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Columbia College Chicago

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THE CHRONICLE

OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO

VOL. XXX, No. 27

May 19, 1997

Seminar struggles for relevance

Questions abound over whether Columbia's Freshman Seminar is working

By Leon Tripplett
Investigative Editor

Neal Bartoletti, 21, was once a typical high school student in Wooster, Ohio. After high school, he became a rebel without a cause: He smoked marijuana, rarely showed up to classes and drifted from the innocence of boyhood.

Two years out of college and after a madcap journey from Barcelona to Berlin, with his only companion a guitar, Bartoletti returned to the United States and found himself in Chicago, in the palm of Freshman Seminar's hand. Dr. Glennon Graham, the director of Freshman Seminar, has the job of keeping Bartoletti at Columbia.

Bartoletti is a perfect case study for Graham, who is a history teacher and Fulbright scholar turned Columbia administrator. He may have one of the toughest jobs on campus: to halt, or at least ease, the problematic trend in higher education of students from dropping out.

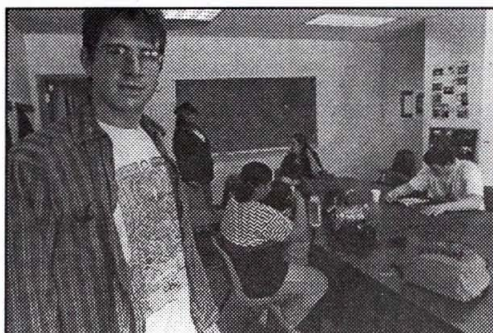
The class theme throughout the semester is to concentrate on "Exploring Arts, Media and Technology in the '90s." But time management, study skills and learning to navigate Columbia are interspersed throughout the class. Graham believes this will help keep students at Columbia.

"Once students are here in Freshman Seminar, we try to prepare them academically and socially and make them at ease with the college," said Graham. "We try to provide acceptable role models and mentors; someone whom they can come back to if they have problems."

Bartoletti, who signed up for the seminar, remembers watching a documentary in Anfela Arndt's class about a hometown hero, Maya Ying Lin, who designed the Washington Memorial for fallen soldiers in Vietnam. Arndt is one of the six instructors teaching the seminar this semester.

All eyes were dead set on Lin's determination to see the project to fruition, a subtle reminder that the architects of Freshman Seminar hoped to purvey. Columbia College is not the only school dealing with a waning student population and a less-than-desirable graduation rate.

According to numbers released last year by American College Testing (ACT), an Iowa-based organization that tracks the dropout rate of college students for over a decade, stated that 27 percent of the nation's freshmen dropped out of college,



Neal Bartoletti is only one of a handful of students enrolled in Columbia's Freshman Seminar program.

Photo by Blair Fredrick

giving their sophomore year the thumbs down.

The dismal retention rate has ricocheted through colleges and universities across the nation, leaving college brass to create safe havens for freshman and a comfortable environment for the new students.

Southern Illinois University at Carbondale has constructed management teams to deal with their ballooning dropout rate, which has increased 30 percent since 1996. Their management teams are designed to help students acclimate to college life by sharpening time management skills and "personal responsibility" in college and society.

Students spent the night on campus before classes started and received a general orientation of the commuter school.

"Retention is everybody's problem," said Sally Ferguson, Provost at Southern Illinois.

Loyola University has also scrambled

to reduce its 17 percent dropout rate. Their retention program, Freshman Experience, like Columbia's Freshman Seminar, is voluntary.

"Our classes were supposed to go into course linking, where freshmen would take classes together," said Richard Hurst, director of Institutional Research at Loyola. "Retention and attrition is such a very difficult thing to change in a year or two."

Freshman Seminar's dropout rate has continued to increase. Of the 230 students who took the seminar in 1995, 190 returned for the spring and only 145 returned for their sophomore year.

"I have a great interest in being of service to the student population of Columbia," said Graham. "We don't know exactly where these students go when they leave Columbia."

The dismal retention rate may alter the amount of weight Columbia's higher-ups will throw behind the seminar. This may mean giving other departments the shorter end of the stick.

Although Graham maintains that the numbers are secondary to him, college administrators are swearing by them as a measure of the college's worth by publishing their retention numbers on recruitment catalogues. "The retention activities are important to me but not of paramount importance—they may be to the administrators. My goal is to produce the very best student I can," said Graham.

Caroline Latta, Academic Dean at Columbia, has been monitoring the program and has made it one of her top priorities. "We [administrators] realize that it's something that has to work, or you don't have to worry about competition from

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Lilly Project diversifies Columbia College

By Claudia Rivera
Staff Writer

Racial and ethnic diversity is an important part of the Columbia College environment. Complimenting that aspect here is the Lilly Endowment Project, helping to increase culture awareness in the classrooms among faculty and students since 1993.

The Lilly project began in 1993 and was proposed to last for three years. After the project's last proposed year in 1996, it was given a one-year extension because to extended activities and grant funding still remained.

According to the project's original proposal, Columbia College faculty are the primary focus of the program. They reflect upon pluralism and diversity and to internalize respect for "others" so that human value is added to teaching/learning relationships.

"There is a direct effect to the faculty and an indirect effect to the students," said Christine Somerville, Associate Academic Dean.

Focusing on the faculty's role in teaching has a trickle down effect to the students who, as a result, can learn more about ethnic diversity, making the entire college increase its

cultural awareness, according to Somerville.

Other goals for the project included reaching a consensus within the Columbia College community about the value of "inclusiveness" in college governance and ultimately to increase minority student retention, graduation and placement.

Currently in its last year, the Lilly project will successfully come to an end this semester. Several activities remaining will conclude with the semester along with the full support of all academic and administrative departments. Activities currently being conducted are additional focus groups and individual interviews to assess the experience of women at Columbia.

The Lilly Project brought additional faculty and student involvement to Columbia. All faculty members have been involved in departmental discussions designed to examine how the faculty "demonstrate sensitivity to diversity in the classroom."

This week the art and design, English, marketing communications and dance departments will have completed their faculty discussions, completing all departmental discussions with faculty.

Next week there will be an external con-

sultant at the college to evaluate the entire project.

Several activities took place over the four years which engaged trustees, administrators, faculty, students and the local community including: a Chicago Metropolitan Conferences Series promoting intercultural understanding; faculty and students collaborating through focus groups and town hall meetings to identify strategies for more sensitive education of majority and minority students; and students and faculty of Columbia College volunteering to create an annual Columbia College Living Multi-cultural Calendar, which identifies and celebrates important holidays and observances for all cultures.

According to Ellen Stone Belic, College Trustee and part-time faculty member in the Dance Therapy Department, the Lilly project will hopefully resume for next year with a new grant and with more seminars and focus groups for both faculty and students.

"Through the existence of the Lilly project, Columbia College can gradually have a more inclusive environment where all voices are being respected," said Somerville. "I have seen positive changes so far."

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Special Photo
Pullout of the
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want to rock

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Magers, Marin talk to Chronicle

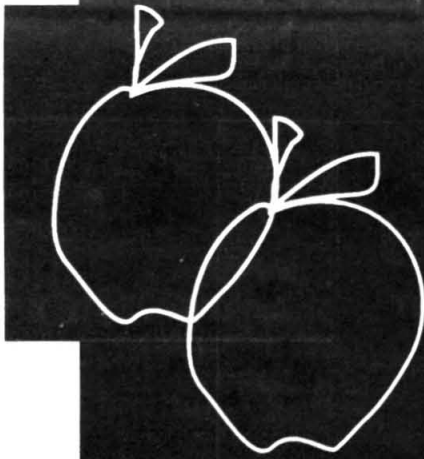
The Chronicle's Jason Kravarik and Bob Chiarito analyze the fallout from the Springer fiasco.



The 1997 Columbia College Excellence in Teaching Award

N O M I N E E S

Herbert Allen, Marketing Communication
Judith Artoux, Academic Computing
Joan Beaudoin, Television
Sheila Baldwin, English
Abour Cherif, Science/Math
Peter Cook, Interpreter Training
Rebecca Courington, Academic Computing
Karen Erickson, Interdisciplinary Arts
Fred Gardaphe, English
Jeffrey Ginsberg, Theater/Music
Ilene Goldman, Film/Video
Ann Hanson, Science/Math
William Hayashi, Liberal Education
Ann Hemenway, Fiction Writing
Baheej Khleif, Liberal Education
Barbara Korbel, Interdisciplinary Arts
Marlene Lipinski, Art/Design
Jose Lopez, Liberal Education
Kim McCarthy, Liberal Education
Isabelle McGuire, Art/Design
RoseAnna Mueller, Liberal Education
Kathleen Nagle, Academic Computing
Niki Nolin, Academic Computing
John Phillips, Liberal Education
Alexis Pride, Fiction Writing
Brian Read, Television
Ross Reed, Liberal Education
Victoria Shannon, English
Shawn Shiflett, Fiction Writing
Nana Shineflug, Interdisciplinary Arts
Lynn Sloan, Photography
Josh Tsui, Academic Computing
Michael Wright, Film/Video



Faculty and Students: Please write a letter in support of any of the teachers who have been nominated for this year's **Excellence in Teaching** award. Your letter is important and will be taken into consideration as part of the criteria for the nominees named above. Give specific examples of innovative and effective teaching methods and creative course development. The award will be given to one full-time and one part-time faculty member. **Send your letter** no later than **Friday, May 23, 1997** to the Academic Dean's office, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Room 515, Chicago IL 60605. Questions? Call 312.663.1600 x 5208.

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b) d

c) d

d) 1 800 CALL ATT

e) HELLO-d



1-800

call

ATT



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Financial-aid assurance from the president

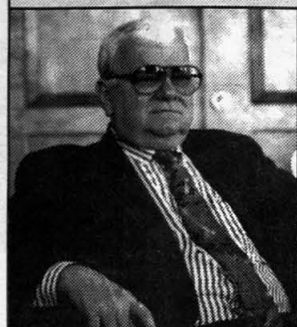


Photo by Stacy Morgan House are an increase in spending on Pell

Serious concerns about financial aid are a given for most Columbia students. Too often, such concerns diminish the satisfaction and optimism students should feel at the successful completion of another school year.

I hope to ease those concerns by reporting on encouraging financial aid news for Columbia students for next year.

On the federal level, the President and Congress have agreed in principle on more financial aid for college students for the 1997-98 school year. At this writing, the specifics have not been hammered out between the Clinton Administration and Congress, but it looks like the increase will come in one or more of several forms.

Among those proposed by the White House are an increase in spending on Pell

Grants, with the maximum grant increased by \$300 to \$3,000, and making the grants available to more independent students.

Tax breaks for families with children in college are also part of the Administration's agenda. One such break, proposed by the President at last summer's Democratic convention, is the Hope Scholarship, which would reduce the tax bill of a student's family by \$1,500; the other proposal would reduce the family's taxable income by \$10,000 for up to four years.

In the area of student loans, the Administration and Congress have tentatively agreed to maintain the size and scope of the direct-lending program and to forbid any increase in costs of student loans.

A great deal of negotiating, with some

inevitable changes in specifics, must happen before any of these proposals are enacted into law. But in general, both parties are on the same page in regard to the urgency of increasing student financial aid.

At the state level, at this writing it appears that Governor Edgar will sign into law a bill increasing the MAP grant from \$4,000 to \$4,120 for full-time undergraduate students and from \$2,000 to \$2,060 for part-time undergraduates.

This bill, too, is subject to change as the General Assembly debates funding for Illinois public schools—a debate which should not, but may, impact on spending for higher education financial aid.

John B. Duff, President

The duplicity of B.S.

Lisa Manna

This is in response to last week's article about bookstore rip-offs by [Edwina G. Orange]. For everyone who thinks the bookstore is a scam, get in line. Everyone complains about the cost of textbooks. They're expensive and you rarely get back half of what you originally paid. I'm not saying never, but if they give me back a \$1.50, I'm thrilled.

Since I only have one semester left at Columbia, I thought I would take this opportunity to share some textbook tricks with my fellow starving students. Believe it or not, there are some ways around buying books. Either people haven't considered them or just don't take advantage of them. Or maybe you already do these things, but I know for a fact most people don't. First, my frustration with the system and how I overcame the B.S., that is, the Book Store.

It was Sophomore year when I finally clued in that buying all required books was a real downer to my financial situation and most often it was a waste. I stopped buying. I have an A average, so my grades definitely haven't suffered from not having the books.

As I am sure many upperclassmen know, you are not going to use every book they tell you to buy. Freshman year I bought a \$58 television book and literally cracked it open once. Not because I am a slacker, but because we just never needed it. I could have looked over my neighbor's shoulder for free. Point is, the syllabus claimed we'd need this \$58 book but the class never delivered. So who did I blame? The teacher? Depends.

I actually had one teacher nice enough (when repeatedly questioned) to admit we would never use the book formally but that he wasn't supposed to tell us that, per the department. So in that case, I blamed the department. (Which, might I add, leads me to believe that they have some kind of conspiracy with the bookstore—but I have no proof.)

