



LITTLE VILLAGE

IOWA CITY'S NEWS & CULTURE MAGAZINE

VOL. 18 | ISSUE 171
FEB. 18 - MARCH 3, 2015



IC DEAD PEOPLE

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SHARING THE ROAD

Questions and concerns remain as the IC City Council moves to regulate ridesharing services, and further regulate taxi services.

BY ADAM B SULLIVAN

Iowa City officials are updating their taxicab regulations, and the new rules could shut industry newcomers out of the market.

The Iowa City Council voted at its Feb. 9 meeting to change the rules governing local taxis, a move spurred in part by the emergence of app-based ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft. Those companies have been successful in larger markets and are now aiming to enter mid-size communities like Iowa City.

Indeed, the council voted 7-0 to amend its existing taxi ordinance to allow for the regulation of shared ride services like Uber and Lyft. The updated ordinance also requires that the city issue ID cards to taxi drivers; eliminates the exception for taxi companies to dispatch from a location other than their office between midnight and 6 a.m.; requires taxi companies to adopt a color scheme; and calls upon the city to revise the definition of “destination rates.”

Though the concept of web-based ridesharing isn't new, Uber and other companies have started doing it on a larger scale, using smartphone apps to arrange rides from independent drivers.

With the popularity of the new technology, a handful of horror stories have come to light across the country: According to news reports, a Chicago woman sued Uber last year after she said one of the drivers in their network made sexual advances and then groped her when she refused; another Uber driver in California struck and killed a child, though he apparently wasn't on an Uber assignment when it happened, giving rise to questions over the company's liability; and an operator for Lyft, a similar network service, allegedly punched a California bystander who was trying to take a picture of the driver's shoddy parking job.



COLLISION COURSE | Iowa City officials disagree with companies like Uber regarding what rules should be applied to ridesharing services.
Illustration by Jared Jewell

The companies usually respond to incidents by suspending the alleged bad drivers and releasing statements about their commitment to safety. Last spring, Uber went a step further and started charging network riders a \$1 “Safe Rides Fee” on each ride. All those dollars apparently help cover the cost of background checks and screenings, as well as the “future development of safety features in this app, and more.”

“From the beginning, we’ve always been

committed to connecting you with the safest rides on the road. ... The whole Uber team is committed to continue innovating, refining and working diligently to ensure Uber is always the safest experience on the road,” the company wrote on its blog when it announced the “Safe Rides Fee.”

It's not as though traditional cab companies have squeaky-clean records, either. The dangers of taxis earned attention here in Iowa City last year when a local woman said she was sexually assaulted by a cab driver.

Investigators found companies didn't have sufficient records of who was driving their vehicles. An arrest was eventually made, but Iowa City Police Chief Sam Hargadine wrote in a city memo that his staff spent more than 200 hours tracking down possible drivers, “allowing the suspect to elude police and potentially continue to commit such crimes.”

“The ability to gather accurate information in an efficient manner is important in bringing criminal investigations to a timely conclusion,” Hargadine wrote. “In addition to identifying suspects and determining applicable charges, suspects and companies can also be cleared of involvement much sooner when useful information is available.”

Late last year, in response to the assaults, city staff proposed new taxicab regulations aimed at both reigning in existing companies and preparing for the arrival of services like Uber and Lyft. Administrators laid out five goals for their regulations: Police need to be able to track drivers; consumers must be able to identify taxis; the vehicles need to be safe; the operators need to be good drivers; and the fares must be fair.

The city differentiates “metered,” or traditional taxicabs, from “network” taxicabs, like Uber and Lyft, but says the same rules should apply to each, “with limited exceptions.” Regulators say efforts like Iowa City's are an



honest try to protect consumers, but critics say the rules are a barrier that protects existing taxi companies.

LATE LAST YEAR, IN RESPONSE TO THE ASSAULTS, CITY STAFF PROPOSED NEW TAXICAB REGULATIONS AIMED AT BOTH REIGNING IN EXISTING COMPANIES AND PREPARING FOR THE ARRIVAL OF SERVICES LIKE UBER AND LYFT.

Before the council approved the new rules this month, Uber representatives argued to the city that the company has “unprecedented

accountability and transparency,” and that rather than being a risk, Uber is a boon to communities—an entrepreneurship opportunity for drivers and an easy and accessible service for riders. Uber also says that it has led to fewer drunk drivers on the road: The company’s metrics show drunken driving arrests decreased by more than 10 percent in at least one city where the service is in place.

Uber officials say their model is different from traditional taxis, so the rules should be different. Instead of a uniform code for metered and network taxis, Uber has suggested that Iowa City establish a separate—and less strict—permitting scheme for its drivers, instead of trying to “squeeze ride-sharing” into taxi regulations.

But for now, the new regulations are taking hold, a relief for established cab companies

who have encouraged the city to hold newcomers like Uber to the same standards.

“A taxicab company that dispatches via web-based technology nevertheless conducts taxicab business; whether or not a company uses this technology or not, passengers are still being driven from Point A to Point B for profit,” Yellow Cab manager Roger Bradley told council members in a letter in December. “We would like to see the proposed ordinance ensure that all taxicab companies and drivers are subjected to the same requirement to ensure safe and responsible service for all companies involved.” **lv**

Adam B Sullivan is an activist and freelance journalist living in Iowa City.



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STRUGGLES BEHIND BARS

It goes without saying that life in prison isn't easy. Here, Oakdale Prison inmates discuss some of the daily challenges they face.

BY RICK K., TIM P. AND JOHN S.

One very big challenge in prison is the loneliness of being separated from my family. I feel, as an inmate, not being able to see the people I love as often as I really need to is the worst feeling in life. Inmates are allowed certain days and limited hours for visits. The distance between my family and where I am incarcerated complicates things even more.

Add the cost of fuel to travel, taking time off work and just the time it takes (two hours) to get here—it is not a cheap visit.

There are so many things that limit how often I see my family and friends, but another big challenge for me is not being there to help raise or even watch my children or grandchildren grow up. Getting pictures is like a double-edged sword—I get to see how

much they've grown, but there is so much I've missed. Phone calls are not cheap either (even though the Iowa Department of Corrections has lowered the cost), it still costs an inmate a day's wages to call home for 20 minutes.

The loneliness is really hard to explain, because as an inmate there are people around you every day. In fact, it's a challenge just finding some alone time away from people. I know that I need the support of my family for love and understanding. But most of all, I need someone I feel comfortable talking with no matter the subject.

—Rick K.

THE SYSTEM PROCLAIMS A LOFTY MISSION STATEMENT, TO ADVANCE SUCCESSFUL OFFENDER REENTRY ... BUT WHO SEES ANY OF THAT GOING ON?

Another frequent grumbling is in regards to the injustice of the justice system. Many can tell stories of being let down by a lawyer, dumped on by a judge and abandoned by the Iowa Department of Corrections, a system which proclaims a lofty mission statement, "To advance successful offender reentry ... " But who sees any of that going on?

In a recent book club book, Piper Kerman's *Orange is the New Black*, the following quote is found:

"Our criminal justice system has no provision for restorative justice in which an offender confronts the damage they have done and tries to make it right to the people they have harmed. Instead, our system of "corrections" is about arms length revenge and retribution, all day and all night. Then its overseers wonder why people leave prison more broken than

ISOLATION AMONG OTHERS | As an inmate, people are around you every day, yet loneliness is a reality for many. Illustration by Jacob Yeates




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when they went in."

After a while the system can begin to wear you down.

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You depend on the system to feed you.

You depend on the system to entertain you.

You depend on the system to provide you a job, whether you really have to work or not.

Rather than grumbling, waiting for someone else to do everything for us, maybe the real challenge is to wake up to the situation we are in—to see the hurt we caused in the past and to begin anew today.

—Tim .P

When I got here I had to adjust to life in prison, which was different than life on the streets. The people in here are in a bad mood a lot. They belittle those who are different from them, and they try very hard to make themselves look better than they really are. I try to not let my caring side show. Then maybe they will get tired of trying to get a reaction or put on a show.

I now look at things in a different light, and I don't trip on the little things like I used to. Prison life has made me more aware of how things really are here. Before I might have tripped on how little we were being paid. Not anymore, because now I can't say that I haven't worked for anything less than \$10 per hour. Now I work for \$0.27 per hour.

I lose myself in my religion, workouts in the yard, writing letters to my family and friends. That way I am not letting them get to me.

On the outside, I had a harder shell because I could do things that we can't do here, like getting away to fish. Or playing my games to get rid of the anger that builds up during the day. In here, sometimes I feel that I have given up. I don't care about mail, phone calls or visits. But I should because those things help. That is my challenge. I have changed since being in prison.

—John S. IV

Notes from the Inside features original writing by inmates serving time in Iowa Prisons.



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Located in the heart of downtown Iowa City in the space formerly occupied by Iron Hawk, Osaka Japanese Restaurant opened in fall of 2014 and has a large menu that seems to be fairly cut-and-dried as far as Japanese cuisine goes around here: lunchtime bento boxes, soups, salads, sashimi, nigiri, sushi rolls, katsu, dumplings, tempura, hibachi entrées and a children's menu. Most entrées include soup, salad or rice. Dinner includes additional menu options with more-elaborate sushi rolls and appetizers.

The menu has some exciting starters, like the Bullet: jalapeño peppers stuffed with spicy tuna and cream cheese filling, then battered in tempura and deep fried. There is also a fish tartare—salmon, yellowtail or tuna—with avocado, mango and a tart yuzu sauce, as well as one of the most generous sashimi plates in town, with fish selected by the sushi chef.

The hand rolls at Osaka are colossal: your choice of fish (I usually go for spicy tuna),

DINE IN OR ORDER TO GO | *Osaka makes quality sushi that is great when dining in. If ordering take-out, opt for a warm dish from the kitchen.*
Photo by Adam Burke

blended with sriracha mayonnaise and crunchy tempura flakes, then wrapped up cone-style in a sheet of nori. They are delicious, convenient and it is a challenge to stop eating at one. If Osaka's hand rolls have anything going against them it's that I've seen them sit at the sushi bar for several minutes before being served to me, which can be detrimental to their texture: I think it's essential for hand rolls to be served promptly so that the crunchy nori wrapper doesn't soften from the steaming rice contained within.

Osaka offers delivery service, which I have used and found to be pretty quick. I'd recommend calling in your order, but there is also an electronic ordering system on their website. Also, one server advised against ordering most sushi for delivery, because it can become

soggy and unappetizing during transit.

