The American" initiative will pay work study students to ensure literacy for all children. By Dina Bass

For University students, taking on the "army" to increase literacy.

"The idea is to become a global army," said Assistant Director of Public Affairs Carol Scheman. "We are trying to get away from students thinking that the language requirement is something to get out of before going to a career of using only English," he said.

"We are going to try to help students improve their language skills. Hopefully this means more people will be interested in new language programs," he added.

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Dervishes Whirl at Annenberg

By Mike Jacarino

Pulsed to accept God's blessing, the Whirling Dervishes of Turkey performed the revered ritual of their ancient order, worshipping with ecstatic energy at the Annenberg Theater Thursday.

The Dervishes continued the traditions of the Mevlevi order, a group of Turkish Sufi spiritual devotees devoted to Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam. Their performance incorporated the order's dual nature with a confluence of classical Turkish music and an incantation of its roots, a Turkish art form that was witnessed by the assembled crowd.

"Sufism is very spiritual, asking someone to come as you are, whatever you are, to search for God through love," Martin Jean-Des Rous said, "There is a truth in everyone.

Sufism's mystical branch of Islam, Sema, an invocation of the soul concealed within the body. The Mevlevi trace their origins to Turkey, said Idil Cakim, a communications graduate student. "Turkey is this amazing piece of history to America," said Idil Cakim, an Istanbul-based, Cakim said. "It's a loving God in America, feeling very empty and very full as well.

The Dervishes performed in four periodic turns of whirling, each time leaving to each other in symbolic reference to the soul concealed within the body. Brought to America through the efforts of the Thompson family, the performance incorporated wind and weather into their performance at Annenberg. Protected by the Turkish Society—a University group extending to schools and Turkish families as far away as Delaware—the event brought "a taste of spiritual culture" to America, said Idil Cakim, a communications graduate student.

"In America there is no recognition of Sema, this is a familiar voice from home," she added. "I remember my childhood in Istanbul with the church towers calling us five times a day to prayer.

The Dervishes' voices took her back to the calls and rhythms of Istanbul, Cakim said. "When I was young I used to Whirled for 24 hours a day in a foreign country, experiencing in another language, another culture," she added. "This is a moment to take pride in, to admire and listen to a voice you haven't heard in a while.

The Mevlevi trace their origins to the 12th century writer Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi, whose poems provide the words for much of the Mevlevi rite. Most of the order's members lead normal lives aside from their weekly performance. The Mevlevi still exist in Turkish society as a brotherhood of spiritual artists and intellectuals devoted to Sufism, according to Rumi.

"There is a Sufist in everyone," said Josh Callahan, an August Kuhn ka.

Read The Daily Pennsylvanian's Housing Guide

Your Home For Next Year Could Be Listed Inside

WHAT'S INSIDE:

• Advice for off-campus living
• Choosing the best place to live
• Safety concerns
• Preparing for the Big Move
• A listing of available properties

University Bagels

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• Salads and Soup
• Desserts and Coffee

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University Bagels

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Former KD house stays empty

By Danii Bullerberg
The Daily Pennsylvanian

As Greeks revealed their presence on campus, finding residences to house newly enrolled chapters is becoming increasingly difficult. But the former Kappa Delta sorority house at 3809 Walnut Street has remained empty since December 1994. The university decided it could no longer afford to maintain the house and sold it to the University last January, according to Associate Treasurer Chris Mason.

"Now, the future of the house is 'kind of up in the air,'" he said.

A few companies approached the university last year about operating the house as an office building, but nothing came of those inquiries, Mason said.

He added that the University monitors the house, but it is not actively seeking residents or workers to fill it.

"It's not like a huge building sit-
ing vacant," he said, explaining that operating costs involved with main-
taining the house are "very mini-
mal" and that the house poses no great financial burden to the Univer-
sity.

Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs Director Ken Budnik said the university had not been actively seeking residents or workers on the house because they were unsure of its availability.

Although OFA looked into pur-
chasing the property from the Kappa Delta, Budnik said the university planned to con-
vert the residence into an office build-
ing.

But now that they know the resi-
dence is available, OFA will probably explore the possibility of utiliz-
ing the house on behalf of the Greek community, Budnik said, adding that some chapters currently occupy smaller houses while others have no places to call home.

Finding occupants for the former KD house could benefit the neighborhood, Mason said.

An office building "may help change the nature of the area which is primarily occupied by student residents and convenience stores," he added.

But as opposed to an office build-
ing, which would probably remain vacant for some time, a residence would have to be occupied by people when it is rented.

"There's a Greek chapter house there, then there's a presence 24 hours," he said.

Mason said it is unsure why the Kappa Delta house has remained empty so long.

Kappa Delta was the only other Greek house on Walnut Street that was also vacant for a "few months" before Lambda Phi Epsilon moved in, Mason said.

Future language programs may spread

PLAC from page 1

be beneficial for students, it is not likely to be a graduation re-
quirement.

"I think to what extent it becomes a requirement will be from outside the University," he said. "The assump-
tion that [everyone] speaks English is no longer valid." English, he said, is not the mother tongue of most stu-
dents, who bought a class on Latin,

He added that students often have difficulty receiving all of their mail and packages. MAIL BOXES, ETC. has

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Office located at 36th and Walnut Streets, will begin operating costs involved with main-
taining the house as an office build-
ing early in February. We invite

"Forget Center City, come to The Palladium!"

Palladium Restaurant & Bar
36th and Locust at 387-DINE

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SurfDP Online...

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"It gives students a chance to learn

Linguistics Professor Antonia Villar

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Quad opens Chats-status 'marketplace'

By Tammy Ries

University City Beverage
College Park, 3903 Chestnut St. and 3920 Locust Walk. Joeli Reynolds shared 20% sales and choicer. From Joeli's. Concessions-Tuesday night, taking advantage of the McCelland's recently renovated McCelland Marketplace.

The facility opened Wednesday is the former location of McCelland Ex-

Newly opened Whatman Brownhouse Dining Hall, which is located in the middle of the Quadrangle, is open to any student and has a capacity of 850 seats. The ballpark study panel discussions is scheduled for February 13 at 4 p.m. in the Franklin room of Houston Hall. It will focus on the values of getting a Ph.D.

Furthermore, S. 36th Street Philadelphia, PA 19104

By Jennifer Arend

Lorraine M. Gutierrez, Ph.D.

Lecture time and conversation. 
The facility opened Wednesday is the former location of McCelland Ex-

Thursday, February 6, 1997

For February 13 at 4 pm in the Franklin room of Houston Hall. It will focus on the values of getting a Ph.D.

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UA begins outreach program

The group distributed flyers in dormitories last week to inform students about its membership and agenda.

By Stephanie Cooperman

The Undergraduate Assembly (UA) is attempting to familiarize students of Undergraduate Assembly activities, the group's outreach campaign last week by tabling information sheets under the dome of campus residences.

The group also plans to contact 1200 student organizations—ranging from the Pennsylvania College of Liberal Arts to student government and student media groups—by tabling at their offices in order to make them aware of their specific policy needs.

If you are interested in attending the meeting of the Undergraduate Assembly, contact Mark Butcher, Speakman and Class of '28 at the Quadrangle and Van Pelt Library, 1310 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102-2191.

The UA members distributed sheets to all campus residences—including Rutledge, Sprague, and Class of '39 in the Quadrangle and Van Pelt College House, which will receive the flyers later this week.

UA member Al Luna said, "There were too many words so it needed to be redone. It's a new milestone—just as our nations are strong allies and friends.

"To know that all these people are working together in inspirations," said Engineering sophomore Kahn Lee, "is exciting about the impact the donation will have on the foundation."
The Daily Pennsylvanian
The Independent Student Newspaper of the University of Pennsylvania
11th Year of Publication

Page 6
Thursday, February 6, 1997

Not a unified institution

Administrators need to decide if Penn is adhering to the "One University" concept.

Administrators should stop fooling us and themselves into believing that Penn is moving towards the "One University" ideal.

With the current "responsibility center budgeting" system, schools are competing with one another for students from other schools to fill their classes. The system also discourages student transfers, even between faculty since they must contribute to the professors' salaries, thus preventing the professors from moving around the University.

The International Studies in Business is a successful program that provides students with the educational opportunity to study abroad. But these programs are not as good as they can be. For example, the "College of Arts and Sciences does not have a substantive program with the Law School because it simply can't afford to establish one. The Wharton School of Business does have the funds to offer programs like this with Penn's graduate schools, and so we set new Wharton initiatives almost daily.

If Penn were truly "One University," the schools would concentrate more on their educational value and wouldn't worry so much about those programs' financial pitfalls. Schools of Art and Science and Wharton School of Finance and Policy would hire world-class faculty members, and the people, including students, would love it.

The system doesn't put enough emphasis on the University's "educational responsibility." School administrators need to fundraise specifically for their schools - knowing the school will keep all of whatever monetary donations are given. A "One University" concept would demand that Penn administrators fundraise for Penn, the institution, not the individual schools.

University officials shouldn't claim Penn is "One University" unless they can prove it. "One University" doesn't mean it's not real. And the way these schools work to compete financially proves that Penn is not.

LETTERS

The Beautiful city of New York

To the Editor:

My goodness. After reading Jason Brenner's column on New York (GP, 2/4/97), a normal person would be going to New York. Being a native New Yorker, to a point, I would like to ask Mr. Brenner one of those dry, slightly offended by Brenner's column, questions: Was "New York City" ever as great as things "New York City"? I mean really, New York City is a circus, I won't even try to describe it. I am sure, so many different people and the transportation is pretty good, probably the best in the nation.

Now, return to New York. Do you remember the days when you didn't have to wait too long for a taxi. Even though I am sure your traffic is just as bad, but that charge is all you will have to pay. But there were places charging just $2 to get in and these places were good. But besides that, things were better in New York, the sewers, the garbage, the streets and the people. Now you walk around one way, I would rather shop in New York than New Jersey. They have the best food and the best coffee. I don't know what you list the price for the LIUG.R. Maybe I am just used to seeing this or maybe you are just not accustomed to being surrounded with something totally different from your normal way of living but New York isn't that bad. Really. I New York!!!

Sylvere Bexnerr
College '99

MBAs' beer of choice

To the Editor:

I write in response to Jason Brenner's article "The University of Wharton: "God bless," No. 1 in the country."

I have strong interest with the changes made by the Wharton School since the addition of the graduate student body. My first year in the undergraduate Wharton was a disaster. I thought I had made a mistake. I was going to get a more liberal education and I was so wrong. I have received an A in every class so far. So, I am a very happy Wharton student.

And by the way, the undergrads often overload the dining hall. There are very good reasons to continue a fine tradition in the form of a private dining club, a tradition that has existed at Wharton since the days of the Wharton M.P. Since the Wharton MBA Pub has remained a recent memory service Coors Light.

Daniel Paul Asker
Wharton MBA Pub Manager
Wharton doctoral student

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Daniel Paul Asker
Wharton MBA Pub Manager
Wharton doctoral student

http://thelyperianian.com
Penn Band tunes up

By Mike Jaccarino

Both the Penn Band and a hotel at-
tended arranging fresh roses greet-
the arrivals of students 

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The Daily Pennsylvanian
Clinton claims budget surplus by 2002

**Morgan, Witter merge operations**

The deal will create the world's largest securities firm.

WASHINGTON — Morgan Stanley, the nation's largest investment bank, has agreed to merge with Dean Witter & Co., an up-and-coming rival that has been bullish about the stock market.

"We're very excited about this," said Morgan's chief executive officer, John Mack. "It will enable us to offer clients a broader range of services and to compete more effectively with larger firms."
thursday, February 6, 1997

TODAY'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Today, educational systems across the country are grappling with how to define acceptable student behavior; avoid using the money to support activities that researchers can prove help reduce drug use; and have poor attendance among high school seniors. The Department of Health and Human Services found that a trend of increasing drug use among high school seniors began in the early 1990s continuing through 1995. A new survey of high school seniors surveyed said they smoke marijuana daily.