Granted, for some classes you really do use the book, and it is a main part of the class. But most of us have hands-on classes when it comes to our majors, and they still claim we need a book. Theory out of a \$58 book isn't what I'm paying \$4,000 a semester for.

Now, time for my miraculous ways around buying books or at least getting them cheaper. These methods might seem pretty simple, but I know for a fact that not many people take advantage of them.

The first, and I think the best: THE LIBRARY. Yes the place you frequent to use the Internet has books too, and some of them are the ones required for our classes. (The library is at 624 S. Michigan Ave. for those who...uh...never make it over there). Ok, so there aren't enough copies for the whole class, but you don't care about the rest of the class. You care about you. Act fast, and if you can't find your book there, check the Harold Washington library or one close to home. Plus, your Columbia I.D. works at Roosevelt down the street so try there too.

Yeah, there is an effort factor here, but you can always call instead of physically going there. Then you do my favorite and renew by phone, too. The library loves hearing from me every three weeks to renew my books. We're all very close. But this has saved me at least \$100 every semester.

Problems with this method: A) You really might not be able to find the book, and B) They only have the 1978 edition. A is a problem but B usually isn't depending on the subject.

For example, this semester I have a science class that required a 1997 hardback that would have set me back \$78. I repeat, \$78. As if. So I hauled over to the library and sure enough the most recent edition (1996) was already checked out. Now I could have requested it and the next time the person tried to renew it, they wouldn't be able to, but if you think they wouldn't do the same to you next time, you're wrong. Don't bother. They were faster. Deal. The 1990 edition, however, was available. Seven-year-old and the only major difference I found was the cover. Pathetic.

The next method, although it isn't as cheap as the first, can still help. 600 South (Columbia's electronic magazine show) reporter Christine Roher did a story on this very subject. She decided to do a little comparison shopping between chain bookstores and Columbia. She found that, by simply going elsewhere, you could save a decent amount of money. Some of our textbooks at Borders were as much as 10 bucks cheaper. But, this can work both ways, so really compare prices first.

Now for the easiest method. (Low effort factor.) Speak up. Grill your teachers about whether or not they really plan to use the books. Then after they say "Of course!" ask for specific examples. This is where you will get the real lowdown. And don't trust the syllabus, either. Sometimes the teacher doesn't even write the syllabus. The department does. Fight the power. I never buy books when they say well...you are going to need them for uh...reinforcement of my lectures, although they won't be used on the tests. Translation, uh...you don't need it. Problem solved. If you are still in doubt try to ask other students who took the class. There are always a bunch of students trying to sell their books cheaper than the bookstore. Help out a fellow malnourished student while helping out your wallet.

I hope this helps. If I saved just one dollar—it was all worth it. These aren't absolutes, but they've worked for me. In defense of textbooks, I will say there are a lot of books I do buy and even keep because they are valuable and I learned a lot from them. And, shocker, I actually needed them for the class. But if this happened most of the time, I wouldn't be writing this.

Decisions, decisions...

Lynne Snyder

My recent weekly trip to the grocery store wasn't the same mundane activity as it has been in the past. I found myself standing in the middle of products—suddenly in awe of the selection. I was reminded of the fact that people in Russia are lucky to find a loaf of bread on the grocery shelf. What's worse is that they don't have the option of going to another store down the street.

We live in a world of choices, most of which we take for granted. Advertisers and marketers bombard consumers with options and what seems to be endless possibilities. One product or service can offer countless alternatives.

Deciding to examine one routine day of mine, I recalled the many choices I was faced with—choices I'd never really thought about.

I awake Sunday morning and prepare myself for the busy day awaiting me. Places to go, people to see, things to do! I hop into my Honda, not the Civic or the Prelude, but the Accord. It's not the LX automatic, but the DX stick shift—without the sunroof.

My first stop is the card store. Near the entrance of the store is a big section devoted to just Mother's Day. As I'm browsing, I notice that Mother's Day isn't just for your mom anymore. Aunts, sisters, friends, stepmothers who feel more like mothers, single mothers who make great mothers and other women who have given of themselves as if they were mothers are just some of those who are honored by Hallmark on this day.

The list goes on and on. There are even Mother's Day cards for the single father who's proven he can act like a mother. Of course, let's not forget all of those cards sent by pets to their mothers. (I don't ever want to be called the mother of my dog. If I become a pet owner, spare me that card.)

After my multiple card purchases (with all of

those suggested categories, I dare not leave anyone out), I'm on my way to meet a friend for lunch. Meeting at a local brew pub, we situate ourselves at the bar and are greeted by a friendly bartender. We have a choice of eight microbrews, ranging in taste from light to dark, dry to bitter, clear to cloudy, offered in half-pint or pint-sized glasses.

We pick something in the middle and proceed to light up a couple cigarettes. My friend likes Virginia Slims Menthol Light 100s while I prefer Marlboro Lights 100s—in a box.

After burgers and beer, we part ways and I continue with the day's errands. It occurs to me that I need gas and decide to get a car wash at the same time. The screen on the pump flashes and offers the express, deluxe, super or premium wash. Quite frankly, I can't keep them straight and opt for whatever sounds the cheapest.

I pass the mall and am reminded that I'm in dire need of new jeans. It must have been a while since I bought them because I couldn't figure out in which section I should be looking. It used to be you found your size, pulled the pants off the shelf or rack, tried them on and VOILA—you're taking home a new pair of jeans!

Obviously, things have changed. There's the classic fit, relaxed fit, tapered cut, long length, wide leg, faded, stone-washed, button fly or zipper. Forty-five minutes and about seven trips to the dressing room later, I leave the store with three identical pairs of jeans—in fear that, when I shop for jeans again, it will be too soon.

Throughout this decision making, I realize I like all of these choices. As long as consumers like me exercise their options, services and products will continue to be advertised and marketed in a variety of ways.

On second thought, I like most of the choices. What is the difference between classic fit and relaxed fit, anyway?

Marin vs. Springer: TKO for the brains

Wilfred Brandt

For the last few weeks, the Chicago showdown between Jerry Springer and Carol Marin had been raging. Unless you live in a cave, you've already heard all about it (if you do live in a cave, stop reading this paper right now—you should be out foraging for food and dragging home a mate). But after all the name calling and spit wads subsided, Springer quit the big leagues and headed back upstairs with his tail between his legs to wallow in talk show purgatory.

Marin's resignation sparked a long-term debate over what is "legitimate" journalism. Is it homicide victims and four-alarm fires or transvestite whores and their secret admirers? (Hey that rhymes!) Apparently, Marin is of the opinion that sensationalism should not be a part of the news. Well, I've got some advice for Ms. Marin—get used to it! It's the '90s and, news shmooze, I want my trash!

Living in the decade of the drive-thru breast implant, what we demand is style, not substance. Who wants to watch the news anyway when it's a bunch of pictures of people getting shot and car wrecks and stuff? Boring! And not very appetizing to look at across the tin foil of your chicken pot pie. When you get home from work or school tonight, try a healthy alternative to Marin's so-called news. Might I suggest a heaping portion of the babes of "Baywatch" to soothe your tired bones? Or perhaps a hot serving of "Married with Children" to melt those blues away? Because after a long day at the rat race, your brain needs relaxation, not information.

You see, our brains can not hold that much information anyway. It makes sense, I mean they're not that big. They're about the size of an ostrich egg, and ostriches are really, really dumb.

Once we've learned the basics of long division and how to make farting sounds with our armpits, our minds are pretty much filled to capacity. Cramming anything more causes a serious fire hazard.

In fact, a new study proves that, contrary to popular belief, knowledge is NOT power. Over four years at the University of Wisconsin, a small group of lab rats were forced to watch news footage and documentary films, while a control group were watching episodes of "The Richard Bey Show" and Corey Feldman films. When later compared, the control group were much more content with their lives of running through mazes and testing new food additives. The "educated" group, on the other hand, spent their remaining years frustrated, trying to get their thesis published and philosophizing in coffeeshops.

But I'm getting off course.

We, the American public demand infotainment as our constitutional right. Shoddy journalism is a tradition that's been with us as long as opium fens and mob lynching. If there are minds to warp, there will be con men more than willing to warp them. Without those early pioneers of trash, where would our culture be today? If it weren't for trashy sensationalism, one can be sure soap operas, exploitation films and Madonna's career would never have taken off.

I am not going to let Carol Marin or anyone else bad mouth the sleazy merchants and ambulance chasers that made this country what it is today. We need more men like Jerry Springer to show the youth of today that there is more to life than higher education and community service. I myself am glad to help with the driving on the way to the disinformation highway. I can guarantee, you'll never read anything newsworthy in anything I write.

SHOOTS AND LETTERS DEPARTMENT

"All the nuts that are unfit to print elsewhere!"

This page rated SH--the discretion of a sense of humor is required. The opinions represented herein are not those of the college, Journalism Department, Chronicle or, in some cases, anybody in their right mind.

When sending correspondence to the Shoots And Letters Department, please also include your name and phone number for verification purposes. You can "write" us in the following ways: Mail: c/o Columbia College Chicago Chronicle, 623 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60605; FAX: (312) 427-3920; e-mail: Chron96@interaccess.com; Web page message board: <http://www5.interaccess.com/chronicle>. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.

Part-time reply

Dean Caroline Latta's comments ("Part-time faculty unhappy with pay," Chronicle, May 5) deserve a rejoinder.

Defending the disgracefully low pay for part-time faculty, she explains the discrepancy between full- and part-time salaries by the "greater expectations" of full-timers, whose job descriptions includes service to the community, professional development and administrative work.

The flaw in this is that the difference in pay is four to one (more if benefits are taken into account). Does Dean Latta really mean to say that upwards of three-fourths of what the full-time faculty do consists of administrative work and the like? Without discounting the importance of these activities, such a contention is simply preposterous. At Columbia College, faculty are paid, above all, to teach.

The reason for low pay for part-time faculty is that it saves money. That may have simplified life for administrators, especially as long as part-time faculty kept quiet. But the exploitations of part-time faculty was and is a great moral blot on Columbia College.

It is also unsound educationally. When bright, concerned teachers are excluded from decision-making, and find their professional achievements and community service unrewarded and unacknowledged, the entire College loses, just as it loses from the low morale and turnover associated with low pay.

The double standard—one for full-time, another for part-time, faculty—should be soundly rejected. A single standard for hiring and compensating faculty is in order. Decent pay—\$3,000 per course—would be a good start, but ending second-class status should be the ultimate goal. Equity, as well as quality, in education demands nothing less.

Christopher Thale

Mr. Thale: Low morale and turnover associated with low pay. Hmm. That may explain the instructor a member of our editorial board had who had a writing class play bathing suit twister for three classes! Oh...wait a minute? Perhaps something more sinister was at work with that one.—Eds.

Don't copy this

[Regarding "Cheating enjoys its new cyber-environment," from last week's Chronicle, by Rui Kaneya]

I have to take exception to the statement that "defining the plagiarism itself isn't a black-and-white issue," which seems to imply that it's okay for someone to knowingly use someone else's words without telling people who really said it. It doesn't get any simpler: If someone else said it, you quote them and you attribute the quote to them. If you don't cite the person who said it, that's plagiarism. If it's an idea, and you know the idea was originally someone else's, but you have put it into your own words, you should let people know whose idea it was. You don't need to quote them because they didn't say the words you used to express the idea.

To demonstrate: Downloading expert information off the Internet is not plagiarism. Quoting those experts in your paper, without attributing the quotes to them, IS plagiarism. What part of that is "grey?"

Re: "Some say that the very definition

of cheating is becoming blurred with the development of technologies." That these sources of information are on the Internet, and therefore more ephemeral than books, does NOT relieve your responsibility to cite references. That there are few standards for formatting such citations does NOT mean you don't have to cite the reference. Technology does not change the standards of behavior—the fact that you're using a computer instead of a typewriter or a quill pen doesn't change the definition of plagiarism, nor does it change the rules of what is or is not moral or "right."

The definition of plagiarism IS black-and-white—it's a matter of simple honesty, both to yourself and to the world. Stealing anything, including words, is WRONG. There is no excuse—most certainly, NOT your "need" to ace a class—compelling enough to justify stealing.

Heather Park-Albertson
Via e-mail

Dear Heather: We've thought of a brilliant reply to your letter—although we disagree with what you are saying, we will defend to the death your right to say it. Pretty good, huh?—Eds.

Ditto to Duff

[This is a copy of a letter sent to Dr. Duff and also forwarded to the Chronicle]

Dear Dr. Duff:

I am writing to you as a new student of Columbia College. I already have a degree from another University and am attending classes to brush up on my photo and digital imaging skills.

First, I must tell you how thoroughly impressed I am with the intelligence, professionalism and accessibility of both of my instructors. They are motivating, demanding, and encouraging, as well as being very informative. Equally impressive is the Digital Editing Lab. The equipment is great, as are the very helpful and cheerful Lab aides. The photo lab is a whole different matter though.