When ordering takeout, opt for yaki soba or udon noodles, which are stir-fried and sauced to perfection, with meat or vegetables of your choosing. Try the eel yaki udon, a thicker-cut wheat noodle served with marinated eel and a side of miso soup.

WHEN ORDERING TAKEOUT, OPT FOR YAKI SOBA OR UDON NOODLES, WHICH ARE STIR-FRIED AND SAUCED TO PERFECTION, WITH MEAT OR VEGETABLES OF YOUR CHOOSING.

The kitchen prepares an appetizer of tasty little pork dumplings that can come steamed, pan-fried or deep-fried. Another delicious appetizer is the agedashi tofu—cubes of fried tofu served with a salty dipping sauce.

If you opt to dine in, there are a few styles of beer, wine and sake, as well as fountain drinks, tea and juice. The owner Yuki Yu, who also owns Szechuan House, will check in on you periodically and quietly remove your empty plates as needed.

The dining room contains some larger tables but mostly booths; there's also a back room that's usually vacant. One of the restaurant's walls still features a rendering of a golden pig with wings that was left by Iron Hawk when they closed last summer. It's one of the few decorations, aside from a couple of paper lanterns and geisha figurines adorning the sushi bar.

I'm confused as to why Osaka is often empty; even on Friday nights, I've only seen three or four tables seated with customers. Perhaps it is because there are more sushi restaurants downtown than there is demand for, or perhaps it's because the space is so big. But Osaka Japanese Restaurant has satisfied my sushi cravings time and again. **IV**

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TALKING MOVIES

HOMETOWN HORROR

Filmed earlier this month in Iowa City, Night of the Babysitter isn't your typical thriller. • **BY JOHN MILLER**



Filming for *Night of the Babysitter*, a horror film shot right here in Iowa City, wrapped up earlier this month. Needless to say, the idea of a cinematic thrill-fest shot right in our own backyard is appealing in its own right, but *Babysitter* appears to be far more than your typical slasher flick.

Little Village caught up with the film's director—Iowa native and UI film school alum Louis Doerge—as well as Director of Photography Jeff Wedding, and the film's star, The Babysitter herself, Dora Madison Burge, to talk about the film, and why they chose Iowa City.

According to Doerge, *Night of the Babysitter* aspires to be more than just a horror movie. Sure, there's a killer named "Father" (played by Bill Oberst Jr.) who wears Japanese Noh masks to strike fear into his victims, and yeah, it's shot on 16mm film to achieve the grainy visual texture seen in classics like *The Omen* and *Persona*, but there's more to it than that, Doerge says.

Tired of filmmakers portraying his home state—and the Midwest at large—as a vast, crimeless expanse of farmland, Doerge set out to make a movie that would let him show the "heartland" in a less idealized light.

BABYSITTER WRAPS UP FILMING IN

IC | *Night of the Babysitter* foregoes the cheap thrills and opts for a high-tension take on the crime and revenge tale. Photos by Ben Handler

"I wanted to explore small urban environments, because they really are interesting, and that's how I grew up," Doerge said. "That's what I was used to and exposed to. I've never set foot on a farm."

Burge, who gained national recognition from her role on the TV show *Friday Night Lights*, thinks of the film as a self-aware throwback to old school slasher flicks. She says she was drawn to the movie, because it's filled with classic B-horror movie archetypes, but manages to rise above many of the all-too-familiar clichés.

"It's kind of a play on that genre. Growing up, I was really into Michael Myers and *Friday the 13th* and stuff like that," Burge said. "The original ones from the '70s, with like, '70s bush and their boobs are real and their hair is feathered, and it's super grainy and awesome [laughs]. You know, before Busta Rhymes comes up and starts beating up Michael Myers and you're like, 'This is not *Halloween*! This is not scary!' [laughs]."

"Horror these days has gotten so blown



out because special effects are so good, you know?" Burge added. "They're not really horror films anymore, they're just really gory and graphic. The kind of style of horror that we're doing is more Hitchcockian."

DOERGE SET OUT TO MAKE A MOVIE THAT WOULD LET HIM SHOW THE "HEARTLAND" IN A LESS IDEALIZED LIGHT.

Doerge says he employs a lot of dialogue to build tension, and has tried to create an atmosphere within the movie that changes drastically from scene to scene. He compares *Night of the Babysitter* to a piece of conversational, experimental jazz or hip hop. It's the *Bitches Brew* of horror movies in a lot of ways, he says, but it also draws some of its style from the underground music scene in Austin, where Doerge formerly resided.

Up-and-coming noise-metal band Future Death, along with politically active electro-punk trio BLXSPLTN, (pronounced "black-sploitation"), made the long drive from Austin to Iowa City to be featured in the film—and, of course, to play a show at Gabe's.

"Future Death is playing the house party scene, and BLXSPLTN has a cameo, but they won't be musically performing in the film," Burge said. "Their lead singer, Khattie, is going to play 'The Shootist.'"

Jeff Wedding, the film's director of photography, says he's been working closely with veteran lighting designer Ace Fillore to get all of Doerge's subtle atmospheric shifts to come to life on film.

"Tonally, it shifts," Wedding said. "The whole first act, the 'Babysitter' story, is a sort of cold, practical and Bergmanesque sort of a thing. Then we move to a scene upstairs, and it's like this light spilling through the blinds. So visually, it's going to jump around a lot. We have that sort of opportunity to be inconsistent, in a way. Because each act reads like

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a different story, and each story will have its own look. It's a matter of getting the right exposure and keeping the look of it intact. That's what I've been trying to do."

The filming itself has been moving unusually smoothly so far, the three say.

"Louis has been so meticulous about everything that it's been the easiest process ever," Wedding said. "You walk in knowing, okay, this is the shot, now we just have to build what needs to go into what light is hitting that frame, and we just have to create that certain frame. On so many shoots, the director has no idea what he wants, and you walk in and have to figure everything out right then."

Local businesses have been doing their part to help make the movie a success, too. Before filming started, Buzz Salon offered to do hair and makeup for the film, upping its production value, and local caterer Valerie Martin has kept the cast and crew from having to survive on pizza alone by cooking French cuisine.

With all the success of the shoot thus far, Burge says she's getting tired of having to explain why they decided to make the movie in Iowa.

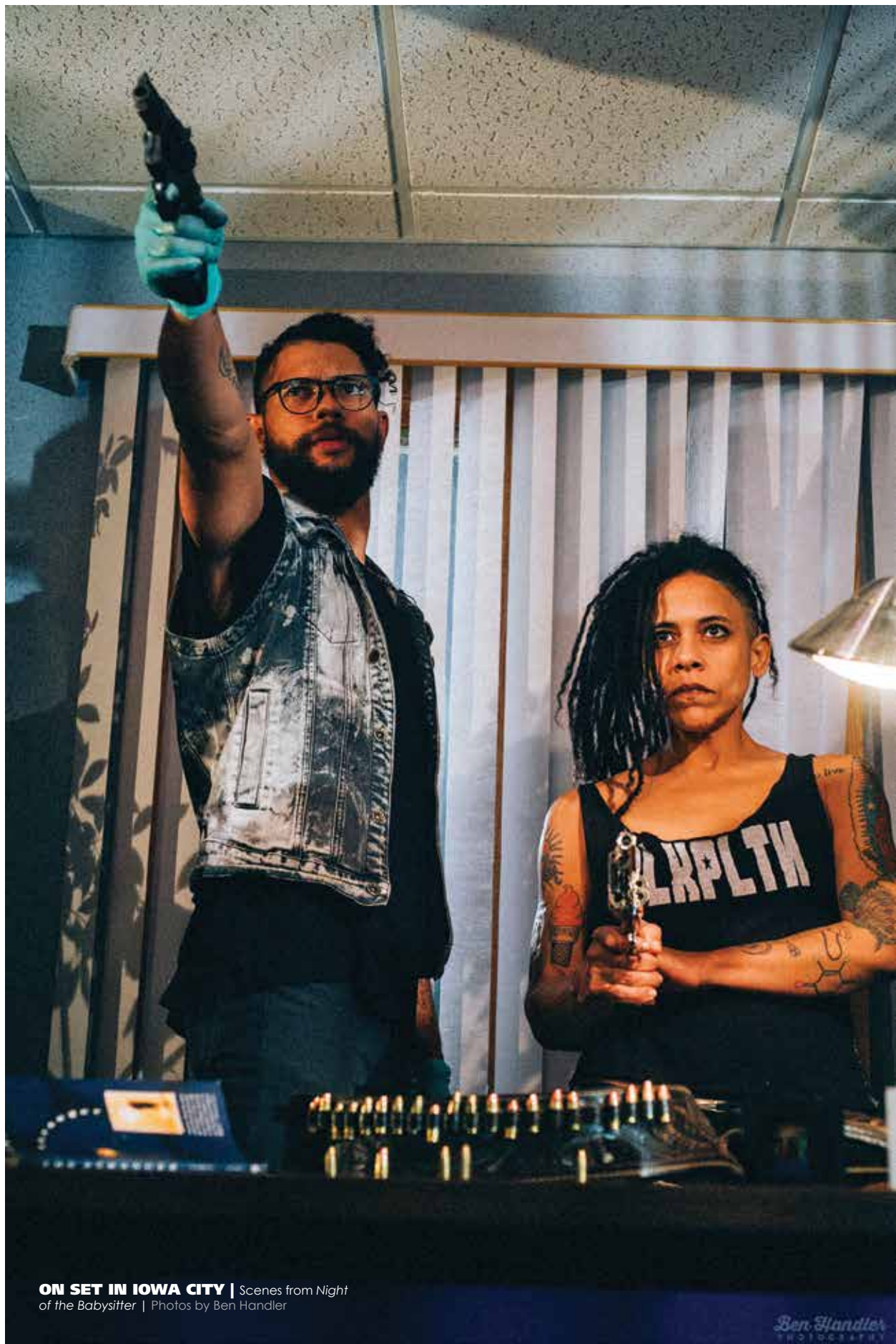
"My agent said, 'Why don't you shoot it in L.A.? Don't you think that will be cheaper?' I'm like, 'Where are we going to fly in the snow?' [laughs]," Burge explained. "I just like that Iowa City is an untapped vein. It's a community of people who are ready to work and are excited about a movie and aren't just punching the time clock."

Shooting in Iowa City wrapped up on Feb. 6, but Burge says you can expect to see her and other cast members back in town for a special premiere, after the movie has been released at a yet-to-be-determined film festival. The details are still coming together, but they say an Iowa City premiere during next year's Mission Creek Festival is one possibility.