U.S. takes over Alaska land damaged by Exxon spill

Washington — Nearly 60,000 acres of land damaged by the Exxon Valdez oil spill was turned over to the U.S. and Alaska government agencies yesterday to insure their recovery and future use.

The land was purchased for $12 million from the Chevron Corp., as an Alaska native village. The land came from the billion dollar settlement the Alaska National Heritage Act. The new land will be managed as an Alaska state park.

"We can't take this land back anymore," Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said in an interview with The Associated Press in New York. "This is the first of many, many acres of land that are the most popular, the easiest to get across its anti-drug message to our students," Clinton said.

The guidelines suggest that school districts tailor the programs to the community, define activities to meet reasonable goals, stop playing the "moral superiority game," and work with schools rather than just telling them what to do. "We must teach our children to be good citizens," Clinton said.

The guidelines state that school districts should allocate funds to the programs under the Education Department's Safe and Drug-Free Schools program. "If there are any outstanding concerns that we need to get to before they get to the floor with the dollars we need," Governor and ambassador Averell Harriman was the daughter of a British baron, and propelling her to power and wealth. She was 76. She suffered a stroke Monday afternoon.

"The ambassador died at 3:48 this afternoon," said Bill Modzeleski, director of the bureau. "It is with sadness that we announce the death of [Ambassador Harriman]."

"We really need to come to grips with what works and what doesn't work," said Debra Glickson, professor at the University of Maryland's criminology department, about school discipline.

"We must teach our children to be good citizens," President Clinton acknowledged the battle to stop the latest explosion of drug use in our schools," Clinton said.

TUESDAY, February 7, 1997

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kevin Richards, Director of the bureau

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TUESDAY, February 7, 1997

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HOW TO PLACE AN AD

BY PHONE
Call (215) 898-0581
Telephone lines are open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed weekends.

BY FAX or E-MAIL
Dial (215) 898-2650 or e-mail advertising@dpenn.edu.
24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Include the ad text, dates you want it to run, your name and phone number, your credit card number with expiration date and your name as it appears on your credit card.

IN PERSON
Come to 4045 Walnut, 2nd floor.
Office hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed weekends.

BY MAIL
Send to: Classifieds, The Daily Pennsylvanian,
4045 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104
Enclose the ad text, dates you want it to run, your name and phone number, and your credit card number (check or your credit card number with expiration date).

CLASSIFIED LINE AD RATES
Regular line classified ads are proof by the number of words:
- 1 day: $6.75 per word
- 2-5 days: $6.25 per word
- 6-10 days: $5.75 per word
- 11 or more days: $5.25 per word

NOTES: There is a 10-word minimum on all classified ads. Those numbers count as one word. Check your ad the first day it runs. Transfers or proffs are not supplied for classifieds.

ONLINE CLASSIFIES
Any regular classified can also be listed on the "DP Interactive" World Wide Web site for 50 per ad per day.
View online classified at www.dpenn.edu.

OPTIONAL HEADLINES
These headlines are automatically included on all ads:
- One-week minimum
- Maximum 18 characters per line
- Options include: 1.40 or 1.50 per word per day
- Maximum 12 characters per line

DEADLINES & PAYMENT
Regular line ads (new, changes, cancellations):
1) From 3 p.m. one business day preceding publication.
2) Classified Display ads (new, changes, cancellations):
   3) From 3 p.m. two business day preceding publication.

PAYMENT
 Classified ads must be paid in full at the time of placement. None will be billed.

AD BEARS
No classified accounts are given to unclassified ads. Visa, MasterCard and American Express cards are accepted.

CLASSIFIED DISPLAY AD RATES
Classified Display (boxed) ads are priced by size. Ad sizes are measured as the number of columns of display. The minimum rate is $65. The size of each inch is worth $65. Crossed out rates are those of inches. (i.e. column wide by "tall") and cost $17.50 per ad.

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Thursday, February 6, 1997

IVY ROUNDUP

JUSTICE FOR ALL EDITION

By Josh Callahan

We have been interested in the nation of Kangaroo Islands that is about to be declared by Thursday night's official on planet Jupiter. The Kangaroo Islands will become an entire nation for the U.S. verdict while the President hammering on the Kangaroo Islands with his mighty speech. Actually, we have at Roundup don't know exactly what is going on the Kangaroo Islands and even the Kangaroo Islands. We can only guess that there is an attempt to create a new nation in the world. We will continue to follow this story as it unfolds.

Under Appreciated Cheer Of The Week

During the basketball game between Penn and Cornell, there was a moment when the crowd started to cheer in support of the Cornell player who had just made a basket. This was a surprising moment in the game, and Roundup was shocked that the Big Red Splat's fans were not more supportive of their team. However, Roundup repeated, "Hey! (pause) Penn! (pause) Die! (pause) Drop Dead! (pause) You Suck!" The fans at the game were very vocal in their support of the Cornell team.

The Hall of Justice of the Week

This week's entry to the Hall of Justice is Thompson, who is Cornell's basketball coach. Thompson is known for his demanding style of coaching, which he uses to motivate his players to fight against the lack of respect shown to them. Thompson's coaching style is often criticized, but Roundup appreciates his efforts to bring the team back to the top of the nation's elite. Joe Jordan and (k.-off Owens see this year.

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475 E. Spruce Street
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FOR INFORMATION OR AN APPOINTMENT

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Benjamin Mitchell's ultimate goal is to play in a Big Ten conference match. According to Dartmouth, the other teams also have to do something to get past the University of Pennsylvania, the top team in the Ivy League. "The coaches at Dartmouth owe it to their opponents to make sure everybody's getting the ball," Mitchell said. "We're going to have to do a good job of competing all the way up to the fourth set, because we need to prove we are the team with the most hustle," Miller said.

The Penn-Dartmouth match is taking place after the Penn-Drexel meet is taking place after the Penn-Drexel match on Saturday. He'll even have his friends and faculty from high school sure he's better than the Quakers' team experience, playing two live fixtures at the top spot, followed by junior spring. The Penn-Drexel match won't be easy, according to Miller.

Penn coach Gene Miller hopes this season with such intense competition, the Quakers aren't taking any shit. "We're going to have to do a good job of competing all the way up to the fourth set, because we need to prove we are the team with the most hustle," Miller said. "After a long fall season, hopes for a good start to the fall season have returned to the curriculum. But according to Miller.

Mitchell said, "I definitely try to be a leader," and we've been practicing real hard. The Penn-Drexel match won't be easy, according to Miller.

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LANDOVER, Md. — Jim Lynam was fired Tuesday as coach of the Washington Bullets, who are fast making a mess of a season that began with great expectations.

General manager Wes Unseld met with Lynam in a Denver hotel before announcing the dismissal. The Bullets were to play the Nuggets later Tuesday night. Unseld took the interim head coach. "It felt that it was necessary at this time to make a change in the head coaching position," he said. "We have committed a tremendous amount of energy to this team, but it was just not working."

Unseld told the team of his decision before the morning practice. The Bullets also fired assistant coach Brice Evans.

After a 19-15 start, the Bullets lost nine of 12 games and were owning of resources to this team, but it was just not working. "We have committed a tremendous amount of energy to this team, but it was just not working."

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After nine losses in 12 games, Bullets fire Lynam
By Erkalh Reddy

Dartmouth coach Dave Faucher smiles when the topic is Kenny Mitchell. "He talk on the phone, but the lieutenant on the court," Faucher said. "He has brightened after hearing Mitchell's name. "He's not here for basketball. He always has been," Faucher said. "It's his last year, and he's improved so much. He's an extremely competitive guy." Mitchell is a pretty good basketball player, Faucher said. "He always scored highly in the country. In fact, Mitchell leads the nation with 5.2 points per game. "I think he's as good as any point guard in the league," Faucher said. "I don't trade him for anyone. He's as important as any- one on our team. The way he plays, he's absolutely critical." Faucher adds he did not expect Mitchell to have this much of an impact on the Dartmouth program when he recruited him. Ac- tually, Mitchell saw little playing time as a froshman, sitting behind first-team All-Ivy guard Greg France.

But at least one person knew Mitchell would be a success. "He's very bright, very intelligent, ex- tremely competitive," Penn assistant coach Gil Jackson said. "That definitely stood out to him, very, very early. When I first met Kenny, Jackson, and Mitchell go back a long way. Mitchell played high school at the Sanford School in Wilmington, Del., where Jackson was the head coach until 1986. Mitchell was a freshman at Sanford during Jackson's first year as a volunteer assistant at Penn. But Jackson continued to teach his- tory at the school, and that was how he grew close to Mitchell. As a senior, Mitchell was interested in at- tending an Ivy League school. He got advice from Jackson, who in turn brought Mitchell to Faucher's attention.

In 1996-97, the Penn women's basketball team welcomed two first-year assistant coaches. Devonna Williams (left) and Renate' Costner (center) are responsible for running practices, recruiting and helping Quakers head coach Julie Bozser (right) make game-time decisions.

M. Tennis wakes up to first two matches

By Kevin Mahoney

The Smiths will meet again, but the Quakers will have the Brunswickers in their sights. In the past, they have been the Quakers' biggest obstacle. But this year, they will have the chance to finish the season on a high note.

Soriero's new assistants key to rise of W. Hoops

By Justin Feil

The new faces on the Penn women's bas- ketball team are no reason the Quakers, at 4-6, have already tucked last year's season- tal Premier League Gaithersburg Betty Fairby and Jen Hoover have posted record totals in several of Paris' victories.

But two other fresh faces who deserve cred- it for their contributions are the Quakers first- year assistant coaches, Renata Cohter and Debiowing Williams, who have replaced di- cin's new-look team for the first time this season.

"We may have gotten to a point last year where everything about our team was state," Penn junior guard Hope Smith said. "They've brought positive attitudes and a new outlook.

Cohter and Williams also brought ex- perience and energy to a basketball pro- gram that sorely needed both. Cohter comes to Penn from Robert Morris, where she served as the head coach for the past two years. Williams, who is attending a university for the first time, started at point guard for Elon (N.C.) College. Williams also played at Emmanuel College before her first coaching job as an assistant at San Diego State. Williams then went to coaching Minnehaha Regional High School and last year worked assisting Springfield (Mass.) College.

I like Renata's experience, and i think that Renata brings a lot of energy to what we have impressed with," Penn head coach Julie Bozser said. "I liked Devonna's desire to be around coaching. She's very hungry to learn.

"One of the reasons we were brought in is because we are both very eager. We both, as well as Julia, want at the same things -- to have a top-notch team," Williams said. Neither Cohter nor Williams found the transition to Penn to be difficult because of the support of the Pen."
The Diner Crawl
By Benjamin Xavier Kim

IN THIS ISSUE:
• A new psychedelic experience: trippin' at the IMAX.
• Tupac and Tim, together at last in Gridlock'd.
To London and back
Going abroad is a trip of self-discovery.

BY KAREN PASTERNACK

You are dancing into a wall, my mother said. No, I'd thought that was impossible. Penn was my first choice school. I had loved it and applied early. I never expected to come down off the high I felt freshman year. But then suddenly, I was stuck somewhere in the middle of sophomore year, walking the Walk, but feeling numb.

I didn't want to become jaded about Penn. I knew it was a special place, but I also knew that it was losing my individuality. The creativity and excitement that had sparked within me was gradually dwindling. I needed to find out what really held me. So I decided to find out what really held me. I didn't want to conform to a comfort zone. I started my own path. I left Penn and went to London.

