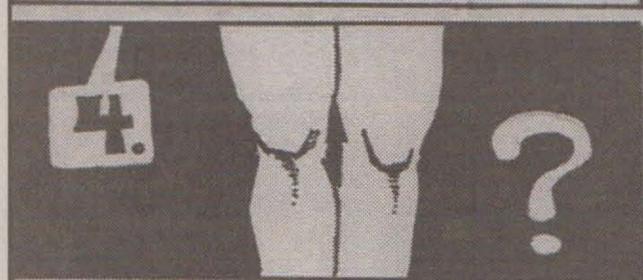
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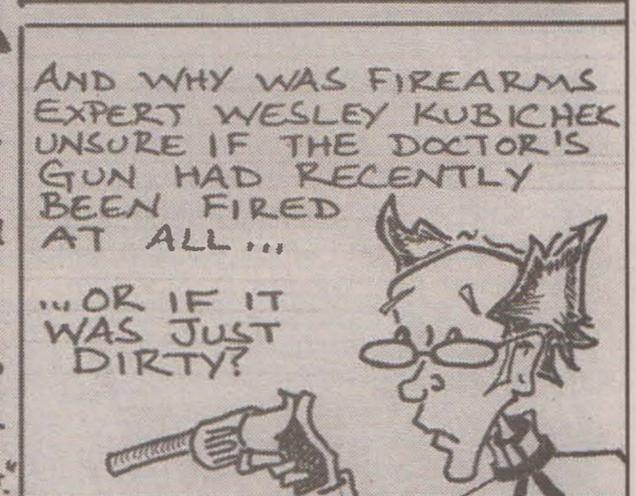
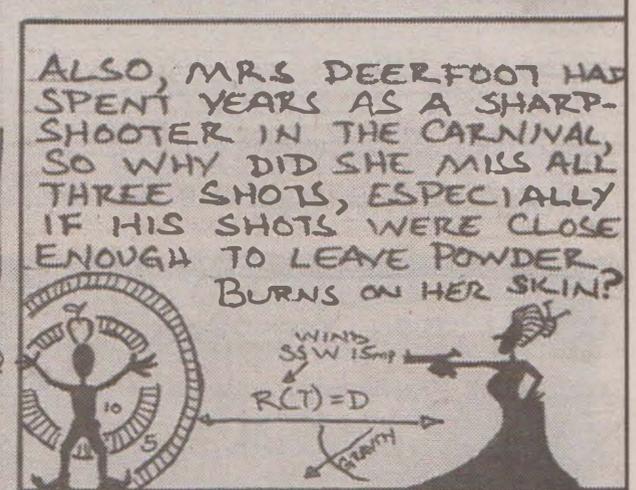
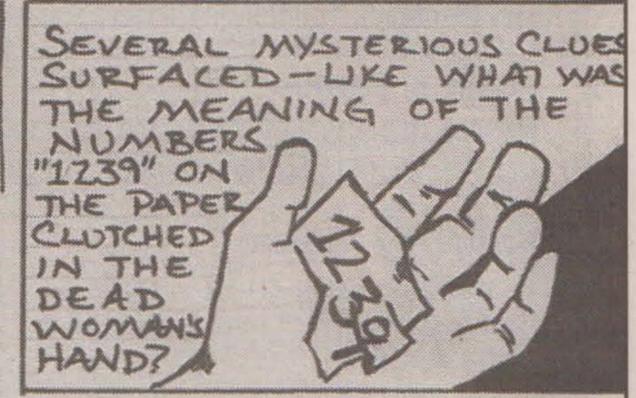
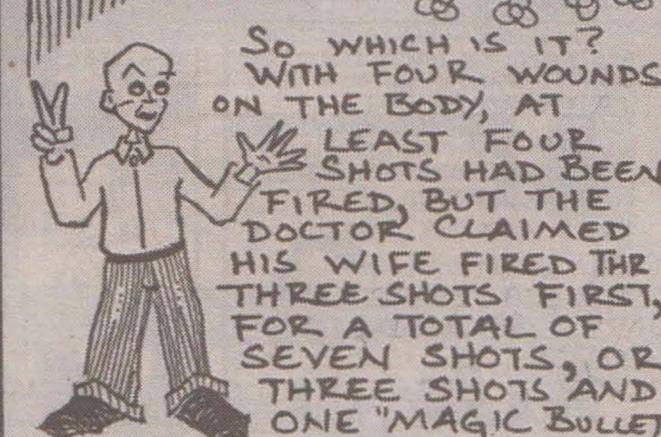
CORONER C.K. HURD FOUND FOUR WOUNDS:
1-THE FATAL SHOT TO THE NECK. THE BULLET RICOCHETED



OFF HER BROOCH, TRAVELLING STRAIGHT DOWN INTO MRS. DEERFOOT'S HEART.
2-INTO HER LEFT SHOULDER,



THROUGH BOTH LUNGS, AND STOPPING IN THE UPPER BACK:
3-SHOT TO LEFT SIDE, THROUGH BOTH LUNGS, OUT THE RIGHT SIDE, LODGING IN RIGHT ARM.
4-FLESH WOUND TO LEFT ARM.



AND THOSE WERE THE FACTS IN THE SENSATIONAL 1913 MURDER TRIAL OF DR. WILLIAM DEERFOOT. COUNTY ATTORNEY W.R. HART LED THE PROSECUTION, ARGUING THAT DEERFOOT KILLED HIS WIFE-SHOOTING HER IN COLD BLOOD AND THEN LEAVING A GUN BY HER SIDE TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE SHE SHOT FIRST. THE MOTIVE? TO MAKE WAY FOR HIS MISTRESS. THE HONORABLE O.A. BYINGTON LED THE PLEA FOR SELF-DEFENSE: DR. DEERFOOT WAS "A MAN WHO DID NOT SLAY TO BE A MURDERER, BUT TO PRESERVE HIS OWN LIFE." FOR A MONTH THE TRIAL WAS THE BIGGEST SHOW IN TOWN, AND IT WAS A HUGE CROWD THAT CRAMMED THE COURT ON OCTOBER 4TH, 1913, WHEN THE JURY RETURNED WITH THEIR VERDICT. TO BE CONTINUED...

Adam Witte teaches at Washington High School in Cedar Rapids, when he is not busy doodling and reading musty old newspapers. The information in this comic comes from the September and October, 1913 issues of the Iowa City Daily Press, and was gathered by an efficient and enticing reference librarian of the Iowa City Public Library.

Behold Leopold

Early Eco Warrior and his Iowan roots

Peruse any list of “famous Iowans,” and you’ll most likely see the usual suspects: Herbert Hoover, Bix Beiderbecke, Johnny Carson, John Wayne, Donna Reed, William “Buffalo Bill” Cody, George Gallup, Glenn Miller, Grant Wood, James Van Allen, etc. These are all justly recognized people. But it’s puzzling, even confounding, that one of our most significant Iowans almost never makes such a list: Aldo Leopold.

I hope you know that Aldo Leopold is one of the most important environmental thinkers and writers of the past century, even of all time. He’s one of the “parents” of our modern environmental consciousness, along with the likes of Rachel Carson.

Leopold is most well known for his book *A Sand County Almanac*, a foundational document in thinking about the human relationship with the natural world, and an excellent read. It is in this book that Leopold formulates his “land ethic”—the expansion of ethics to include nonhuman members of what he calls the “biotic community.”

Leopold posits that the land and all its flora and fauna are to be treated with ethical respect in and of themselves, without regard to human utility or economic value. As he says, “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.” Almost any environmental action today is founded on this bedrock belief.

Leopold is most often associated with Wisconsin and the West. Indeed, Sand County and the Leopold “shack” are in our neighboring state to the north-

east, and Leopold spent much of his career at The University of Wisconsin-Madison.

He virtually invented the discipline of wildlife management, was a founder of the Wilderness Society and was instrumental in establishing wilderness areas—and the idea of wilderness preservation—in the United States during the 20th century. What most Iowans don’t know is that he was born and raised right here in the Hawkeye State, on the banks of the Mississippi in Burlington.

Aldo was born to a well-educated, prominent and prosperous family in Burlington in 1887. The stately Leopold home stood (and still stands, as a private residence) on Prospect Hill, overlooking the mighty river. His grandfather and father were avid gardeners and hunters.

Much of Aldo’s childhood was spent exploring the river’s bluffs and banks, as well as the extensive floodplain of marshes, meadows and timber across the river on the Illinois side.

Aldo combined his exploration of the outdoors with his growing artistic ability and penchant for close observation, creating many sketches of local natural landscapes and cataloging birds. As he advanced through the Burlington school system, he distinguished himself by his great talents in the scientific method, plant and animal biology, and writing.

Aldo’s father Carl was an instinctual conservationist before such a concept existed. During this time, as the 19th century turned toward the 20th, the Industrial Revolution and the swift settlement of the Midwest and West continued at breakneck speed. On the Mississippi, commerce and resource extraction were increasing before father and son’s very eyes with sawmills up and down the mighty stream. With unregulated hunting, migratory waterfowl populations declined rapidly during Aldo’s childhood. His father observed these environmental changes and voluntarily engaged in a conservation ethic, limiting his hunting hours, making personal bag limits, stopping hunting certain species altogether, and so forth.

Clearly, Aldo Leopold’s formative years in Iowa were foundational to the environmental perspective for which he became world-re-

nowned and to which we owe our contemporary consciousness about the natural world.

So why don’t we speak of him in the same breath as Herbert Hoover and Donna Reed?

Hopefully, that lack of recognition is changing. In 1987, the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture was created at Iowa State University. But more recently, an intrepid group of Burlingtonians has formed the Leopold Heritage Group.

In the last few years, they have organized a number of events in the Burlington area to promote this river city’s famous son—and the Leopold name in general as it relates to the environment and conservation. (Aldo’s brother Frederick, who remained in Burlington, was an important conservationist in his own right.) Currently, the Group is spearheading an effort to have April declared Aldo Leopold Month in Iowa.

April, of course, is the month when we celebrate Earth Day. So this month, I encourage you to reconnect with our world-renowned native-son conservationist and environmentalist, Aldo Leopold.

Read *A Sand County Almanac*. If you’ve read it before, read it again. It’s worth reading every year. Read Curt Meine’s wonderful biography of Leopold.

But most importantly this Earth Day/Month, please do as Aldo would do. Love the land, treat it with respect and care, and honor it in an ethical way, in the way that it rightly deserves. Aldo learned to do that right here in Iowa, and we should not only be proud of that, but we should also follow his visionary lead.

If you’re interested in getting involved with the Leopold Heritage Group, contact Jerry and Lois Rigdon at ledgerguy@lisco.com.

Thomas Dean founded and directs the Iowa Project on Place Studies at The University of Iowa and teaches courses on society, place and the natural world for the UI Leisure Studies and Literature, Science and the Arts programs. Last year he gave a library talk on Aldo Leopold for Humanities Iowa in Burlington, and that was pretty intimidating.



Dear Senator Harkin . . .

Through your years of public service you have shown that you have the best interests of Iowa and the Nation at heart. This year, with your party in control of both houses of congress during consideration of the Farm Bill in 15 years, and you at the helm of the Senate Agriculture Committee, you are in a very strong position to steer our nation's food system (and the \$300 billion Farm Bill) down a healthier and more sustainable road.

I'm not telling you anything you don't already know here, but our subsidy system is way out of whack. Subsidies supported just 39 percent of farms in 2003, with the bulk of the commodity payments going to a very small number of the very largest farms. Contrary to popular belief, subsidies are not helping the small, or even medium farmer. Meanwhile, more and more farm families are forced to take jobs off the farm in order to pay the bills and insure their kids.

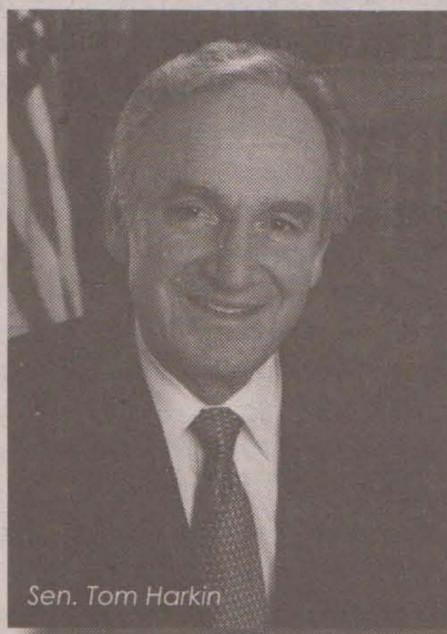
Farmland is disappearing at the rate of 1.2 million acres year. Farmers over age 65 outnumber farmers under age 35 by more than two-to-one. Meanwhile, our population recently passed the 300 million milestone. There is a very simple formula that should concern us here: no farms + no farmers = no food.

Of course, we could simply rely on foreign sources of food, but look where our reliance on foreign oil has gotten us.

And speaking of oil, recent market volatility, where we see oil prices passing \$70 per barrel, are taking a huge bite out of the farmers' bottom line in an agricultural system that is increasingly dependent on petroleum not just for powering farm equipment, but for fertilizer, packaging, shipping and storage. Ethanol is one proposed solution, and it may or may not help in the future, but one thing it is doing now is driving up

the price of corn, which in turn drives up the cost of feed for livestock, all the while enticing more farmers to plant more corn.