The photo lab is grossly under-equipped, so much so that the students have to carry around their own filters, tongs, tanks, scissors, can openers, spot tone, light meters (for the copy stand)—and this is only in the black and white darkroom. I do not know about the color lab facilities. I called the School of the Art Institute and UIC; both institutions supply their students with all the aforementioned items.

Additionally, the hours of the lab are completely geared towards students who don't work 9-to-5 hours. For someone like myself who does work and is taking two night classes, I have access to less than 11 hours of lab time a week (Wednesday evenings and Saturday, and this is assuming I have no other obligations). All of the labs I have used previously were open late to accommodate the hours of all of its students, including all night privileges for advanced students and Sunday hours.

Lastly, there is broken equipment in the lab that apparently has been broken for a long time, such as broken screens in the RC paper dryer, dirty canvases on the fiber paper dryers—one of which does not work properly. The final wash tubs are filthy and often contain dirt or fallen residue from the pipes that surround the final wash tubs.

These problems affect the quality of student work. I would hope that the equipment problems could be fixed by the summer session. I can't imagine it would take

more than a day or so by a plumber, an electrician and a handy-person. I hope that some serious consideration be attached to the lack of "basics" (filters, tongs, tanks, scissors...) Columbia College is supplying its students. These improvements would benefit hundreds.

In addition to the problems with the photo lab facilities, the registration process was truly unfair and disrespectful of students trying to register for classes. In my case, I wasn't able to register for any classes I had pre-selected. Considering that my registration date didn't come until the end of the pre-registration period, this was somewhat understandable. What was not understandable or acceptable, though, was the way in which I had to go about getting into the classes. I had to come down during the add/drop sessions and wait for someone to come and drop a class. For me this meant, taking off 10 hours of work on Thursday and Friday, and sitting around waiting for that someone to drop. This didn't happen for all of the classes, so the next day, Saturday, resulted in the same frustrating experience, four hours of waiting to no avail.

If the waiting and consequent inability to register wasn't bad enough, finding out that the following Monday that a student did in fact drop but that Columbia College add-dates were over, thus not allowing me to register drove me over the edge. It was annoying because: 1) I had attended the first class (so I hadn't missed any class time) 2) I had wasted more than 10 hours and over a hundred dollars pay waiting and 3) I had the instructors permission and authorization to enter the class. Columbia College's "system" was the only thing holding me back from registering.

My suggestions to remedy this problem is to 1) allow students an extra two weeks to add classes and 2) make sure that instructors give the people registering students a priority list (a list which shows which students showed up for the first class). These two simple measures would most certainly serve the time and efforts made by students trying to get into classes, as well as top off Columbia's registration, thus bringing in more money for Columbia.

As the semester is ending, I hope that all of the positive aspects of attending school here as mentioned in the first couple paragraphs of my letter remain, and I hope that all of my reasonable complaints are taken seriously and remedied.

A new student

New student: Welcome to Columbia. And, although we don't want to discourage you, you ain't seen nothin' yet! Anyway, your experience with registration—waiting around for hours for someone to drop—is similar the the process Investigative Editor Bob Chiarito uses to pick up women in bars! Thought you might like to know!—Eds.

Moronically speaking

Dear Chronically-ill,

I'm thoroughly pissed off about last week's letter in your Shoots and Letters Department concerning the English Comp. Classes and the program. Whoever this guy is, he's completely misinformed! This moron (the only befitting word) is complaining about the problems with the Norton Textra Program and blames these problems on his teacher, Nelly Maynard. This idiot complains about the computer-assisted class, yet he's the knucklehead who took it! He had a clear choice as to whether or not he wished to take it! He says

that Columbia should go back to a "low-tech" program of pen and paper... well dipshit, there is one. It's called English Composition! No one forced him to enroll in a computer assisted class; he just made a poor decision and jumped into something he apparently can't handle. Plus, to deal with his incompetence, he blames the teacher and the entire English department for his problems. His previous letter annoyed me as well, yet you fools choose to make it even worse.

Nelly Maynard IS indeed a teacher here at Columbia, and in fact, she happens to be a friend of mine. To call her ill-prepared is like calling the Columbia Registration process a breeze. She's quite talented, and has a list of credentials a mile long. Her "inability" to work with the Norton program is not a fault in her, rather, it is a problem with the program itself and, partly, with the bookstore who liked to run the disk/book package over the magnetized security scanner, thereby erasing the disk. Before you folks decide to make fun of a "fictitious" teacher, you better make damn sure she is fictitious.

Joe Stoopid,
Graduate of Computer Assisted
English Comp. I and II

"Joe": You realize, of course, that we find it difficult to take someone seriously who goes by the name "Joe Stoopid." But "Joe," why don't you tell us how you REALLY feel? And the only "fictitious" people we make fun of are the yahoos like you afraid to sign your real name to a letter.—Eds.

Aren't we angry

K, I didn't want to give a bad response to Ms. Nelson; but bitch—my name happens to be Angelica and, yes, the nickname that I've had since birth is Angel. By the way, if you are waiting for a Mr. Respectful with balls, keep waiting because no man alive wants a woman who blames all of her problems on men. From the sound and tone of all your letters, you probably already got told where to go by a Mr. Respectful with self-esteem!

Angel
Via e-mail

Readers/writers: We have one issue left. Can we please, please somehow get ONE Shoots and Letters Department this year without reference to Carrie Nelson? But maybe Ms. Nelson really wants a Mr. Respectful without balls. We think there are still some Heaven's Gate members out there who didn't go chasing the old Hale-Bopp.—Eds.

There's only one more issue left for this school year!

Now's your last chance to sound off about anything that's on your mind.

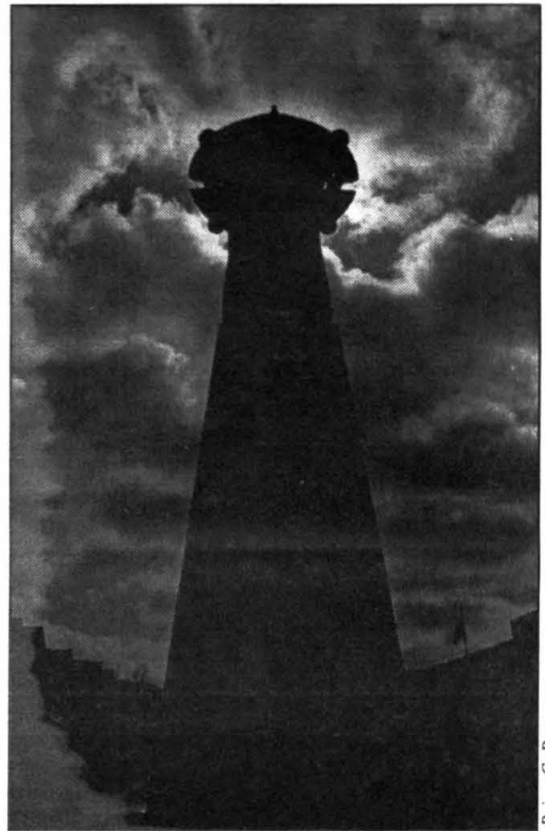
Send us your letters!

Photos of the year, 1996-1997



Jo Machado

Chinese New Year Celebration; Chinatown, Chicago 1997



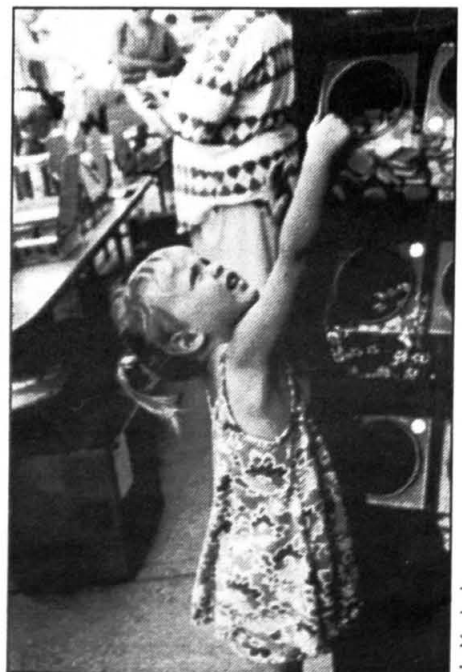
Brian C. Peterson

Roosevelt Street Bridge



Steve Rochelle

Visitors at the Sears Tower Observatory Deck



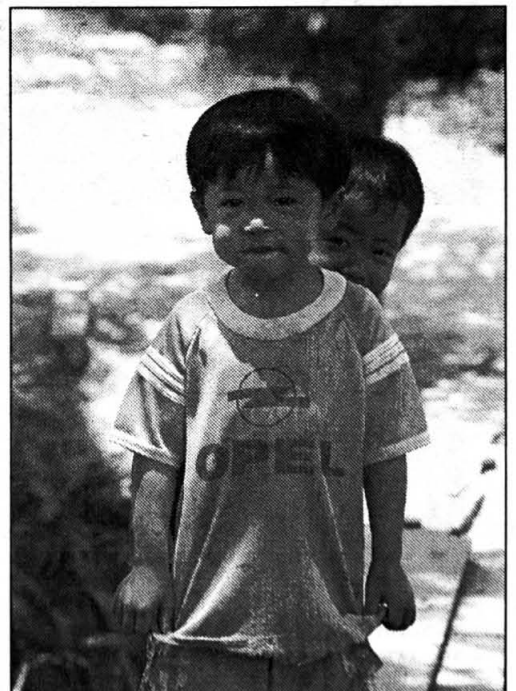
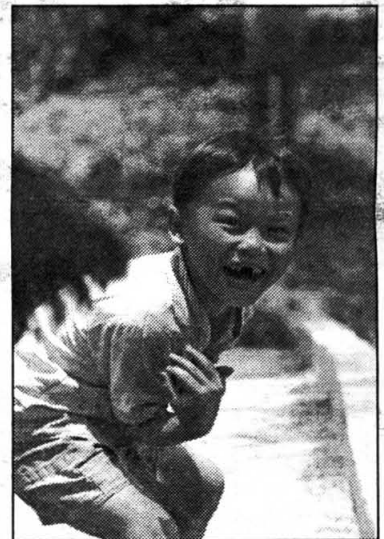
Jo Machado

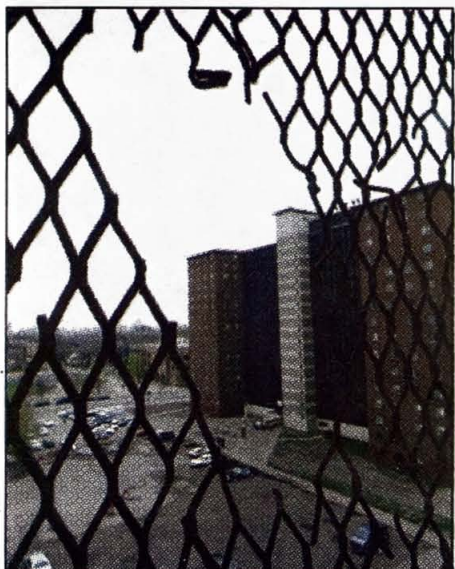
Mekong River Delta, Vietnam

Photos by JR Kinander



The Mekong Delta best defines the old-school culture with its open markets on the river and diverse religious beliefs. This immense river and its tributary system is the true soul and spirit of the region and of the people. The children shown on this page are the first generation of many to come who have not had to live under the former communist regime. Now, eight years after the border.. opened to the Western traveler, the unique organizations of the river are starting to change. Bridges, electricity, cars and pollution will soon take over this beautiful landscape.





Engine Company # 16

Text and photographs by Walter S. Mitchell III,
a graduate student at Columbia College

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Several months ago I began a documentary on firefighters and the act of responding to emergency situations. The resulting photographs depicted men performing the task of extinguishing fires and risking their safety to save others. These images, however, did not show the faces of these figures beyond the oxygen mask, black coat and helmet.

The African-American firemen, like other black heroes and contributors to society, historically have been unacknowledged for their contribution to the community. This dismal situation begs the insistent questions, "Are there any heroes in the black community? Are there any black role-models?"

These selected fragments of time and place represent my personal response to that important question. These photographs are a metamorphosis of my original idea. The narrowed and selected focus about the men of Engine Company #16 has developed into a social documentary.