Going abroad is a trip of self-discovery. I knew it was a trip of self-discovery. And although difference can be intimidating, I felt that it was refreshing. The experience of commuting every day via the underground system, and having the city as my campus enabled me to explore the atmosphere in a separate way from the fixed pattern I had established at Penn. Even within Hampstead village, there was a sense of history and culture I'd never experienced before. I saw how the temporary change in atmosphere were incredibly stimulating. I saw how the temporary change in atmosphere were incredibly stimulating. I saw how the temporary change in atmosphere were incredibly stimulating. I saw how the temporary change in atmosphere were incredibly stimulating.

When I first arrived in London, everything seemed extremely different. Initially, it was overwhelming, but then every day became an adventure. The complete change in atmosphere gave me the most refreshing feeling. And although difference can be intimidating, I felt that it was rejuvenating.

I was exhilarated by the personality of the city. Never had I spent the morning at Charles Dickens' house, given to class, and spent the rest of the day at an art museum. It was clear to me that the challenge of defining myself was the most important part of my trip. Close friendships did not form at Penn. I was exhilarated by the personality of the city. Never had I spent the morning at Charles Dickens' house, given to class, and spent the rest of the day at an art museum. It was clear to me that the challenge of defining myself was the most important part of my trip.
By Gary Kiang

It has been a little over 16 years now since Debbie Gibson, teen-pop sensation, appeared from “Out of the Blue” to capture our hearts and our imaginations. Debbie’s special gift for combining poignant lyrics with heartfelt and inspirational melodies gave rise to a whole new generation of female singers who have followed in her footsteps. Popular artists such as Alanis Morissette, Jewel, Donna Lewis, and many all pay homage to Debbie Gibson and credit her as an inspiration to their careers.

“Debbie Gibson started it all. If it weren’t for her, I would still be selling ice cream to fat men with hairy buttcracks,” says female pop diva Lisa Loeb. “She is the ‘Mother of the Single White Female Pop Revolution.’”

Most members of the Single White Female Pop Revolution echo Miss Loeb’s comments. 10 years later, it still may be too soon to assess the total impact that Debbie Gibson has made on history. Debbie Gibson was a pioneer who brought the themes of young love and teenage wonder out of the closet and into the nation’s consciousness. With such hits as “Out of the Blue,” “Shake your Love,” and “No More Blue,” Debbie Gibson rewrote all the rules of popular music. Recently, I had a chance to talk to Debbie about her life, her career, and her place in history. The following are excerpts from our eight hour long interview.

Debbie Gibson on her early days

In the beginning, I just wrote from my personal experiences. I mean, I was a teenager, and I didn’t know that much about what was going on in the world, but I did know about my own life. I think I remember writing “Out of the Blue.” I wanted to describe my love for Corbin Bernsen of L.A. Law, and it was as if this love just struck me as if falling from out of the sky. But then I looked up, and I was like hey, this sky is blue, and out of the blue love appeared! And the rest is history. The great thing about that song is that yeah, the sky is blue, and you can say, love came out of the sky. But you know what else is blue? The ocean. So you can also interpret “Out of the Blue” to mean that love came out of the ocean. Another thing is, usually when people are sad, they describe themselves in terms of the color blue. So another meaning for the song is that love is bringing me out of my sadness. This is what I think I enjoy most about songwriting. There are so many different subtle interpretations for each of my songs, and I think my gift was that I realized this in my early days.

Debbie Gibson on her contemporaries

Many people associate me with Tiffany, because we came out at about the same time, and we were both so young and so successful. And you know, I think many people think that we hated each other, but that is just not the case. Tiffany and I sort of had a healthy competition. We both sort of had the same message, but we went about conveying the message in two totally different ways. Tiffany was a genius in her own right. People say Tiffany just sang other people’s music, but those people never listened to what she was doing with that music and the subtle changes she made, which enhanced the meaning of the song. Tiffany’s message. For instance, she sang an old Beatles song, but she changed the lyrics from “I saw her standing there” to “I saw him standing there.” I mean, I don’t think people fully understood these little changes can contribute to changing the entire meaning of the song. This was absolute brilliance. I mean, look at when she sang “We’re Alone Now” in the shopping malls. Why was she singing in the malls, and why was she singing this specific song? Not many people understand the irony and the message that Tiffany was trying to get out. She was singing, “I think we’re alone now, doesn’t seem to be anyone around.” Yet there were so many people around! That is true irony!

Debbie Gibson on the current generation of the SWFPR and her legacy

I am really proud of today’s girls. They are all so beautiful and talented. They are just wonderful. I think they have carried on the tradition of what Tiffany and I did. You can see a lot of what we were about in their songs today. The themes of love songs and words with many subtle hidden meanings are all there. I was listening to Alannis the other day and I think she has this one brilliant line where she’s like, “Will she go down on you in a theater?” Just in this one line, there are a ton of different meanings. “Down” meaning sad. Will she be sad when you go to the theater with her? Another meaning is that in theaters, you have to go down to the front and a lots of guys hate sitting in the front row. So the question becomes, “Is she going to make you go sit in the front row? Is she really going to do that to you in a theater?” And I can even offer you a third interpretation. “To go down on someone” can also mean to give them a mouth cleaning. So maybe some people even see this line as, “Will she give you a mouth cleaning in the theater?” Wonderfully elegant and delightfully ambiguous. I think that is my legacy to the single white female pop singers of today. May they remain strong.

On the Street Scene

With Fletcher Towell

The afterparty of my return to campus, there seems to have been a good deal of speculation about my dentity. There seems to be a prernium in my line of work, however; I feel like you deserve to know the man who’s watching you. To this end, I’ve included this fine artistic rendering of my celestial visage. Enjoy. Ladies and gents — I know I will.

You know, there’s something terribly wrong with Penn’s social scene when Theta’s on social probation for unethical rush practices, the self-appointed kings of the scene can’t attend a pledge class, and the Get-Laidnum’s once proudly Eurotrash Tuesdays have been overrun by a certain sorority’s five-foot and under crowd. Even downtown clubs aren’t the saving grace they once were. Just ask fresh Rain Steinberg (of Stemy-D fame), about it — he got mugged at Shampoo last weekend.

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**Tupac is dead and he's still cooler than you**

**Gridlock'd** showcases Shakur in his finest hour.

**By Jesse Ducker**

When **Gridlock’d** works, it works well. The film serves as a biting social commentary on the maze of red tape that obstructs people in need. The bureaucracy is so confusing, so frustrating, so infuriating that it threatens the sanity of those who already face seemingly insurmountable odds. **Gridlock’d** also does a brilliant job at portraying those so lost in despair that it takes a shot full of poison in the arm just to make it through the day. The heroin users no longer get high from it; they need it just to keep from being violently ill. As long as **Gridlock’d**, a film written and directed by actor Vondie Curtis Hall (*Chicago Hope*), covers this ground, the film is satisfying. But when the focus turns to more prosaic "Hollywood" subject matter, such as being on the run from drug-dealers, it gets dull.

In his first posthumous film, Tupac Shakur portrays Spoon, one-third of a jazz group on the brink of hitting the big-time in Detroit. The other two-thirds are Stretch (Tim Roth), and Spoon’s girlfriend, Cookie (Thandie Newton). Both Spoon and Stretch are heroin addicts, while Cookie stays away from the stuff. After a big show on New Year’s Eve, Cookie decides to try some of the smack, and subsequently ODs. After Spoon and Stretch finally get her to a hospital, they decide to try starting the New Year off right by kicking their heroin habits. They know that if they don’t get off the streets that day, it will never happen. They spend the rest of the day desperately trying to check themselves into a detoxification center, finding no help from an over-crowded, over-worked public assistance system. The frustration becomes so great that it causes a blind veteran to go into a berserk rage in a welfare office, smashing everything in sight just to get some attention.

All of the actors deliver excellent performances. It is a shame that Shakur finally gets to play a character who is not a clone of Bishop (his character in his first movie, *Juice*), and then he dies. The near death of Spoon’s girlfriend causes Shakur’s character to realize that his time and luck are running out and that he could very easily end up like her. In a particularly powerful scene, Spoon somberly tells Stretch of the first time he ever tried cocaine, and how his life subsequently entered a downward spiral. Roth is also admirable as Stretch, Spoon’s borderline-insane, best — and possibly only — friend. A crooked smirk remains on Roth’s face throughout the film, even with the very real possibility of death.

**Meet Mr. Burns’ long-lost son**

As we sat down to watch a bootleg video of *Meet Wally Sparks*, my friend told me that the film’s star, Rodney Dangerfield, is to funny people what *Star Trek* is to nerds. “Please explain your statement further,” I said, “for I am not so good with analogies.” Funny people, my friend suggested, enjoy *Star Trek* as much as nerds enjoy *Star Trek*. "Did you say ‘nerds’ or ‘birds’?" I asked. “Let’s just watch the movie,” he said.

The plot of the film — wild talk show host Wally Sparks gets invited to a governor’s mansion by the governor’s crafty son, causes lots of trouble, and then rescues his show and the governor’s career from impending doom — takes a back seat to the endless parade of sight gags, one-liners, and cameo appearances. I enjoyed this immensely; my friend was less enthusiastic. He bashed the film’s failed attempt to recreate the touching father-son moments between the characters in another Dangerfield movie, *Back to School*. "Well, you can’t really expect anyone to top *Back to School*," I told him, "because that movie is like *Star Trek: First Contact* to birds, only funny." "Lay off the analogies," he said.

My friend continued to voice his disappointment with the film, pointing out that the events of the last hour occurred almost entirely within the governor’s mansion. This gave the film an uneasy, claustrophobic quality, he said, like when his mom used to go to work and lock him in a closet. "Wow, that’s terrible," I said. "Do you want to talk about it, my friend?" He said that he had just made him up for this review, that I wasn’t a real friend, and that he hated me. "Hate me all you want," I told him, "because, my friend, I love Wally Sparks." Go see it.

—Steve Caputo

**Short Takes**

**No Shadows in this Conspiracy**

I’d like to tell you about the new political “thriller” *The Shadow Conspiracy*, but let me finish laughing first.

The film’s plot centers around the possibility that there is a “shadow” government that is truly running things in Washington, and it is ready to emerge — after they kill the patsy president, of course. Not if director George P. Cosmatos (*Bram Stoker’s First Blood Part II*) is at the helm.

Cosmatos and the screenwriters succeed in regurgitating too many Hollywood conventions. You want your sunglasses and trenchcoat-wearing, Marine-tough, cold-blooded killer? He’s here! Is it possible that we might have the young and bright hero who is being mysteriously set up? You got him! You want your flirtatious female sidekick? You get the idea.

The movie focuses on the attempted kidnapping of the young and bright Special Assistant to the President, Bobby Bishop (Charlie Sheen) and ace reporter Amanda Givens (Linda Hamilton) to subvert the conspiracy to kill the chief executive. While formulaic, it still should have been somewhat enjoyable. The tragedy of this film lies in its inability to live up to its billing as a suspenseful thriller. It contains asinine situations and plot twists that make the audience laugh rather than hold their breath. In addition to the implausible ways in which things occur (yeah, we can sneak in and out of the White House, sure), *Shadow Conspiracy* has the most ridiculous bike chase I’ve ever seen. Still, this is nothing compared to the way in which the assassin tries to kill the President. When you see this scene, you might begin to wonder how this script ever made its way through Hollywood to the big screen.

This movie definitely qualifies as my Leave-Ya-Brain-At-Home pick of the week. If you see *Shadow Conspiracy* (which you shouldn’t), it’ll be obvious to you that everyone involved with this garbage left theirs at home, too.