This corn is often being planted on land that grew corn the previous year, as well, a method called "corn-on-corn planting" that seriously depletes the soil of nitrogen, requiring more fertil-



Sen. Tom Harkin

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izer, and we're back to the oil issue again. One fifth of all U.S. energy use goes into our food system.

And meanwhile, in the "agricultural" state of Iowa, we import about 95 percent of our food, and it travels an average of 1400 miles to get here. We lead the nation, perhaps the world, in hog, corn and egg production, but we can't feed ourselves. Our current model of an agricultural system - devoid of diversity, losing real estate, subsidizing wealthy corporate land barons and addicted to oil - is wholly unsustainable.

But Senator, you are in a unique position to take us in a new direction. The new Farm Bill could foster local and regional food systems, reducing oil consumption and providing fresher food while keeping dollars in the communities. You could strengthen the USDA rural development programs, especially for housing, water and telecommunications.

You can attack the causes of rural poverty by spurring investment by *local* entrepreneurs through savings incentives for families living and working in rural areas. You can significantly increase funding for working lands conservation programs. You can steer the subsidies system so that it rewards sustainable methods rather than overproduction. You can help make people consider not just the price of food but the cost of food, as well.

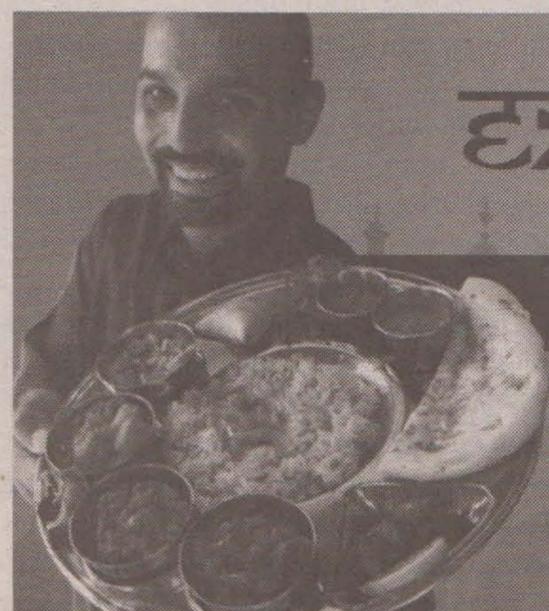
All over Iowa, and all over the country, there are people standing ready to make our farm system better. Many are already diving in and doing it themselves. The shifting tide - toward local, sustainable food - is undeniable, and this Farm Bill is the floodgate.

Senator Harkin, if you need any help at all in making this a reality, or if you are in need of further information on the strength of the sustainable food movement, I and millions more stand ready to help.

Yours very truly,
Kurt M. Friese
Iowa City

lv

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.



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CARRY OUT OR LIMITED CAMPUS DELIVERY AREA

I met Renée in Charlottesville, Va., when we were both 23,” Rob Sheffield writes. “When the bartender at the Eastern Standard put on a tape, Big Star’s ‘Radio City,’ she was the only other person in the room to perk up. So we drank bourbon and talked about music.”

The tall, skinny, geeky grad student soon found himself at her doorstep, sputtering, “I don’t know what your type is. I don’t know what your deal is. I don’t even know if you have a boyfriend. I know I like you and I want to be in your life, that’s it, and if you have any room for a boyfriend, I would like to be your boyfriend, and if you don’t have any room, I would like to be your friend. Any room you have for me in your life is great.”

Before long, he was making her mix tapes, a rite of passage shared by most music-obsessed lovers. Almost as quickly, she reciprocated.

Love Is a Mix Tape (Crown) is a new memoir by Sheffield, whose smart, witty “Pop Life” music column is one of the saving graces of *Rolling Stone* magazine. Chronicling his romance with fellow rock critic Renée Crist, a woman I knew, Sheffield’s book is a moving meditation on love and loss—and the (musical) ties that bind us.

“Before I met her, I was just another hermit wolfboy, scared of life, hiding in my room with my records and my fanzines,” Sheffield writes. “Suddenly, I got all tangled up in this girl’s noisy, juicy, sparkly life.”

A noisy, juicy, and sparkly life, yes—but a brief one.

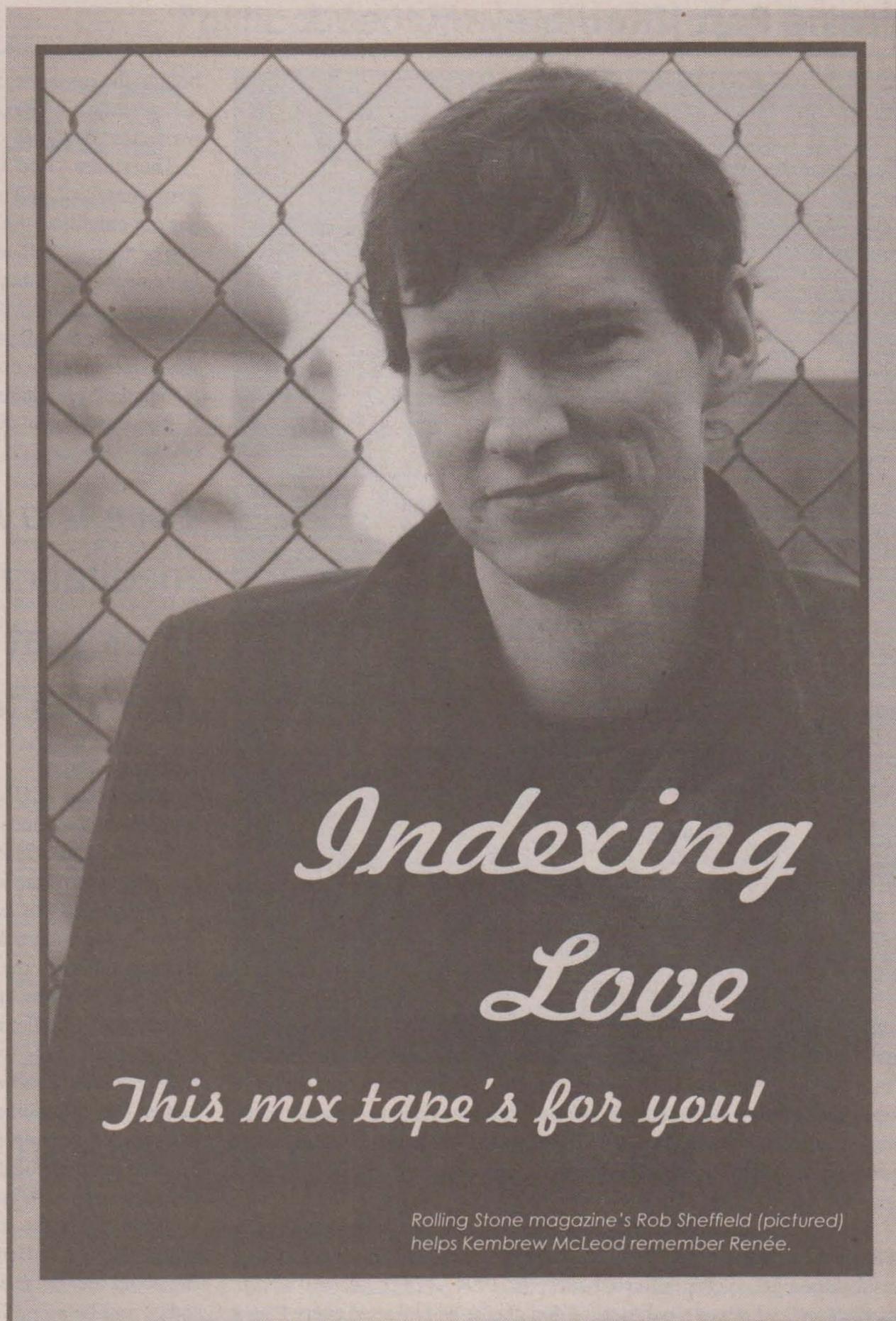
“Renée died on May 11, 1997, very suddenly and unexpectedly, at home with me, of a pulmonary embolism. She was 31. She’s buried in Pulaski County, Va., on the side of a hill, next to the Wal-Mart.”

Until that year, I never had a friend who died. Renée passed away about two years after I left Charlottesville, where we both worked at Plan 9 Records.

I still remember the day she joined our motley crew of record store clerks. Her reputation as a rock critic and an all around kick-ass woman preceded her, and needless to say, we were stoked to be in Renée’s presence. Her music writing provides evidence of the “lion-hearted take-charge southern gal” Sheffield depicts. In the *SPIN Alternative Record Guide*, for instance, she describes Marshall Crenshaw’s debut album this way: “he longs for a ‘Cynical Girl,’ doesn’t have any interest in ‘The Usual Thing,’ and promises to take his pick ‘Rockin’ Around in NYC.” She adds, “Sign me up.”

In many ways, though, *Love Is a Mix Tape* cheats death. It transforms their relationship into a well wrought, beautifully written work of art—offering it back to the world for safe keeping.

The book opens years later with Sheffield listening to a cassette, in a different apartment, a different town.



Rolling Stone magazine's Rob Sheffield (pictured) helps Kembrew McLeod remember Renée.

“This mix tape is just another piece of useless junk that Renée left behind. A category that I guess includes myself.”

At the beginning of the first chapter, and in every chapter, Sheffield lists the songs on an old mix tape. The melodies, the lyrics—even the way the songs are ordered—help him remember.

“[T]his is the tape that changed everything,” he writes about the first mix he gave her. “Everything in my life comes directly from this Maxell XLII crush tape, made on October 10, 1989, for Renée.”

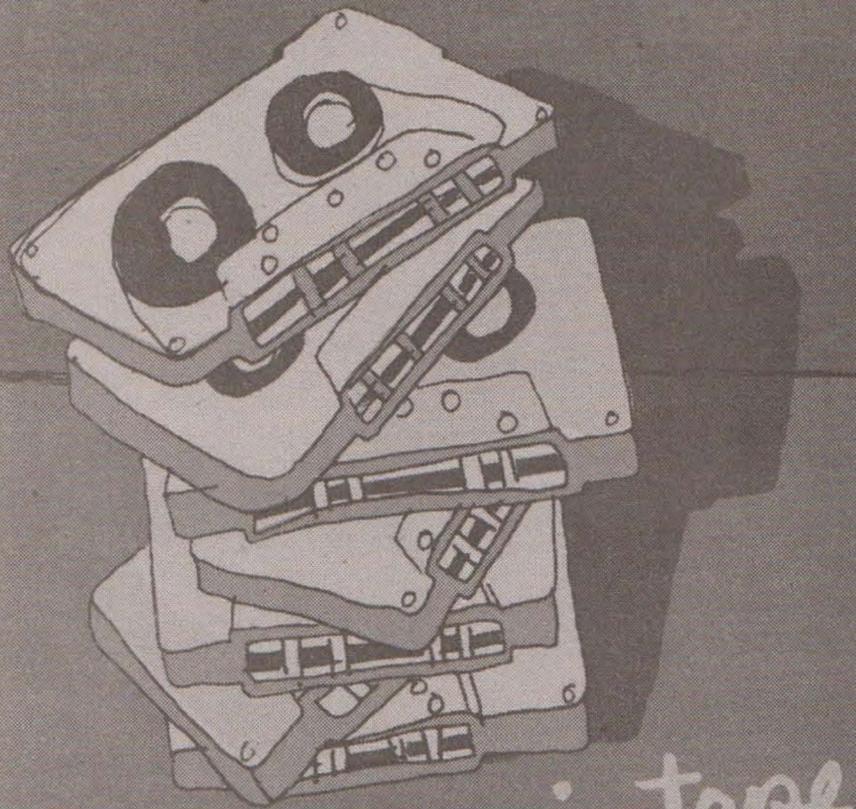
One of the book’s strengths is its attentiveness to the way recorded music has an uncanny ability to archive our memories. It is this conceit that helps organize the book, and though it

largely unfolds chronologically, it is also a bricolage.

“Walter Benjamin, in his prescient 1923 essay ‘One Way Street,’ said a book was an outdated means of communication between two boxes of index cards,” Sheffield writes. “One professor goes through books, looking for tasty bits he can copy onto index cards. Then he types his index cards up into a book, so other professors can go through it can copy tasty bits onto their own index cards. Benjamin’s joke was: Why not just sell the index cards? I guess that’s why we trade mix tapes.”

Anyone familiar with Sheffield’s writing knows that he swims pop culture. He seamlessly integrates these references into his music criticism and, in the case of this book, his own life.

"No rock critic—living or dead, American or otherwise—has ever written about pop music with the evocative, hyper-poetic perfectitude of Rob Sheffield. *Love is a Mix Tape* is the happiest, saddest, greatest book about rock n' roll that I've ever experienced."
 —Chuck Klosterman, bestselling author of *Fargo Rock City*, *Sex, Drugs, and Cocoa Puffs*, and *Killing Yourself to Live*



love is a mix tape
 Life and Loss,
 One Song at a Time
 Rob Sheffield

Take the following story: "One day we were driving around in her 1978 Chrysler LeBaron and Gladys Knight's 'Midnight Train to Georgia' came on the radio. Renée sang lead, while I sang the Pips' backup routine. She's leavin! Leavin' on the midnight train! Woo woo! A superstar but he didn't get far!"