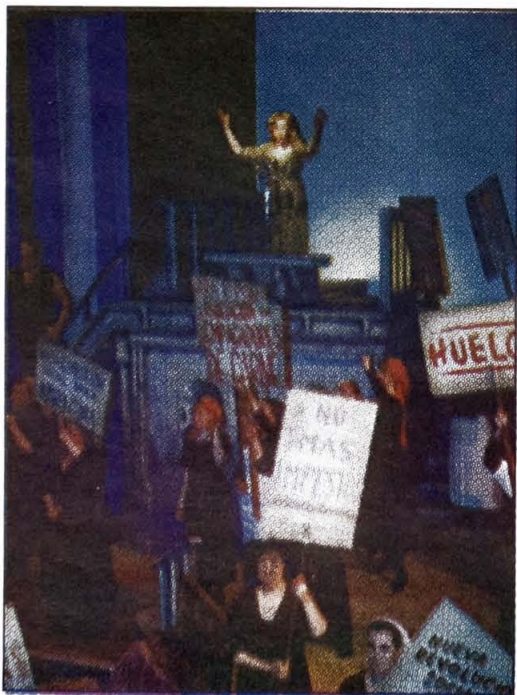
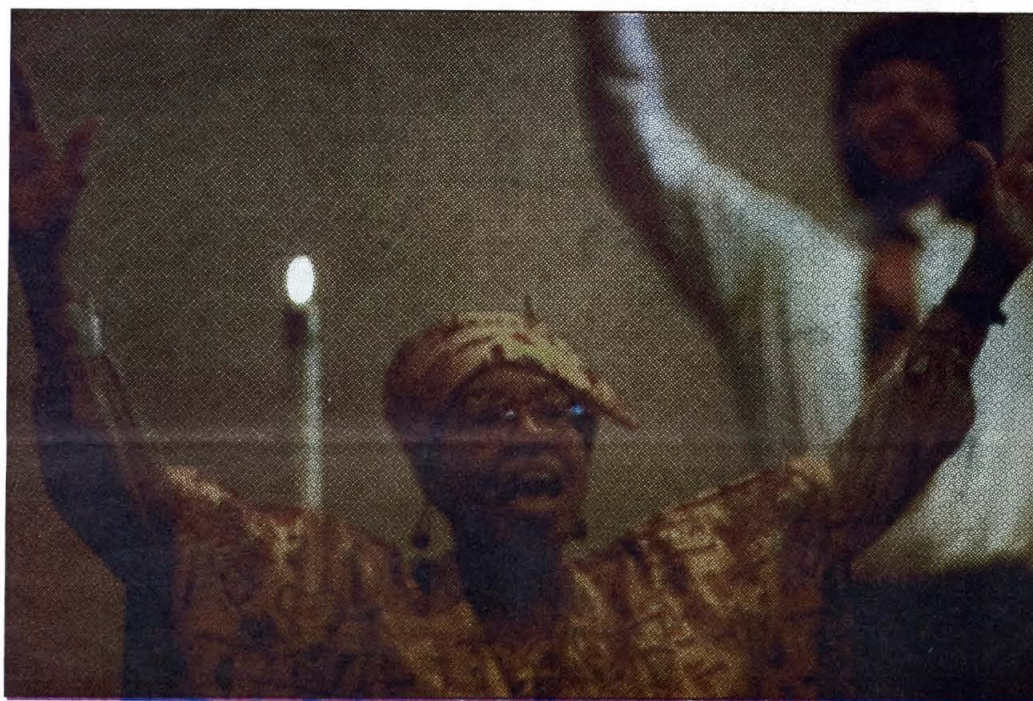
Most importantly, this body of photographs seeks to reveal the faces behind the myth and character of heroism and to illustrate what these black men have with the community they serve.

Engine Company #16 is unique for two reasons: It is an all-black firehouse in what is traditionally a white profession. Secondly, Engine Company #16 is historically significant because it continues the existence of an all-black firehouse in that neighborhood dating back to 1871. Segregation forced large communities of African Americans to migrate from the downtown area to what is presently known as the Taylor street area and then finally to the area of 24th and State Streets. Ironically, this is where the high-rise projects begin.

This documentary will attempt to provide a view of African-American male responsibility in an extended family as well as proactive community intervention with the underprivileged children of the CHA's Robert Taylor Homes.



Church of the Deaf
Photos by Jo Machado



Brian Markiewicz

Harper College performs Evita.

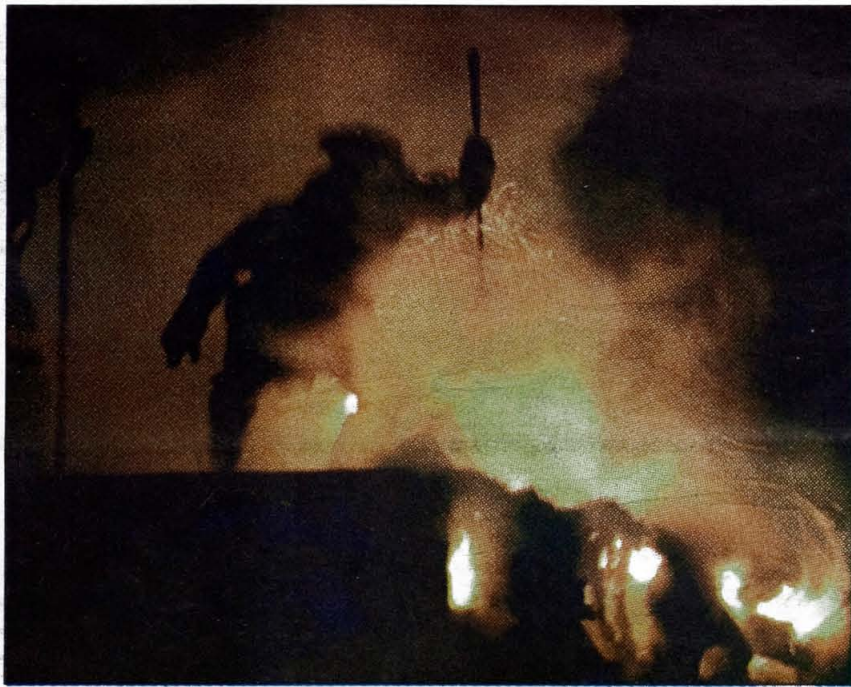


Young Love

Dave Brennan



Dave Brennan



Walter S. Mitchell III



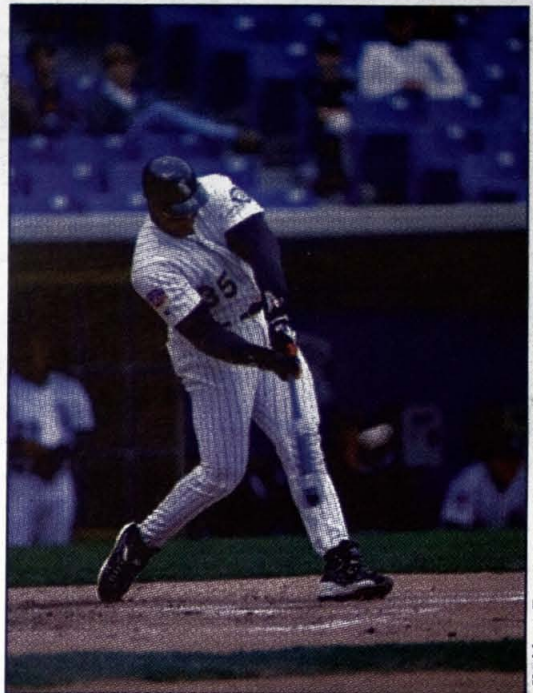
Brian Markiewicz

The Buto-Sha Tenkei dance group performs.



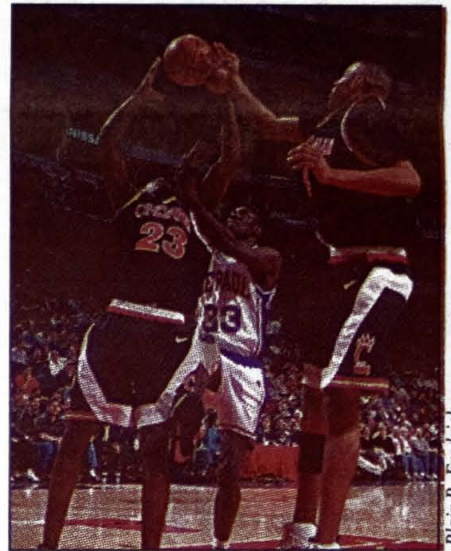
Brian Markiewicz

An Illinois Wesleyan runner after an agonizing race.



Kathleen Economou

Chicago White Sox Frank Thomas connects, but it will take more than this home run to get the Sox out of last place.



Blair B. Fredrick

DePaul players try anything they can to win against national-ranked Cincinnati.



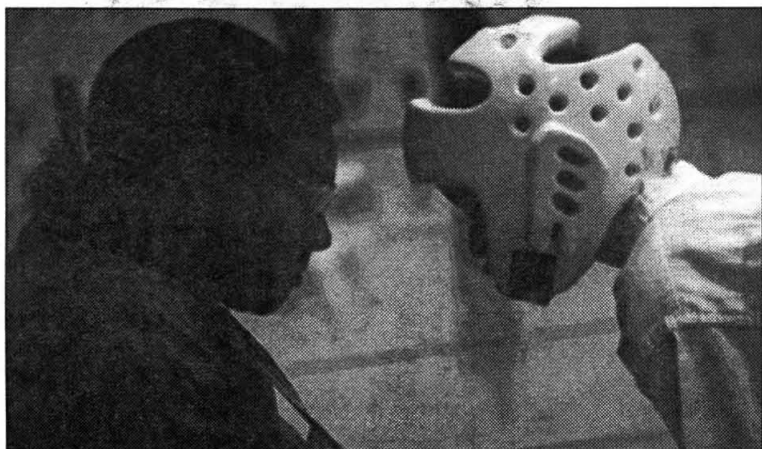
Kathleen Economou

Michael Jordan takes control as the Chicago Bulls win Game 5 of the Eastern Conference Semi-finals to advance in the playoffs.



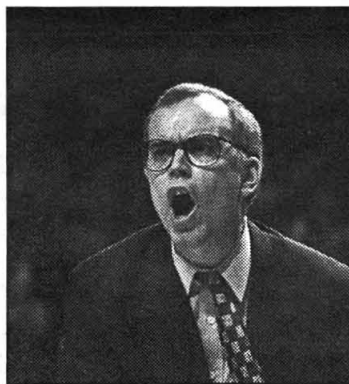
Kathleen Economou

Chicago White Sox slugger Albert Belle slides into second base.



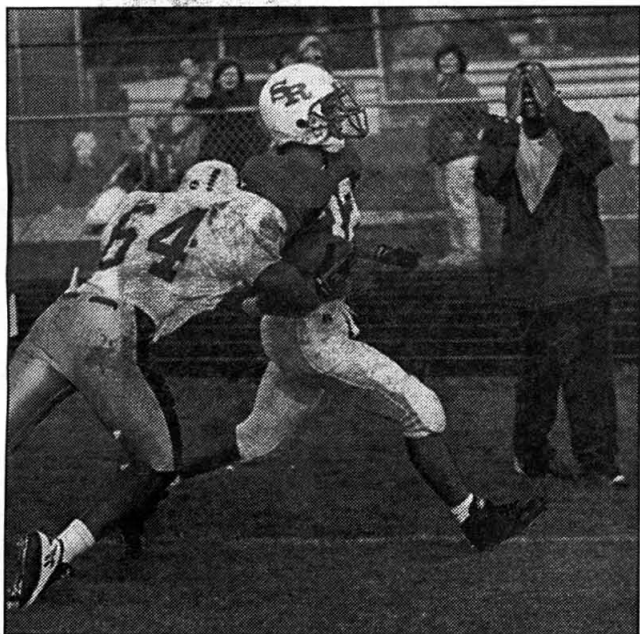
Brian Markiewicz

A young boxer and his mother



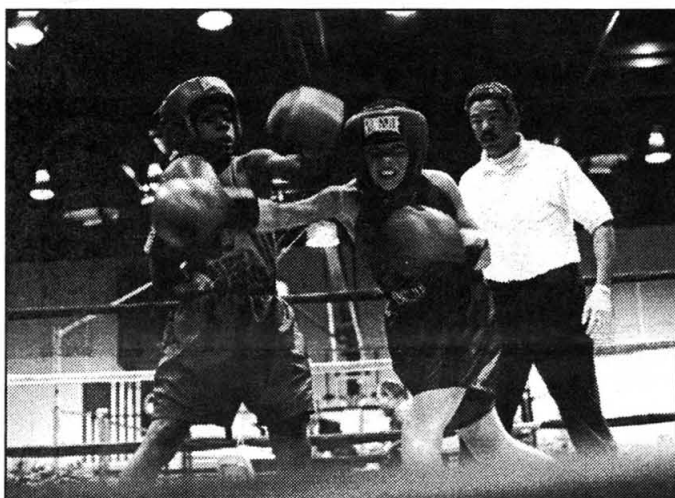
Blair B. Fredrick

The Meyer dynasty ends at DePaul University as head coach Joey Meyer coaches hi final game.