"I'm already planning the party," Burge said. "Billy [Singhas, who plays "Thomas" in the movie] has this school bus that's custom graffitied, and he's planning on bringing it I love being here and I want to come back to visit. It's nice to have a spot in between places." **lv**

John Miller graduated from the University of Iowa in 2013 with a writing certificate and bachelor's degree in English. He's a regular contributor to Little Village and hopes to someday overcome his fear of masked murderers and start sleeping with the lights off.





ON SET IN IOWA CITY | Scenes from *Night of the Babysitter* | Photos by Ben Handler

POWER PAY

Two Days, One Night takes a hard look at how economic hardship can devalue human sympathy and solidarity. • BY WARREN SPROUSE



Lessons that we can immediately ascertain from Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne's intriguing film *Two Days, One Night* include the following: sometimes the only thing worse than having a job is not having a job and also that, even in Belgium, poverty still sucks.

The film's main character, Sandra, played by Marion Cotillard, confronts these uncomfortable realities in nearly every scene. Sandra is a working class mom with two young kids and a husband working as a waiter; the film's immediate focus is her history of depression, her somewhat troubling prescription drug habit and her inability to get a grip on her hairstyle and a nine-to-five shift at a solar panel factory.

After returning from months of depression-related sick leave, Sandra learns that the fate

TWO DAYS, ONE NIGHT | Screens at FilmScene through Feb. 19

of her job is now in the hands of her co-workers. Since the factory has proven its ability to get along without her, her boss has decided that the fate of her job is up to her co-workers: Either they vote to reinstate Sandra to her former position, or they vote to keep their yearly bonuses of as much as 1,000 Euros each, because the company allegedly cannot afford to do both. Such a choice is absurd and probably illegal in any country with good labor lawyers, but nonetheless, it forms the emotional center of the film.

Sandra must now spend the upcoming weekend going to her co-workers and convincing at least nine of them to give up their

bonuses in support of her cause. The ensuing 70 minutes are, not surprisingly, fraught, stressful, confrontational and sometimes violent. The Dardennes expertly meld the vocabulary and fragility of Sandra's clinical depression with the grinding oppressiveness of working-class life to create a situation in which Sandra comes to question her own worth, since it is constantly being defined almost exclusively by one's utility to the forces of production or contributions in normally defined social and economic ways.

Those critical of the European welfare state as too coddling will be heartened to learn that working class life for Belgians seems to consist more of mini-pizzas and orange drink than of French wine and brioche. They will also be pleased with the Dardennes' portrayal of the basic human instinct towards profit. Co-workers throughout the film forthrightly tell Sandra that they value the money more than her employment, success, family solvency or psychological recovery.

While Sandra struggles to maintain her pride and desire not to seem like a burden or a beggar to her work colleagues, many of them display an utter lack of solidarity as workers, feeling that if she is not fired, one of them eventually may be. We are led to the quite-depressing conclusion that government policies and human sympathy are not able to overcome the cruel logic of the free market, wherein working-class people make heartless decisions to the detriment of people much like them.

Two Days, One Night has plenty of problems



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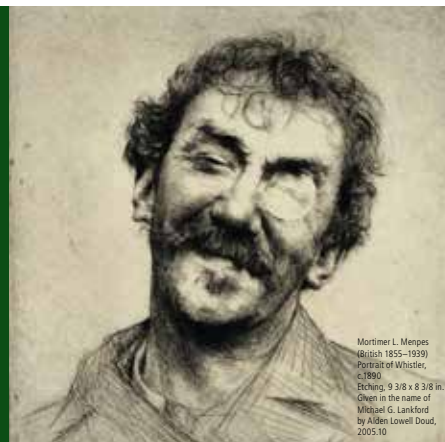
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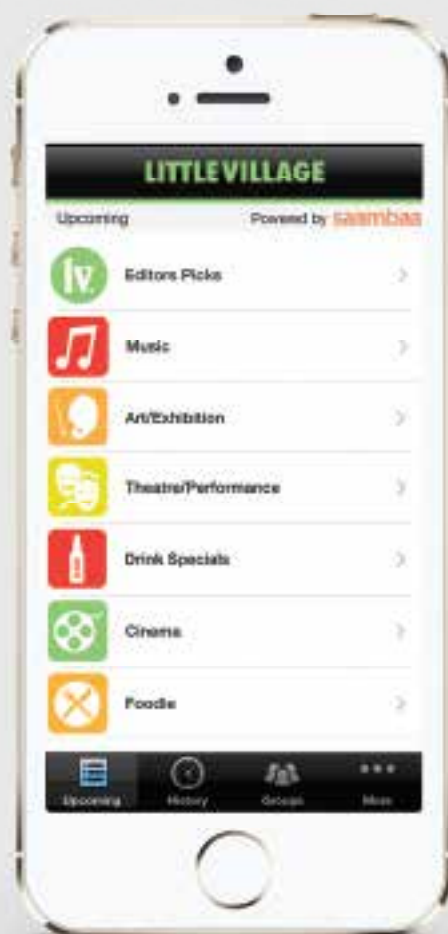
Funding for the exhibition was provided in part with a grant from the International Fine Print Dealers Association, and with donations from H. Dee and Myrene Hoover, the Koza Family Fund, and the UIMA Members Special Exhibition Fund.



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Etching, 9 3/8 x 8 3/8 in.
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as a film. The pacing seems off in significant portions of the movie, the settings throughout are unvaried (though working-class neighborhoods throughout Belgium perhaps do all look pretty much the same) and there is a little too much reliance on the juxtaposition of Cotillard's star power (*La Vie en Rose*; *Rust and Bone*; *The Immigrant*) recast in a smaller, more vulnerable role.

Nonetheless, American audiences will be reminded that, though the setting is different, the choice of humanity versus jobs is one certainly familiar to us as well: *Two Days, One Night* is the humanization of larger social choices in the context of one woman and her family.

In the first volume of *Das Kapital*, Karl Marx talks about the idea of a 'reserve army of labor,' the chronically unemployed or underemployed workers which capitalism needs as a constant threat to keep employed workers in line, frightened and motivated to increase production without a corresponding increase in wages. A certain amount of unemployment or underemployment is always needed to make sure the workers who are employed appreciate that fact and consistently see their employers, rather than their co-workers, as best representing their interests. *Two Days, One Night* is at its heart a cinematic illustration of this phenomenon, but it also asks us to consider whether this choice still exists in the world of post-industrial Europe and, more importantly, whether more human concerns and sympathies should transcend class loyalties. Class divisions in an economic sense certainly still exist, but *Two Days One Night* asks us if we should see more personal sympathies and friendships as even more essential. **IV**

Warren Sprouse teaches in Cedar Rapids and reviews films for Little Village.

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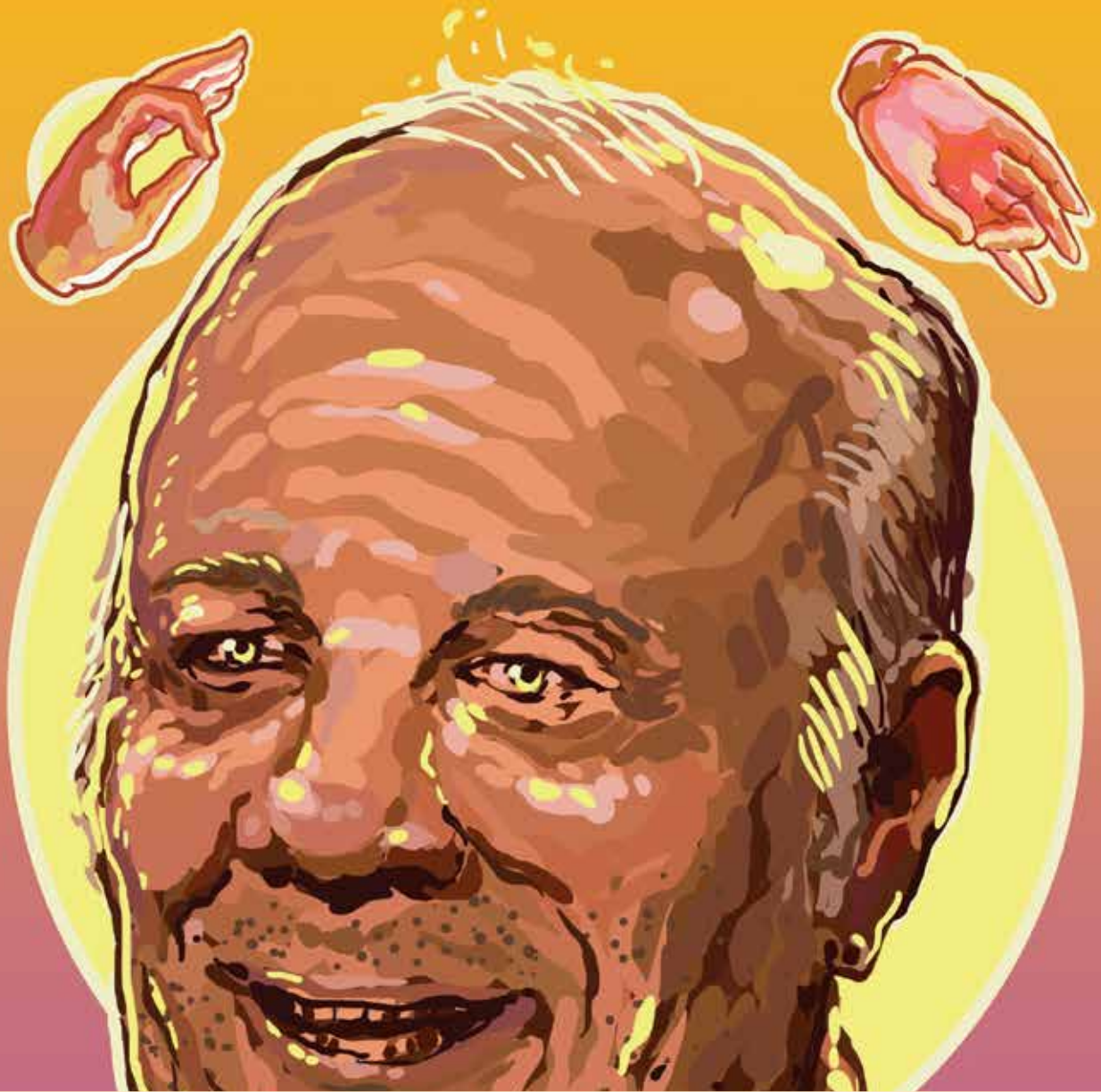
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GREEN GRAVEL

Downtown Iowa City | Feb. 27-28 | Page 20

LUNAFEST

Coralville Marriott Hotel | Feb. 19 | Page 22

BÉLA FLECK & ABIGAIL WASHBURN

Englert Theatre | Feb. 24 | Page 25

STAND-UP REBEL

Comedian Eddie Pepitone rejects crowd-pleasing humor in favor of skewering the absurdity of economic and environmental plights, as well as our personal anxieties. • **BY ARASHDEEP SINGH**

Comedian Eddie Pepitone, headlining this month's Green Gravel Comedy Festival, is a longtime favorite of the L.A. comedy scene who, in his 50s, is finally getting his due. His stand up reached a broad audience with the 2012 documentary *The Bitter Buddha* and 2014 saw the release of his first stand-up special, "In Ruins." Pepitone continues to be a mainstay of alternative comedy with regular appearances on TV shows like *Comedy Bang Bang* and Adult Swim's *Your Pretty Face is Going to Hell*.