As an homage to Sheffield's love of pop culture-drenched analogies, I'll share a memory of Renée, a memory embedded in an infectious, reddish-orange colored compact disc. In 1994, TLC's second album, *CrazySexyCool*, was a much-needed pop plague that infected every Plan 9 employee not completely poisoned by elitist indie sensibilities. I remember our resident punk rocker raised eyebrows among said elitists when she

bought the cassingle of "Creep." I think she identified with TLC member T-Boz (the cool one), who was tall and fit and skinny, just like Plan 9's own punk rock girl.

The slinky "Red Light Special" was the next single released from *CrazySexyCool*, and my red hot lady friend from Louisiana confided that she not only liked the song, she had a crush on Chilli (the sexy one). The two of them—Chilli and my friend—both had innocent-looking exteriors, but you could tell they were bad *bad* girls.

In my own mind, Renée was Lisa "Left Eye" Lopez (the crazy one). Left Eye, some of you might recall, was a short spunky singer/rapper who once one-upped Jim Morrison by trying to light her boyfriend on fire (football player Andre Risen).

Renée was also short and spunky, and even though she was a fire-cracker, she wasn't *burn-down-the-house-with-flaming-sneakers* nuts.

Love is a Mix Tape isn't just a meditation on one woman—it's a book that also mourns the loss of a special moment in time.

Just crazy-fun.

When I hear TLC's *CrazySexyCool* or even just see that album cover, I think about that time in my life—and I remember Renée.

Love Is a Mix Tape isn't just a meditation on one woman—it's a book that also mouns the loss of a special moment in time.

"Something was happening in '90s music that isn't happening *anywhere* in pop culture these days, with women making noise in public ways that seem distant now."

"It was an open time, full of possibilities, changes we thought were permanent," Sheffield writes. "It seemed inconceivable that things would ever go back to the way they were in the '80s, when monsters were running the country and women were only allowed to play bass in indie-rock bands. The '90s moment has been stomped over so completely, it's hard to imagine it ever happened, much less that it lasted five, six, seven years."

Most people would point to the iconic '60s when making such a celebratory statement, but not Rob. Or Renée.

"I remember the summer of 1996, at a drunken wedding with one of my professors, a Hendrix-freak baby boomer, when he was complaining about the 'bullet-in-the-head rock and roll' the kids were listening to today, and he asked Renée, 'What does rock and roll have today that it didn't have in the '60s?'"

MIX TAPE continued on page 22

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CAN'T WAIT TO CAUCUS?

Iowa's polity strongly influences the future of party candidates in presidential election cycles. We have relied on that prominence since 1976, when the Democratic Party shifted its state caucus ahead of other state primaries thus earning a "first-in-the-nation" status. But don't rest your heart so easily on the idea Iowa has the best polity in the land, or that the sum of Iowa's human capital will somehow keep us up front, as is. Iowa will inevitably drift from that prominence if we fail to defeat cynicism du jour. Caucusing is a moral responsibility we have to maintain.

For me, 2004 election images such as the small town conversation near inanity. And I can guarantee typical media coverage will once again emboss T.V. screens with the cute old guy in a green mesh hat with crisp, wife-ironed, blue bib overalls on, who's talkin' with his buddies over burnt hash browns and oily eggs. In that typical diner scenario, and in some strange Amway approach, a big-shot politician makes an entrance and joins in communion with the common.

The old-timers and upstarts, allegedly surprised by a politician's grand entrance, are left with big-shot's heart felt promises, held in check by the American Gothic. But you and I know the rest of the nation hardly looks like this, and for that matter, the rest of a world doesn't either. We continually drag around with our government policy and private industry.

Anyone with at least one good eye, or ear, knows that 2008 is more about money candidates raise over anything else. And that's a good foundation for a whole lot of cynicism. There is no room for hope, heart, community and faith in a democratic process, or a politician, who aspires to lead our globalistic "democracy." Their mouth is where the money is.

To further antagonize our cynicism, an ABC News Web site from March 2006 (that neatly organizes announced candidates on a simple number rating system) has already figured your choice out ahead of you. The same ABC News "Political Unit," that conducts the "Invisible Primary," predicted Sen. Kerry and Sen. Edwards would be the democrats' pick for '04, back in 2002, respectively—and on the same ticket. They were right.

This time around, it looks to be Clinton v. McCain.

The Unit claims their measurements are not mathematical, but "geometric," and "measure past, present and future simultaneously." Granted this crystal ball precludes our man Obama—who will probably lose the nomination anyway.

While the Unit steps back and claims the race is always wide open, a few paragraphs down

they declare that, "The candidate who has raised the most money by the time of the Iowa caucuses wins the nomination."

That's a funny approach. What's more cynical than placing your bets on money as the message?

But MONEY should not take precedent over believing, hope, community and ideas. That's why we have an extremely personal and then local process, in that order: stringent, close and personal.

Iowa's unique nature of caucusing was the impetus for the New York Times stories about the process itself in 1972, which in turn lent national attention and momentum to shift our state process ahead of many others. How and why Iowans' vote should not only counter big money, it should go beyond being contrarian for contrarian's sake. The spirit of our statewide and national polity is at stake.

I take from Jacques Derrida that hope and faith are the greatest endowments of our human

We face a two-headed monster: money and media

experience. Since voting is a decision based on some level of judgment, and for some, one more of identity, decision is an act of faith because the final outcome is not known.

Nor can outcomes truly be known in the near future. Knowing such would undermine what it means to be mortal, a terminally finite thing that our biology alone unifies.

We face a two-headed monster: money and media. Even if major media has increasingly preempted the undetermined future ahead of us, its lack of faith in individual voters is our greatest asset.

Their role in the process is asymmetrical to an extreme, and this is a foundation for vigilant hope, not the cynicism that powers their projects. Hold fast with faith in your candidate, overcome cynicism and the democracy will inevitably spin back to our hands.

For the nihilist in us all, existence precedes essence, and by acknowledging each others' existence in a meaningful way, we can overcome

the abuse of essentialism and its hyper-real characterizations we all fall victim to. However, to author a blog and to acknowledge your neighbor are two different things.

One might be inclined to think the blogosphere as revolutionary media [emphasis on me], but it's only one part of a much larger, quicker organism hinged against faith and belief.

Hope requires a commitment in the face-to-face encounter's unknown: a true personal risk of feeling.

Do you think conditions that gave the president his support have gone away? Can we take a moment to look at why we support a candidate in the first place and what brings us together? Not even catastrophic wars seem to do the trick, and if so, then only for a moment.

Coming together has to happen in the most regular ways—we create hope and humility for each other in that way. We need a gathering instead of a net full of blogs. Before the street, it starts with our hearts.

To overcome this period of exquisite alienation dividing us into the false commons of our time, we need to face down the Candyland dream that powers our hyper-reality, but that starts with you and me.

Blogs read to me only as a symptom of apathy concealed as openness. Where's the author, in the flesh? Your neighbor is typing away their emotions, when they could be telling you at an event, to your face.

As it is, and as our own Gov. Vilsack can attest to, campaigning is all about the money. So we must become the decider of faith-based actions such as voting and neighboring when we elect a sovereign.

Many forms of contemporary essentialism, besides blog communities, lend to aesthetic warfare, and it has already begun by the configuration of John Edwards as "faggot" by that sweet, hate-filled bitch, Ann Coulter, who uses the reality of emotion and concealed alienation to unify polity.

Those who can truly care for emotion are those best to become agents of hope, thus stewards of our desperate and divided community. In the case of Coulter, she's equivalent in a way to the snarky and juvenile antics of the Daily Show, whose hope remains unseen.

Before it is sold back to us exclusively as nostalgia, let's reclaim our community by starting with our hijacked and delusional selves, then come together and generate real hope. **lv**

Adam Staley Groves is a native Cedar Rapiidian, currently a graduate student studying media philosophy at the European Graduate School.

LV Earth Day picks

Started in 1970 by founding members of the non-profit Earth Day Network, Earth Day now exists as a holiday under the direction of the Environmental Protection Agency.

“Earth Day is a time to celebrate gains we have made and create new visions to accelerate environmental progress. Earth Day is a time to unite around new actions,” says the government-run Web site, Earthday.gov.

The Earth Day Network, however, demands a little more action than simply celebrating gains made by the EPA since the holiday’s inception. This year, they put out a call for action against Climate Change.

“Join Earth Day on [Capitol] Hill and don’t take no for an answer,” shouts Earthdaynetwork.org. “We demand a drastic cut in greenhouse gas emissions – 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.”

Celebrating Earth Day in Iowa lies somewhere in between rejoicing in the EPA’s efforts and marching on Washington. Check out LV’s Earth Day picks, and why not celebrate by planting a tree, too?

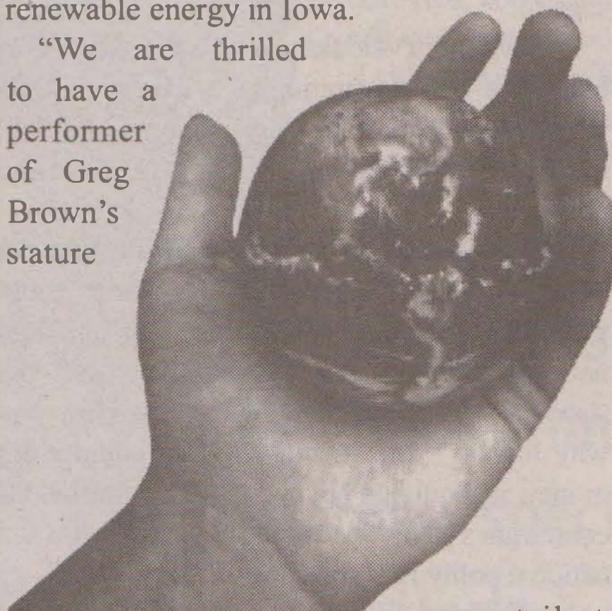
CLEAN FUEL CAR SHOW/ GREG BROWN CONCERT

Sponsored by I-Renew, the non-profit Iowa Renewable Energy Association, Greg Brown will perform a benefit show at the Englert Theatre after the Car Show displays the latest in clean-energy technology: Bio-fuel cars, E-85 ethanol cars and electric hybrids will line Washington Street.

The Clean Fuel Car Show outside the

Englert is free and open to the public, while entrance to the show costs \$26 per ticket or \$50 for a ticket and membership to I-Renew, a value of \$76. The concert’s proceeds go to I-Renew to support their pursuit of renewable energy in Iowa.

“We are thrilled to have a performer of Greg Brown’s stature



contribute his talent to ensure I-Renew’s ability in promote renewable energy for Iowa,” said I-Renew’s Executive Director Michelle Kenyon Brown.

And in the spirit of renewable resources, I-Renew’s mobile 1,000-watt solar generator, the Solar-Traveler, is providing the power to bring the show to “light.”

For more details on I-Renew, go to irenew.org.

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY FOR IOWA

Some Earth Day events call for action—others, for reflection. The Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center is sponsoring a dinner-and-

a-lecture event on Earth Day from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at their retreat center at 120 East Boyson Road, Hiawatha, Iowa.

Dinner will feature local, organically grown produce to be followed by a talk from Cedar Rapids’ Michael Richards, founder and president of Soyawax International, also based in Cedar Rapids.

Bring your sustainable business questions to dine and whine about the harm chemicals do to this land on which we tread. Then tread the 70 acres of nature to find your inner Earth Day peace—perhaps you’ll “find” yourself in the Prairiewoods’ Labyrinth!

ORGANIC ENDURATHON

To make up for 6,000 calories lost by the body, one would have to consume 11 Big Macs or 200 carrots. Steve Shriver, founder of Cedar Rapids-based Eco Lips Organic Lip Balm, will be losing at least 6,000 calories daily from April 12th through April 22nd—but he’d prefer the carrots...as long as they’re organic, that is.

Shriver is running 260-mi. across Iowa to promote consuming organic products and celebrating Earth Day, ending in Iowa City, according to the route map on Organicendurathon.com.

“Organic foods have 30 percent more antioxidants than conventional foods, and contain higher levels of nutrients,” Shriver told LV via email, “so I have no doubt in my mind I will be properly fueled for this endeavor.”