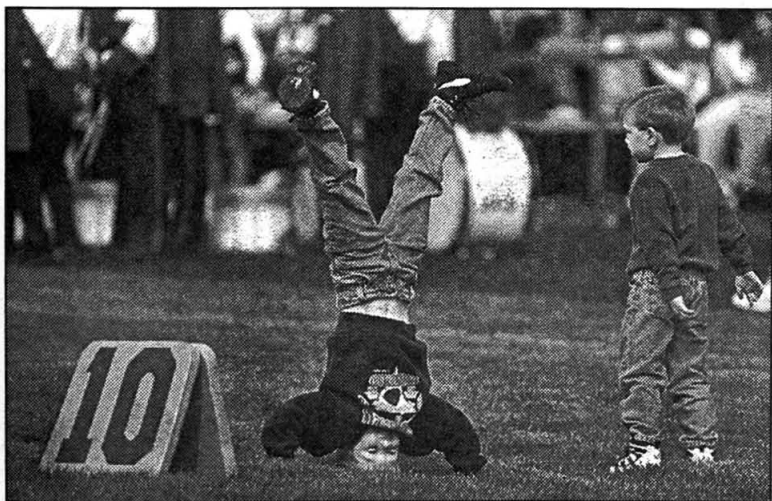
Blair B. Fredrick

A St. Rita high school football fan is amazed at his team's poor performance against third-ranked Mt. Carmel—and it shows.



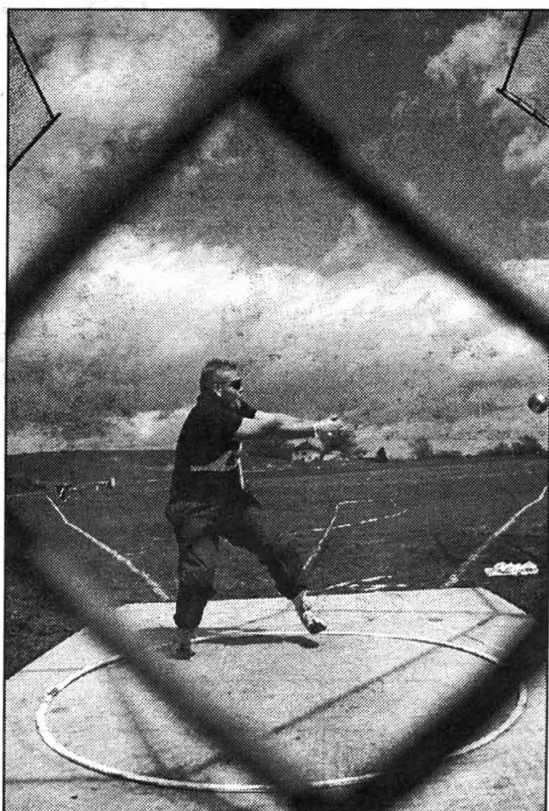
Steve Rochelle

A scene from the Boy's city-wide boxing Championships at Curie High School.



Blair B. Fredrick

Two children entertain themselves before the start of the half-time entertainment.



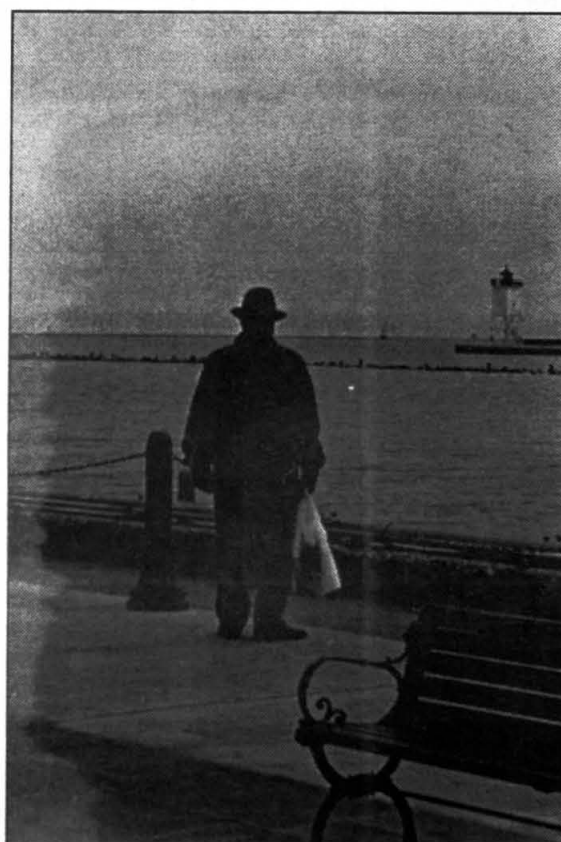
Brian Markiewicz



Stacy Morgan



Carol Marchand



Stacy Morgan

Coming next week:
A Special Pullout on
Graduation

This Is This

Bob Chiarito



Stripped of brains

Some will argue that the politically correct atmosphere of the 1990's has increased the public's tolerance and awareness, but what it has really done is taken the soul out of many things, especially strip clubs.

Last Wednesday, I got a call from my friend Max ten minutes after I arrived home from work. Now Max is from Philadelphia, but goes to school in Montana and is known throughout the United States as someone who loves to party.

After saying hello, I asked him what he was doing, to which he replied "I'm driving to Philly and I'm ten minutes from your house, so get ready to go out."

He arrived shortly after I took a shower and we promptly headed out. After going to a couple of empty bars, Max seemed eager to see some female flesh and suggested a place where we'd be sure to see plenty of it.

"I heard there's a strip joint over by the Crobar, let's go there."

It should be noted that I'm not a huge fan of strip clubs, not because of the ethical issues—I think all women should be able to show off their goods if they want. I don't like them because they are a waste of money. You pay to get in and then pay extra if you want any of an assortment of dances. Then you sit there like a moron, thinking of how you would like to jump on the strippers but you know that, if you do, the bouncers, probably named Moose and Rocco, will stomp your guts out. If you spend the same amount of money on a real girl, at least you'll get a good-night kiss. So what you end up with at strip clubs, after wasting hard earned money, is getting stiffed.

Despite all my reasons for not wanting to go to a strip club, I agreed to go with Max. After all, if he wanted to go bar hopping all night after driving non-stop from Montana, I knew he needed something to keep him up.

Once inside, I noticed something very strange. It wasn't that the strippers kept their G-strings on, I knew they had to that because the joint served booze. It was something else, and it didn't take long for me to figure it out. After all, every good reporter should have an eye for detail.

You see, every stripper in the place had what appeared to be clear plastic wrap over their nipples. Thinking it was odd, especially since you could still clearly see their nipples, I asked the waitress what was going on.

"Are they afraid of being bit by a drunk businessman?"

No, she informed me that the reason for the "skin-colored latex" was that it is a law.

As with most politically correct rules, this was another example of how efforts to please one group, Bible-banging puritans, resulted in infringing on the freedom of another group, horny strip club patrons.

Although the latex didn't affect the view, creation and enforcement of the law is an obvious waste of taxpayer money. Tired of looking at silicone breasts, Max and I left after about an hour and as I walked out I remember thinking that the only real boobs are the guys who made that ridiculous law.

E-mail Bob Chiarito!

For anyone that would like to write me hate mail, love letters or just say hello, my e-mail address is behariato@aol.com



Seminar a great idea that needs work

Ask anyone familiar with Columbia College Chicago for their opinions on our school, and you're bound to get one of two types of reply. Either the "Oh yeah, they do a lot of good things toward diversity, the arts and the community" type or the "You mean the place where anyone can—and does—get in?"

Ironically, the things that draw students to Columbia are the same ones that fuel most of its criticisms. Our open admissions, like the academic Statue of Liberty, lets anyone with a desire to become educated through our doorways. That policy is one of the finer aspects of Columbia, representing an attitude toward education that is curiously lacking in the nation's overall collegiate scenario. At the same time, however, open admissions raises the legitimate question of whether or not everyone is capable and willing to achieve that education.

There are many success stories out of Columbia, many cases of students coming from inadequate public high schools and/or previously failed attempts at college who went on to success through the opportunity Columbia granted them. But, as Investigative Editor Leon Tripplett's front-page story on the Freshman Seminar describes, the number of students who drop out before attaining degrees here is alarming.

True, it is not strictly a Columbia problem. As Tripplett's piece relates, student retention is an issue receiving plenty of attention at many colleges and universities. Nonetheless, the very nature of Columbia necessitates a greater degree of scrutiny toward this problem—we simply cannot open our doors to everyone without making allotments toward those who haven't been properly prepared for the college environment by the public school system.

Columbia has been addressing this problem through many means. One of the most innovative methods has been through the Freshman Seminar class. Students who take that class are instructed in such crucial matters as time management—atypical fare for higher education but skills students need for any successful foray into a college or university setting.

The Freshman Seminar is a great idea for those students who need to learn the skills it teaches—and those students willing to learn those skills. But we do not believe it is a panacea and we do not believe that every incoming freshman will need the class.

One of the changes that may be enacted soon in Columbia's future is to make the Freshman Seminar a required course. Maybe that will help Columbia's retention rate, but we nonetheless look at the idea with suspicion.

Also related in Tripplett's story is the fact that, of the 230 students who took the seminar in 1995, only 190 of them returned for the spring semester and only 145 returned for their sophomore year.

These results drive home a point: While the seminar may prove invaluable to some students it, by itself, does not necessarily improve college retention. The reasons are undoubtedly numerous and unimportant for the purposes of this writing.

But, considering the statistics, we do not see the required taking of the seminar as a step in the right direction. Many students do have the skills it teaches and will be turned off by a course they may see as pandering. And (need we reiterate) the seminar has not yet brought the greatest success statistics.

The Freshman Seminar—as it is, optional—should undoubtedly continue and we commend those in power who are working to make it better. But until it brings much better results, requiring the course is not a wise option.

E-mail your opinion!

CHRON96@INTERACCESS.COM

Stuff from Staff

Chuck Jordan

E-mail? I say : (

As we get further into May, I am reminded of my college graduation. At this time two years ago, I was preparing to walk across the stage in front of family and friends. I had enjoyed my college experience and had made a lot of close friends from living on a small campus. We said our farewells with the usual promise to stay in touch; however, something came up that I wasn't prepared for.

Many of my friends, friends that never wrote letters, asked me for my e-mail address.

When I was asked that question, I had no idea that most of my friends wanted electronic mail to be the main form of our communication.

I wasn't a big fan of computers at the time; I only began using computers on a regular basis during my sophomore year. So when asked, I told them that I didn't have one, which was true at the time, but I must admit that, if I were asked the same question now, I would probably say no.

Why? What do I have against e-mail? Actually, nothing. It's great for many purposes. It saves me a lot of time and money; I can write my stories and e-mail them to the paper instead of making the 25 mile trip from my house to Columbia.

However, I don't want to use e-mail for personal communication. I mean, I spend dozens of hours a week in front of the computer doing work for classes or copy editing for the paper. I don't have any interest in spending any more time in front of a computer screen.

I really believe something is lost without human interaction. I want to actually talk to or meet with someone and electronic mail is a poor substitute for that.

Hearing that person's voice, the excitement and surprise in their voice when they realize it is me calling.

It seems like everything is moving away from interpersonal communications; one can bank, do research and communicate with people without leaving the house.

The college I graduated from offered e-mail accounts to students on and off campus. Classes to teach students e-mail were offered free.

I admit I was uncomfortable with learning a new technology. At the time, I hadn't mastered wordperfect 3.1. I didn't take the class and was one of the few people on my floor not to request an e-mail account. In fact, I was still not interested in having anything to do with e-mail nine months later when I was asked for my e-mail address.

Unfortunately, the only connection I have with my alma mater is two yearly calls from the alumni relations department thanking me for my past donations and asking for more money.

The worst of this is that my closest friends don't live 2,000 miles away or out of the country. Many live in the Chicago area or the Midwest. I suppose it is easier and faster to send someone an e-mail while taking a break from writing a paper than it is to actually call someone.

I do my part to stay in touch; I'll call and I've even made trips to see friends. I've also gone back and visited during homecoming weekend.

I'm not trying to put down those who use e-mail to contact friends and family. All I'm saying is that I would prefer to have a dialog with an actual human being face to face, or at least by phone.

Power Of Our Rhythm

With Tim Mathews
Staff Writer



Who's House!!!! Tim's House!!! You guys know this place as the **House Of Blues**, located at 329 N. Dearborn St. A place that will kick @%& and take names later over the summer with all kinds of different shows, sometimes two a night. Speaking of which, this Thursday, May 22, with doors opening at 7:30 p.m. and the show starting at 9 p.m., Chicago's very own Jazz/hip-hop band, Liquid Soul, will take center stage and show why they're the next big thing to come out of Chicago's revitalized music scene. Their opening act will be the alternative group Sister 7. If you are interested in this concert and can fit it in your time during finals, leave a one-page paper on what music means to you and drop it off in the Chronicle office, located in the Wabash building in room 802 in Robert England's box. The people with the best summaries will receive two tickets to the show. Don't forget to leave information on how you can be reached because it makes it much easier to track you down the day before!!