Little Village recently talked with Pepitone about his hatred of corporations, his love for sports and why comedians need to constantly investigate themselves.

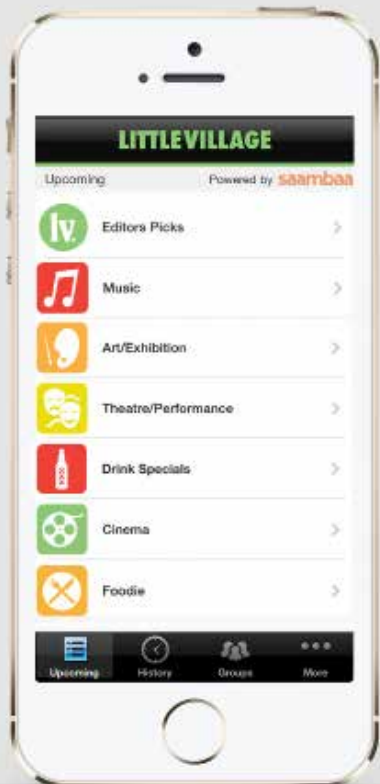
Even though you're an older comedian, you connect with young audiences and are strongly admired by a younger generation of comedians, especially within the alternative comedy scene. What do you attribute this to?

I think that it's all about staying truthful to who I am. My life is about just being an artist. Being a comedian. I hope this doesn't sound too pretentious, but what that entails is constantly investigating myself, what I'm feeling and what I'm thinking. I am always trying to

stay on top of the zeitgeist that is going on in the country, and that is going on in people's lives.

Sometimes I feel like I am one of the few comedians who cares where we are politically and economically. I was talking to Marc Maron about this the other day. I am always railing about how the ecosystem is about to collapse. And he says, "What the fuck do you

PEPITONE SOUNDS OFF | Pepitone performs on Feb. 28 at 9:30 p.m. at Riverside Theatre.
Photo by Rebecca Rotenberg



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care, you don't even have kids." But I care about it. I care about the terrible inequality of wealth we have. I've always been the guy who's just been so pissed off about injustice and authority. And I think my rebellion connects with younger people.

You mentioned Marc Maron. You're often associated with him because of your appearances on his *WTF* podcast. How did you come to work together?

I've known Marc for many years from back when we were both in New York. We were never great friends, but we were friendly. And then, Marc started his podcast and he had the idea for me to come on at the end of the live podcast—he doesn't do them much anymore—he wanted me to do a rant of the day.

He gets a kick out of me being ranty. He used to be very political. But now Marc doesn't want anything to do with politics. I am railing about this shit, and he's like "What do you care? Why don't you enjoy your life?"

Maybe, eventually, I'll outgrow this. It is hard to stay rageful all the time. It is draining.

You're pretty active on Twitter. During the Superbowl you tweeted "A lot of commercials about how tight-knit families are what defines us. Meanwhile we are a shattered nation in every way in its death throes." Did you enjoy the game?

I did. It wound up being a really good game. I always rail against corporate culture, but I have been a sports fan my whole life. I love the Giants in football, and I love the Raiders in hockey and the Yankees in baseball. Sports is a way for me to completely turn on off my mind and just kind of suck my thumb for three hours.

But the comment I made: I get so pissed off at the bullshit. Like the McDonald's thing where you got to pay in love. Call your mom and tell her you love her. That was so upsetting to me knowing how they factory farm animals. Anything but love. They don't let workers get any kind of decent wage. What's horrible is how corporations project an image on television and then what they are really about is this complete opposite. It's just so evil to me. All corporations use this stuff about how much they care about you and your family and just the opposite is true!

There are a lot of comedians who are political, but it is striking how far to the left you go with your material. In your act, you often come off as a street-wise Noam Chomsky who won't stop yelling.

That's funny because Noam Chomsky is one of the guys I look to for clarity about what's going on. Another guy I read all the time is Chris Hedges who wrote this incredible book that is kind of my bible which is called *The Empire of Illusion*. I do try to say what those guys are saying, but in a funny way.

In your comedy, you're often ranting at yourself as much as you are at the outside world. There is a bit you have where you highlight this by literally heckling yourself. You run to the back of the audience and start yelling things at the stage like "Hey Pepitone, why do you dream about dead birds attacking you at night?" and other various Pepitone-based insults. How did that bit come about?

It came out of the fact that I think most comedians really want to be hecklers because we've gotten heckled. We would really like to heckle other people. But the other thing it does is express my self-loathing in a funny way. I am always too self-conscious. I am always analyzing what I do. The only way I can make myself feel sane is to get that on to stage. I get too in my head unless I get this stuff out of my head. I have to verbalize it.

Your act often plays against this image of you as a blue-collar New York guy. Do you think growing up working class in Staten Island and Brooklyn informs your comedy?

Oh yeah, big time. My dad had a big part in it. My dad was a teacher. He was involved in the union for a bunch of years. He was big union guy. He turned me on to politics of the working man trying to get their fair shake. Then growing up in Brooklyn and Staten Island, my dad a teacher, my mom a teacher ... it was a lower middle class existence. It couldn't help but shape me and my comedy. **IV**

Arash Singh is a writer and comedian based in Iowa City.

WED., FEB. 18

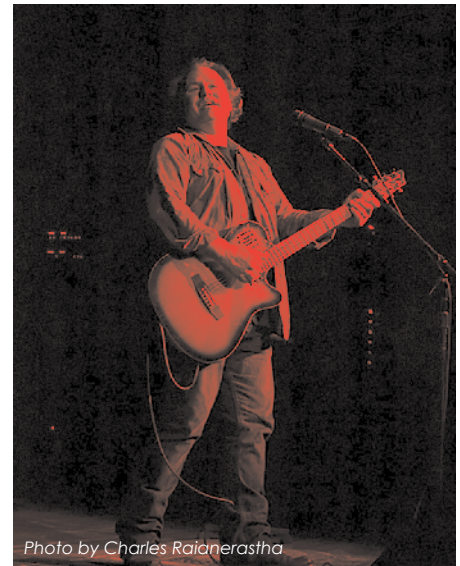


Photo by Charles Rajanerastha

/MUSIC: Martin Sexton, CSPA Hall, \$23-\$28, 7 pm

Syracuse, NY native Martin Sexton brings heartfelt, unpretentious soul music to CSPA.

Jordan Hobson & Brandon Ellsworth, Gabe's, Free, 9 pm | Iowa country music.

/THEATRE-AND-PERFORMANCE: Ballroom with a Twist, Paramount Theatre, \$43-\$63, 7:30 pm | See professionals tackle the samba, waltz and foxtrot. American Idol finalists will join the dancers for vocal performances.

/LITERATURE: Art Lovers Book Club, Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 4 pm | Discuss the book *Artemisia*, about 17th century artist Artemisia Gentileschi.

Matt Runkel, Prairie Lights, Free, 7 pm | Matt Runkel will read from his book of short stories, *The Story of how All Animals are Equal and Other Tales*.

/EDUCATIONAL: Sewing: The Sailor Top, Home Ec. Workshop, \$68, 6 pm | Learn to sew an adorable raglan sleeve top, pattern included.

THURS., FEB. 19

/MUSIC: Mind Over Mirrors, The Mill, \$8, 9 pm | Musical collaboration between Jaime Fennelly and Circuit des Yeux's Haley Fohr features an Indian pedal harmonium to create meditative music.

Dirty River Ramblers, Yacht Club, \$5, 9:30 pm | Get down and dirty with old-time bluegrass from Omaha.

/THEATRE-AND-PERFORMANCE: Paperback Rhino, Public Space One, \$2, 10:30 pm | Locals perform improv comedy.

/CINEMA: *Song of the Sea*, FilmScene, \$6.50-\$7.50, 3 pm | See this hand-drawn animated film about two siblings who set out to save the world of magic from the owl witch.

EDITORS' PICKS



LUNAFEST, Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, \$15-\$20, 6 pm | LUNAFEST heads to the Coralville Center for the Performing Arts Feb. 19, bringing eight short films "by, for, about women" to support two causes.

Established in 2000 by the makers of LUNA nutrition bars, LUNAFEST is a traveling film festival which aims to showcase films by women filmmakers. For the past four years, Girls on the Run (GOTR) Eastern Iowa has brought LUNAFEST to Coralville. The festival works to bring women's stories to communities across the country, while raising money for local causes; all proceeds are donated to the Breast Cancer Fund and the GOTR Scholarship Program.

"The themes represented in the films correlate so well with the lessons and values the girls learn through GOTR—loving yourself and your body, embracing our differences and finding strength in connectedness, unlocking your limitless potential and boldly pursuing your dreams, whatever they may be," Esther Baker, executive director of GOTR. "These filmmakers are sharing stories of women and girls who are fearless, creative, confident and strong."

Lunafest begins with a silent auction at 6 p.m., followed by film screenings at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door and include food and desserts from local businesses. All proceeds will benefit the Breast Cancer Fund and GOTR. Because of some adult themes, this event is recommended for ages 16 and older. —Celine Uhl



/FOODIE: Contemporary Japanese Dinner, New Pioneer Co-Op Coralville, \$20, 6 pm

I Japanese home cook Satomi Kawai will demonstrate how to prepare traditional Japanese food, including egg drop soup, spinach tofu salad, teriyaki salmon and white rice. Attendees can enjoy samples and tea. —Shauna McKnight

/COMMUNITY: Restore, Repurpose Club, Cedar Valley Habitat for Humanity ReStore, \$3-\$5, 4 pm | Get your craft on! The Habitat for Humanity ReStore will provide tools and materials.