Shriver said running allows him to get the best of Mother Nature’s sights and sounds, which will be the fringe benefits to promoting organics in celebration of Earth Day. Visit OrganicEndurathon.com to learn more. **lv**

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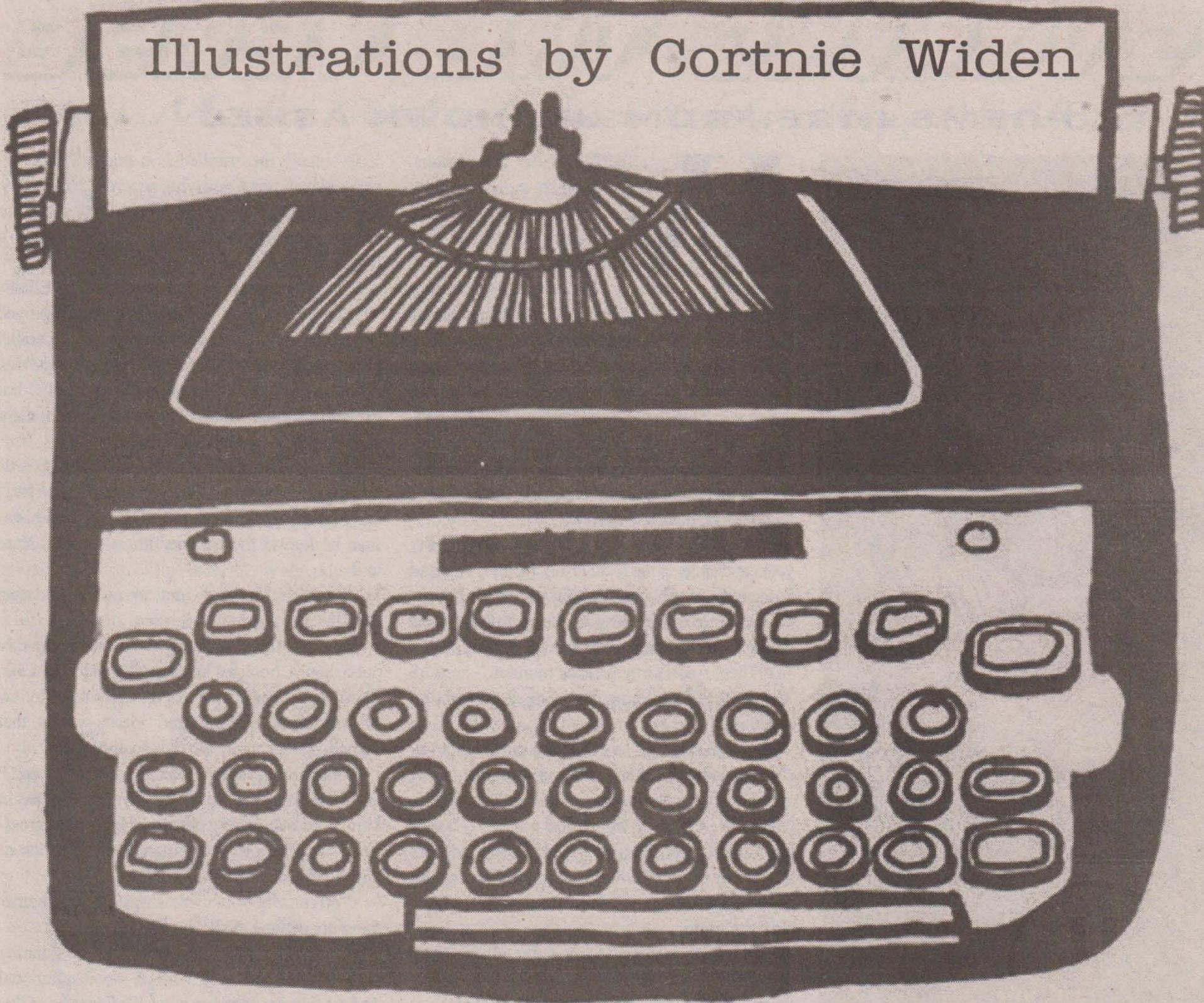
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Illustrations by Cortnie Widen



Everyday Poetry

It is easy to walk down the sidewalks and not see the cracks but the pebbles glistening in the cement. Sometimes there is quartz, inextricable and so un-touchably lovely. In the grocery, small local, olfactory glands swell in relish of grinding coffee, wet squash and aprons (the chocolatesmell is locked in a glass case). Wine descriptions read like paperback rear-covers, if properly written.

I find the word mouthfeel.
I buy the wine.
I say the word.

And herbs. Green that pop sting readily grow buds inducing panic or soft chamomilic delirium. The path does not end on passed tunnels of open signs,

some neon soft-glow, others painted, handwork to make simple russet flowers, the Book Shop says on the inside, "not open," challenging laws of business physics, never closed.

Churches, abandoned by architects, arches to open air, numerous few pigeons. Angle now sharply, into the used texts, houses, hidden shelves kneeling to read titles only for that prayer.

Anais Nin, Gertrude Stein, yelling about flowers sulking on gray matter. Exit wishes seep in for a moving sidewalk, an airport without planes, the convenience instead of very fast submarines, cheap tickets, no searches, easy pressurizing. The dreams of afternoon

degenerate into the beautiful. The temperature now is a vacuum, as in sleep. Imbued sense collapses and the two-dimensional begins. The lines are circles, overlap intersect and rotate wavelengths of color, but they are movie sets, nothing behind them but paper coffee cups. As the lighting is dimmed I look for the director, he is not here. Somehow the full-land will return. **lv**

Christina A. Patramanis is a free-lance artist currently residing in Iowa City. Her artistic endeavors include theatre, poetry, short fiction and spinning UK hard house on vinyl. Today her favorite words are names: Anais Nin, Praga Khan.

STOKING THE VERSE

POEMS RISE FROM UNKNOWN ASHES



Cortnie Widen is a local artist/screen printer as well as owner and operator of the boutique, *White Rabbit* located in the Hall Mall. After years of consigning her own work at local stores, she noticed the need for a store that focused on locally made art and apparel. Everything sold at *White Rabbit* is handcrafted by local artists and is 100 percent DIY. Visit *White Rabbit* on myspace www.myspace.com/123394102 or in person at the Hall Mall at 114 1/2 E. College St.

Without the UI Writers' Workshop, Iowa City might never beguile writers to live in this Midwestern town. Established poets' names appear in the IC phonebook, and poets not yet associated with publishing houses are overlooked.

"Here, lift it," said Justin Cox of his backpack, a poet visible only on the stage and not within the pages. This feat caused concern that the conversation would be on geology, not writing, until Cox began extracting several books from the parcel, including Galway Kinnell's, *The Book of Nightmares*, a current favorite.

The 26-year-old has lived in Iowa City for six years and sings in the local hip-hop band, The Bad Fathers. Currently constructing a thematic collection on "racing," his love of literature began at a young age and writing developed naturally.

"There wasn't any genesis moment," he said. "As early as I can remember, I liked to read [everything]."

Through what he terms "duration," Cox's poetry has progressed over time to become, as he states it, "more narrative, more formal," and he is presently examining the "translation of requiem into sonnet." While Cox's poetry often adheres to form or contains strong elements of meter and sophisticated rhyme, it sometimes deviates from strict structure.

"I think it's a good idea to write all the time, and do them all," he says of working with poetic forms. And, Cox adds, "Publication context determines so much of what is or isn't poetry."

A shining element in Cox's work is his ability to impart a raw sense of experience to the reader, perhaps because he works to fully realize the concept of "essential song." His ongoing absorption of eclectic art forms aids this rich poetic texture—he says he "spent almost an entire evening listening to Eskimo hunting songs."

He says his writing and personal trajectory is infinite growth.

"I'm learning more about the possibilities of being a human being," Cox explains. "The sense of infallible conscience has really left me."

Another poet-unknown teaches as a substitute with the Iowa City Community School District. Evan Hartley's poetic beginning was quite different from Cox's.

Hartley, 25, has traveled extensively. Passport stamps include Venice, Nice and Saudi Arabia—a brief childhood home. High school poetry curriculum did not impress him, and he began college as a computer science major.

Eventually he enrolled in a poetry course instructed by Chris Cook who, according to Hartley, "forced us to also write poetry and talk about our own poems." His scholastic path then veered to a double major in English and education.

His initial piece, an imitation of T.S. Elliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," employed Alex from, *A Clockwork Orange*, as a parallel character to Prufrock. Hartley explains that Alex is "seemingly the opposite of the old man" but exudes a similar "tone of desperation and silent suffering."

Many poems later, Hartley still springboards his work by finding "someplace outside of [the] self to start with." While desiring formal publication, he knows the industry has a certain nature to it.

"I think it's elitist—not in an intimidating way."

Through Argentos Press, he has independently published a book of poems, *Tertiary Thinking*. These seven poems present a darkly tinged view of previously romanticized ideas—works that verbally scrape away the old idealist patina.

Commenting on his poem, "All Roads Lead," an ironic examination of his own experience in Venice, he deems it "redemptive in its own grossness." But, one of the transcendent qualities of writing is transmuting a feeling.

"You can take your cynicism and make it something not cynical at all," he tells us.

Not all underground poets thrive on spinning cynicism. IC-bom Lee Wathen has inspirational dreams living within her head. The dreams of this 26-year-old proprietor of Cedar Rapids' Abundant Earth Massage include "eating grits with cheese in a Buddy Holly suit." She says she extracts poetry from journaling, dreams and life where, she exclaims, "everything will turn itself into art."

A prose-poet and fiction writer, her artistic drive grew playfully out of creative, group media projects with her cousins. Later, she wrote science fiction stories in 3rd grade. At one time her poetry was subjected to copious editing and symbolic intent.

Now she says, "I've stopped a lot of consciousness [in symbolism]." That ceased "when I stopped being caught up in product. It's a strange word to use, but it's true. I really organically kind of let go of being some really prolific, graying man on a top of a mountain writing on stone tablets."

Though in her shared writing her hopes surround "leaving a mark." Would she like to be published? Yes, but conditionally.

Wathen urges: "I would never want to produce a piece of pop-print." **lv**

DIGITAL VISCERA

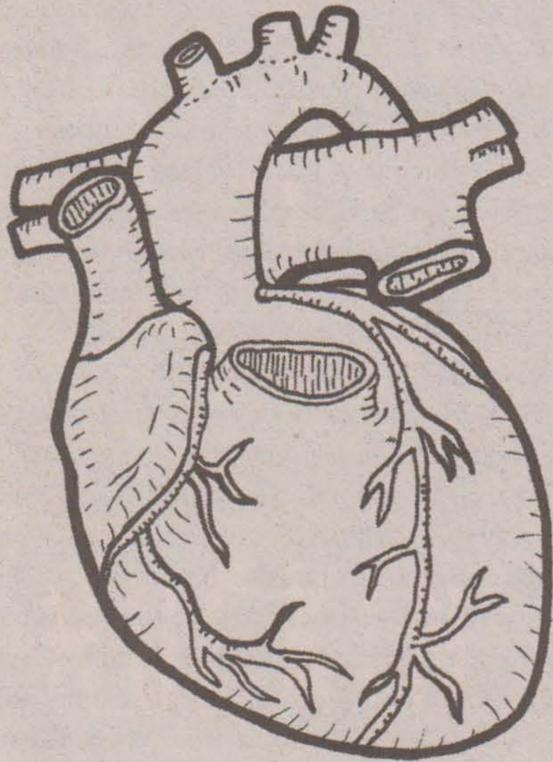
New Media Poetics gives technology libelblood

At first the term seems simple, New Media Poetics (NMP), but an initiate to NMP needs some contextual definition. So how is this literary handle new—DVD-like new or Blu-ray kind of new?

Well, it turns out, it's sort of 8-track new.

NMP first showed its typeface among literary analyses of the 1970s. Like Jesus, it remained in relative oblivion for about 30 years, until Loss Pequeño Glazier published his 2002 book *Digital Poetics: The Making of E-Poetries*, when the movement gained steam.

Since then NMP has gained popularity in both discussion and creation. It is easy to find interactive sites online such as www.poemsthatgo.com, or scholarly, contemporary essays in a collection such as *New Media Poetics*



— *Contexts, Technotexts, and Theories* (2006), edited by Adalaide Morris and Thomas Swiss.

The term has been brought into the Now, but what is the new media? Interestingly, the nature of that new, is also ancient.

A “medium,” in the NMP sense, is any material, whether made out of clay, or light and electricity, used to form a different product.

The plural is of course media, and thus, new media poetics, pretty much means that everything we can get our hands on can be used in conjunction with our poetry.

As the definition of “poetry” often ends up dirty and personal, it will so here remain. While media these days consists of computers, light installations and Bose speakers, thousands of years ago it was papyrus, red-dying

henna and natural amphitheatres.

Any poetry that took advantage of these, then current, mediums would be akin to today's NMP. On a more recent timeline, NMP is a stepchild to “concrete poetry” which popped up in the '60s, largely consisting of shapes made out of words. Today the term leads to fun and exciting computer generated, often interactive sites, sensationalized by titles such as “floating sushi.”

Initial pros of NMP include animation, with candy-colored progressions and visually representational images. An example can be experienced in Thomas Swiss' web-based poem, “Genius,” www.differenceofone.com/genius/genius.html, in which, with strobe-like jerkiness, a rotating shirtless man with fat spilling over his trousers illuminates the poetic line, “and something on love handles.”

Many authors also create interactive environments, where the reader/viewer can control the word progression, speed or image in the poem. It is endlessly entertaining to discover shiny, morbid, playful pieces, made with purposeful image display: a way to not just read or hear the authors' thoughts but also to see them.

There are some constraints to this new-fangled motion poetry - the five senses.

A person can only be fully aware of one thing at a time, with the exception maybe, maybe, of a Shaolin Monk. In other words, while you're watching the rotating fat dude, you aren't thinking about the next line of poetry. (Watch the poem, see if you can remember the words that come after “love handles.”)

Basically, by using more media, the reader understands less of the poem at once.

Nonetheless, making and viewing NMP is a worthwhile endeavor. The seemingly infinite digital databases of graphics can be used to form a poetic habitat of pop-cultural contexts.

Whether the kitschy '50s housewifery style, soft-porn sound of the '70s, or the matte olive-green of the '30s is needed, the poet can instantly insert textual tone.