Coming right at you with another juicy joint will be the sensational Michael Franti (lead vocalist) and his group **Spearhead**, which also features David James on guitar, Onieda James on bass, Carl Young on keyboards, and Trinna Simmons and Ras I Zulu on background vocals. The new album is called **Chocolate Supa Highway**. Franti has been involved with the music industry for over a decade and is known as open-minded in embracing all types of music, which in my opinion drastically helps him as an artist. His lyrical political analysis over the years has included topics such as OPEC Nations, gay bashing, immigration, and modern-day Uncle Toms. In its early days, the group has had the pleasure of opening up for Gil Scott Heron and Public Enemy. As a musician, Franti is committed to finding new ways to deliver his message across.

Said Franti, breaking down the significance of the name, **Spearhead** comes from the Chief Shaka of the Zulu Tribe, who invented a spear called the assegai. He took the long spear they would throw, shortened it into a hand-to-hand combat type of spear and put a big spear head on it. With that, he revolutionized warfare for the Zulus. It's a name that we take as the spirit of our militancy in the struggle and also how we reinvent the tools of our time to help us liberate." The group will be displaying their creative abilities on June 1 at the HOB (House Of Blues for all the slow people out there) with the up-and-coming hip-hop duo from New York known as **Camp Lo** of "Luchini" fame opening up. Check this out!! We all know that the show is going to be phat and all that so if you want a ticket to see a group that gives love back to it's consumers by adopting a specific cause



The Cherry Poppin' Daddies are currently pushing their fourth CD titled **The Swingin' Hits**.

with each album, then type a one-page paper on the most insightful and inspiring event/performance you've ever experienced and include the five W's (Who, What, When, Where, and Why). You've got to get it to me by Wednesday the 28. I kid you not, this is what the definition of educational show really means.

Coming to you on the gospel tip is some new flavor from Verity records (BMG distribution). The artists are a group of sistas that simply call themselves **Virtue**, with the album entitled the same name. Their up-tempo beats combined with their uplifting lyrics places them in the same category as a Kirk Franklin, in that their music is very commercial friendly and very receptive to your ears as soon as the first verse of each song kick in. The CD, scheduled for a summer release made me feel somewhat redeemed with songs like "Greatest Part Of Me," "Quiet Times," "Through Your Name," and "Be With You." My personal favorite was "Take It By Force," which in my thinking isn't even the tightest single but deserves to be the first released song due to the harmonic tones from these gifted women that seem to be at their best right on this one!! This is a CD that I can see many hip-hop heads having in their jacket right next to that new **Wu-Tang** and that new **Puffy**, because it's worth the money from start to finish!!!

Are you looking for **POETRY** that will stimulate the mind? Look no further than Black Erotica Poetry Night, Wednesday May 2, at The New Dating Game, located at 8926 S. Stony Island Ave. Show starts at 7:30 p.m. with

special guest **Reggie Gibson** from the movie "Love Jones." There is a free dinner buffet at 7 p.m. Admission is \$5/ \$8 if you bring "A" friend. For more info, call 773-955-8810.

Big Ups to the super swingin' **Cherry Poppin Daddies**, who came into town over the weekend and did their thing to a packed audience at the HOB. The group consists of seven members and their style is a self-described Punk!Swing!Jive! They are the epitome of the two hot sounds, Swing and Ska, in the "all-ages" clubbing venues. Their performance left a good taste in everyone's mouth with many wanting more! They're the best horn arrangement I've heard in a long time. Lead Singer **Steve Perry** always seemed to have a handle on the situation as he flew from one end of the stage to another.

Just when you thought that the **ILL State Assassins** were dead and gone! While others have been using gimmicks to get by, **E.C. ILLA** and the rest of the crew have been making **Power Moves** to make sure everyone feels their return. CD scheduled for summer release.

I don't know about you other cats, but on May 31, I'm going to hang out with the crew with the most, a.k.a. the **Euphonics**, the **Who** and the **Nacrobats**, as they bring **Monkey Business** to the table. The show will be at **Natural Love**, located at 1900 S. Michigan Ave., from 8 p.m.-2 a.m. The admission is \$5 for guys, \$3 for girls, and \$7 for everybody after 11 p.m. I'll see you there or at graduation the next day. Peace out and much love.

Heated discussion over Ebonics transpired at Columbia

By Mema Ayi
Managing Editor
and Leon Triplett
Senior Writer

To discuss the ongoing debate over Ebonics or "Black English," Columbia's English department hosted a symposium on the topic May 12 in Hokin Hall.

Sheila Baldwin, instructor in the English department, solicited a politician, a writer and two educators to address the issue in her African-American Cultural Experiences in Literature class May 12.

Panelists included Dr. Salikoko Mufwene, Chair of the Linguistics Department, at University of Chicago, S. Brandi Barnes, writer and alumni of Columbia, Alderman Smith, 28th Ward and Dr. Charles B. Smith, Dean of Students at Chicago State University.

Ebonics has caused a great deal of controversy in the media and among the American public since the December 1996 decision of the Oakland School Board to recognize the language variety spoken by African-American students. Oakland educators suggested that teachers take that into account when teaching standard English. The systematic and expressive nature of the grammar and pronunciation patterns of the African-American vernacular has been established by numerous studies over the past 30 years.

The heated debate here sparked concerns and questions on whether the Oakland School Board and scholars have the right to practice the so-called "dumbing down" of African-American students.

"I don't think that teachers should teach down, they should teach up," said Alderman Smith. "The

most important thing for young people is their ability to communicate."

"If you can not articulate well during an interview, you will not get the job even if you have a 4.0 G.P.A.," Smith said.

"Almost any community speaks English in it's own way," said Dr. Mufwene. It's [Ebonics] not something you can eradicate in a community like a disease."

Mufwene said that the goal in Oakland was to make teachers more familiar with Black English to help them teach those students.

"They were trying to teach students to bridge the language they speak at home with standard English taught in schools."

"You teach it [English] in such a way that is familiar to the linguistic background of the learner," he said.

Mufwene credited Oakland with trying to find a way to assist students in moving forward. He said the Oakland school board meant well and may have had more sympathy if Ebonics had been presented as a social class problem.

"Ebonics is a part of our communities. People in my communities told me that we had to learn to 'switch.' If we learn to speak and write standard English, we can 'switch,'" Smith said.

An audience member asked the panel, "What is the difference between slang and Black English?" Barnes' reply was "Slang is a phrase used within a community and Black English is the incorrect use of grammar and sentence structure."

Mufwene said speaking is a form of social behavior. "How you speak is more or less how you dress. You dress differently on certain occasions."

Edwina G. Orange contributing

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'Austin Powers' blends '60s, humor for smashing summer blockbuster

By Katrice Hardaway
Correspondent

"Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery," the newest movie starring Mike Myers, shoots off one of the first shots for this summer's blockbuster run of movies. This soon-to-be hit proves that the sound and the soul of the '60s is alive and well.

Myers plays a British Super Agent who has almost won a war against his arch nemesis, the diabolical Dr. Evil. But Evil (also played by Myers) escapes by going into orbit to wait cryogenically frozen until the time is right to continue his quest for global domination. Agent Powers follows in his footsteps by also being frozen to wait Evil out. Now, decades later in 1997, both Evil and Powers have themselves defrosted.

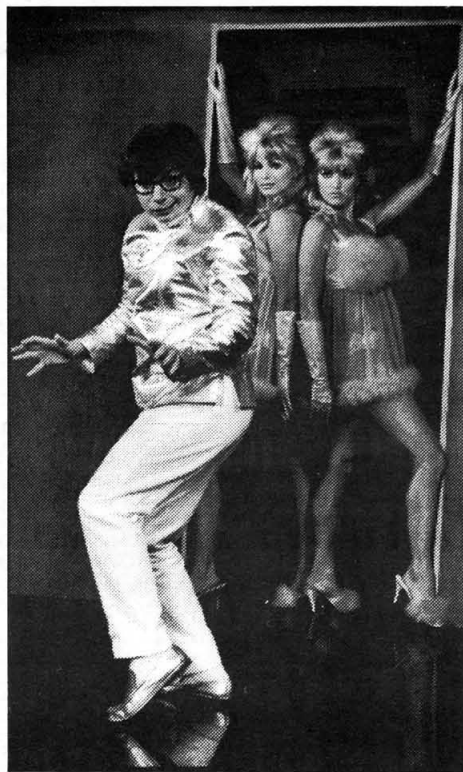
Now, back from their 30-year frozen hiatus, they find it hard to cope with the days of modern society. They come back to find the world of the Internet, cellular phones and laptops that had passed them by.

Dr. Evil unearths that he has a son named Scott Evil (played by Seth Green) who feels indignant about his father spending 30 years in orbit and leaving him fatherless.

This movie is a delicious blend of fun and comedy, and your satisfaction is guaranteed. One of the funniest things in this movie is how Austin tries to pursue Vanessa Kensington (played by Elizabeth Hurley) using '60s slang, like "trendy," "groovy," "fabulous" and "rad." In a party Powers throws, he yells "this is my happening and it freaks me out."

When you see this movie, you will see a lot of references made to movies and other nostalgia, like "James Bond," "BVD" and "Our Man Flint." Don't worry—this movie is still cool.

One thing's for sure: "Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery" is one of the must-see hits of this summer. The movie was written by Mike Myers, who plays both "Austin Powers" and the malevolent "Dr. Evil," showcasing his many talents. I give this movie three out of four stars.



Photos courtesy of New Line Cinema.

Above: Austin Powers (Mike Myers) poses with the Fembots as he enters Dr. Evil's headquarters.

Left: Austin Powers (Mike Myers) and agent Vanessa Kensington (Elizabeth Hurley) plan their escape in the latest of this summer's hit films.

'Father's Day' fails despite funny duo

By Sandy Campbell
Film Correspondent

Question: What is the new movie in which the stars are funnier promoting the film than the actual film itself? If you answered "Father's Day," a remake of the 1983 French film *Les Compères*, you could be a winner. You could also be a winner if you save your eight bucks.

What's wrong with this movie? Don't get me started. I mean one would think that any film starring Robin Williams and Billy Crystal would be funny, even on an off day. That was the perception I had before seeing this film.

"Father's Day" concerns two men who, together, go on a search for a missing boy that each one believes is his the real father of. This is one of the major mistakes of the film. We, as an audience, want to see Robin Williams and Billy Crystal, not the adventures of some dopey spoiled teenager. What is this, Free Willy without the whale? The boy's character was written as if the average audience member was a 14-year-old boy, as in most kid's movies. Attention studio heads, rich white kids from southern California suburbs do not define an entire generation, despite what happened in the '60s.

Also, people throw cash around in this movie as if it was Monopoly money. I bet a homeless man wishes he was a character in this movie because then he would be filthy rich too.

Sure the movie does have its moments, but it's nothing like Billy Crystal and Robin Williams promoting the film together last week on Oprah and Leno. The two said that the film had quite a bit of improv. Maybe the whole film itself should have been done on improv, completely eliminating the screenplay of Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel (Parenthood and City Slickers, two films I find to be overrated).

It's also sad that the movie could have been built as a comedy threesome and not a male duo. Comedienne Julia Louis-Dreyfus (Seinfeld) is left out in the cold and given the thankless role of being Billy Crystal's wife. There is also a silly subplot about the real father played by the bland Bruce Greenwood (St. Elsewhere, Exotica) going on a search for the missing boy, with his car breaking down, getting stuck in an outhouse (don't ask me because, like the movie, it stinks) and learning the true meaning of fatherhood from a garage mechanic.

I may not have enjoyed the movie, but there were people guffawing at the most repetitive jokes all the way through. I say whatever rolls your yarn. The worst comedy I ever saw was the Nicholas Cage, Dana Carvey, Jon Lovitz fiasco, Trapped in Paradise, and there was a toothless bag lady chuckling all the way through the film. So I am not saying that you may not enjoy the movie, but I wish the kid would have stayed missing. D-

Me'shell Ndege'Ocello displays love, sadness, hatred in music

By Doug Arnold
Staff Writer

A Maverick Records artist whose first single from her latest album was controversial sings about difficult love, unavoidable hypocrisy and the struggles of a young woman in society is performing in Chicago on May 19, but it's not Alanis.

Alanis Morissette's label mate Me'shell Ndege'Ocello, who is doing a Columbia-sponsored show at the Metro on May 19, explores some of the same emotions as the 500 billion-trillion selling phenomenon, but does so with a genre-hopping mix of soul, hip-hop, jazz and poetry, rather than stale, studio-enhanced rock groomed specifically to sell on alternative and Top 40 radio.

And unlike the former kiddie television star and lollipop-sucking Canadian teen idol who was remarketed as an alternative icon who will go down on you in a theater, there is no reason to believe that Me'shell isn't sincere about what she sings about. Of course, in all probability she'll never sell half as many records as Morissette.

Ndege'Ocello isn't exactly commercial poison though. Her breakthrough single, "If That's your Boyfriend (He Wasn't Last Night)" was all over MTV's "Buzz Bin" a couple of years ago and her duet with pre-heart attack John Mellencamp, "Wild Nights," gave him one of his few radio hits of the 1990s.