FRI., FEB. 20

/MUSIC: The Delta Routine, Java House, Free, 2 pm | See a free performance by the Delta Routine, broadcast live on IPR's Studio One.

Tapestry: The Music of Carole King, Opus Concert Cafe, \$25, 7:30 pm | Join Mirage and Amy Stoner for an evening of music by Carole King. (Through Feb. 21)

Crizzly, Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-\$20 9 pm | Dubstep music from the dirty south.

Grateful Dead Experience: The Schwag, Gabe's, \$10, 10 pm | Beginning in 1991 as a Grateful Dead Tribute band, The Schwag has been touring for the last 10 years.

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/ART-AND-EXHIBITION: Benjamin's Buttons: Faces of Intensity Opening Reception, Chait Galleries Downtown, Free, 5 pm | Artists captured portraits in various mediums, in both 2D and 3D forms.

/THEATRE-AND-PERFORMANCE: Michael Winslow, Penguin's Comedy Club, \$15-\$17.50, 6:30 pm | Known as the "man of 10,000 sound effects," audiences might recognize Winslow from his voice acting. Creating characters and effects for films like Gremlins, Back to the Future and Spaceballs, this comedian can replicate almost any sound. (Through Feb. 21) —SM

Lucky Me, Riverside Theatre, \$18-\$30, 7:30 pm | Meet Sara Fine, a young woman who is unlucky in love. She's all but given up until she meets a handsome TSA agent who sets out to find the source of her troubles. (Through Feb. 22)

Doubt: A Parable, Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$13-\$20, 7:30 pm | Drama about the staff of a Catholic school in the Bronx during the 1960's. Turmoil ensues when one nun suspects a priest is sexually abusing schoolboys. (Through Feb. 28)

SPT Theatre, CSPS Hall, \$20-\$25, 8 pm | SPT Theatre company presents another season on Tales from the Writers Room.



Photos by Adeara Jean Maurice

Opening: Why Torture is Wrong and the People Who Love Them, \$10-\$13, 7:30 pm | Written in 2007, Christopher Durang's Why Torture is Wrong, and the People Who Love Them explores the War on Terror and America's obsession with violence through twisting sitcom clichés.

Dreamwell Theatre named its 2014-2015 season, "The Grand Delusion: A Season of Dreams and Deception." Because everyone eventually falls victim to lies—from other people and ourselves—this play comes at an opportune time. Last December, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence released a report on the CIA's torture program for interrogating suspected terrorists in the wake of 9/11. Interrogators employed exceptionally brutal tactics, while the CIA kept the program secret and exaggerated the benefits of torture. It raised many uneasy questions that will never receive adequate answers.

The second play in Dreamwell's series finds a woman who wakes up after a night of drunken reverie to discover that she's gotten married—and her new husband might be a terrorist. Their relationship becomes perilous when they meet her parents and learn that her dad is an agent for a secret, counter-terrorism organization.

Durang's humor is blackest when he satirizes contemporary American culture. The characters take farce and violence to such dizzying heights that audiences leave the theatre unsure of what they just experienced. (Through Feb. 28) —Jorie Slodki

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/LITERATURE: Hilton Als, *Prairie Lights*, Free, 7 pm | *Staff writer for the New Yorker and author will read from his work White Girls. Focusing on art and pop culture, Als analyzes topics with insight on race, gender and history.*

/COMMUNITY: Astronomy Night, Indian Creek Nature Center, \$3-\$7, 7 pm | *Look at stars and planets through telescopes and binoculars. Binoculars will be provided, but participants are encouraged to bring their own.*

SAT., FEB. 21

/MUSIC: Summercamp Battle of the Bands, Yacht Club, \$5, 8:30 pm | *Summercamp Music Festival is visiting Midwest cities to find the best local bands the heartland has to offer.*

Sinking Suns, Gabe's, \$5-\$7, 9 pm | *Acoustic Guillotine, Crown King Revival and Flannel Season join the Wisconsin band.*

/ART-AND-EXHIBITION: Broke Kids Art Bazaar, Public Space One, Free, 1 pm | *Make your world a little brighter with inexpensive art from undergraduate art students.*

/THEATRE-AND-PERFORMANCE: Gabriel Iglesias, Paramount Theatre, \$45-\$285, 7:30 pm | *See the Mexican-American comedian fondly known as Fluffy.*

The Canaries Raise Hell and Dollars, The Mill, \$10, 8 pm | *Comedy show to raise funds for Planned Parenthood Voters of Iowa PAC features filthy, fearless feminist comedy.*

The Underground Burlesque Show, Shores Event Center, \$20-\$45, 9 pm | *Burlesque dancers, including the Va Va Voom Burlesque Troupe! Vivi Phoenix will offer a two-hour workshop so you can participate in the show too!*

/LITERATURE: Senator Matt McCoy and Jim Ferguson, *Prairie Lights*, Free, 1 pm | *Iowa's openly gay senator will discuss his new book, Senator McCoy, You're Going Straight to Hell.*

/COMMUNITY: 2015 Lunar New Year Celebration, IMU Second Floor Ballroom, Free, 6 pm | *The University of Iowa's Vietnamese Student Association presents an evening with free dinner and entertainment to ring in the Lunar New Year.*

/KIDS: Cub Corner Adventures: Tails and Tales, Indian Creek Nature Center, \$5-\$8, 10 am | *Preschoolers will learn about animals with tails and how they use them.*

Choose Your Own Art Adventure, Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 11 am | *Children can meet their favorite book characters, map out their own tales on felt storyboards or cozy up in the reading nook.*

Explore STEM Science Through Nature, Indian Creek Nature Center, \$5, 1 pm | *Head out for a day of measuring and calculating during a fun nature activity.*

SUN., FEB. 22

/MUSIC: Peter Mulvey, CSPS Hall, \$13-\$16, 7 pm | *Writer and musician has been performing folk music for 20 years.*

Hot Club of Cowtown, The Mill, \$20-\$22, 8 pm | *Gypsy songs.*

Megan Jean and the KFB, Gabe's, Free, 9 pm | *Curators of the avant garde, this band is influenced by Americana, punk and dance music.*

/CINEMA: Hollywood Live, Englert Theatre, Free-\$35, 6 pm | *The Englert screens the Academy Awards live! Stroll down the blue carpet in your best movie costume or your best black-tie attire for a chance to win best Dressed.*

MON., FEB. 23

/MUSIC: Houndmouth, Blue Moose Tap House, \$15, 9 pm | *The Indiana-based band formed in 2011 and rapidly gained attention after their 2012 performance at South by Southwest in Austin, Texas where they discovered by Rough Trade Records. Houndmouth's second album, Little Neon Limelight, is set to release on March 17. Opening for them is the accordion-donning, dream pop band Twin Limb hailing from Louisville, Kentucky.*
—Abigail Thomas

Shirin, Gabe's, Free, 9 pm | *British entertainer and singer.*

/LITERATURE: Boris Fishman, *Prairie Lights*, Free, 7 pm | *Renowned journalist reads from his work.*

My March for Climate Action, Iowa City Senior Center, Free, 6 pm | *Miriam Kashia will give a presentation on*

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her experiences with the cross-country Great March for Climate Action.

/EDUCATIONAL: Felting Seamless Jar Cozies, Home Ec. Workshop, \$58, 1 pm | Play with felt to learn about mix colored fibers and how they move during the felting process.

TUES., FEB. 24



Photo by Kevin Bond

/MUSIC: Béla Fleck and Abigail Washburn, Englert Theatre, \$35-\$55, 8 pm | Since they met, the married banjo-lovers Béla Fleck and Abigail Washburn have played music together. Their debut record released last year uses only their voices and a myriad of banjos. The record is simply Fleck and Washburn combining their raw talent with their raw connection as both musicians and companions. —AT

Datsik, Blue Moose Tap House, \$20-\$25, 9 pm | Dubstep music.

Angwish, Gabe's, Free, 9 pm | Indie rockers setting out to take back rock and roll.

/LITERATURE: Craig Morgan Teicher and Kathleen Ossip, Prairie Lights, Free, 7 pm | Teicher will read from his poetry works, while Ossip will read from her work about the Cold War.

/FOODIE: Fresh Italian Pasta, New Pioneer Co-Op Coralville, \$25, 6 pm | Learn to make homemade pasta with Chef Gianluca Baroncini.

WED., FEB. 25

/MUSIC: Burlington Street Bluegrass Band, The Mill, \$5, 7 pm | Iowa City's finest bluegrass.

Sam Baker, CSPS Hall, \$15-\$18, 7 pm | Texas singer-songwriter.

Odesza, Blue Moose Tap House, \$14-\$16, 9 pm | Electronic music duo on the rise.

Oketo, Gabe's, Free, 9 pm | Six-piece from Lincoln, Nebraska.

/EDUCATIONAL: A Deeper Black: Race in America, Englert Theatre, Free, 7:30 | Author and writer for The Atlantic Ta-Nehisi Coates presents a lecture on race.

THURS., FEB. 26

/MUSIC: Kevin Devine & The Goddamned Band, Blue Moose Tap House, \$12-\$15, 8 pm | High-energy indie pop.

Mike Adams, Gabe's, Free, 9 pm | Americana that combining jazz, folk and country music.

/ART-AND-EXHIBITION: Gallery Tour, Iowa Memorial Union Third Floor, Free, 5:30 pm | Senior curator of UIMA will give a tour of their exhibit, From the Grand Tour to American Pop.

/LITERATURE: Bonnie Friedman, Prairie Lights, Free, 7 pm | Friedman will read from her book, Writing Past Dark: Envy, Fear, Distraction and Other Dilemmas in the Writer's Life.

/FOODIE: Prevention, Treatment and Reversal of Heart Disease, New Pioneer Co-Op, \$15, 6 pm | Learn about foods to eat for cardiovascular health.

/EDUCATIONAL: Make Your Own Ear Wires, Beadology, \$55, 5:30 pm | Learn to make ear cuffs using copper wire.

/KIDS: Planet Protectors: Grow Your Own Food, Iowa Children's Museum, Price TBD, 9 am | Learn about the plant cycle and healthy eating.