Plus the sensory advantages, sound vibrations, techno lights or electromagnetic pulses can, with some consideration, add physical symbolism. These additions may funnel the viewers' focus, forcing deeper concentration than what could occur with simple words on a page.

This said, to fully attempt a personal NMP experience, check out the Web sites and find out how you see poetry. **IV**

from *Synesthesia, she said*

Then there are the mustard seeds,
which bring to mind
the sound of a Black cat, the fizzle
it makes the moment before bursting.
I imagine a field of impending explosions
and I can't help but think of a mustard
seed
in fast-forward,
its shell about to burst with
neon green sunlight.

— Lee Wathen

While taking out the trash

I find a dollar bill.
I am nervous.

— Justin Cox

Heidegger Under Bluebirds

I read once, somewhere that
anxiety is the one true human emotion.
Who would have written that?
Bukowski – was it you, you son of a bitch?
No. If I imagine asking you the question,
'what is the one true human emotion?'
I'm sure that you wouldn't answer,
but you'd write a god-damn
poem about it,
wouldn't you?

And if you did answer you would spit
it right back at me.
You would bark:
Desperation,
loneliness,
insanity,
or some sort of mutant – violent ennui.

— Evan Hartley

Falling for the Church

Benjamin Black *Christine Falls*

You've heard of John Banville, right? The Irish guy who's written novels depicting the lives of Kepler and Copernicus, getting reviews that compared him to the finest writers in the English language?

The same critics who loved the earlier novels went completely insane over *Ghosts* and *The Book of Evidence*. His 2005 novel, *The Sea*, won the Mann Booker Prize. I've tried so hard to like the Banville oeuvre, but it possesses that quality that every bookseller recognizes with regret in a chapter or two.

This guy is HTR—hard to read—and there is no trait more likely to guarantee a failure at the box office (books office), or a tendency for this reader to hand it off to the nearest reader he can fool with dust jacket blurbs. Banville's length of sentence and the pleasure he takes in spinning out artily formed, but somewhat hollow, relative clauses pretty much ensure that no one will buy his books. He's hard to read. Roddy Doyle is easy to read. They both won the Mann Booker

Word of mouth is a wonderful way for good books to get free publicity. Banville's good reviews mean nothing to a readership that would rather not slog through complicated prose to finish a novel that ends in peculiar places. His stories don't move, and his characters take too much work to understand. So there. Mann Booker or no, I'm ignoring Banville's glowing blurbs. HTR. My time is valuable. The good news about John Banville is that he has retooled. He's changed his nom de plum. He's now Benjamin Black. He's changed his genre from high-end fiction, shooting for a Mann

Booker (he has one, remember?) to high-end subtle thrillers à la LeCarre and Graham Greene. Mr. Banville, or his publisher at any rate, wants to sell some books.

His new novel is *Christine Falls*, set in Dublin and Boston during the gray early 1950s, when the Catholic Church was not on the defensive. His hero is a pathologist, known simply as Quirke, who owes his respected status in life to his being rescued from an orphanage and taken in by a Dublin judge. Judge Griffin raises Quirke along side

his own son Malachy Griffin. Do you think a rivalry develops between the boys, young men, and professionals? It does.

The plot of *Christine Falls* is set into action when Quirke wanders into Mal's office after a Christmas party and notices suspicious cover-up behavior regarding the death of a recently deceased Christine Falls. His brother is a surgeon, not a pathologist, and Quirke immediately guesses that something is up. If you are familiar with the conventions of the crime novel, it is clear that the story

will begin with this cover up and that Quirke will spend the remainder of the novel seeking out the reasons Mal Griffin was desperate to alter the record of Ms. Falls' cause of death.

That's all you're getting of the plot. It's too fine and subtly wrought to be ruined by a clumsy bookseller trying to paraphrase his way through Benjamin Black's fine work. The character of Quirke I can't ruin for you. He is not a Catholic to begin with, which seems to be a tragedy for everyone but himself among the book's characters, but he is a deeply moral man, and the fate of Christine Falls is important to him precisely because he feels for the sad corpse of the young woman who died mysteriously.

Quirke's adoptive father and any number

of very tough guys working for the Church do warn him off the case. He tells himself over and over to let the case alone, but his curiosity and his feeling that the Catholic Church is involved in this unnecessary death in ways that trouble him deeply. The

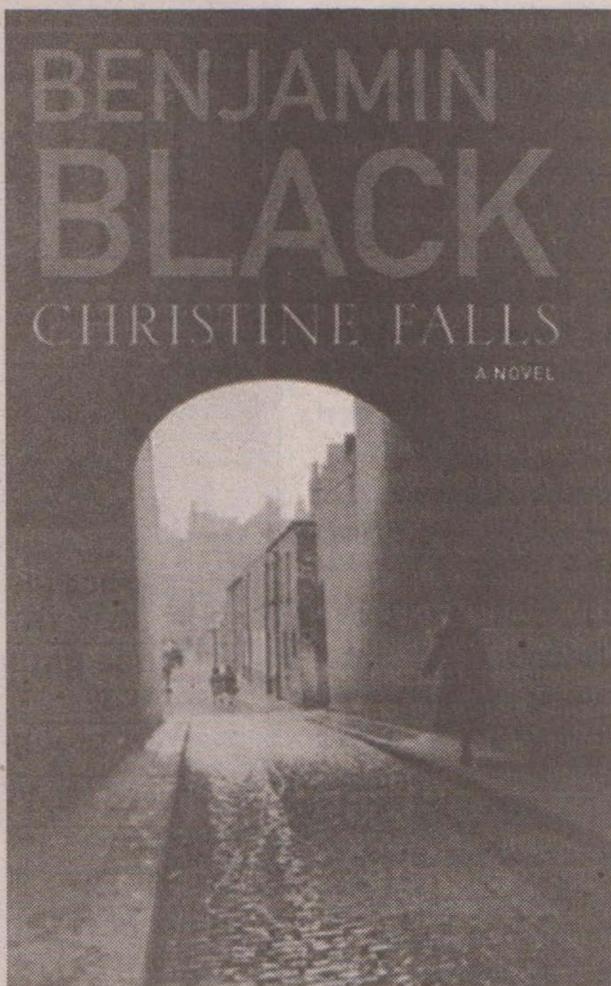
The Church at the time was unquestioned power and Quirke was born into powerlessness.

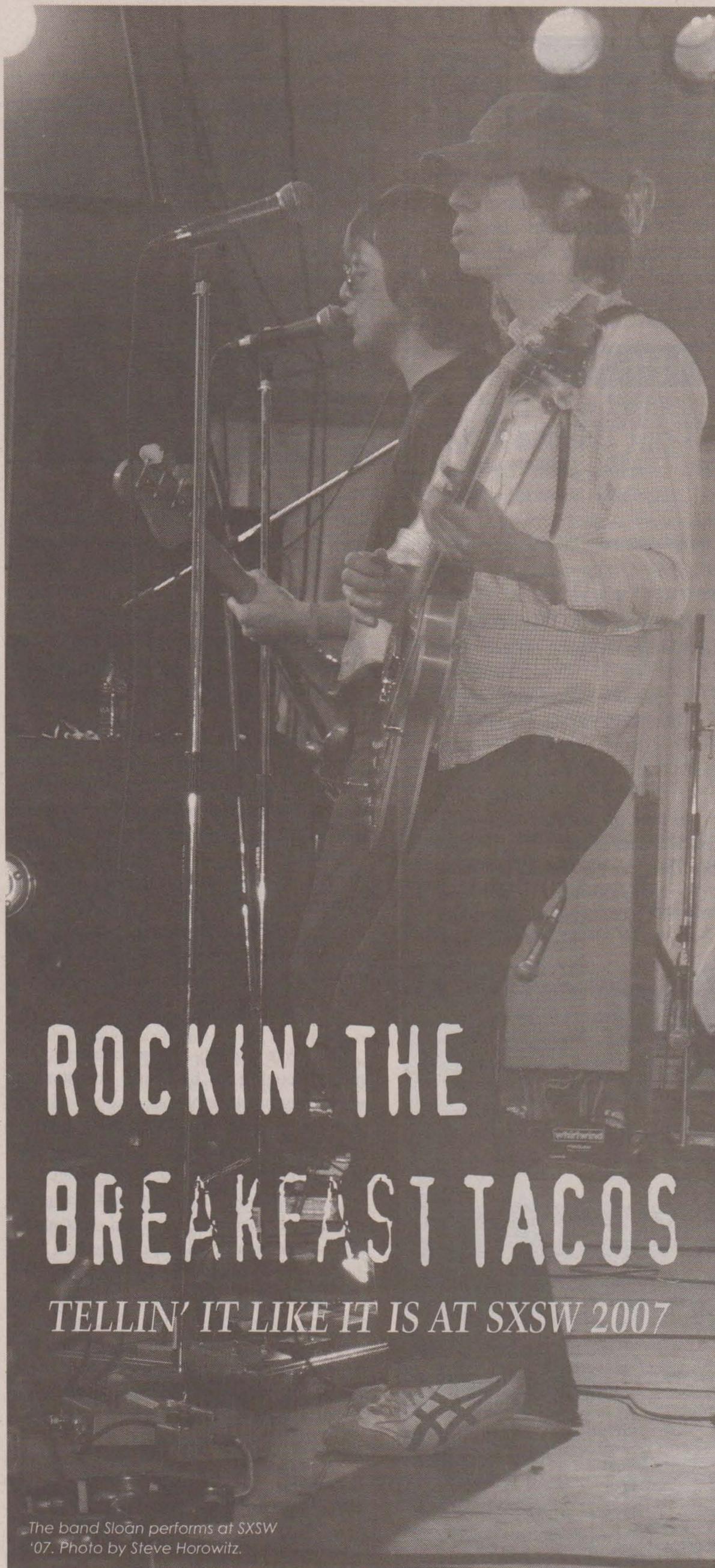
Church at the time was unquestioned power and Quirke was born into powerlessness. He must know.

Graham Greene never wrote a sharper more poignant moral fable. Black fills his novel with carefully drawn Dubliners of every stripe and social class. His search takes him to Boston where he and Mal were educated, and finds a Catholic extension of Dublin. *Christine Falls* is best read slowly to appreciate the dark moral picture its author wishes to show us. The dire position of today's Church adds meaning and depth to the story. It has for too long been absolute power corrupting as absolutely as its self-preservation required.

John Banville, had he begun by writing this kind of intelligent, plot centered novel, might be thought of as another John LeCarre, with movie contracts and more money than he knows what to do with. He would not however have won the Mann Booker Prize (*The Sea* is actually pretty good). For my reading pleasure, however, I'd prefer he undergo his alchemical transformation to Benjamin Black, where good men and bad fight it out over the elusive issues of good and evil. **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.





ROCKIN' THE BREAKFAST TACOS

TELLIN' IT LIKE IT IS AT SXSW 2007

The band Sloan performs at SXSW '07. Photo by Steve Horowitz.

Pretty much the biggest question facing SXSW revelers is what are they going to get sick of first: breakfast tacos or great music? Both overflow the streets of Austin, Texas, for four solid days each mid-March like the sparrows returning to Capistrano. SXSW began as a showcase for regional music in 1987 and has grown into a mind-blowing extravaganza of 10,000 registrants and only slightly fewer bands. This is the place where you might find yourself slurping down breakfast tacos next to the Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne at an all-night Mexican bakery only to rise 20 minutes later for more breakfast tacos and a live radio performance of that insanely catchy whistling song by Peter, Bjorn and John.

SXSW is where notoriously noncommittal music fans are finally forced to make a choice between The Stooges, Midlake, Dead Meadow and Lee "Scratch" Perry because they're all playing at the same time. It's either that or running like a chicken with your head cut off between venues to catch more than one act within each assigned 45-minute set. And then there are the logistical challenges...try getting from a delightfully low-tech set by Super Furry Animals' Gruff Rhys (his only percussion, a plastic metronome and miked footstomps on a plywood stage) to the historic Jandek show all the way across town at the First Presbyterian Church, with not a free cab in sight.

The festival is just as important for bands as it is for fans, of course. Musicians from NYC to Bergen, Norway, apply in hopes of landing a showcase and being discovered at what is basically an indie music version of Schwab's Soda Fountain.

This year, Iowa musicians enjoying the Austin sun included Iowa City's own Deathships, Pieta Brown and Bad Fathers, as well as Central Iowa's Envy Corps.

It's tempting to try and construe an emerging musical zeitgeist from the unmanageable riot that is SXSW. But this still fiercely independent round-up of perennial rebels like Iggy Pop and a back-to-the-basics Paula Cole continues to defy any such simplification.

That said, here are a few highlights, weird moments, etc. from one veteran SXSW-goer.

- The Who's Pete Townsend was this year's conference keynoter. With more and more day parties popping up around town, the panels were more sparsely attended than ever. The only one I managed to catch was billed as a remembrance of Nick Drake and featured his sister, producer Joe Boyd and Robyn Hitchcock. The chills came rolling when his sis played snippets of an unreleased Nick song and a haunting recording by Nick's own mother on piano, both of which will be out this year as part of a special release. It seems Nick's biggest musical influence was his mom.