Based on experiences with people and emotions she's encountered throughout her life, the songs on "Peace Beyond



Passion," Ndege'Ocello's second album for Maverick, are lyrically jarring but funky enough to play in a club.

Said Ndege'Ocello, "This album is my journey toward understanding and allowing myself to question reality's boundaries."

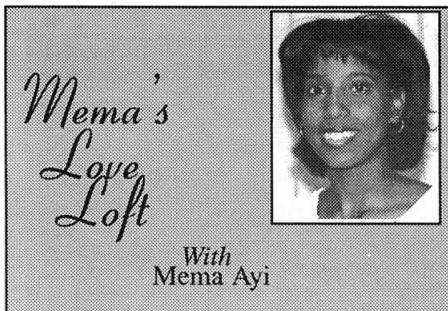
The first single, "Leviticus: Faggot," details the confrontational reactions to a young man who has come out of the closet: "Faggot better run, o'run 'cus daddy's home, His sweet little boy just a little too sweet...His mother would pray, save him, save him, save him from this life."

Rock critics tripped all over themselves last year praising Ndege'Ocello for choosing such a gutsy single, a tough sell even

for the most daring commercial radio markets. Said Billboard, "Some records just leave you speechless—filled with emotion and perspective but grappling for coherent words of expression."

She pulls no punches with songs about her own feelings as well. The chorus of "Deuteronomy: Niggerman," goes "All I ever wanted was a nigger who would be true, All I ever wanted was a niggerman."

Despite the longing and pain in the songs, Ndege'Ocello hopes to convey a sense of hope. "I no longer spend my days in worry of tomorrow; instead I keep the thought of God ever-present in hope that my days are filled with love for myself and others."



Hey Mema,
The most beautiful girl on Columbia's campus is in "Legal Aspects of Art and Entertainment" on Wednesdays at 12:30. Her last name is Lopez. That's all I know.

—Posted by "Interested" via online forum

Hey Interested:

That's all you know? You've been in class with this woman for an entire semester and all you know is her last name? Come on, what are you shy? And what would you like for me to do with this information? Check the Love Loft's telephone list of the most beautiful men and women on campus? Set you up on a date with her?

I could do this for you, but I won't. I don't know anything about you. You could be some silly, stalking weirdo. No, I guess you can't be a stalker because you didn't even have the guts to find out this woman's first name!

But I'm thinking that maybe you are a bit silly though because you're interested in this woman because you think she's beautiful. That's all you know about her, and you're interested. Don't you think it's a bit petty of you to be interested in a woman because she's beautiful? Her looks are inconsequential.

Do you see anything else in her? You've been in class with her for an entire semester. Is she articulate? Does she make good points in class? Who does she talk to from class, the more intelligent students or the losers who sit in the back sleeping?

There's so much more to a woman than just what she looks like. I realize that a person's appearance is the first thing we notice, but you have to look beyond that. And if this woman is as "beautiful" as you say she is, the last thing she needs is yet another guy telling her how beautiful she is. She's probably looking to hear words like bright, fun or witty.

Interested, if you want some hints on getting to know this woman, read on:

—Find a way to let her know that you wrote this letter without spooking her. You don't want her to think that you've been following her around.

—Try to get to know her. Keep in mind that, while she's beautiful, she could be a complete idiot. There can't be anything more disappointing than going out with someone because you think they're totally hot and later discovering that they're dumb as a rock.

—Be yourself around her, but realize that she may not be interested in you. In which case you can move on and maybe learn to appreciate less than beautiful women. Beauty doesn't equal perfection—unless that's all you're looking for. But if that's all you're looking for, all you'll ever find are beautiful women with no substance. And you going after these women would make nothing more than an ordinary jerk. But I'll just assume you're not a jerk and you're looking for more than that.

I thought for sure single, Columbia women would be coming to the Chronicle in droves to snatch-up any one of the bachelors I mentioned last week. What happened? Where are you? Don't you realize that summer will be here any day now and you can go out with one of 10 really nice guys? All guys that I would go out with—if I could. I only mention that summer's coming because there's nothing like a budding romance in the summer.

Ladies, it's time to stop complaining that we can't find a nice guy. We can find one if we stop settling for jerks. And I've got 10 of them, all waiting for 10 Columbia women to brighten their lives.

* * * Sara on sports * * *



By Sara Willingham
Sports Correspondent

Ahhh...the saga continues...

The story surrounding the Chicago Bulls is simply a soap opera. I feel that Ray Clay will have to alter the way he announces the team. Instead of saying, "Aaand now, the starting line-up of your WORLD CHAMPION Chicago Bulls," he'll have to say, "Like sands through the hour glass, so are your World-Champ Chicago Bulls." From Dennis and Annie's tragic break-up to MJ's finger-waggin' at Dikembe, the tale has become a series of goofy sub-stories designed to keep us watching week after week.

And the top story of the week? Phil Jackson. He is the grandfatherly person who keeps all of the feuding family members under control and ensures that all is well despite the turbulent times. He's the one who is expected to maintain a certain composure even though his number one rebounder is the butt of poor officiating. He's supposed to keep it cool...no matter what. And let me tell you, he is not at all compensated appropriately for his skills.

So the twist to this week's story is that Phil Jackson has been offered \$30 million over five years to coach the Orlando Magic. I say he isn't going to take it. I don't think he'll pass it up because he's incapable. Nor do I believe that Phil thinks he won't be successful if Michael Jordan isn't playing for him. I think that Phil Jackson will have to be lured by a lot more than money. It's a

deadhead thing. You know, anti-materialism, anti-conformity, all-peace all-the-time. That's how "heads" think. Phil uses that unique Zen approach to coaching the Bulls. Which is precisely why he is so successful at what he does.

Some people are apt to think that coach Jackson is only good because Mike is on his side and, without MJ, Phil would be useless. C'mon people! At the professional level, a coach does not have to teach the fundamentals of the game (Riggleman is an exception to this rule). Phil Jackson does not have to tell Michael Jordan how to play basketball. Phil is paid to be that grandfather, Michael is happy, Dennis is somewhat well-behaved, Scottie is energized, Toni is healthy, Caffey is playing, Luc is hustling, etcetera, etcetera...the list goes on.

Phil is just the right person to coach these Bulls. He's the right (and probably the only) coach who earns respect from "His Airness," receives obediency from "The Worm" and keeps a smile on "Pip's" face. Sure, he coaches the greatest basketball player to ever play the game. He still has his work cut out for him, as far as keeping the peace amid the bizarre clash of his squad's personalities.

Again, Phil is the right man for the job here in Chicago. He can't be schmoozed by money, and he'd be crazy to break up the chemistry. Phil Jackson is as important to the Bulls during the playoffs as MJ, Dennis, Scottie, Toni, Luc, Harp, Kerr, Caffey, Jud, Brian Williams and even the Chief, for cryin'-out-loud. It's a team, and everyone takes responsibility for the team's errors as well as their successes.

It is a stinkin' soap opera, but it keeps us watching, and it keeps us happy. The top story next week will most likely involve the villain team...the New York Knicks. They've got brawling, dirty players, a snot-nosed 6th-man and an overgrown ape. All of the essentials for a truly trashy day-time drama... "The Days of the NBA Fives!"

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The spoken word of Spearhead's Michael Franti

By Bianca Williams
Correspondent

The telephone is a mighty powerful communication instrument when it comes to getting an interview. And playing phone tag for two weeks is a wonderful game when it works out in your favor.

When the reporter discovered that Michael Franti, the front man for the hip hop group Spearhead, would be swinging through Chicago on his two-week spoken word tour, the wheels started turning to snag an interview with the man. It was as easy as e-mailing the Hollywood and Vine company and requesting an interview for the Chronicle of Columbia College Chicago. A week after the e-mail was sent, this reporter received a phone call at work from Spearhead's Capitol Records publicist in New York City. This pencil pusher was informed that an in-person interview would be impossible but that the reporter could have a phone interview while Spearhead was on the road promoting their new album, "Chocolate Supa Highway."

After setting up dates and times and canceling them for a week, the reporter finally got a definite time along with telephone numbers of the hotel in Dallas, the manager in L.A. and the alias name Mr. Franti would be registered under. At 6:58 p.m., this reporter called the Dallas hotel to be connected to Franti's room, only to be told by the female voice on the other end that the number was busy. At the precise moment the hotel concierge said the word "busy," this reporter's other line chimed. She quickly said thank you and clicked over to take the call.

Bianca: Hello?

Michael: This is Michael Franti.

Bianca: Michael. How are you doing? I just called the hotel and your line was busy.

Michael laughs. *I lie down on my bed with my pen poised in the air and stare at the blank sheet of paper.*

Bianca: How do you write lyrics about today's bleak society?

Michael: I just see what I see out on the street and talk to people. It's not any specific incidences that makes me want to write what I do. I feel it is a bleak world...it is an ugly place but it's worth fighting for. I try to make my music to inspire people not to give up but to keep going.

Bianca: In your songwriting process, do you write the lyrics or compose the music first?

Michael: It's always different. I usually have a hook, story or idea for a song, but I always make the music first because, if I sit down in front of a blank piece of paper, I get mad writer's block. If I have music, the creative process flows through me more easily.

Bianca: Spearhead is one of the few musical groups that put the album lyrics on the flap. Is it important to you

that your listeners know and are moved by the lyrics and not just the beat of the song?

Michael: Yeah, definitely. I want the lyrics to be heard and understood. When I was a kid, I would buy an album and go in my room and crank it. I would read the back of the giant record cover and say, "Damn, that's what they were saying." Usually, you would get into the beat of the song and not trip off the lyrics unless you saw them in writing.

Bianca: What is hip-hop music doing to save hip hop?

Michael: I think Hip Hop has a lot of creativity. I don't look at lyrics as being positive and negative because it's important for people to have the right to express what's on their mind. Every song doesn't go into a vacuum. It goes into the hearts of the people that listen to it. If an artist wants to write about violence, they should do it from a viewpoint that looks at it creatively. Every artist has a responsibility.

Bianca: Spoken word is now starting to make a dent in the music industry. Is Spearhead going in the spoken word direction or down a different avenue?

Michael: I've always done spoken word along with making music with the band and on the record. It's something these days since everyone gets entertainment from the electronic media. Spoken word is moving a lot of people because they're used to watching TV and not socializing. My house had a spoken word conversation at the dinner table every night because someone was always telling a funny or sad story. We just didn't call it spoken word.

Bianca: You speak in rhythmic tones that remind me of the stories my parents told me as a child. Did you have any strong storytellers in your life growing up? And, if so, how have they influenced what you are bringing to the music industry?

Michael: My grandmother is really, really...an incredible storyteller. She was really funny too. The last time I saw her, in 1995 before she died, she was in the hospital. I went to visit her and said, "Grandma, what are you doing in the hospital?" *Michael changes his vocal tones to sound like an older woman.* "Because I'm pregnant." My grandmother was 96-years-old. "Who got you pregnant?" I asked. "Reverend Mitchell." She decided to add flair to it. Even through adversity, she could tell stories. That's something I carry with me.

Bianca: People in general always say they don't want to talk about religion or politics. However, it is so intertwined in our lives that it is a natural part of our existence. How do these two topics affect your work as an artist?

Michael: It is so intertwined in our lives. I try not to compartmentalize things. On my spoken word tour, while I was in Minneapolis, a bunch of kids asked me, "You know, there are so many important issues out there, where do you start to address them?" I said, "Well, you can't go around and pick all the different issues to address. You

should have a set of values you hold for yourself. When something comes up, you have a framework to look at things and make your own judgment." Issues have a lot to do with your spiritual beliefs tested everyday.

Bianca: How do you select the specific cause for your albums? [The cause for Spearhead's first album was HIV and AIDS; the second album is the U.S. prison system.]

Michael: I live in San Francisco. Our city has been hit real hard by the AIDS crisis. So it's hard not to know someone who has died from or has the virus. The last time [referring to the "Home" album], I wanted people to talk about it [AIDS] in the community. In doing that, I traveled around the country. I visited St. Claire Hospital in New York. It's a prison hospital with a lot of HIV patients. Talking to the patients inspired me to bring up the issue of locking people up for possession of a controlled substance. The reason they are selling this [illegal drugs] is because they have no opportunities in the community. We need to look at different ways of addressing these issues instead of locking people up.

Bianca: The lyrics of "Gas Gauge" are so visual. I can see the flowing images of the story that lead to this kid being shot.

Michael: In my neighborhood, people get shot all the time. People are around so many guns all the time. One day I was driving down the street in L.A. on my way to the airport. It was a white neighborhood and I saw four black brothers pushing a car off to the side of the road that had ran out of gas. A gas station wasn't around for miles. I imagined what would happen when the sun goes down: No one would help them because they're black. The police would arrive and what would happen if a gun appeared in the situation? We have so many guns. People resolve their problems by getting a gun and shooting people. Now people get shot and die. When I was little, people used to fist fight. I never thought I would see the day that I'd encourage people to fist fight.