FRI., FEB. 27

/MUSIC: Rock Hill, Java House, Free, 2 pm | IPR's Studio One broadcasts live from the Java House.

Rodgers & Hammerstein, Paramount Theatre, \$19-\$49, 7:30 pm | See two Broadway heroes perform classics in concert, including "Shall We Dance?" and more. (Through March 1)

Caladh Nua, CSPS Hall, \$20-\$25, 8 pm | Music with deep roots in Southern Ireland.

/THEATRE-AND-PERFORMANCE: Green Gravel Comedy Festival, Various Locations, see website for pricing, Various Times | Enjoy a two-day festival of comedy, featuring Midwest comedians. Headlining the festival are Adult Swim's Too Many Cooks creators and Eddie Pepitone. (Through Feb. 27)

Hancher Presents: Roseneath Theatre, Englert Theatre, \$5-\$10, 6:30 pm | Roseneath Theatre presents La Maleta, about a 10-year-old girl searching for her grandmother.

Ms. Pat, Penguin's Comedy Club, \$15-\$18, 6:30 pm | Growing up in the tough, west-end of Atlanta, Ms. Pat had a hard childhood. She began dealing drugs when she was 16, and turned to a life of comedy after discovering a knack for telling funny stories. (Through Feb. 28)



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Opening: 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, \$10-\$18, 7:30 pm | Spelling bees have become so popular that fans can even watch the finals on ESPN. If you ever wished competitors were more entertaining, come see this Tony award-winning musical about a group of children—and their parents—who vie to become the local spelling-bee champion. (Through March 8) —JS

/COMMUNITY: Diamonds or Denim, HotelVetro, \$55-\$500, 7 pm | Enjoy desserts and horderves from area restaurants. Funds will support IC's Riverside Theatre.

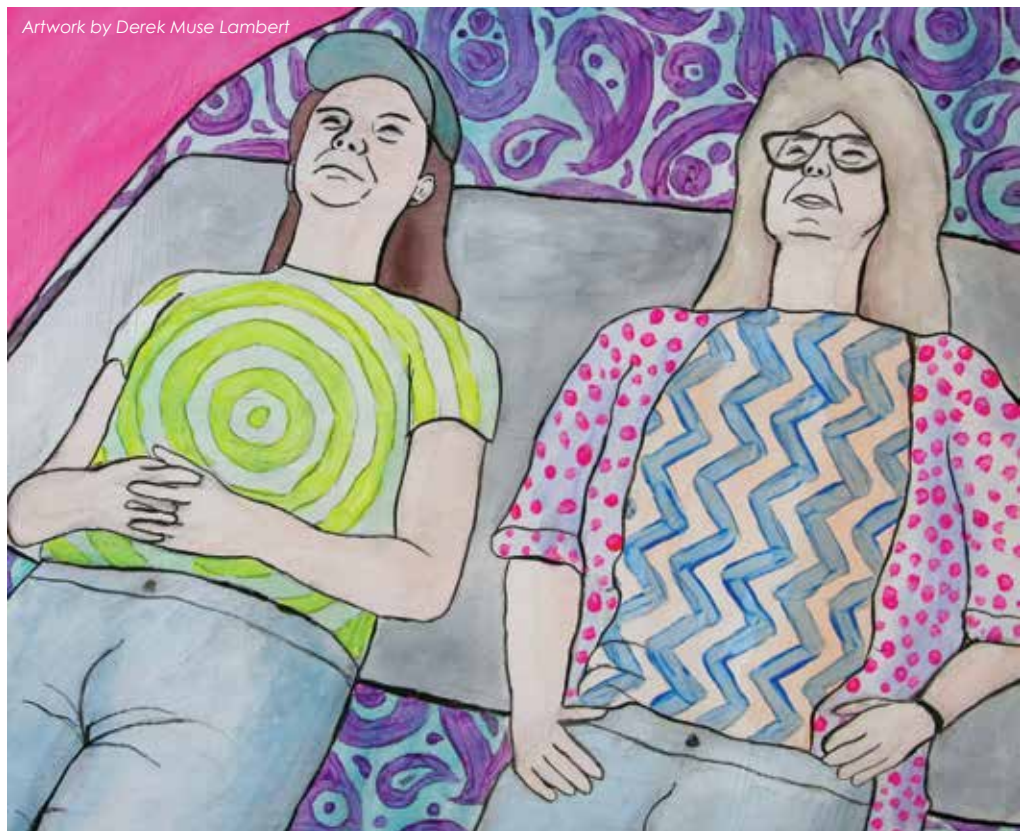
/EDUCATIONAL: How To: Install a Ceiling Fan, Cedar Valley Habitat for Humanity ReStore, Free, 3 pm | Learn to install and rewire a ceiling fan.

SAT., FEB. 28



/MUSIC: Aaron Carter, Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-\$65, 7 pm | Aaron Carter—yes, *THAT* Aaron Carter—heads to Iowa City! Beginning his career in 1997 and getting some recognition from his Backstreet Boy-brother, Nick Carter, the artist gained considerable fame from love triangles with former Disney stars and his hit single, "I Want Candy." Relive your '90s, bubble-gum pop nostalgia at this show! —SM

Artwork by Derek Muse Lambert



ONGOING EVENTS

MONDAYS:

Dance Fitness Classes Jazzercise Fitness Center, \$15, 7 am, 3:15 pm **Stories for Scooters** Cedar Rapids Downtown Library, Free, 9:30 am **Play & Learn** Cedar Rapids Ladd Library, Free, 9:30 am **Toddler Storytime** Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10:30 am **Starlight Story Time** Cedar Rapids Downtown Library, Free, 6:30 pm **Open Mic** The Mill, Free, 8 pm **Catacombs of Comedy** Yacht Club, \$5, 10 pm

TUESDAYS:

Toddler Storytime Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10:30 am **Scott Barnum Trio** Motley Cow Cafe, Free, 5:30 pm **Play & Learn** Cedar Rapids Downtown Library, Free, 6 pm **Blues Jam Parlor** City Pub and Eatery, Free, 7 pm **Line Dancing Lessons** Robert E. Lee Recreation Center, \$5, 7 pm **Upper Deck Dance Party** Yacht Club, Free, 10 pm **Comedy and Open Mic** Studio 13, Free, 10 pm

WEDNESDAYS:

New Dance Fitness Classes Jazzercise Fitness Center, \$15, 7 am, 3:15 pm **Story Time** Cedar Rapids Downtown Library, Free, 9:30 am **Preschool Storytime** Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10:30 am **Open Jam and Mug Night** Yacht Club, \$5, 10 pm **Open State Wednesday** Studio 13, Free, 10 pm

THURSDAYS:

Preschool Storytime Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10:30 am **Children's Meditation** Quaker's Friends Meeting House, \$30, 5:45 pm **Buddhist Meditation** Quaker's Friends Meeting House, \$5 - \$10, 6:30 pm **Open Mic** Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 pm **Karaoke The Vault** Penguin's Comedy Club, Free, 10 pm **SOULSHAKE** Gabe's, Free, 10 pm **Mixology** Gabe's, \$2, 10 pm **Karaoke Thursday** Studio 13, Free, 10 pm

FRIDAYS:

New Dance Fitness Classes Jazzercise Fitness Center, \$15, 7 am, 3:15 pm **Book Babies** Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10:30 am, 1:30 pm **Weekend Comedy Showcase** Penguin's Comedy Club, Price TBD, 7:30 pm **Drag & Dance Friday** Studio 13, Cover, 10 pm

SATURDAYS:

***Community Folk Sing** Uptown Bill's, Free, 3 pm (Once a month) ***Ukulele Social Club** Uptown Bill's, Free, 4 pm (*Every third Saturday) **Saturday Night Music** Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 pm **Weekend Comedy Showcase** Penguin's Comedy Club, Price TBD, 7:30 pm

SUNDAYS:

***Winter Farmer's Market** Johnson County Fairgrounds,

Free, 11 am (every other Sunday) **Open Lab** Beadology, Free, 12 pm **Community Worktime** Public Space One, Free, 1 pm **GLBTQ Community Pot Luck and Bingo** Studio 13, Free, 6 pm **Pub Quiz** The Mill, \$1, 9 pm

/THEATRE-AND-PERFORMANCE:

Dreamgirls Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$21 - \$33 (Through Feb. 14) **Good Kids** Theatre Building at UI, \$5 - \$18 (Through Feb. 15) **An Evening of Farces** Corallville Center of the Performing Arts, \$12 - \$27 (Through Feb. 15) **Lucky Me** Riverside Theatre, \$18 - \$30, 7:30 (Through Feb. 22) **Doubt: A Parable** Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$13 - \$20 (Through Feb. 28) **The Spy Who Killed Me** Cedar Rapids Clarion Hotel, \$50, (Through Mar. 28)

/ART-AND-EXHIBITION:

Peter Sis: Cartography of the Mind National Czech and Slovak Museum, Free - \$10 (Through Mar. 1) **Drawn to Illustrate** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free - \$5 **Jeni Reeves' Illustrations for Voice of Freedom** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free - \$5 **Shadows of History: Photographs of the Civil War** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free - \$5 **Guardians of Grain: Bamana and Dogon Door Locks** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free - \$5 (Through Mar. 19)

Left Coast Country, Yacht Club, \$5, 9:30 pm | Newgrass band from Portland.



/ART-AND-EXHIBITION: It Takes Two: Illustrations by the Muse Lamberts (pictured), 4:30 - 6 pm | Ramona Muse and

Derek Lambert have been performing together since 2012 as The Snug Tops, and in the White Rabbit's February art show they also collaborate on visual art. The duo married last year and had to postpone the opening of their show due to inclement weather. They have promised to roar back for a Feb. 28 closing show.

SUN., MARCH 1

/MUSIC: Brother Sun, CSPA Hall, \$13-\$16, 7 pm | Three-part harmony folk music.

Greensky Bluegrass, Blue Moose Taphouse, \$15-\$18, 9 pm | Bluegrass rock music.

Dave Paris Group, Gabe's, Free, 9 pm | Live guitar rock.

/THEATRE-AND-PERFORMANCE: Mary Poppins, Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$24-\$35, 7:30 pm | See the classic children's musical. (Through March 31)

MON., MARCH 2

/COMMUNITY: The University of Iowa's Biomass Fuel Project, Iowa City Senior Center, Free, 6 pm | Ferman Milster will discuss alternatives to the university's combined heat and power plants.