- Live music, of course, is what SXSW is all about. Artists who managed to kill live included the soaring prog-rock of Denmark's Mew, the new and improved



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Wed 04.04

Doug Stanhope, James Inman, Matthew Grimm & the Red Smear

Thu 04.05

The Drams

Fri 04.06

Skunk River Bandits Reunion

Sat 04.07

Dave Zollo and the Body Electric

Sat 04.07

SPENCENTER

Mon 04.09

Magnolia Electric Co.(Songs: Ohia) / Great Lakes / Old Panther

Tue 04.10

4 Shillings Short

Thu 04.12

Dr Z's Experiment w/ Everwonder

Fri 04.13

Patrick Bloom w/ Guests Central Standard Time/ Brian Troester

Sat 04.14

Billy Howke and the Hoax, The Puritanicals and Jonah

Sun 04.15

Nathan Granner Beau Bledsoe

Tue 04.17

Thee Almighty Handclaps

Wed 04.18

Big Wooden Radio

Thu 04.19

COGSAPALOOZA

Fri 04.20

The Heathers, AV Collective, Illinois John Fever

Sat 04.21

Matthew Grimm and The Red Smear w/ Macon Greyson

Sun 04.22

Weekend Warriors

Wed 04.24

Benefit Concert Feat: Public Property Euphorquestra Strings

Thu 04.26

U of I Jazz Ensemble

Fri 04.27

Euphorquestra

Sat 04.28

Deathships w/ Gentleman Auctionhouse

Music Feature

Magic Numbers sunshine pop of Austin's own Brothers and Sisters, the Montreal Arts and Crafts band Young Galaxy, and Toronto's all-woman garage rockers The Cliks. It would be safe to say that Canada continues to be the most reliable source of innovative and interesting music. A triumphant appearance by power-pop old-hands Sloan in support of their new 30-song release only bore this out the more.

• I managed to catch at least two of the festival's bigger buzz acts, Amy Winehouse and the Fratellis, both from the UK. Chanteuse Winehouse seemed frighteningly slight and soaked in cold sweat as she did her best to belt out her signature song about her time in rehab. The daytime performance provided little evidence she's anything more than a thinking person's Lindsay Lohan. The Fratellis were ok.

I only heard rave reviews of Damon Album's new vehicle The Good, the Bad & the Queen. And while we're on the subject of UK buzz, The Foals are a band with a first release due out shortly that manages to combine the very best of early Cure and Talking Heads.

• A requisite dose of country/roots rock was supplied by the Rhino Records-sponsored Emmylou Harris tribute with the likes of the Watson Twins, Charlie Louvin, Buddy Miller and Kelly Willis performing her songs.

• Hip-hop high points included solid sets by Redman, Brother Ali and Kid Koala (who scored a standing ovation for a turntable set that included crab scratching "Somewhere Over the Rainbow"). A riverside Public Enemy reunion was also well received.

• SXSW was pretty flat on controversy this year, although a set by Daniel Johnston and his backing band the Nightmares proved to be pretty creepy and offensive at the same time. Back-to-back renditions of "Die Satan Die" and "[I Feel Like] Lucifer Tonite" were only half of the reason for a conflicted reaction to the show: he opened the packed daystage set with an anti-semitic joke and screeched "Heil Hitler" at least twice. One can argue for days whether Daniel's mental illness should release him from responsibility, but it's clear his attempts at rock 'n roll bad boyism are best kept to the music. Still, seeing Waller, Texas' Daniel Johnston at SXSW remains the quintessential SXSW experience. And I can't even remember which Beatles song he covered. **lv**

Todd Kimm was one of the original co-founders of Little Village. He likes his breakfast tacos with black beans and spinach.

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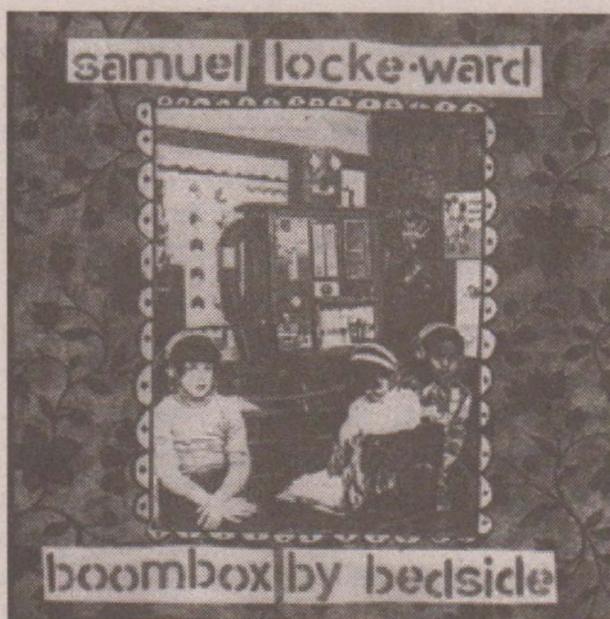
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Samuel Locke-Ward

Boombox by Bedside

Self-released

It's been over two years since the tour accident in Missouri that left Miracles Of God guitarist Samuel Locke-Ward in intensive care. The long road to recovery and his return to the stage were as inspiring and dramatic as the TV movie-of-the-week schmaltz that the Miracles often parody in their music. Since then, compensation from the accident (Sam calls it his "leg money") allowed him to start his own record label, Hot Potato Records, and fund a variety of projects. Aside from the occasional darkly comedic reference to the accident, Sam has put all of that behind him, and there's little room in his compelling songwriting for feeling sorry for himself.

With his most recent release, *Boombox By Bedside*, Sam finally drops the other shoe. Recorded during a month spent recovering in bed following his return to Iowa, the album reveals a side of this artist that we haven't seen before. Sam's solo work has been presented in this defiantly lo-fi setting before, but never has the subject matter been so personal in nature.

In just over 30 minutes and 15 tracks, the recording takes an amazing trip through the mind of someone who's coming through the darkness, contemplating what it all means, and ultimately raging at the helplessness of it all. Sam's songwriting has always been built around topics that push people's buttons (drugs, murder, rape), and these songs are just as shocking—but for different reasons. With song titles like "What Does God Know?," "Unworthy Soul," "Heaven," and "Under The Lord," demons are being exorcised at every turn.

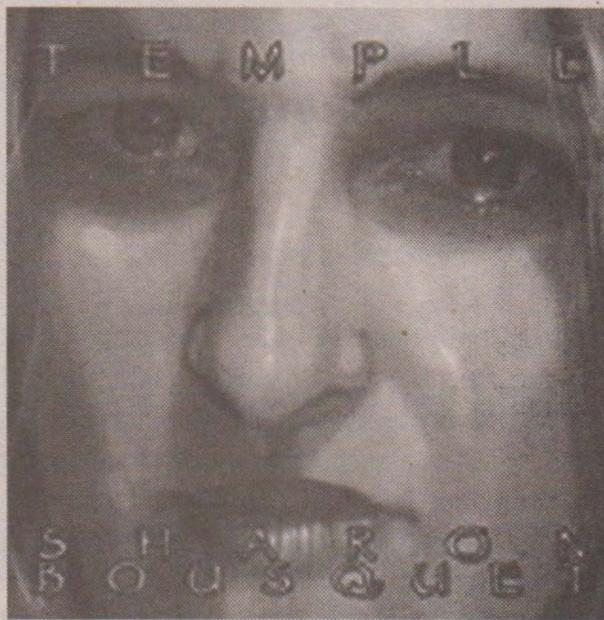
The songs are short, most between 30 seconds and two minutes, but nothing seems like a throw-away. On the amazing "I Still Love Somebody," Sam delivers a mantra of sorts in a delicate falsetto: "I still love somebody / I still want to be with

you," presumably an ode to Grace Sinclair, who appears bedside on some of the tracks, offering vocals and guitar work. Uncomfortably honest in every way, these short pieces are as powerful as you'd expect from the subject matter.

The biggest surprise of all is the enormous part that religion plays in the songs. It's not strictly a Christian viewpoint, but Sam's thin, choirboy vocals reveal a seriousness regarding religion that he's never shown before (or since). "Father, grandfather, waiting at the gates / Oh, bring me home," Sam sings on "Unworthy Soul." "You will be crushed under the weight of the world / Under the Lord" is sung with none of his trademark sarcasm. There's even a creaky "hallelujah" offered up, something Miracles Of God fans might've thought they'd never hear.

This isn't for everybody, or even most casual music fans. You'll want something else if you're unfamiliar with Sam's other work. I'd recommend the full-length *Miracles Of God* album or even his earlier work with the Eggnogs. If you're already a fan, however, this is the record you've been waiting for. The lo-fi approach only underlines the extreme situation that Locke-Ward found himself, and the care he took in crafting the songs on this album is apparent. Somewhere between Brian Wilson and Daniel Johnston lies the music on *Boombox By Bedside*: a true gem.

William Fare works and lives in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, pretending that rock music will someday provide a career. Like Lester Bangs, he mostly thinks that pop culture peaked with punk rock and has been coasting since Reagan took office.



Sharon Bousquet

Temple

Body Mine Spirit Music Company
www.sharonbousquet.com

Returning to Iowa after nearly 10 years, developing her musical art in Texas and southern

California, Fairfield resident Sharon Bousquet clearly shows off her polished talent and Austin influence on her newest CD, *Temple*. Her style has aptly been compared to such '70s greats as Joni Mitchell, Carole King and Janis Ian. Holding her own in that company, Bousquet presents an entire package: smart songwriting, remarkable voice, masterful guitar playing and a natural ability to fluidly span many musical genres. The beautiful production of the CD also stands out. *Temple* was expertly recorded by Austin-based producer, multi-instrumentalist and engineer Chris Gage of Roy Clark fame.

Temple transitions effortlessly between vocal jazz, contemporary ballads and sharp political folk, all marked by Bousquet's accomplished acoustic guitar, crystal-clear voice and sparkling clean arrangements. With the exception of the CD's outstanding version of Nick Drake's "Northern Sky," all songs are Bousquet originals with influences ranging from gospel, to soul, to blues, to Celtic.

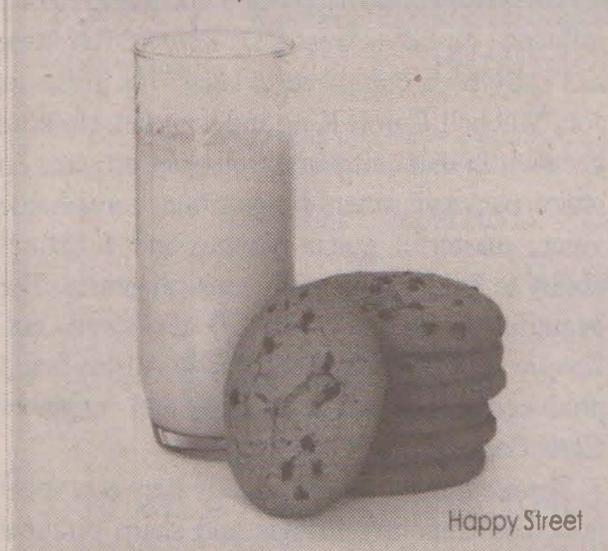
Bousquet plays it all with an extraordinary intimacy and confidence that command attention. As a storyteller, this songwriter does not hold back, adorning her music with stark sensuality and honesty. Listeners should not expect big pop hooks, however. Bousquet's songs invoke thought and offer insight on the more spiritual sides of life. The CD is subtle and layered with meaning—you'll spin it many times to get the full effect.

Bousquet's persistence and dedication in the uncertain music world are also notable. "Temple" is a clear indication of why Bousquet has garnered numerous songwriting awards, including recognition in the 16th Annual B.W. Stevenson Singer-Songwriter Competition, first-place honors in the Texas Heritage Music Foundation Essay Contest, winner of the Kerrville Folk Festival Essay Contest, as well as various awards from the Austin Songwriter's Group. Three songs and several backing tracks from "Temple" will be featured in 2007's indie film, "Cosmic Radio" (Lions Gate Films), alongside tracks by Peter Gabriel, The Rolling Stones, Elton John and others.

Bousquet's passion for music is full-time; she runs her own music business out of Fairfield, Body Mine Spirit Music Company, and teaches holistic singing when not recording and performing concerts. Her work certainly shows great things to come; if it gets around, she should quickly become a popular, well-appreciated fixture in the Iowa music scene.

Lisa Schreihart is an engineer by day who moonlights as a community organizer, music promoter, concert producer, and event planner under the name Stellar Kick Entertainment.