—Jamil Smith

**Gridlock’d**

**Starring:** Tim Roth, Tupac Shakur, Thandie Newton, Vondie Curtis Hall
**Directed by:** Vondie Curtis Hall
**Rated R** • Gramercy Pictures
**Playing at:** AMC Olde City 2, UA Sameric, and UA 69th Street

The only problem is that he continually slips out of his obviously phony American accent. Newton, albeit in a small role, should finally get her due respect as an up and coming actress through her convincing portrayal of the somewhat naive yet strong third member of the trio. **Gridlock’d** serves as a biting social commentary on the maze of red tape that obstructs people in need. The bureaucracy is so confusing, so frustrating, so infuriating that it threatens the sanity of those who already face seemingly insurmountable odds. **Gridlock’d** also does a brilliant job at portraying those so lost in despair that it takes a shot full of poison in the arm just to make it through the day. The heroin users no longer get high from it; they need it just to keep from being violently ill. As long as **Gridlock’d**, a film written and directed by actor Vondie Curtis Hall (*Chicago Hope*), covers this ground, the film is satisfying. But when the focus turns to more prosaic "Hollywood" subject matter, such as being on the run from drug-dealers, it gets dull.

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—Steve Caputo

**The Street Ratings Guide:** • • • • • blue plate special • • • • coffee • • • • french fries • • soup • hair in your omelette
Winter companions....
The buddy movie for the pre-pre-Gen X set fails to titillate — even with Walter's help.
BY MELISSA GOLDATE
Take two old men and their coming of age in the changing times. Combine it with a great deal of unnecessary dialogue, put in a few mildly humorous jokes, toss in a minor sensationalist subplot, and stretch it all painfully over approximately two hours and 20 minutes, and Voilà! You've got I'm Not Rappaport. Directed by Jon Penotti, this film adaptation of Herb Gardner's Tony Award winning play is a Grumpy Old Men gone awry. While the subject material, revolving around two men facing their pasts and dealing with their present lives, is a bit on the serious side, the movie seems to have been intended more as a comedy, judging by the abundance of somewhat funny one-liners interspersed throughout the movie. Now don't get me wrong, I'm Not Rappaport does have its moments, but after two hours of nearly substance-free dialogue, I probably would have found humor in a mass-murder slaying. The movie opens with a very serious tone, focusing on the passion of labor strikers in the early 20th century. Ned (Walter Matthau) witnesses the emotional struggle of these people as a young boy, and he is profoundly affected by their fire and determination. Throughout his life, Ned was a revolutionary always in search of a cause to fight for. But the film tries to prove his high ideals and wild imagin-ation catch up with him as the two men get into some serious trouble. Towards the end, a typical Geraldo-esque subplot is introduced that transforms this predictably slow, but somewhat charming movie into a half-assed attempt at typical '90s sensationalism. Not only does this uninteresting plot detract from the movie, but it needlessly adds another 30 minutes to the dragging ending. It almost seems as if the writer experienced some last-minute anxiety that mainstream audiences would not appreciate the dialogue-focused content, so he resorted to typical Hollywood tactics to detract from the audience at the final moments to ensure a satisfactory review. I'm Not Rappaport is not a completely negative experience. Walter Matthau and Ossie Davis give excellent performances, and the shots of Central Park are quite attractive; however, the overall plot is tedious and predictable. I'm Not Rappaport could just be a depressing example of the generation gap, but my grandfather's snoring during the movie led me to believe that generation gap or not, some movies are just bad.

I'm Not Rappaport
Starring: Walter Matthau and Ossie Davis
Directed by: Jon Penotti
Rated PG-13 • Gramercy Pictures
Playing at the Ritzy Five

The Cook, the Thief, His Wife, and Her Lover (1989)
This surreal British import is a mind-bending, stomach-turning celebration of gluttony, decadence, and pure sadism. The "thief" is actually a sort of gangster king, a raging mountain of flesh and venom with an all-consuming abusive streak. The revenge he exacts upon his adulterous wife is both revolting and chillingly appropriate; her retaliation is equally dark and demented. Cinematically the film is an intriguing departure; the director toys with his viewers' perceptions and emotions through mutable color schemes and stunning imagery. Though the film leaves a disturbing impression, and can be psychologically exhausting, it's a worthwhile adventure.
—Natalie Sharon Denney

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (1990)
Written and directed by God's gift to modern playwriting, Tom Stoppard's brilliant Hamlet spoof demonstrates a genuine appreciation of the opportunities to be creative when working with film while remaining true to the original play. Gary Oldman as the flighty Rosencrantz and Roth as his practical, sardonic counterpart cavort in a world of comedy and treachery at the heels of the tormented Prince of Denmark. Stoppard's dialogue is layered with oblique wit and myriad references reflecting the extent of the author's literary, artistic, and scientific literacy. The principal actors bring his words to life with energetic performances that indicate their skill as actors and as astute interpreters of the material.
Filmed in Stoppard's native Czechoslovakia, the scenery is a surprisingly appropriate complement to Stoppard's intense lighting and surreal cinematography. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is as much a visual feast as it is an intellectual one. Simultaneously entertaining and thought-provoking; this unforgettable film commands the viewer's attention and holds it long after the credits have rolled.
—Adrenaline Hyena Snot

Little Odessa (1994)
A master of accents, Roth delivers a chilling performance as a hit man for the Russian mafia in this underappreciated masterpiece. Set in Brighton Beach, New York, the film tackles the troubling family dynamic of a heartless, alienated criminal (Roth), his impressionable teenage brother (Edward Furlong), a dying mother (Vanessa Redgrave), and an unforgiving father, Furlong and Roth exhibit astonishing chemistry as the younger boy struggles to prove his manhood while holding together his decaying family. Little Odessa is darkly fascinating, a bleak and realistic portrayal of a transplanted culture and its antisocial underbelly.
—Leen Satan Heroin Den

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387-5440

Back in 1919, a group of gamblers were rumored to have fixed the World Series so the Reds would beat the White Sox. Gamblers my ass. Anyone who knows anything knows Street fixed that World Series.

So come to our meeting today at 6:30 p.m. to meet the people who get things done. Writers and designers are welcome to help us plot our next wily endeavor.

First 15 people find out about Street's role in the JFK assassination.
Radio Free Philadelphia

"Alternative" WDRE goes off the air tomorrow, but we stopped listening a long time ago.

By Brian Cross and Maureen Track

Pop quiz: it's a warm evening in September 1996, and you are feeling the spirits of alternative-music energy once again return to your consciousness as Sebadoh, one of the last remaining patriots of good indie music, prepares to take the stage at the TLA. Suddenly, a pugnaciously up front Marylinn Russel jumps on stage to pronounce WDRE's suspiciously sudden support for the band, immediately crushing your anticipation of a brief return to an era free of mass-market bandwagonism. What do you do? Well, if you were a member of that select audience, you'd boo her the fuck away.

Remember 1996? It was the time that Dr. Dre left N.W.A, WDRE became a radio station, and the music world was polarized. There was pop, comprised of honey-sweet artists like Mariah Carey, Bryan Adams, and Paula Abdul. There was also hip-hop, which was increasingly leaning towards "gangsta-rap," a genre to which no self-respecting, puma-wearing white teen could rightfully relate. And then there was alternative, initially dominated by the Movement Formerly Known as Grunge. As grunge decayed into a self-loving monotony a couple of years ago, punk was reborn, then "industrial" music surfaced, and ultimately some very mediocre music emerged. And WDRE went along for the whole ride.

When the station kicked off four years ago, they represented a distinct alternative to the contemporary ditties that infused pop radio. While other stations played Boyz II Men, Guns 'n Roses, and corporate alt-rock throw-aways like Toad The Wet Sprocket, WDRE championed true modern rock. They intermingled New Order, Soho, and Big Audio Dynamite with the Nirvana and R.E.M staples that contributed to the musical backbone of virtually every rock radio station. Those were golden days for WDRE: they wielded a power that older, more established stations didn't have. They could be indiscriminate in their choice of artists to feature — even including the likes of the Digable Planets and Sonic Youth when they wanted to. The only recurring theme seemed to be a refreshing eclectic assortment of good music. They truly were "Philadelphia's Modern Rock."

Yet the early '90s faded into the middle years of the decade, the station acquired a debilitating propensity to play pure, uncut horseshit. By the sinister workings of some mysterious, gruff-voiced authority, they seemed driven to replagad music a predictable set of modern rubbish that could put pop radio to shame with its degree of oppressive artlessness. With a songlist so desperately forgiving in its tediousness, they carved out an identity for themselves by permanently etching their "flavors of the month" into the brains of their poor listeners, offering little diversion beyond the confines of the playlist: Black Hole Sun, "Come Out And Play. "Better Man," "Good," "Ironic," "All I Want is the Girl," "Bullet With Butterfly Wings." We will doubtlessly remember the words to these songs long beyond kissing security. It is doubly so, however, whether we will ever want to hear them again.

By this time, there was nothing left to distinguish WDRE's playlist from Y100's (except for Y100's very admirable inclusion of rock classics, which WDRE effectively shunned). And even when WDRE unearthed a gem in the current tide, they naively believed the act of pounding it into their lineup, indiscernible powder by playing it no less than 70 times a day. So why even listen to the station? Y100 provided the alterna-pop fix, Penn's WXPX played more marginal alternative folk-rock, and Drexel's WDJD introduced the totally foreign alternative creations. WDRE no longer provided a service to Philadelphia's radio-listening public, and they fell out of the loop. It became a station to listen to only when the others were out of their minds. Now WDRE is bitter; today, it will get its last opportunity to play Smashing Pumpkins "33," Garbage's "I'm Only Happy When It Rains," and Bush's "Comedown," because come tomorrow, the station will exist no more.

What were their programmers thinking? Perhaps WDRE thought that "modern rock" began with Nirvana and ended with Green Day. But while they were creating a "Shirley Manson worship page" on their website, they altogether forgot about Suzanne Vega, Stereolab, and indeed — Sebadoh. They forgot that "modern rock" is as old as the Velvet Underground and as vital as the Pixies. By looking at the music they play as a trend, they have, themselves, become a trend, and no one can respect that.

So don't be too beside yourselves that radio's gone astray. With the demise of WDRE, there arises the chance for "alternative" music to rectify itself and the hope that Philadelphia's modern rock will finally find a deserving home on the FM dial.

ask mistress lola

Street goes to the expert to answer the questions of our innocent student body.

Dear Mistress Lola,

I have been spending a lot of time on the Internet lately, and I have had "cyber sex" with one of the people I was talking to. I really enjoyed it and would like to continue playing on-line. I am nervous, though, because my boyfriend doesn't know. Am I cheating?

Gotting It On-Line

Dear Getting It On-Line,

Well, you tell me. Are you cheating? Are you emotionally involved with the people you chat with on-line? Are you having these experiences with the same person many times? Do these people know who you are? If you answer "yes" to these questions, then you probably are cheating. If it is only the idea of seeing your sexual fantasy person out on the screen that excites you, then there is something you can do. Tell your boyfriend that you want to try cyber-sex with him. Hopefully, dirty talking with him will be better than the anonymous on-liners.

Dear Mistress Lola,

I am a junior girl in the College, and I am interested in Eng. Lit. I was wondering if I should go to see a play. I was thinking of The Taming of the Shrew. I have never seen any plays before, but I would love to go. My friend suggested that I should go by myself, but I am afraid to. I would love some advice.

Dear Friend,

Well, how did you feel about this flirtation? Were you slightly aroused, or were you confused and upset? It became something you should discuss this with your friend. If your platonic relationship is strong enough, then the incident will not be important. Perhaps it was a drunken moment that was misconstrued. Nonetheless, if you are concerned that it was a sexual incident, then I would talk to your friend about how you are feeling — be it excited or uneasy. In a situation like this, communication is crucial. Although, if you are uncomfortable about approaching him, you should see if and see if it happens again.