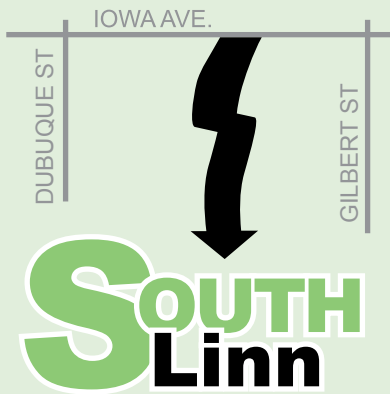
TUES., MARCH 3

/MUSIC: The Dirty Bourbon River Show, CSPA Hall, \$13-\$17, 7 pm | New Orleans gypsy rock.

/THEATRE-AND-PERFORMANCE: Stomp, Paramount Theatre, \$48-\$63, 7:30 pm | Hear rhythms and music created using live percussion.

Hugh Masekela and Vusi Mahlasela, Englert Theatre, \$25-\$35, 8 pm | Two trumpeters from South Africa.

/LITERATURE: Jill Zahniser, Prairie Lights, Free, 7 pm | In a special Women's History Month event, Zahniser will discuss Alice Paul's Claiming Power.



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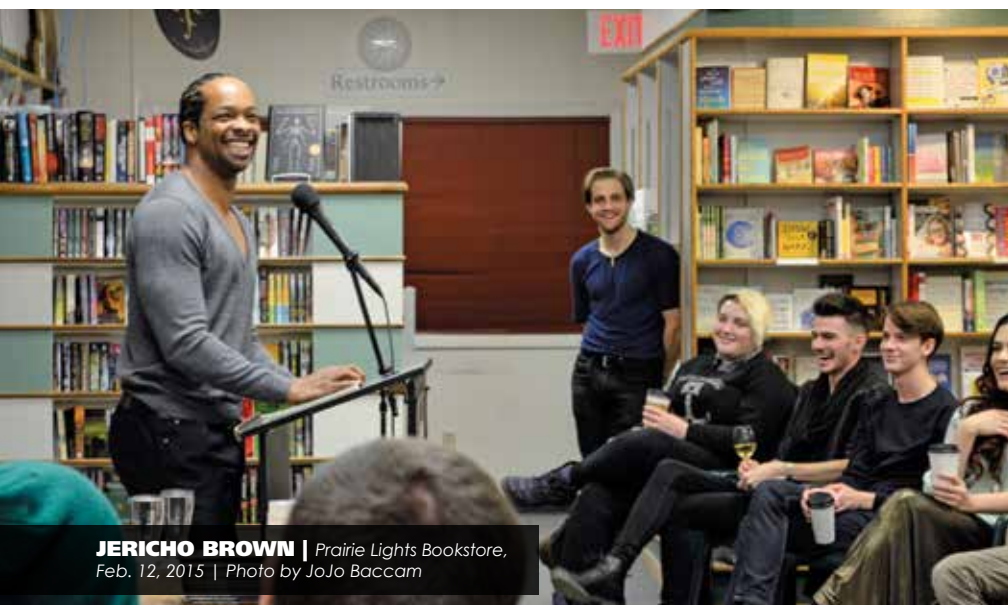
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IS THERE A CASE FOR LEGALIZING PROSTITUTION?

Prostitution has been legal in Las Vegas for some time. What's the verdict on legal prostitution? Gay marriage and marijuana use have become accepted. Will legal prostitution always just be a Vegas thing? —Silent John

You need to do your homework, John. First of all, if you bought the services of a prostitute in the city of Las Vegas, you committed a crime. Second, legal prostitution is more widely accepted than we provincial Americans may understand: 50-plus nations, including most of the industrialized West, have adopted it to some degree. The growing realization worldwide is that the practice is never going away, and that those selling their services are at far greater risk than their clients. Consequently, legislative goals have continued to shift since we last discussed this: instead of trying to stamp out prostitution, they're increasingly focused on safety.

The modern case *against* legalizing prostitution is essentially (a) legalization would make it more difficult for police to identify and stop pimps and traffickers, and (b) it's such an inherently violent and degrading profession that ethically it can't be condoned. In one survey of prostitutes in nine countries, 60 to 90 percent said they'd been physically assaulted on the job. My assistant Una works at a charity that assists prostitutes, and in her experience the *Pretty Woman* stories are rare: "The vast majority of them are addicted to drugs, and almost none have any hope they'll escape this life."

No one claims prostitution is the career one dreams of as a child. But police action makes an already hard life even harder: British and American police still target prostitutes much more often than their clients, without any measurable deterrent effect. Raids on brothels (where 85 percent of workers say they feel safe) push more prostitutes on the streets, where they are more vulnerable to their clients, drugs and disease. U.S. police and prosecutors regularly use possession of condoms as evidence of prostitution, making prostitutes less likely to carry them. And it's not like the cops are getting women off the street and driving them to job-training classes—sex workers make up a third of all female inmates in U.S. prisons, and a criminal record makes finding alternate work even tougher.

Countries that choose to legalize generally enforce health and safety regulations (including STD testing); they often provide unemployment, disability and pension benefits for prostitutes, as well as channels through which prostitutes can report violence, enforce contractual rights of payment and transition out of the industry if they wish. Sixty percent of sex workers in the Netherlands and New Zealand said they felt safer refusing clients after legalization. In Nevada, where it's permitted only in licensed brothels in the sleepier counties (so not Vegas or Reno), there are intercoms, panic buttons and constant monitoring of safety and cleanliness.

That said, legalization isn't easy; plenty of countries have neglected major opportunities for regulation. The Netherlands provides work permits only to EU citizens, forcing immigrants to work illegally and rely heavily on pimps. Germany doesn't mandate condom use, and neither country requires STD testing. It's frequently argued that legalization promotes human trafficking, but it's very tricky getting solid numbers on a highly illicit activity. The trafficking rate in the Netherlands increased after legalization, but the definition was widely expanded at the same time, making comparison difficult.

A controversial solution that's rapidly gaining traction is the Swedish model, under which selling sex is legal but buying it isn't. Already in effect in Norway and Iceland and recently approved by Canada, Northern Ireland and the European parliament, its advocates argue it discourages prostitution and thus minimizes trafficking while sparing prostitutes shame and legal trouble. Critics counter that it's no substitute for decriminalization, saying it denies women their autonomy and makes prostitution more dangerous by making it more furtive. Yearly Swedish arrest totals have varied wildly—the apparent number of prostitutes may have gone down, but many have likely moved online.

Which brings us to the biggest recent development: the growth of the internet escort industry. In the U.S., Germany, the



Netherlands—anyplace with decent broadband, basically—prostitutes are leaving even legalized brothels for the online marketplace, where websites list services, connect clients with workers and provide ratings for both. While this is undoubtedly less safe than the better-run brothels, it does allow prostitutes to work independently without pimps. Escorts report far higher self-esteem and job satisfaction than street prostitutes and brothel workers—on the whole, it seems to be a very different job. Internet-based prostitution will undoubtedly be difficult for governments to keep track of, but it may mean the work can occur more on the workers' own terms.

Is prostitution a great life? Clearly not for many. Would I want my daughter doing it? Hell no, and I'd rather nobody else's daughter did it either. But the idea that we're going to abolish or even seriously control this ancient practice is a harmful illusion. We need to protect the women involved to the extent we can and not just drive them underground. If that means decriminalization plus inspections, licensing and other bureaucratic accoutrements, spare me the moralizing—that's what we should do. **lv**

—CECIL ADAMS

Send questions to Cecil via straightdope.com or write him c/o Chicago Reader, 350 N. Orleans, Chicago 60654.

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CURSES, FOILED AGAIN

- Police looking for a bank robber in New Kensington, Pa., found suspect Shane Lindsey, 32, two blocks away at a restaurant where he stopped for chicken and biscuits. Officers entered the restaurant hoping its surveillance video might show the suspect passing by, only to spot Lindsey eating at a booth. (*Tarentum's Valley News Dispatch*)
- Sheriff's deputies suspected drugs when they stopped a car outside Daytona Beach, Fla., but found none. Passenger Candyyce Harden was getting back in the car to leave when an 11-month-old boy with her reached into her blouse and pulled out a bag of cocaine. She was arrested. (*The Daytona Beach News-Journal*)

TAX DOLLARS AT WORK

- The National Institutes of Health gave Daniel Resnic \$2.4 million to develop an "origami condom," described as a non-rolled, silicone-based condom designed to "increase pleasure," but then canceled the project after a former employee accused Resnic of spending the funding on trips to Costa Rica, lavish parties at the Playboy mansion, full-body plastic surgery, a condo in Provincetown, Mass., and patents for numerous "get-rich-quick" schemes. (*Washington Free Beacon*)
- Alaska taxpayers are funding a two-year, \$400,000 University of Alaska study aimed at combating fetal alcohol syndrome that involves making free pregnancy tests available in bar bathrooms. (*Alaska Dispatch News*)
- Kentucky spends \$2 million a year to pay 41 elected county jailers who have no jails to run. According to the Kentucky Center for Investigative Reporting, the figure includes nearly 100 full- and part-time deputies the jailers employ, many of whom are family members. Several jailers also work other jobs, a few of which are full time. (*Lexington*)

Herald-Leader)

- The U.S. government spent \$500,000 to build a police training facility in Afghanistan that disintegrated within four months of completion, according to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. Its report said the contractor used substandard materials, including bricks made only from sand, that caused water to become trapped between the walls, making the building look like it was "melting." Inspector General John Sopko called the project "an utter failure and embarrassment." (Fox News)

NEIN ON THE RHINE

- Some 500 German right-wing protesters arriving for an anti-immigration rally in Schwerin were handed banners and stickers reading "mvgida.de," which they assumed was the website for Mvgida, their xenophobic, anti-Islam organization. The site actually opposes right-wing extremism and urges tolerance. The duped protesters, many of them professed neo-Nazis, learned hours later that they had been demonstrating on behalf of immigrants instead of against them. (*The Washington Post*)
- A few days later, members of Germany's far-right National Democratic Party boarded a train to attend a neo-Nazi protest in Freiburg. They missed the rally because they went 200 kilometers in the opposite direction before realizing their mistake. "We don't feel their absence here," Freiburg Mayor Otto Neideck said after organizers canceled the rally due to low turnout. (*Turkey's Hurriyet Daily News*)

WHEN GUNS ARE OUTLAWED

Allan Johnston, 40, received four years in prison for robbing a woman in Stirling, Scotland, authorities there said, by using "a can of Red Bull to mimic a gun." (BBC News)