Homemade Headtrip



Homemade Headtrip

Happy Street

Self-released

www.homemadeheadtrip.com

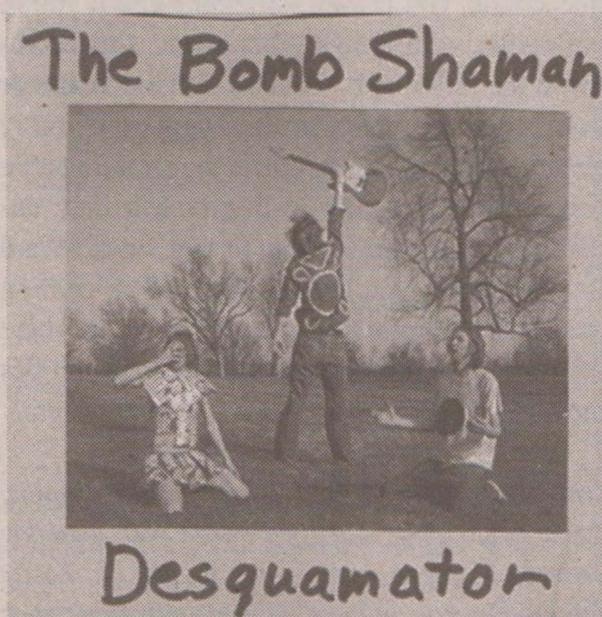
Homemade Headtrip is a 6-piece band from Cedar Rapids, but their music comes from a place much harder to locate. Their songs vary from the Soul-Jazz of "Here We Are," to the Calypso-influenced "Happy Street" to the guitar-driven, Allman Brothers-esque "Midwestern Arms." Their most likely habitat in Iowa City is the Yacht Club, and their audience overlaps with groups like Euforquestra and the Gglitch. They even have a listing on Jambase.com, but their CD is thankfully free of the endless deedle-deedle noodling so dear to the hearts of baked twirlers who are still mourning the death of Jerry.

A CD called "Happy Street" with a cover image of Milk and Cookies on a white background is your first clue that these guys inhabit a decidedly comfy, warm musical space. Being a bitter old bastard, I tend to mistrust this much shiny happiness in one place. The title track, which begins with a young girl singing about "happy feet on your legs" and mentions gumdrop cars started with cookie keys. It's not a complete bath in saccharine, but it comes close. More to my taste are tracks like "More2Life" which is up-tempo, jazzy and dominated by driving, intricate percussion. I also like the poppy "YesHippie," which combines a bouncy back-beat with some tricky chord changes, reminiscent of XTC. The chorus for "YesHippie" is close to perfect, combining an unexpected key change with nice vocal harmonies.

What I like most here is the quality of the musicianship—and their preference for brisk tempos. Homemade Headtrip is nothing if not tight. The drums and percussion crackle with energy. The song Meshbereen starts out with a nice open drum break, no doubt soon to be stolen by a hip hop producer. But while I'm sure that "Happy Street" will be just the thing for many listeners,

this much positivity and major chords in one place doesn't do it for me. And I would never tell them to change a thing, actually -- Homemade Headtrip writes musically interesting songs, and performs them with engaging energy. They're a perfect match for their audience, and there's nothing at all wrong with that. They hit a certain sweet spot that is just a bit too sweet for me. But hey, bitter old bastard here, remember?

I will say that I listened to the CD several times through without feeling like finding a hippie to murder, which is more than I can say for Dave Matthews or late period Grateful Dead for example. Reviewing "Happy Street" feels a bit like breaking up with a nice girl -- it's not you, guys, it's me. Still I'd heartily recommend this CD to people who like their music eclectic, technically adept and, well, happy.



The Bomb Shaman

Desquamator

Self-released

www.thebombshaman.com

The Bomb Shaman's CD "Desquamator" is just one face of an ongoing multimedia art project by a skinny red-haired kid who lives in Iowa City. His Web site contains a load of handmade art, including ballpoint doodles and paintings made with sloppy splashes of primary color tempera paint. Other artifacts are his mix tape comprising thrift store cassettes and experimental videos. The CD-R release "Desquamator" comes in a handmade package comprising a construction-paper sleeve, labeled in Sharpie pen. So my hopes weren't high for any sort of completely realized musical work. I expected something slapdash and silly, or grating and monotonous. The democratization of audio recording brought about by cheap computers and software has unleashed an avalanche of crapulence on the world by people who think messy randomness can

serve as a unifying aesthetic principle.

But I'm a music reviewer, so I bit the bullet and pressed Play. I was surprised to find that Bomb Shaman makes music I would listen to even if I didn't have to. The song "Mint Field" leads off with a two-chord guitar seesaw, and echoey vocals panned hard right. Many layers of fuzzed out guitar, accompanied by simple shaker percussion, create a wide, fractally textured sprawl of warm sound. The singing sits pretty low in the mix, so the hand-scrawled lyric booklet comes in handy -- sort of. In "Pure Terror," he sings: "The clown stole all the animals to parade them through the town. East was where they headed off to burn the temple down." It's not clear what he's on about, but accompanied by a repeated nonsense chant and minor chord drones, you get a sense of his recurring themes: religion, loss and wide-eyed narcoleptic fantasy.

In "Mole Man," his peculiar vision becomes clearer: "I found a man in the depths of my pockets planning his tumbles on bundles of lint" followed by the refrain "Mole man, God be with you." He sings this in a completely earnest manner, conveying genuine emotion. The Bomb Shaman's empathy for a being who lives in his pocket recalls Dr. Seuss's "Horton Hears A Who." It has the perfect logic of a dream where deep emotion can be expended in completely absurd situations. The Bomb Shaman is inspired by outsider musicians like Daniel Johnston and acid casualties like Syd Barrett and Roky Erikson, but I don't believe he's actually one of them. There's too much that's artfully intentional in his songs. Still, his music is sufficiently seductive and obtuse to grant him at least an honorary membership in the league of gifted nut jobs.

What makes "Desquamator" worth repeated listening is that The Bomb Shaman's splattery, goofball surrealism never overpowers his well developed sense of drama and pacing. These songs are actual pop songs, even if they're sung from the point of view of an un-sprouted seed in dirt or addressed to a little man who lives in his pocket lint.

The Kindergarten-grade production values of the packaging, the sleep logic of the lyrics, the spazzy, murky audio production, all cohere into something listen-able and enjoyable, against all odds. And if you aren't sure if The Bomb Shaman is your cup of tea, you can check out his Web site and MySpace page for free -- the MySpace-only cover he performs of the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy For The Devil" is a poisonous, queasy treat.

Kent Williams writes the software that makes the whole world sing. Or at least, the software that helps psychiatrists classify anatomic features of the brain. He also produces his own electronic music and writes for various publications.

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.

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 • *Hidden Treasure: Original Children's Book Illustration*, through May 13 • *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
Dimensions of Chunghi Choo and Her Students, through Apr. 14.

The History Center

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

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

National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

30 16th Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids, 362-8500
Homelands: The Story of the Czech and Slovak People, ongoing.

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.

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.

Clapp Recital Hall

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
All music 8pm unless noted otherwise.
 "Over the River," Cerberus and The Architects, Apr. 1 • Volkan Orhon, bass, and Alan Huckleberry, piano, Apr. 2 • Katie Wolfe, violin, Alan Huckleberry, piano, Apr. 6 • Tricia Park, violin, Apr. 7, 3pm • Iowa Woodwind Quintet, Apr. 7 • Iowa Brass Quintet, Apr. 11 • Quattro Mani Piano Duo, Apr. 12 • Maia Quartet, Apr. 19 • Ksenia Nosikova and Dmitry Novgorodsky, pianos, Apr. 20 • Composers Workshop, David Gompper, director, Apr. 22 • University and Concert Bands, Apr. 25 • Philharmonia and All-University String Orchestra, Apr. 29, 3pm

CSPS

1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580
All music 8pm, except Sundays, 7pm.
 Susan Werner, Apr. 5 • Garnet Rogers, Apr. 6 • Sharon Bousquet and Gayla Drake Paul with Eric Douglas, Apr. 9, 7pm • David Francey, Apr. 12 • Lucy Kaplansky, Apr. 13 • SONiA and Disappear Fear, Apr. 14 • Tom Russell, Apr. 17 • Peter Mulvey, Apr. 20 • Alex Delivery, Apr. 27

Hancher Auditorium

UI-Campus, 335-1160
 Guarneri Quartet, Apr. 10, 7pm • Hairspray, Apr. 17-22, Tue-Sun at 7:30pm, Sat-Sun at 2pm

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Harper Hall

Voxman Music Building, UI Campus, 335-1603

All music, 8pm unless noted otherwise.

Abigail Pack, horn, Janice Minor, clarinet, and Jason Haney, piano, Apr. 4 • Kathy Perl, harpsichord, Apr. 15, 3pm • The Bad Boys of Double Bass, Apr. 16 • Paul Sharpe, Apr. 21, 7pm

The Mill

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

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

Skybox, Bare Bones Orchestra, Apr. 3 • Doug Stanhope, James Inman, Matthew Grim & the Red Smear, Apr. 4 • The Drams, Apr. 5 • Skunk River Bandits Reunion, Apr. 6 • Dave Zollo and the Body Electric, Apr. 7 • SPENCENTER, Apr. 7, 5-8pm • Magnolia Electric Co., (Songs: Ohia), Great Lakes, Old Panther, Apr. 9 • 4 Shillings Short, Apr. 10, 8pm • Dr. Z's Experiment, Everwonder, Apr. 12 • Patrick Bloom, Central Standard Time, Brian Troester, Apr. 13 • Billy Howke and the Hoax, The Puritanicals and Jonah, Apr. 14 • Nathan Granner Beau Bledsoe, Apr. 15, 7pm • Thee Almighty Handclaps, Apr. 17 • Big Wooden Radio, Apr. 18, 7-10pm • COGSAPALOOZA, Apr. 19 • The Heathers, AV Collective, Illinois John Fever, TBA, Apr. 20 • Matthew Grimm and The Red Smear, Macon Greyson, Apr. 21 • Weekend Warriors, Apr. 22, 6pm • Public Property, Euphorchestra Strings, Apr. 24, 8pm • U of I Jazz Ensemble, Apr. 26, 8pm • Euphorchestra, Apr. 27 • Death Ships, Gentleman Auctionhouse, Apr. 28

The Picador

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

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

Big D and the Kids Table, Slaughterhouse 6, Philli Fakeouts, Doctor Death and the Retro Mechanics, Apr. 1, 6pm • Clipd Beaks, Holy Roman Empire, The Ballet, Apr. 2, 6pm • Kyle Riabko, Illinois John Fever, Sarah Cram and the Lovedrops, Apr. 3, 7pm • The Re-Up, Jap Out Boyz, Vizzoloni, So Sick Kick, Billionaire Boyz, Apr. 4 • Ignite the Will, The Feeding, Take Control, Avidius, Apr. 5, 5pm • Rusty Buckets, Illinois John Fever, Wax Cannon, Apr. 5 • Devil Wears Prada, The Calico System, A Day to Remember, Apr. 6, 5:30pm • Terrence Parker, Sonar, DJ herbert, TJ Hood, Nate Unique, Apr. 6 • Cosmic Break Battle of the Bands with Public Property, Homemade Headtrip, Hunab, The Mayflies, Dr. Z's Experiment, Apr. 7, 7pm • Love Hate Hero, Vanna, Blinded Black, Morello, Apr. 8, 6 pm • Jason Isbell, The Mayflies, Apr. 8 • Local H, Riddle of Steel, Apr. 11 • Antelope, The Humbugs, Apr. 12 • David Bazan, Will

Johnson, Apr. 13 • Brother Ali, Psalm One, Trama, BK One, Toki Wright, Apr. 13, 5pm • Joshua Radin, Schuyler Fisk, Apr. 14, 6pm • The Schwag, Apr. 14 • Leslie and the LYs, East Side Guys, Prostitute, A Vague Sound, Apr. 15 • The Black Angels, Vietnam, Skursula, Apr. 17 • Public Property, Apr. 20 • Aquaduct, What Made Milwaukee Famous, Chin Up Chin Up, Canasta, Apr. 21 • RJD2, Busdriver, Happy Chichester, Apr. 22 • Antibalas, Krudas Cubensi, Apr. 23 • Blueprint, Coolzey, Johnny Sixx, Apr. 24 • As Cities Burn, Cool Hand Luke, Olympia, TBA, Apr. 25, 6pm • Ted Leo and the Pharmacists, Love of Diagrams, Apr. 27, 7pm • Destrophy, Apr. 28, 6pm • Bad Fathers, Apr. 28

Paramount Theatre

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

Cedar Rapids Symphony Pops Concert - Classical Mystery Tour: A Tribute to The Beatles, Apr. 14 at 7:30pm, Apr. 15 at 2:30pm • Artie Shaw Orchestra, Apr. 22, 2pm

UI Museum of Art

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

Dan Knight: The Whitman Suite, Apr. 1, 2pm • Music at the Museum: "Lieder and Mélodie," Apr. 22, 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

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.

Grooveship, Strange Neighbors, Apr. 6 • Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Apr. 7 • Bockman, Shirrelle C. Limes and the Lemons, Apr. 12 • Mike Dillon's Go Go Jungle, Ephraim Zehn, 3lbs. of Love, Apr. 13 • Cornmeal, White Water Ramble, Apr. 14 • New Monsoon, Filling Space, Apr. 18 • Electric Junction, Mint Wad Willie, Apr. 20 • Sexual Buddha CD Release Show, AV Collective, TBA, Apr. 21 • Pnuma Trio, Chinese Fingertrap, Apr. 26 • Groovatron, Hunab, Unsung Hero, Apr. 27 • Mannix! CD Release Show, The Puritanicals, Lipps, Apr. 27 • Tony Brown and the 608 Riddum Section, Apr. 28

**Theater/Performance/
Dance/Comedy**

Englert Theatre

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

Paul Poundstone, Apr. 6, 8pm • John Trudell, Apr. 12, 7:30pm • Old Crow Medicine Show

Paramount Theatre

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

Anastasia Krupnik, Apr. 13, 9:45am • Fab Five Show Choir Extravaganza, Apr. 16-17, 7pm • Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Apr. 26, 7:30pm

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672

Collected Stories, through Apr. 15.

Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592

Thursdays, Fridays, & Saturdays: 7:30pm;

Sundays: 2:30pm.

Angels in America, Apr. 1, 2:30pm

Words

Englert Theatre

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

John Trudell, Apr. 12, 7:30pm • UAY's Spoken Word Fest 2007, Apr. 21, 2-4pm

Prairie Lights

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

All reading 7pm unless noted otherwise.

Maggie Nelson, Apr. 2 • Jonathan Silin, Apr. 3 • Jonathan Lethem, Apr. 4 • Sam Witt, Apr. 5 • Huston Diehl, Apr. 10 • Robin Hemley, Apr. 11 • Best New Poets 2006, Apr. 12 • Michele Morano, Apr. 13 • Gregg Mortenson, Apr. 17 • Joshua Weiner, Apr. 19 • Elizabeth Rosner, Apr. 23 • T.K. Kenyon, Apr. 24 • *Earthwords*, Apr. 25 • Geoffrey O'Brien & Ben Lerner, Apr. 26

UI Museum of Art

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

Writer-in-Residence Reading featuring Riley Hanick, Robin Hemly, and Patricia Foster, Apr. 19, 7:30pm •

Film/Video

Bijou Theatre

UI Memorial Union

UI Campus, 335-3258

Visit www.bijoutheater.org for show times

Tears of the Black Tiger and California Split, through Apr. 5 • The Host and Aguirre: The Wrath of God, Apr. 6-12 • Documentary Showcase, Apr. 13-26 • Unconscious and The Rules of the Game, Apr. 27 through May 5

Uptown Bill's Small Mall

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

Movie Night, Sundays, 6pm

A-LIST

**Cole Swensen
and Dean Young**
Poetry Reading • Presented
by UI Writers' Workshop •
Location TBA • Apr. 17, 8 pm

One of America's major experimental poets, Cole Swensen, is also a permanent faculty member at the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop. Her 11th collection of poems, *The Glass Age*, has been published through Alice James Books, who previously published the poet's *Goest*, nominated for a National Book Award.

The Glass Age is an extended poem in three parts, a meditation on the history and use of glass and windows in modern architecture, as well as in the works of many modernist poets and thinkers such as Mallarme, Baudelaire, Apollinaire, Wittgenstein and the Lumière brothers. Central to the book is the work of the French post-Impressionist painter Pierre Bonnard, especially the use of windows in his paintings.

Looking out of the Louvre in 1946, he said, "The most beautiful things in museums are the windows." *The Glass Age* is a poetic commentary on the evolution of modern ideas about space, architecture and perception, beginning with the use of glass in greenhouse and moving to the beginnings of photography and film.

"The earliest movie was a window," Cole writes.

Though her work has always been innovative in its use of history, language and syntax, *The Glass Age* continues to use her excellent ear to draw smart sonic constellations of varied subjects, handling the difficulties of history with a sense of play that makes it new. The poems here question what it means to see and are a radical, imaginative way of thinking critically about perception and culture.

She'll be reading from this work in celebration of National Poetry Month, along with Pulitzer Prize nominee poet Dean Young, also on Faculty at the Workshop, whose new book, *Embryo*, was also recently released.

For more information visit: <http://at-lamp.its.uiowa.edu/virtualwu/>

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MIX TAPE from page 8

Renée's response: "Tits."

Reflecting on the present, Sheffield mournfully notes, "The radio has become homogenized, with practically every station around the country bought up and programmed by the same corporation, and in a shocking coincidence, the weird girls have been shoved back underground."

Despite the fact that Sheffield looks back wistfully on the '90s, he's not blinded by nostalgia, at least when it comes to technology. He loves his iPod. *Loves it*. Rob claims he would rather have sex with his MP3 player than Jennifer Lopez. But he notes that there's a difference between the way we consume mix tapes and the way we take in digitally stored music.

Digital technologies open up many new possibilities, sure, but they also create problems archivists have worried about for years. For instance, are you able to open a computer file that you created in 1991? Chances are, you can't.

I'm also willing to bet that those encrypted, copy-protected iTunes music files I bought from Apple won't open 15 years from now—at least, not without great difficulty.

On the other hand, I recently listened to a tape recording of my college radio show from 1991, one that was lying around in a box. This analog tape doesn't sound as bright and crystalline as a compact disc—"The cassette is full of tape hiss and room tone," Sheffield reminds us, "it's full of wasted space, unnecessary noise"—but it still played.

I also discovered that this ratty little tape had soaked up a few of my memories, ones I thought had been lost forever. Those sounds and those songs brought it all rushing back to me.

Last year my friend and colleague, Ken Cmiel, died as unexpectedly as Renée. At his memorial service, Ken's family played a selection of songs he loved, which his kids found on his iPod's "Most Played" list.

I remember sitting there, watching people fill the room as Aretha Franklin's "I Say a Little Prayer" hovered in the air. It was one of Ken's favorite songs, and as each tune gave way to another—John Coltrane's "My Favorite Things," Perry Como's "Magic Moments," Dionne Warwick's "Do You Know the Way to San Jose?"—my mental picture of him came back into focus.

"The times you lived through, the people you shared those times with—nothing brings it all to life like an old mix tape," Sheffield writes, reminding me of both Ken and Renée. "Every mix tape tells a story. Put them together, and they add up to the story of a life." **lv**

Kembrew McLeod lives in Iowa City. You can listen to his specialty radio program on KRUI, "The Ministry of Reverend Eleven's Happy Time Radio Hour," on Mondays at noon.

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FORECAST FOR APRIL 2007

♈ ARIES—You are really in the thick of it this month. Close to the source, finger on the pulse, and lots of people awaiting insight and instruction from you. Don't worry too much about failure. The planets are with you. But guard against things you know in your gut are wrong. And don't use the situation simply to better your own lot. Let conscience and good sense be your guide. Be a little visionary, too. This is about the future. Trying to resurrect the past can easily backfire.

♉ TAURUS—You bear a lot of responsibility for making sure things go in the right direction, despite confusion, resistance and outright conflict. You must also work through many intermediaries. The task is big and complicated, so don't be discouraged if results seem modest at first. Despite potential friction, your approach needn't be combative. Whether or not there is friction, your efforts will be healing. For you personally, April is about overcoming your demons and inner obstacles and using your abilities to achieve the best for everyone. You have a safety net.

♊ GEMINI—Simplify relationships. They are becoming complicated—not in a good way. Associates are pushing you into things best avoided. Return to your core values. Meanwhile, those who must be obeyed at work and at home, near and far, are not providing the support and encouragement you need to proceed in certain directions. They are adding to your doubts, pretty much blocking progress. This is a blessing in disguise. A self-imposed delay in key areas would provide the opportunity to think through moral complexities. Promising options will develop mid-month.

♋ CANCER—A set of problems surrounding long-term finances, cash flow, household and work affairs will not resolve itself. It is complicated by distance, difficult emotions and family loyalties and obligations. Except for that, everything is fine! I cannot guarantee a complete and permanent resolution. However, April's planets will bring new and lasting improvements. Helpful compromises, promising options and insurance against downside surprises are all included. The most important aspects of the problem will be covered. April will be generous to all, but Cancerians will get a better deal than most.

♌ LEO—April will be a very good month for Leo. Your long-term financial wellbeing has long depended on establishing, maintaining and benefiting key partners. That remains true. Be sure that you take this into account as you work through the many benefits and opportunities presented to you in April. You are mostly shielded from negative outcomes now, but you remain vulnerable to the reactions of important partners who might feel abused. Satisfied associates are your best insurance against financial harm from unexpected events or the impulsive actions of others.

♍ VIRGO—Don't let obstacles or setbacks early in April discourage you. Problems should fade as mid-April brings a barrage of favorable, supportive and protective aspects to your ruling planet. Even recent financial pressures should ease significantly. The possibility of angry confrontation hovers over events. You might feel vulnerable to the over-zealous, impulsive behavior of others. However, the likelihood of a bad outcome is low now. April also presents the opportunity for deep healing and nurturing. You can soothe nerves worn thin by long-standing concerns. Luck is with

you.

♎ LIBRA—Venus, your ruling planet, is besieged as April opens, but breaks out by mid-month. You will still have to negotiate energetically to achieve your goals. The key is to sell people on the virtues of doing things your way: reasonably, politely and fairly. But make sure your idea of what is reasonable, polite and fair is valid. If you act according to your own highest ideals, things should go very well. If you take the low road, things could easily backfire. A good month, if you handle things right.

♏ SCORPIO—Scorpio will play a prominent role in everything that happens in this important and fortunate month. The potential for good is high and there are many guarantees against misfortune. However, the situation is complicated and volatile and you might be at odds with yourself over how to proceed. The best way to get the best results in this lucky month is to be on your own best behavior. Self-serving or shortsighted decisions could set you back considerably. People you meet at work or socially play an important part.

♐ SAGITTARIUS—April is an empowering and uplifting month for Sagittarius. You will play a crucial role in important events and make sound and lasting contributions. One challenge is to apply tried and true principles to new and unfamiliar situations. Respect both your old principles and the new situation. Resist the temptation to abandon caution, good sense and self-respect for the sake of novelty. But I think your toughest challenge will be to maintain personal integrity and not be drawn into shady or questionable agreements for the sake of quick progress.

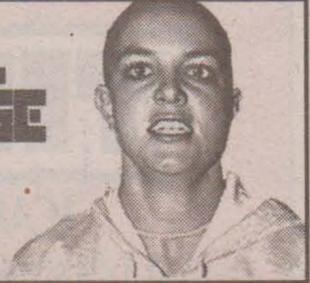
♑ CAPRICORN—April brings a balancing act in many areas, with emphasis on financial issues. You have enough leverage to produce a beneficial effect, but not enough to achieve a decisive outcome. If you stay involved, it will bring more risk and expense. If you bail out, you might lose opportunities or influence over important situations. In many cases, uncomfortable as it is for you, you might be the only person preventing a disaster. There are no clear-cut choices. But if given a choice, choose in favor of local actions or interests.

♒ AQUARIUS—Relationships of all kinds are always very important to Aquarius. In April, your numerous and wide-ranging friends, acquaintances and associates, from near and far, work together to produce a deeply gratifying, rewarding event of some kind. You have not felt so well or so happily connected to the world in quite some time. My only caution would be that you make sure you do not overstrain available resources as you participate. It is important that you provide the guidance needed to maintain not only an uplifting and idealistic but also realistic tone.

♓ PISCES—Things are ready to come together in a big way. You can soon begin to weave finances, home and career into a serviceable, durable fabric. You don't have to do it all at once. The planets are providing time to maneuver. And you will have a lot of flexibility. It is important that you not forget or abandon all the sound principles and practices that got you here. Things are working out, but you need to keep your feet on the ground and take one solid step at a time.

Contact Dr. Star at chiron@mchsl.com

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Clipd Breaks Holy Roman Empire The Ballet

Tues. Apr. 3 -- **Kyle Riabko**

Thurs. Apr. 5 -- ALL AGES 5pm
Ignite the Will The Feeding Take Control Avidius

Fri. Apr. 6 -- ALL AGES 6pm
The Devil Wears Prada
 Calico System A Day to Remember

Sat. Apr. 7 --
Cosmic Break Battle of the Bands
 with Public Property Homemade Headtrip Hunab
 The Mayflies Dr. Z

Sun. Apr. 8 -- ALL AGES 6pm
Love Hate Hero Vanna Blinded Black Morello

Sun. Apr. 8 --
Jason Isbell (of Drive-By Truckers)
 The Mayflies

Mon. Apr. 9 -- ALL AGES 6pm
Saosin The Elizabeth Dane

Wed. Apr. 11 -- **Local H** Riddle of Steel

Fri. Apr. 13 -- ALL AGES 5pm
Brother Ali Psalm One Trama BK One Toki Wright

Fri. Apr. 13 --
David Bazan (of Pedro the Lion) Will Johnson

Sat. Apr. 14 -- ALL AGES 6pm
Joshua Radin Schuyler Fisk

Sat. Apr. 14 -- **The Schwag**

Sun. Apr. 15 --
Leslie and the LYs East Side Guys Prostitute A Vague Sound

Tues. Apr. 17 --
The Black Angels VietNam Skursula

Fri. Apr. 20 -- **Public Property**

Sat. Apr. 21 --
Aqueduct What Made Milwaukee Famous

Sun. Apr. 22 -- 8pm
RJD2 Busdriver Happy Chichester

Mon. Apr. 23 -- **Antibalas** Krudas Cubensi

Tues. Apr. 24 -- **Blueprint** Coolzey Johnny Sixx

Wed. Apr. 25 -- ALL AGES 6pm
As Cities Burn Cool Hand Luke Olympia

Fri. Apr. 27 -- ALL AGES 7pm
Ted Leo and the Pharmacists
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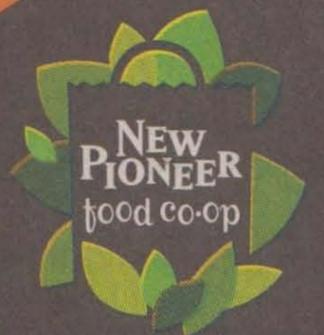
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