Dear Mistress Lola,

My boyfriend has this fascination with public hair — or more precisely, lack there-
U

pon entering the Franklin Insti-
tute’s spaceship-like Omniverse theater, intrepid moviegoers are greeted by an apathetic attendant who blandly announces, "If you suffer from motion sickness, you may want to leave" — or puke, whichever comes first. Her point is well-tak-

en, however, for soon the screen comes alive with an aerial adventure called "Symphony

Philadelphia," and if all you’ve got in your stomach is a few rum andokes and per-
haps some tasty brownies, you’re about to lose your lunch and your mind.

Though the feature show changes periodically, "Symphony Philadelphia" is the uni-

versal prelude. The short film, a sort of musical prelude, sends the viewer on a breathtaking tour of the city from the sky: a taxi cab, and a window-washer’s scaffolding, as it plun-

mets toward the pavement. The cab ride proves that even Philly has a certain beauty to it... when you’re going 70 miles an hour, you’re about to lose your lunch and your mind.

Streetlights and neon signs swirl into a Great Gatsby-esque blur as slow-moving pedestrians scurry out of the way and the sounds of the symphony rage in the back-
ground. The theater is specially designed to maximize the sensation of being in the action — the four-story, 70-foot-diameter domed screen completely surrounds the viewer’s peripheral vision, and 20,000 watts of amplification provide larger-than-life sound ef-

fects.

Most of the shows presented in this large-screen format take full advantage of its grandiose nature. Past Omniverse features have included a safari in the African Serengeti des-
t, with an aerial view of a stampeding herds of wildebeest that consumes the screen; an exploration of active volcanoes; an un-

dense documentary on sharks; and trips to South American tropical rain forests and dis-

eolate Antarctic cases. The films assume a National Geographic-type format, with

informative and often scientific narration, but the visual effects are pure blockbuster entertainment.

The Tuttleman Omniverse’s latest feature, Special Effects: Anything Can Happen, con-

tinues the tradition. In the words of director Ben Bunt, who spearheaded the sound crew of the original Star Wars release, "Filmakers began to experiment with special effects almost as soon as motion pictures were in-

vented. The history of special effects is the history of film.”

Bunt’s words reflect his reverence for film-

makers’ capacity to use such a versatile medium to produce gen-

uine magic. Special Effects: Anything Can Happen is a breathtaking Death Star explosion, a hi-
tech model set for the planet Mos Eisley, and creatures from the Jurassic Park mold. The film imparts a genuine appreciation for the technology and effort involved in pro-
ducing the final product, and the filmmakers’ enthusiasm is infectious.

Though the Star Wars effects are the main attraction, Jurassic Park, Independence Day, Kaca-
am, and several other films featuring elabor-
tate trompe-loiels also receive the big-screen treatment in the Omniverse’s latest offering.

Narrated by John Lithgow, the film em-

phasizes the individual artistic contribu-
tions of photographers, graphic designers, and technology wizards in producing what has become standard cinematic fare: flying people, lifelike dig-

tal animals, and fantastic explosions. NOVA and the National Science Foundation fund-
ed the Special Effects project, and their ap-

preciation of the science behind special effects is evident. According to NOVA exec-
utive producer Paula Apsell, "The science story is a natural, because special effects are all about perception. Knowing how the eye and brain work is an integral part of creating convincing effects.”

More than just convincing, many of the effects are nothing short of dazzling. The Omniverse magic has already attracted a number of Penn students to its enticing al-
ternative to ordinary movies. Judging from in-

terviews with satisfied Omniverse customers, sobriety isn’t critical, or even preferable. To

ensure that this did not become a partisan ar-
ticle, reflecting the opinions of a single low-

ly Penn student, this intrepid reporter descended on an entire crowd of lowly Penn students who had just returned from the Spec-

ial Effects show and culled a few revealing yi-
gnettes from their stream of excited ramblings. When asked what she enjoyed about the theater, one girl responded, "It helped that we were drinking... but I guess you can’t put that in the article.” Oh yes I can.

In the words of one freshman, asked if he’d accompanied the posse to the show, "Yes, but I don’t remember it.” Another revealer, brimming with childlike exuberance and eag-

er to share his transcendent Omniverse ex-

perience with anyone who would listen, described the theater as “cool.” He reflected, "They’ve got this big fucking screen, and they do a lot of cool shit on the big fucking screen. It was such a good experience. The most in-

teresting part for me is a huge Star Wars fan was seeing the new scenes and effects for the movie. They put in all these new animals, and it helps to make Luke (Skywalker, dah) look more rural when he’s on Tatooine. There’s all these animals around, and it’s like word up, this guy’s a farm boy.”

Clearly, the fact that the theater is housed within a nationally-renowned science mu-

seum doesn’t reduce its status as a great place to spend a Saturday night. Everyone who was interviewed concurred that the Tuttle-

man Omniverse presents a great opportu-
nity to get away from campus and sample a part of what the rest of the city has to offer, far surpassing the ordinary movie-going expe-

rience.

Film Editor Natalie Denney once played a practical joke with some special effects of her own... can you say, "Disappearing martini?”

For show times call (215) 448-1111
Street takes a bleary-eyed look at some of Philadelphia's all-night diners.

By Benjamin Xavier Kim

Perhaps it's the fact that breakfast food can be ordered at any hour of the day or night. Or maybe the indefinable thrill of being called "hon" or "baby" by a waitress, regardless of your age or gender. And still others find comfort in a place where the night never seems to end. Whatever the attraction, it's clear that America's love affair with the 24 hour diner is still going strong; and the scene one might find on a Friday or Saturday night makes Edward Hopper's depiction of late-night diner life, *Nighthawks At The Diner*, look positively morgue-like in comparison.

There is a conspicuous shortage of such all-night diners in the University City area — the American Diner on 42nd and Chestnut being the only one open 24 hours a day on weekends — which is a shame. College students are notorious for depriving themselves of sleep for no good reason at all, and the only places to go after a night's revellers are Wawa or 7-Eleven (where they make an effort to cater to the day's supercomputers).

With this in mind, here are a few diners where they make an effort to cater to the nocturnal set, proving that not all of Philadelphia shuts down after two a.m. So grab a bottomless cup of Joe, a piece of banana cream pie, and watch the hours tick by...

SILK CITY DINER
(5th and Spring Garden Streets)
Open 7 am - 12 am Sun. through Thurs.; open 24 hours Fri. and Sat.

When one walks into the Silk City Diner, one might recognize a vague resemblance to the American Diner in West Philadelphia, Letti, (no last name given) a waitress at Silk City, says it isn't coincidental. The Silk City Diner and American Diner were once owned by the same people.

"Four years ago, the owners sold the West Philly American Diner and its name," says Letti. "So when that happened, this diner just changed its name to the Silk City Diner because it was right next to Silk City Lounge." Indeed, when scanning the Saturday night crowd at the diner, it is all too apparent that many of these patrons could easily be Silk City clubbers as well. Often the clientele is as young and hip as the waitstaff, and many are usually en route to or finishing up with one of Silk City's dance nights or live concerts. However, according to manager Jacques Gallard, the crowd varies, especially during the morning and daytime hours, when the older and more working-class customers stop by. In fact, even the waitresses are older during the day shift.

"One woman, Ella, has been with the diner for 26 years," says Letti. "She's got customers who've been coming in to see her all that time."

The jukebox at Silk City is not only amazing in its vintage design (definitely an authentic relic from the past), but for its wide song selection, which mixes up the usual oldies-theme diner music (the Ventures' "Hawaii Five-O") with more contemporary hits (Chaka Khan's "I Feel For You"). Unfortunately, the jukebox is left off during Saturday nights (the "Back To Basics" dance party). As Gallard says, "With all the music from the club and then all the noise in here, it would just be too much." Other than that, the antique decorations are kept to a minimum and the subtle retro-design of the diner is bathed in colors of gray and pastel pink. The food is one of the least greasy in terms of diner fare and the selections are extensive, offering many vegetarian-friendly items, and can be surprisingly fancy. Despite the gourmet-like selection, the prices are quite reasonable. According to Gallard and Letti, the diner's chocolate bread pudding and huevos rancheros are the most famous dishes. Of course, their side orders (macaroni and cheese, black beans and rice, quesadillas, etc.) are excellent as well and a few of those should more than make up a meal.

The location of the Silk City Diner might make it seem to be an unattainable fantasyland, but rest assured that it is easily accessible by SEPTA via the Blue Line. And if dancing amongst the faux-leopard skin set isn't your thing, the food alone is definitely worth the trip. And if the food isn't a good enough reason to venture out to North Philly, consider that Silk City Lounge bar provides alcoholic drinks to the diner so you can die from cirrhosis of the liver from the beer or urinary tract infection from the coffee — pick your poison!

CHEAP ART CAFE
(250 South 12th Street)
Open 24 hours a day

Just because the art on the walls is cheap doesn't mean the quality of the food at the Cheap Art Cafe is shoddy.

The waitstaff is predominantly male — unusual for a diner. As the name indicates, the art adorning the space usually sells for under $100, which is refreshing after seeing other establishments with pieces by local artists going for ridiculous prices (and then usually spawning such deep conversations as "What is art, really?" and "I could do that!").

As far as the rules about smoking go, the menu asks patrons of the Cheap Art Cafe to be considerate of others and to refrain from...
smoking clove cigarettes, pipes, and cigars (though regular cancer sticks are fine). The food, while typically diner, does have some standouts, such as the Cafe Fries (served with jalapeño peppers and cheese) and the delicious desserts. Beware, calorie-outliers — the cakes are served not so much in slices but slabs (think Stonehenge) and are garnished with two large burial mounds of whipped cream. It is also rumored that the chocolate sodas, which are made on the premises, are to die for. A caveat: there is no milk in their chocolate sodas, just carbonated water mixed with chocolate powder (a chocolate soda in the most technical sense of the term).

Other features include a very diva-heavy and dance-oriented DJ jukebox (selections have included the Eurythmics’ “Here Comes The Rain Again,” Donna Summer’s “I Feel Love,” and the Pointer Sisters’ “Automatic”) and a Ms. Pac-Man sit-down machine.

There is no counter, only tables. The chairs are hard plastic, reminiscent of high school assemblies in the gym. The crowd is a mix of bohemian and glamorous, young and old, but definitely Center City. It’s a more low-key place to visit than the other diners, especially conducive to tortured souls seeking a place to write despondent poetry.

**DINNER ON THE SQUARE**

*1839 Spruce Street*

Open 24 hours a day

Diner On The Square, or “DOTS” to those who pretend to be in the know, is decorated like a quintessential theme diner — Brakowa watch clock, vintage Mobil Gas sign, and lots and lots of neon. The lighting is very bright and the walls are painted white as well, with a very suspicious red and blue color scheme running through the interior. More than a few Penn students have already discovered Diner On The Square due to its relatively easy access by Escort van. One can also expect loud barflies to add to the lively atmosphere around three or four o’clock. A few police officers regularly drop by as well, so you may want to save your drug deals for another venue.

The menu is more limited than most diners’ and the one-free-refill-only policy on coffee is unforgivable, plus there is a five-dollar minimum per person at tables on the weekends, and the prices are somewhat expensive. But, there are some very interesting breakfast combinations available that may surprise you with their tastiness — the Corn Muffin Delight has eggs and peppers served with a toasted corn muffin. Despite the prices and the policies, the diner’s cushy booths can provide a comfortable hang-out for a large group of friends.

**LITTLE PETE’S**

*(17th and Chancellor Streets)*

Open 24 hours a day

Directly across from the Warwick Hotel, Little Pete’s is the consummate diner experience without the glitz. The name alone conjures up images of malloso relaxing after a hard day’s work of bumping off various no-goodniks (although in reality, this is hardly the case). The color scheme is brown brick and wood, with huge timbers going across the ceiling like some kind of urban ski lodge. There is virtually no sign of vintage paraphernalia on the walls. A lone neon sign saying “TAKE OUT” hangs at the far end of the long counter. There are also a few cute little red vending machines dispensing 25 cent candy for charity.