DEFINE "LIFE-THREATENING"

- After Facebook and Instagram service went down in San Francisco's East Bay area, five people called 911 to ask when the sites would be back online. "Even though Facebook is important to a lot of people, it's not a matter of life and death when it stops working," the dispatcher said after asking residents to stop calling to complain. "One caller even called back



to tell me I was being rude because I told her it wasn't a life-threatening emergency." (San Francisco's KCBS-TV)

- Authorities reassigned a 911 operator in Anne Arundel County, Md., after he told a woman who called to report her father had been hit by a car to "stop whining." After repeating his response to the caller's emotional pleas for help, the dispatcher asked if there was anyone else at the scene he could talk to and later told her to "stop yelling." The victim died. Fire department Capt. Russ Davies acknowledged that the dispatcher might have handled the call differently but insisted dispatch time wasn't affected. (*The Baltimore Sun*)

REVENUE STREAM

When Washington, D.C., officials announced an unanticipated \$38 million shortfall in projected revenue from traffic cameras, they explained the drop was evidence that motorists were obeying the law. A subsequent probe, however, found that many of the 338 speed and red-light cameras were broken. Police Assistant Chief Lamar Greene said last winter's extreme cold kept workers from chang-

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ing burned-out batteries, but since then police “have taken additional steps to enhance internal temperature controls.” Indeed, automated traffic enforcement revenues for the first quarter of the new fiscal year jumped \$13.1 million. (*The Washington Times*)

THOU SHALT NOT SPARE THE ROD

Pope Francis said spanking children is permissible, as long as their dignity is maintained. The pope made his remarks while outlining the role of fathers, noting that a good father forgives but is able “to correct with firmness.” (Associated Press)

SELF-INTEREST

Joe Morrissey, 57, is a Virginia legislator who’s also serving a jail sentence after being accused of having sex with a 17-year-old girl he hired as a receptionist at his law office in Henrico County. He pleaded guilty to a lesser charge and now is on a work-release program that lets him spend days at the General Assembly while spending nights in jail. When a bill to prohibit pornography in jail came up for a vote, Morrissey voted against the measure. It passed anyway. (Associated Press)

GETTING ALONG

The Oneida Indian Nation announced plans to open a \$20 million casino in Chittenango, N.Y., honoring author L. Frank Baum, who was born in the village and wrote “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz.” Baum also called for the “total annihilation” of Native Americans. Ernestine Chasing Hawk, a descendent of the 300 Sioux slaughtered at Wounded Knee, called the project a betrayal, asking in the *Native American Times*, “Would the Jews build a casino to honor Hitler?” (*The Washington Post*) **lv**

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RITMOCANO

Familia

cdbaby.com/cd/jamesdreierandritmocano

Latin jazz collective Ritmocano is an all-star lineup of the Iowa jazz community, headed by percussionist and one of my former UI instructors, James Dreier. On *Familia*, Ritmocano's most recent album, he demonstrates his abilities playing multiple percussive instruments, from the congas often found in Afro-Cuban

music, to the Batá drums of West Africa.

Because the project is headed by an accomplished drummer, one might expect *Familia* to be rhythmically overwrought and filled with complex twists that could easily leave the average listener flummoxed. However, Dreier goes beyond mere percussive expertise in this project, bringing sensitivity and thoughtfulness to each arrangement.

Familia kicks off with a fiery Latin fusion tune in 7/4 time (read: difficult) called "Siete," which introduces the listener to the main themes of the album: brassy melodies, tight hits sections and a plethora of percussion (of the 13 musicians featured on *Familia*, six are percussionists).

The tune "Debora" features Rich Medd, Gabe's father, on a laid-back, trombone-driven bossa nova reminiscent of Antonio Carlos Jobim's composition, "Look to the Sky." The album stalls somewhat by placing the down-tempo cha-cha-chá "Song For My Father" in immediate succession, and this is one of the few critical points to be made about the album.

Continuing with the up-tempo samba "Namorada," pianist Steve Shanley channels Chick Corea's Rhodes playing from his innovative *Return to Forever* album. Meanwhile, Dreier's son Derek flexes bombastic chops and

grooves on the drumset, capturing the flare of Corea's drummer, Airtio Moreira. "Afro Cuban Fantasy" contains a Batá drumming passage straight out of the folkloric tradition of West Africa; a singer beseeching the trickster god Elegua or the moon goddess Yemaya would not be out of place on this track. The final jewel of this album is the ballad-like "Of Grace," written by Dreier for his mother. Saxophonist and flutist Ryan Smith hits us right in the serotonin receptors with a velvety soprano solo, while Dreier's daughter Virginia gently serenades us on violin.

Familia has something for every listener of Latin-jazz music, including fusion, bossa nova, cha-cha-chá, samba, West African folk music and guaguanco, to name a few, and the familial collaborations are definite highlights. **IV**

—Justin LeDuc

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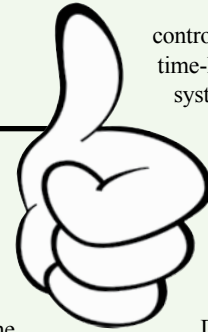
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BODYSUITS AND LOUSY SUITORS

Wayne offers advice to the romantically deficient on how to make it through February. • **BY WAYNE DIAMANTE**



Late-winter blues got you down? Looking for love in all the wrong places? Tired of groundhogs stealing your birthday thunder? Uh oh, sounds like someone's got a case of the Februarys! Lucky for you, bad penny, things are about to turn up. Welcome to the first installment of 2015 *Pro Tips with Wayne Diamante*!

Dear Wayne,
I have no idea what to get my girlfriend for her birthday. Every year is exactly the same: I stress out about getting her something special, fuss about it until the last minute and then end up getting her a gift certificate for some store and taking her out to a mediocre restaurant with jacked-up prices. Please help.

Sincerely,
Blaine

Dear Blaine,
Instead of going out on the town, think about a romantic night in. The perfect antidote for these chilly February nights is a little hanky-panky,

complete with some fancy new duds for the missus. You could opt for more expensive lingerie, but who's got time to go to all the hassle of finding out what size crotchless jumpsuit your old lady wears? If you'll indulge me, might I suggest my economy line of one-size-fits-all Diamante-Brand Vajamas? Diamante-Brand Vajamas are the perfect gift for the busy gentleman, or gentlewoman who can't be bothered with details. We're able to keep costs down by limiting the range of sizes to just one, while also taking advantage of the negligible oversight and loose trade restrictions afforded by operating facilities in emerging markets. Our more natural, olde-world-style trade ethic focuses on maintaining quality

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Sincerely,
Wayne

Dear Wayne,
It's been a long time since I've been in the dating

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"scene." Let me cut right to the chase; I'm recently divorced, and I'm looking to get some stank on my hang-low. I have no idea what these ladies today want. The last time I tried to make a move on a total stranger; the first Bush was in the White House. Is it still cool to wear your pants backwards?

Sincerely,
Jake

Dear Jake,
Let me start by saying ... just ...WOW. You're a train wreck. I don't do this very often, but I'm going to suggest alcohol. Lots and lots of alcohol. It has the dual benefit of simultaneously lowering both inhibitions and expectations, and you're going to need both of those in spades. I hear you buddy, it's rough out there, but you ... well, just wear your pants backwards and hope for the best.

Sincerely,
Wayne



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MEAL ZEAL

Hey Rhyme Timers, who's hungry for some rhyming?

Listed below are two synonyms for two words that rhyme, followed by the number of syllables in each of those rhyming words. Your challenge is to figure out what those rhyming words are based on the clues provided.

As an example, "Improving Eating" (3, 2) would be "Refining Dining."

Make sense? Then Rhyme Time is served. Bon Appétit!

BY LUKE BENSON

Manly Chip (2,2) Macho Nacho

Infernal Pickle (2, 2) _____ , _____
Dad's Appetizers (2, 2) _____ , _____
Pastry Rapprochement (2, 2) _____ , _____

Fancy Cut (2, 2) Gourmet , _____

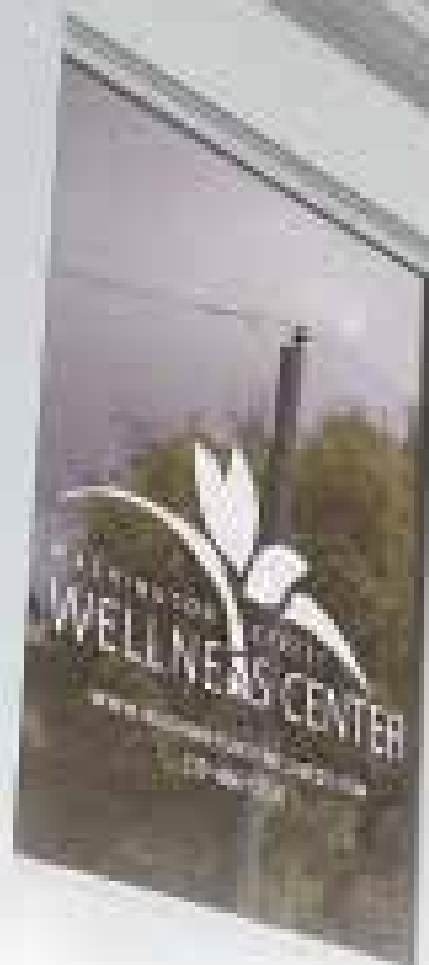
Fin Tidbit (2, 2) _____ , _____
Mollusk Nunnery (2, 2) _____ , _____
Video Game Squid (2,4) _____ , _____

Savoy Fracas (2, 3) _____ , _____

Candied Goody (1, 1) _____ , _____
Hijack Pastry (2, 1) _____ , _____
Intellectual's Cookie (4, 3) _____ , _____

January Rhyme Time Answers

J.S.'s Stockings (1, 1) Bach's Socks
Benjamin's Gloves (2, 2) Britten's Mittens
Antonin's Hydraulics (3, 1 1) Dvorak's Floor Jacks
Richard's Forts (2, 1 2) Strauss's Tree Houses
Debussy Composition (1, 2) Claude Ballade
Johannes Comforts (1, 1) Brahms Calms
Mozart Crooned (2, 1) Wolfgang Sang
Awesome Show, Beethoven (1 1, 2) Good Gig Ludwig
Baroque Cause Célèbre (2, 2) Handel Scandal
Angry German (1, 1) Pissed Liszt
Frantic Ragtimer (1, 1) Fraught Scott
Christoph Frenzied (1, 2) Gluck Rebuke



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