The waitstaff is made up of that older, streetwise, Philly-accented career-waitress bunch you expect to be working the graveyard shift — friendly yet brusquely professional. Consequently, service is usually very fast and devoid of error. And as a bonus, if you come in more than once, they will acknowledge you as a “regular,” just the way it should be.

It’s easy to be overwhelmed by the menu at Little Pete’s. It’s three cubits tall, crammed chock full of more items than you could shake a proverbial stick at. The omelette sandwich, and entire sections are extensive to say the least. The prices are also very sensible, with the most expensive dishes involving seafood. The vanilla milkshake, the creamed chipped beef, and the humongous Greek salad are all recommended by various patrons.

The clientele at Little Pete’s is quite varied. The young and old frolic with the nouveau-riche and the old money, and raver club kids eat alongside security guards. The unity is truly moving. Saturday nights get very crowded and the atmosphere is usually loud and boisterous. Expect schmaltzy ‘80s rock staples like “Nothing’s Gonna Stop Us Now” by Starship to enhance the mood.

The special feature of Little Pete’s which distinguishes it from all the rest is because Ms. Pac-Man stand-up machine. Or, should I say, Ms. Crack-Man. Yes, it’s one of the speed-up versions that allow players to let past the pretzel level in no time at all — or at least before your order comes. If you let the waitresses know that you’re going to hit Ms. Pac-Man, they’ll tap on the window to let you know when your food is ready.

**MIDTOWN IV**

*(2601 3 Chestnut Street)*

Open 24 hours a day

The Midtown IV is a very large and dark restaurant that feels like a shadow of its former self. Even the walls, with their tarnished golden veneer and dark wood paneling, seem to recall a past decade or era. According to Dolores (again, no last name given), one of the waitresses, “It’s gone downhill since the restaurant began.” They built the Convention Center and that’s the worst thing that could happen. You know the businessmen and people who go there (the Convention Center), they don’t want to leave.” The Midtown usually isn’t all that full, with most of the patrons being working-class regulars. There is a very surreal feel to the place; it wouldn’t be hard to imagine Kubrick or Lynch having a field day filming the Midtown.

The walls have some of the more interestingly themed-decor of any restaurant — faded paintings of Greece. There is also a painting of one of the late co-owners of the Midtown restaurants (as the name indicates, there are others in Philly), a smiling Greek man whose name even Dolores admits she doesn’t know. But she did say that “Greek people, they stay up all night. At least, that’s the way it was back in the ‘80s.”

The waitstaff at Midtown are also of the career-waitress mold, but more talkative, as they aren’t as many people to take care of at once. Many, like Dolores, are more than happy to chat away and crack jokes about all things while you eat. There is a separate breakfast menu with many deals (such as the feta cheese omelette, home fries, toast, coffee or tea — all for the low low price of $4) and the other menu is rather expansive, folding into itself three times. The food is not of the highest caliber and for some strange reason, the restaurant uses Kraft ketchup instead of good old Heinz. But the service is friendly and the prices are very inexpensive, and if you want to avoid the hustle and bustle of the usual Saturday night crowd, you’ll feel like you own the place once you step inside.

When your last meal feels like a distant memory and you’re in need of a final pit stop before heading home, give the diner option a spin. Think of it as an aerobic cool-down for a night out where you can decompress, recount the evening’s events and replenish all those nutrients lost through excessive partying. The twenty-four hour zone can last as long as you can.

Benjamin Xavier Kim is Street’s Culture editor. Due to his rigorous blood drinking schedule, he is unable to grant any requests for interviews.
Look, I just need my Space
Britain's latest export offers up an alternative to alternative.

By ALEX LING

Since WDRE's gone, now is the perfect opportunity for Philly's
Barnett-heads to escape from the
clutches of grunge. What's the best
way to detox from Seattle's gui-
tar-driven homogeny? Consider
the debut release by Liverpool's
very own techno/flamenco/hip-
hop/lounge/Britpop quartet
Space. may be just what the doc-
tor ordered. Careful, though — it
packs quite a punch.

What makes this CD so potent?
Colors, man — lots and lots of col-
ors. Contrasting with grunge's
mournful, gray-filled landscape, Spe-
ders is filled with an eclectic vari-
ty of timbres, styles, and moods.
Space's sound can best be likened
to an all-star band out of
Spain: a Spanish disco featuring a
lizard Esquivel, Grand Master
Flash, Damo Mama, and the cast
of Monty Python.

Freddy Griffiths, the band's res-
ident keyboard player, assembles
the songs (with help from Black
Grape producer Stephen Lironi)
by meshing together a variety of
disparate genres with his skillful
use of samples and technological
weirdness. "Female of the
Species," for example, seamlessly
sees from the cheesy techno
beats in the beginning to a Vio-

dent Femmes-esque xylophone
pace, which is in turn followed
by a DJ's scratches and Motown-
style strings. Trippy.

The oddest component of
Space's sound, however, is vocal-
ist Tommy Scott. If he isn't trying
to sing like Frank Sinatra (on "Fem-

ine of the Species" and "Dark
Clouds"), he's probably trying to
sing like Speedy Gonzales ("Mis-
ter Psycho") or "Drop Dead").
Scott's curious choice of vocal
styles, however, perfectly accen-
tuates his hilarious lyrics, which
tell stories about paranoid killers
("Mister Psycho"), the upper class
("Lovelock of the Queen," "Major
Pages"), and botched crime sprees
("Me and You Vs. the World").
Space's Spiders is a quirky,
manic little album. But be warned:
this time, the bizarre elements,
as head hopping, sing-a-longs,
euphoria, should be expected
and welcomed.

Silverchair: teenage waste-band?

By BOB KANAPKA

Silverchair's Daniel Johns
claims that his band's new al-
bum, Freak Show, is based on the
band's experiences on the
road. This is understandable,
considering that though all the
members are still in high school
they've already had to deal with
the boredom of touring, the has-

tle of the press, and the pres-
sure of releasing their second
album. However, I'm convinced
that the album is really about
cold sores. Johns decided to
write three songs that men-
tioned the unsightly abscesses.
These days, maybe a bad cold
sore is all it takes to classify a
freak. Or maybe it's just a meta-
for for having to tour with their
parents.

Whatever the reason, Silver-
chair has successfully followed
up their hit debut album,
Frogstomp, with one chock full
of heavy guitar riffs, powerful
vocals, and the continuing
theme of alienation. Their liner
notes are filled with pictures of
circus freaks like the werewolf
man, the bearded lady, the
midget, and the "I'm only a tor-
so man, but one has to wonder
if their rock star lifestyle is real-
ly that bad (besides touring with
their parents).

The new album still has the
characteristic Silverchair sound
that was first heard on songs like
"Tomorrow," "Pure Massacre,"
and "Israel's son," but they have also
expanded their horizons and are experimenting with new tech-
niques. Johns says about Freak
Show. "Compared with our first
album, this one's got cleaner
sound. We've expanded in both
directions." Songs like
"Petrol and Chlorine," with a
real sitar, and "No Association,"
with backwards tape effects,
show that the band is exploring
new terrain in their music.

For those Silverchair fans who
love Frogstomp, there are plen-
ty of songs that will float your
boat. For those of you who
thought that Silverchair was a
little too immature for your ears,
you'll find a more mature and
experienced band that proves
it's no one-album wonder.

Yesterday, Philly. Today, the world.

By BEN DIETZ

Philadelphia, hardly a bastion of indie-rock in the past, may fi-

cally have something to get ex-
cited about, and that something
is Latimer. Born of a rock scene
that might be called foundering
at best, this four-piece injects a
healthy dose of power into the
City of Brotherly Love. courtesy
of its sophomore effort, the fre-
netic Live from Sour City.

As a whole, what the band pro-
duces with Sour City is a hell of a
rock record, one that bashes as
much as it pops, and one which
will certainly inject some new
life into a tired rock scene. Make
way — the boys from South
Philly have arrived.
February 6, 1997

Ixnay on the Hombre, The Offspring's major-label debut, doesn't stray far from on-ventoncy — but that's not such a bad ingthay

BY DANIEL FIEBENG

Decades ago, the phrase “Wall of Sound” was used to describe producer Phil Spector’s elaborate blanket of symphonic sound that washed out the vocals and meaning of many a popular song. Years later, that instrumental thing just doesn’t cut it anymore. For all of the technical virtuosity displayed by ambient artists and the mad samplers of electronica, the only groups who seem to be adhering to that old-fashioned Phil Spector brand of music-making are the purveyors of punk. The driving, repetitive pliers of electronica, the only groups to out-numb the ear drums to the level of “Come Out and Play” (the “you gotta keep ‘em separated” song) blasted-out ear drums to the level of multi-platinum success. Three years after the success of their indie-revolutionary Smash, the Offspring have finally come out with a follow-up album, the distinctly more polished, Ixnay on the Hombre.

And the new CD had better be more polished. Forsaking Epitaph — the “little label that could” — for the happier (and certainly wealthier) auspices of Columbia, the Offspring have gone from being a band that no one had heard of to a major label’s million-dollar baby. Columbia, of course, has every right to be nervous. The Offspring shared improbable sales records with fellow California punk scene over-achievers Green Day, whose Whitey actually outsold Smash. Green Day followed up Green Day with the unassuming Insomniac, an album that critics happily accepted as more of the same-old same-old. Fans, however, were not nearly as easily satisfied. And Insomniac didn’t sell one tenth the number of albums as its predecessor. On Ixnay on the Hombre, the Offspring certainly attempt to buck the status quo, with occasionally surprising results.

It’s a good idea to start with Ixnay on the second track. That way you can avoid the pretentious spoken-word “Disclaimers,” done by Jello Biafra, is there anything cool about talking about how “real” you are after your last CD sold more copies than any other this side of Alanis Morrisette? I think not — so just move along. From there, the rest of the album is divided into two sections — the songs where the boys from L.A. attempt to prove that they have diverse musical abilities and the songs where they realize that experimentation is not where the money is.

Ixnay bursts into the latter section first with “The Meaning of Life,” a fabulous example of the new Wall of Sound. If you could actually make out the lyrics, they’d say something about individuality, but when you’re slam dancing ‘till your ears bleed, who really gives a damn? The contemplative “Mota” follows, pondering one of the great dilemmas of the ‘80s, “You won’t find me in a bong user — whether or not increased appreciation for Mota in the aforementioned “Cool to Hate” and how often do you find Ph. D. students (when is Dexter Holland gonna get that doctorate anyway?) with the appropriate inferiority complex to write lyrics like, “Now if I wasn’t such a weenie/ do you think you’d really love me/ reverting to an airplane on the living room floor”?

Ixnay on the Hombre is certainly not a disgraceful successor to Smash. It isn’t as if the Offspring sound like Metallica! I didn’t think so, but when the band slows its pace and lead singer Dexter Holland adds an echo to his vocals, as on “Me & My Old Lady,” he becomes virtually indistinguishable from James Hatfield of Metallica. It’s not a bad job of mimicking, nor is the Van Halen (circa 1980) impression that the band does on “Gone Away” and “I Choose” (which takes its opening almost completely from Van Halen’s “Unchained”). The Offspring even dabble in a Sublime-inspired ska tune, “Don’t Pick it Up,” a heart-felt warning about how much dogshit looks like chocolate sometimes.

The slow movement to integrate the band’s brand of punk with hard rock cannot be a bad idea. The songs are mostly well-written and catchy (with the exception of the aforementioned “Cool to Hate”) and how often do you find Ph.D. students (when is Dexter Holland gonna get that doctorate anyway?) with the appropriate inferiority complex to write lyrics like, “Now if I wasn’t such a weenie/ do you think you’d still love me/ reverting to an airplane on the living room floor”?

MTV'S 'AMP'

What's this? The music video channel actually playing interesting, challenging music videos? It’s as if someone at MTV is actually using his brain. In any case, this mixed-for-television smorgasbord of electronica is pretty damn cool.

NERF HERDER

Van Halen (Arista)

This Orange County three-piece pays homage to arena rock’s greatest white dentistry Sammy Hagar. These guys are bigger geeks-rockers than Weezer — and we love it. Might as well jump for this one.

JUNE OF '44

The Anatomy of Sharks EP

The Axis Powers of indie rock return, less than a year after their last album, with a new “experimental” EP. This little number in three songs manages to outshine its predecessor in half the time (23 minutes). You don’t even notice the first song is 11 minutes long. I heard the indie rock fans lined up around the block for this one.

THE DEMISE OF DRE

Philly’s modern corporate rock empire crumbles beneath the weight of its own success. Maybe now someone’s going to start playing real college rock. The King is dead! Long live the King!

THE DEMISE OF DRE

Philly’s modern rock leader is consumed by the giants of the Urban Contemporary format. Now where are we gonna hear the new Offspring, anyway? There is some good news, though — almost the whole DRE staff is moving to Y100.

BUSH

Greedy Fly

(Interescope) Video

We all know that Bush sucks, but we didn’t ever think it would get this bad. Besides being subjugated to a mind-numbingly horrible rip-off of Snoop, The X-Files, and even Michael. As one character says to lead singer Gavin Rossdale at the end of this travesty, “They have places for people like you.” Yeah, we know — it’s called hell. And when you get there, you hear ‘em Street sent ya.

NAS @ THE AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS

(Columbia)

What the hell is going on here? In two and a half years the Queensbridge MC goes from the paragon of urban realness to a carbon copy of the same tired playa shit that’s been polluting hip-hop. On the American Music Awards, he came on stage dressed in extra-mafioso style, accompanied by a bevy of hoochie-mamas and Cadillacs. Street dreams aren’t made of this.

The Street Ratings Guide: • • • • blue plate special! • • • apple pie • • • french fries • • • soup • • • hair in your omelette

pump it up

Rub-a-dub-dub, four punks in a sub... way.

OFFSPRING

Ixnay on the Hombre

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tv & multimedia

Insultingly lucrative TV

Witness Bill Maher’s un-PC antics, now on network TV

BY SOL ABULIAK

It has long been known that Comedy Central has the best shows. My god, their prime time lineup includes Faulty Towers, The Pee-Wee Herman Show, and Dr. Katz (who makes mefreakishly dizzy). The Comedy Central people were like, “We’re on a roll. We’re Golden. We can do no wrong.” So, in the spirit of exceedingly great programming like Riki Lakand and the Real World, the boys at CC decided to dredge up perennial favorites like racism, inequality, immigration, and gender citizenship, but with a twist. Their twist, called by many of the “putting David, Fuck, and Neil in a house with civilized people” tactic, was to mix activists, writers, and celebrities, who were sworn enemies, on four person panels to discuss timely issues. It’s sort of like American Gladiators, but with words instead of pugel sinks Kill Bill was born in Rivervale, NY. In July of 1993, the first Politically Incorrect was taped in New York City. For this show, the Rev. Al Sharpton was in top form to defy conventions! The “heckle” area allows the user to fill in a Web letter in a Mad Libs-esque fashion. The letters, which cover topics from same-sex marriage to pornography, can be sent to Pat Robertson and Bill Clinton, among others. The goal: to annoy the hell out of them and break the law, all at once.

The site opens with four boxes flashing profanities and ethnic slurs interspersed with pictures of Newt Gingrich, Jesse Helms, a cross, and two large breasts. Can you think of a better way to defy conventions? The “heckle” area allows the user to fill in a Web letter in a Mad Libs-esque fashion. The letters, which cover topics from same-sex marriage to pornography, can be sent to Pat Robertson and Bill Clinton, among others. The goal: to annoy the hell out of them and break the law, all at once.

The site’s “censure” area provides a rich assortment of offensive e-cards, which can be delivered over the Web to friends and enemies. Topics include a truly graphic selection of abortion cards and a less impressive selection dealing with politics, guns, and homosexuality. The site is bitter and witty, using offensive language not to offend but to preserve the right to offend. Let’s hope Jesse, Tipper, and Bill’s computers blow a circuit.

—Dina Bass

NASCAR’s virtual joyride

You know when you’re driving down the highway and some idiot goes screaming by you on the right, and all you want to do is cut hard and drive the jerk into the nearest guardrail? Well, in NASCAR Racing 2 you can do just that — at speeds of up to 200 mph. The ensuing crashes are sights to behold, possibly the best in any racing sim to date, with bumpers and hoods flying off and tires rolling everywhere. And even after the novelty of kamikaze driving has worn off, you’ll find that there is really an excellent racing game underneath it all.

NASCAR’s quality relies heavily on two things: its realism and its options. Everything in the game is as it would be in a real NASCAR race. Before the race, you can change your gears and the psi’s, and while racing, you have to worry about refueling and changing your tires as well as fixing any damage done to your car.

There are 16 different tracks, each one faithfully portraying its real-world counterpart, as well as 39 actual NASCAR drivers, each complete with his own car. The graphics are beautiful and exact. The cars are expertly rendered with all of their corporate decals included, and they immediately reflect any damage they may have incurred. And the game conveys the feeling of speed very well: though you can’t go 185 around a turn in real life, you can play out your fantasies here. The controls are simple, as you just use the directional arrows to keep your car going in the right direction.

There are numerous other options, including the abilities to determine the length of each race, to change the driving parameters for all cars, to allow for night driving, to change from every conceivable angle to make your car invincible, and even to play an entire NASCAR season. Overall, this game is the complete package for anyone interested in a racing game. It’s fast, it’s fun, and it’s very addicting.

—Jeff Furlotti

The Street Rating’s Guide: • • • blue plate special • • • coffee • • • french fries • • • soup • • • hair in your omelette

February 6, 1997

Annoyingly good

The Communications Decency Act, which makes the communication of anything “indecent” with the intent to “annoy” a felony punishable by a fine and up to two years imprisonment, was passed into law last February by a bunch of Congressman who have zero chance of relating to anyone who is not a sixty-year-old, male WASP, and it was then signed into law by a President whose home state just got electricity last week. Basically, none of these people would recognize a computer if one fell off of the Washington Monument and hit them on the head.

While federal judges across the country strike down various parts of the law as unconstitutional, the Internet continues to fight back. Apollo Media’s annoy.com (http://www.annoy.com) flouts the law by allowing visitors to annoy public officials. Apollo is suing to protect annoy.com, which had previously allowed users to send annoying letters to public officials. Annoy.com’s current contents are merely Apollo Media’s friendly way of telling the government to go to hell.

The site opens with four boxes flashing profanities and ethnic slurs interspersed with pictures of Newt Gingrich, Jesse Helms, a cross, and two large breasts. Can you think of a better way to defy conventions? The “heckle” area allows the user to fill in a Web letter in a Mad Libs-esque fashion. The letters, which cover topics from same-sex marriage to pornography, can be sent to Pat Robertson and Bill Clinton, among others. The goal: to annoy the hell out of them and break the law, all at once.

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Dem boob tube blues

By Tina Lopez

Neil Simon takes a look at the eternal struggle between TV and popular culture in the 1950s

Ah, television during the 1950s. Families gathered around the set, milking in the glow of their brand-new, made-in-the-USA TVs. Neil Simon's play, *Laughter On The 23rd Floor*, gives a behind-the-scenes glance at a group of writers working on "The Max Prince Show," a fictional variety program from that Golden Age of Television. But put away your wholesome notions and unrealistic fantasies about a simpler time untarnished by the sex, drugs, and jump-cut editing of the MTV generation. As the lone female writer in the group says, "If I worked in France, I'd speak French. But I work here, so I speak Jack." This ain't no family show, kiddies.

Actor Frank Ferrante, as Max Prince, wins over the audience with his incredible rendition of Marlon Brando as Julius Caesar. The entire cast — from Ira (played by Ben Lipitz, Steve Perlmutter) — spends the play running around half-cocked, worrying about what NBC might do next. And, as Mill says, if you're half-cocked, you already have a major problem.

Amidst an endless onslaught of one-liners and Letterman-esque jibes that would fall flat if not for the energy and vitality of the cast, the Cold War politics of 1953 provides the backdrop for the play. The "Max Prince Show" is being sored by the network execs, who want to cut it down to a tidy one hour and make it less "smart." With viewers in the Midwest now tuning in, the show has to compete with other popular programming options such as bowling.

The play's narrative parallels the history of the era: as one of the most reputed and beloved figures in America, General Marshall, is placed on McCarthy's blacklist, Max Prince loses air time. By the time the Rosenbergs are exonerated for high treason, the show has been taken off the air.

In the 1950s, comedy was driven by politics, and politics was driven by lunacy. Neil Simon seems to think that the uncertainty and desperation that ate at the hearts of the American people in the 50s forced them to protest in the streets during the '60s made for the great classic comedies of early television. In other words, the crazier things were, the funnier they were. These shows appeared to be simple and innocent, but they were really attempts to cover up the madness of the paranoid 50s. Well, if craziness makes for great comedy, then Simon possesses more than enough to make us all look sane — which is no small feat. Less a cynical look at the conflict between creative forces and the head honchos who have the final say, *Laughter On The 23rd Floor* leaves one feeling good about this hectic sitcom we call life.

Laughter on the 23rd Floor

****

Starring: Frank Ferrante, Ben Lipitz, Steve Perlmutter

Written by: Neil Simon

Tickets: $8 - $39

Closes February 23

The Walnut Street Theater

825 Walnut Street

For tickets call (215) 574-3550

A knockle sandwich

The manly art of boxing comes alive on the stage with lackcluster fight scenes but compelling drama

By Doug Roberts

I was genuinely enthused about the prospect of seeing the world premiere of Art Becker's *Bar-Kruckle*, showing at the Harold Prince Theater at the Annenberg Center. For a boxing fan, the chance to see some quality fighting scenes can make an evening worthwhile. Unfortunately, the fight scenes were less than thrilling. The choreography was awkward and the execution was lacking. However, what was missing in Rocky-esque boxing sequences was made up for in other areas.

Dramatizing the life of Jack Johnson, the first African American World Heavyweight Champion at the turn of the century, the play centers around the imprisonment of Johnson and another fighter after a bout in Texas, where boxing was illegal. The depiction of their 28-day jail term and Johnson's eventual release is the basis for the emotional and racial themes that bring the play to life.

Through effective writing, Art Becker manages to eliminate the inherent tedium that seems to go along with many scripts focusing on athletics. Boxing is of secondary importance to Becker. Instead, he paints a picture of a racist, turn-of-the-century Texas. The convincing narrative is complemented by strong individual performances. Michael Broughton (Jack Johnson) brings a swaggering athleticism to the role of the brash boxer, while Chance Kelly, an accomplished boxer as well as an actor, brings ring-toughness and savvy to the role of Joe, Johnson's opponent. David Sitter's hard-as-nails portrayal of the Texas prison guard with a latent compassion, gives dimension to the supporting cast.

The conflicting emotions become apparent when, while trapped in a cell with the black Johnson for nearly a month, Joe is torn between the respect he has for Jack, the athlete and person, and the contempt he has for the African race. Through this tension, a budding friendship is hopeless ly pushing against the many restraints of a prejudiced American culture.

Becker's dramatized version of the brawl, fast-paced Johnson is accurate and convincing — a perfect medium through which Johnson's inner strength shines. It is this portrayal that draws the audience in, leaving one to believe he must make it in a bigger world.

Deserved ovations erupted from the crowd as the lights flicked on — an aura of satisfaction could be felt in the air. The lack of action-packed fight scenes was more than compensated for by the exceptional writing and the intriguing individual performances. Boxing fans may be disappointed by this play, but that's why Philadelphia has the Blue Horizon.

Mr. Culture sez: listen up, you savages. Come out on Thursday at 6:30 to the Street meeting at 401 Walnut Street. And maybe, someday, you could be one of us.
Thursday

Open Mic

The Gathering

Got the skillz to pay the bills? Can you bust phat freestyle rhymes? Do you have any poetry you’d like to share? If the answer is yes to any of these questions, then bring yo’ ass down to The Gathering at Houston Hall every Thursday. The evening is hosted by supa-MC Slant from Los Angeles, and live funk is provided by the MomSug band. There are 20 spots open a night, so if you want to perform, be sure to get there fairly early. After the acts, the mic will be open to anyone who wants to catch wreck. The vibe is chill, so always come packed with respect for others.

$1.00 admission 8 PM – 10 PM Edgar Falls Smith Room, 2nd Floor, Houston Hall

Friday

Art

First Friday

Make a Night of It...

This Friday, galleries all over Philadelphia will open with new shows. Between 5 and 9 p.m., visit galleries in Old City. Entry and refreshments are free, and the surrounding restaurants and bars are happenin’. Take a cab to 4th and Arch streets, and walk east toward Front Street.

And for our lazier readers, stay on campus and visit the Institute of Contemporary Art’s preview reception from 9 to 11 p.m. on Friday. While you might miss the bar scene of Old City, the ICA does offer its share of wine and refreshments. More importantly (or not), the gallery will feature video installations dealing with topics ranging from body consciousness to emotional disorders by artists Maureen Connor and Tony Oursler. In addition to getting your booy tube fix, you can experience the great outdoors indoors by viewing Winifred Lutz’s “New Installation.” This Philadelphia-based artist gets in touch with her natural roots with an exhibit that features 30-foot-tall trees and other herbal enlacements. 118 S. 36th Street (at Sansom).

Saturday

Dance

Doug Elkins Dance Company

Forget everything you think of as dance — because postmodern choreographer Doug Elkins has redefined the art.

In his attendance-record-breaking program, featuring the dances Where Was Yvonne Rainer When I Had Saturday Night Fever?, The Stuff of Recoiling, and Center of My Heart, Elkins melds movement from styles like hip hop, capoeira (a kind of martial art), social dancing, and breakdance to reach new levels of expression. Elkins’ choreography is complemented by music from artists like Barry White, Nasir Fateh Ali Khan, and David Byrne.

Annenberg Center, 3680 Walnut Street, (215) 588-3214. $12 for students.

Sunday

Food! Games! Willy Wonka!

See David Berger’s “Still Life with Pears” this First Friday at the Zone One Gallery in Old City.

Merce Cunningham

Merce Cunningham

Monday – 9 p.m.

A pioneer in the world of dance, choreographer Merce Cunningham overcame his humble Black Mountain roots (and the stigma brought on by being named “Merce”) to gain worldwide steam over 30 years ago. His dance company has been both rejected and respected for its abstract originality and its innovative format. Usually arranged on the day of performance, his performances are not always palatable for the “uninitiated.” But Cunningham’s performance guarantees to be an exciting, unpredictable event.

So leave it to Merce to bring the spark and spontaneity back to Monday nights with his intermissionless, 90-minute show. And surprise, surprise! It’s already sold out. But for you, perhaps a deal can be arranged. Call for details. $18. Annenberg Center, 3680 Walnut St. (215) 898-6791.

Jazz

Michael Brecker Quartet

Any jazz lover knows the silky tenor of the heavily accoladed Mike Brecker’s saxophone — but even if you aren’t much of a jazz aficionado, you’ve probably heard it, too. Beyond having performances with a slew of great jazz musicians — Herbie Hancock, Dave Brubeck, and Chet Baker, to name a few — under his belt, the man has transcended the genres. If you don’t think his sax is familiar, think again. Since the late ’60s, when he and his brother Randy collaborated in the group Dreams, he’s played with Zappa, Everything But the Girl, John Lennon, and Dave Matthews. His quartet includes Pat Metheny.

$19.50. 8 p.m. Theatre of the Living Arts, 334 South Street, (215) 922-1011.

L’Art et l’Amour

The PMA celebrates Valentine’s Day

Feel the passion from 6 to 8:45 p.m., while sampling Godiva chocolate and martinis. Featured events include big band music and dancing, a poetry reading, and a King of Prussia Mall fashion show. You can even enter a drawing for a romantic vacation in the Poconos, where you’ll stay in a hotel room equipped with a heart-shaped jacuzzi. In addition, guided tours of the Museum will be offered throughout the evening.

$4 with student ID. The Philadelphia Museum of Art, 26th Street and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, 763-8100
music
THE BALCONY
Handsome
These New York hardcore specialists come to the Troc's upstairs (don't forget ID). February 8, $5. 1003 Arch St., (215) 922-LIVE.

THE BLARNEY STONE
Jack Tripper
Those Penn guys sure know how to rock. Formerly known as "The Crowd," they've changed their name but not their game. February 6, 10 p.m., 3929 Samsom St., (212) 222-5340.

BROWNIES 23 EAST
Johnny G. and the Classic Dogs of Love
To celebrate their first anniversary, Brownie's lures you with free food and $1 beverages. February 8, 8 p.m.. 3929 Sansom St., 10 p.m., $18. 3701 Chestnut St., (215) 922-1033.

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE
Ladysmith Black Mambazo
Need I say more? February 8, 8-10 p.m. 334 South Street, (215) 922-1011.

THE MIDDLE EAST
The Ghib Droll Band
$8. February 6, 8 p.m. 126 Chestnut St., (215) 922-6542.

NORTH STAR BAR
Los Straitjackets
$8. February 8, 10:30 p.m. 27th and Poplar sts., (215) 235-STAR.

PARKESAN
Some bands are playing, but we'll keep you in suspense... Free. February 8, 11 p.m. High Rise North Rathskeller Lounge, Locust Walk.

NORTH STAR BAR
Buckwheat Zydeco
$15. February 9, 8 p.m. 27th and Poplar sts., (215) 235-STAR.

PI LAM
With over 100 different effects pedals, Suburban Effects and others. $5. February 8, 10 p.m. 3914 Spruce St., (215) 222-8850.

SILK CITY LOUNGE
Latimer
See review page 10. February 6, 10 p.m. 5th and Spring Garden sts., (215) 592-8838.

ARTS
The Cardigans
February 7, 8 p.m. It's sold out, but don't you just want to kick yourself thinking it was only $8.25? 334 South St., (215) 922-1011.

THEATER OF THE LIVING
Michael Brecker Quintet
So smooth, it's a pick of the Week. February 8, 7:30 p.m. 334 South Street, (215) 922-1011.

ANNEBERG CENTER
Brighton Beach Memoirs
Neil Simon's autobiographical play highlights the everyday life of the author as a teenager growing up in 1937 Brooklyn. Presented by Teatro. $5. February 6, 11 p.m.. February 8, 8:30 p.m.. February 9, 9:45 p.m. Studio Theatre, 3680 Walnut St., (215) 898-8791.

MERRIAM THEATER
Rodeo
Well, Street has fooled you again, ya niny! Rodeo is actually a ballet about a none-too-feminine cowboy who makes all the cowboys drool when she shows up at the Saturday night dance. No horses or hotdogs, but with a storyline like this, who needs 'em? February 12-16. Prices vary. 250 S. Broad St., (215) 885-6542.

TONY CLARK'S
Brazilian Mardi Gras Carnival
Minas dance the samba for the 10th annual Philly "carnaval." $20. February 7-8, 10 p.m. 126 S. Broad St., (215) 772-9238.

CATCH A RISING STAR
Greg Giraldo
Of "Common Law" fame. $8-$12. February 6, 8-9 p.m. Studio Theater, 3680 Walnut St., (215) 898-8791.

MANNED THEATRE
Wharton Follies
You decide if charging $20 is a folly. February 6, 7, 9 p.m. February 8, 6, 7 p.m. Chestnut St., (215) 440-HAHA.

ARTS
The Lion King
Well, this magical story of a boy, a girl, a lion cub, and Africa is worth seeing anyway, even without "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." It's produced by Luc Besson (La Femme Nikita). Through February 16. 3701 Chestnut St., (215) 885-6542.

GALLERY
ART IN CITY HALL
Drawing Currents
City Hall exhibits the drawings of 13 Philadelphia artists. Through April 25, so don't hate yourself if you don't get there this week. Free. NE Corner of City Hall, (215) 686-2803.

spoken word
ARCH STREET FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE
Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
He's no Tammy Faye, but Sri Sri has been called "one of the greatest spiritual leaders of our time." Come hear the sitarist talk about grace, wisdom, and healing. February 7, 7:30 p.m., $10. 4th and Arch Sts., (215) 247-4273.

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Travel Agents International
(215) 242-4242
(800) 381-5600
**film times: Feb. 7 - 13**

**AMC Old City 2**
2nd and Sansom, 627-5966

*Metro*
Fri. 5:15, 7:45, 10:20.
Sat. 2:00, 5:15, 7:45, 10:15.
Sun. 2:00, 5:30, 8:20.
Mon.-Tues. 5:30, 8:00.
Wed.-Thurs. 4:30.

The Shadow Conspiracy Fri. 6:10. Sat.-Sun.
3:15. Mon.-Thurs. 6:00.

The Pest
Fri. 4:10, 8:10, 10:30.
Sat. 1:15, 5:45, 8:00.
Sun. 1:15, 5:45, 8:00.
Mon.-Thurs. 4:10, 8:20.

**Cinemagic 3 at Penn**
3925 Walnut, 222-5555

*Evita*
Fri. 4:00, 7:00, 9:45, 12:30.
Sat. 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:45, 12:30.
Sun. 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 9:45.

*People vs. Larry Flynt*
Fri. Sat. 12:30, 4:45, 8:00, 10:10.

*Guardians of the Millennium*
Fri. 4:15, 7:45, 10:00.

*The Last Emperor*
Fri. 4:15, 7:45, 10:00, 12:20.
Wed. 7:00, 10:00.

**Ritz Five**
214 Walnut, 925-7900

*Albino Alligator*
Fri.-Tues. 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10.
Wed. 1:30, 3:25, 5:20, 10:00.
Thurs. 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10.

*Everyone Says I Love You*
Fri.-Thurs. 1:30, 4:30, 7:10, 9:30.

*Portrait of a Lady*
Fri.-Thurs. 12:30, 3:45, 7:00, 10:00.

*Shine*
Fri.-Sun. 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 10:00.

**UA 69th Street**
53 S. 69th St., (610) 734-0202

*Star Wars*
Fri.-Thurs. 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00.

*Shadow Conspiracy*
Fri.-Tues. 1:20, 4:20, 7:10, 9:50.

*Gridlock'd*

*Dante's Peak*
Mon.-Thurs. 1:30, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10.

**Metro**
Mon.-Thurs. 1:30, 4:10, 7:20, 10:10.

**UA Riverview Plaza**
1400 S. Delaware Ave., 755-2219

*Star Wars*
Fri.-Sun. 11:00, 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20.
*Beaver Hills Ninja*
Fri.-Thurs. 1:00, 3:10, 6:00, 9:00.

*Metro Five*

*The Relic*
Fri.-Thurs. 1:00, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30.

*4:15, 7:45, 10:00.

*Penthouse*
Fri.-Sun. 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 10:00.

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