Michael and I chat about people we both know. I look at my clock and discover that it's 7:20 p.m. and I'm missing the season finale to one of the only programs I watch on television. A program I would have to watch via the VCR if I didn't cut class to do the interview with Michael Franti.

Bianca: Well, that's it. Thanks for the interview.

Michael: Thank you.

Bianca: Have a great tour.

Michael Franti and Spearhead will have a great tour. The "Chocolate Supa Highway" album is doing well. Spearhead rolls into Chicago on June 1 at the House of Blues. Watching and listening to this group perform is definitely a must see and also a great energy boost after a draining year of education at Columbia College.

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INSIDE...

THE CHICAGO POETRY SCENE

PART IX IN A CONTINUING SERIES

The Guild Complex

By John Henry Biederman
Editor-in-chief



"The Guild Complex erupted out of a big bang between performance poets and published poets (which at the time were really separate categories) in the middle of a bookstore that valued both,"

explained Michael Warr, executive director of the Guild Complex, which conducts most performances out of the Chopin Theater at 1543 W. Division St. "We pride ourselves on a reputation for being open to all forms and styles of poetry."

A large portion of Chicago's modern, live poetry scene arose out of disdain for published poets, whom many saw as cloistered in egotistical academic circles. The current incarnation of live poetry in Chicago began with the creation of the poetry slam, at the Green Mill, by Marc Smith. Smith's primary goal was to bring poetry back to the common man—to have it performed in venues like bars and coffeehouses for people who might never pick up a book of poetry.

Smith, at first, refused to publish his poetry even when asked—and although he has recently published his own book, that attitude is not rare, even today.

Nonetheless, written poetry, today, has migrated back toward the realm of the common man, of the hip and the urban. And the Guild Complex deserves much of the credit for that. Its publishing wing, Tia Chucha Press, has only complimented the variety of performances, and commitment to diversity, showcased in the Chopin Theater.

"The performance poetry movement, rooted in bars and cafes, consciously expanded the poetry audience beyond academia and the classroom," Michael Warr explained. "That was a quantitative achievement. The same movement has had a qualitative impact, including the revitalization and extension of performance poetry into the universities, both here and abroad. Poetry is now typically presented in venues as distinct as rock festivals, prisons, churches, art galleries...even the state-designated protest areas of the National Democratic Party Convention."

The Guild holds irregular events, usually twice a week on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, encompassing a broad variety of acts. Most (90 percent) focus on poetry—featuring a published poet, perhaps, or a performance poet from the Scene followed by an open-mic. Nonpoetry events may be anything from a reading by a fiction author to Native-

American dancers to its annual National Poetry Video Festival. The complex occasionally features performers from other parts of the country, as well. Many of the Guild's events fuse poetry with other arts—as in performances by the Funky Wordsmiths and Tree Roots and the Traveling Caravan, combining poetry and music.

The setting is softly-lit and roomy with a coffeehouse feel. Hosts vary, including some from other venues like Maria McCray (see P.O.E.T.S., below) and the likes of actor Reggie Gibson ("love jones"). Meridel LeSeur, Gwendolyn Brooks and Studs Terkel have been featured here. Events generally cost \$5, \$3 for open-mic readers and students.

Tia Chucha Press has published the likes of author Carlos Cumpian and many scene regulars. The well-published Warr has won a National Endowment for the Arts for poetry. At the same time, however, Warr came from meager beginnings, as this excerpt of his poetry relates:

*A jar of pickled pig lips
reminds me of where I come from.
Where gumbo ain't nouveau cuisine.
And folks on every corner
affectionately call me cuz...
(from "Back to Baton Rouge")*

All in all, it's difficult to categorize the Guild Complex—sponsoring over 100 events in 1996 alone. It is a cornucopia of what's to be expected from the scene overall as well as a showcase for acts one can't find elsewhere. If nothing else, it's living, thriving proof that performance poetry can exist alongside written verse.

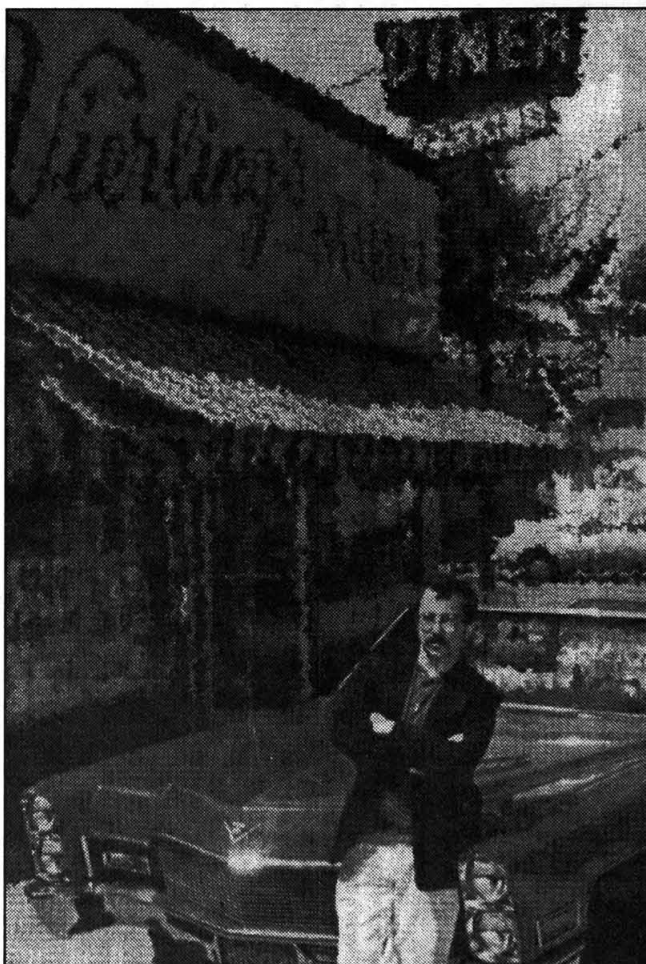
About this series

Today's look at the Guild Complex is part IX in a continuing series of poetry open-mic reviews the Chronicle is running indefinitely this semester—excerpted from a book tentatively scheduled for release this summer and tentatively titled, "The Chicago Poetry Scene: A Comprehensive Guide."

The book, by editor-in-chief John Henry Biederman, seeks to define The Scene, from the invention of the slam onward, to an extent never seen before. As The Scene is an ever-changing, largely unchronicled monster, the rare write-ups it has received have suffered from inaccuracies and misrepresentations—but this book strives to be different, written from a Scene insider's point of view.

Although the excerpts to be printed herein form but a small part of that work, enough will be included within these pages to allow one interested in the Scene to get started. For those interested in the book itself—keep up on this series as publication is now being negotiated between publishers and even an agent or two.

Currently, Biederman is working on a chapter for "Underground Chicago," to be published by Manic D Press out of San Francisco, on the poetry scene. He also appeared on the WGN morning news on April 23 as an expert on the scene.



Photos courtesy of the Guild Complex
(through promotional materials)

Scholarship fund expands with Buddy's benefit

By Jill Schimelpfenig
Features Editor

A new approach to fundraising for Columbia's Residence Hall scholarships went through its test run on May 14. Dozens of students, faculty, alumni and friends of the college met down the street at Buddy Guy's Legends, 754 S. Wabash Ave., to kick off the first-ever "Columbia's cooking with Buddy's."

For \$35, participants received a "Taste of Columbia" cookbook, soft drinks, a light meal and live musical entertainment by the Columbia Faculty Jazz Group and the band "She." All proceeds from the benefit went to the Residence Hall Scholarship fund.

Rose Gordon, assistant to the dean of students, was the chief coordinator of this benefit and the person behind the cookbook's inception.

"A lot of students really don't know how to cook," said Gordon, as she recalled the students' example from the first "Taste of Columbia" event back in the fall of 1995. After this event, modeled after our very own "Taste of Chicago," Gordon set to work on gathering recipes from anyone affiliated with Columbia—she sent 16,000 letters requesting recipe contributions. From the many submissions, the cookbook was soon published and in the Columbia bookstore by December 1996. Composed of 150 recipes, the cookbook also includes artwork by Jeff Stevenson, art instructor, and contributions from local restaurants, including Printer's Row and Ann Sather. Delicacies range from treetop hash to basic meatloaf to lemon broccoli pasta to blueberry wheatcakes. Personal comments at the end of many recipes are an added touch to the already unique cookbook.

Gordon describes the contents of her brainchild as "cheap, quick and easy."

The cookbook is available at Columbia's bookstore and all proceeds benefit the scholarship fund.

The number of full and partial scholarships applicable toward housing costs at the Residence Hall varies each year and is dependent upon the amount of funds raised. Scholarship awards are based on a combination of financial need and academic excellence. Consideration for scholarship renewal is based on continued, positive academic performance. Applications have already been accepted for the '97-98 school year, but Residence Hall Scholarships will continue to be offered.

Approximately seven to 10 new students receive this type of award each year and, depending on the success of events like "Columbia's Cooking with Buddy's," the numbers may just increase.



The Columbia Faculty Jazz Group performed at the "Columbia's cooking with Buddy's" event (above). A sampling of the fare offered last week (below). Photo by Dave Brennan

Buddy Guy's Legendary Chicken and Sausage Jambalaya

- 1 6-ounce chicken breast, boneless and skinless
- 8 ounces smoked andouille or kielbasa sausage
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 teaspoon garlic, minced
- 1 small bell pepper, diced
- 1 12-ounce can diced, peeled tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon Tabasco sauce
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon gumbo file powder
- 1 tablespoon Cajun spice blend

Makes: 4 servings

Slice sausage in to bite-sized pieces and brown in large sauce pan over medium-high heat. Remove sausage from pan with slotted spoon and reserve grease for next step. Wash chicken thoroughly and cut into 1/2-inch cubes. Sauté over medium-high heat (add a little peanut oil if there is not enough grease to sauté—total of about 2 tablespoons of oil) until cooked through. Return sausage to pan and add onion, bell pepper, celery and garlic. Sauté until vegetables are cooked through. Add liquid ingredients, including tomatoes, and stir to combine. Add dry ingredients and simmer over low heat for about two hours. Adjust flavor to taste with salt, pepper and Tabasco. Serve with cooked rice.

CUMA delivers conference to boost student contact in music business field

By Mema Ayi
Managing Editor

Columbia's Urban Music Association (CUMA) hosted its second annual urban music business conference May 10.

The conference, called "Survival of the Fittest," provided the 200 attendees with a networking base for students and/or artists interested in promotions and product or artist development.

In addition to a music showcase featuring local artists Warzone, B.A. Smart, The Syndicate and TSP, artists were able play their music for major record label executives in a demo listening and critique session.

In its first two years as an active student organization, CUMA has been successful in marketing and promoting Chicago-based artists.

Executives from several record labels told artists and students interested in marketing and promotions that most record companies are not creative—that they're not looking for a "new sound."

"They [record companies] want whatever's sold," said Tammy Tisdell, Midwest Promotional Director for Sony's Urban Music Division.

"So if they tell you that you sound like 2Pac, don't feel bad about the comparison," Tisdell said.

She said that, before the company even listens to a demo, they will ask who the artist sounds like. New artists should realize that they're going to be characterized and compared to established artists, Tisdell said.

Tisdell also suggested that before going to a record company, artists should have an idea about what [music] category they fall into.

"You need to know your market base," said Mary Thatcher of On the Street Promotions.

Thatcher suggests that artists first build a "street" foundation or a fan base so that they can

go to a record company knowing who will buy their music.

"Record companies expect marketing tools to already be in place," Tisdell said.

The Marketing and Promotions panel addressed why so many new artists end up bankrupt after a short period of time.

"The company will get you [the artist, financially]. The company really doesn't need you," said Kirkland Burke, Warner Brothers' Regional Promotional Director.

Tisdell said that artists go broke early in their careers because they don't "take care of business."

New artists should get professional legal advice and professional management, she said, warning them to look out for lawyers and managers just "trying to make a buck."

"It's a shady business," Tisdell said. "You get to play on the shady side—from money, from girls, from drugs and from negotiations."

Thatcher suggested that artists focus on a reasonable distributor and bar code their product. And when artists begin to make a profit, she said, they should turn that money over.

"Don't buy a new car with that money!" Thatcher said.

The promotions and marketing executives stressed the importance of internships and networking to break into the business on either side.

Tisdell suggested that people interested in marketing and promotions work first in retail record stores to gain experience.

"You've got to know a lot about music. A record store will give you a broad range of music knowledge."

"When you do get an internship, take it very seriously," said Jello, co-founder of Chrewd Marketing. "And try to do something to let the people know that you're dedicated. People will remember that and support you."

The Chronicle
will honor
the 1997
graduating class
in next week's
farewell,
for the summer,
issue.

Local-talent-friendly venues

Often, Chicago's rock scene is nationally underscored. But true Chicagoans remain loyal to our local legends by frequenting venues that cater to the next generation of great musicians. The following is a list of local arenas that dedicate time and space to the sounds of this great city.



Photos by Stacy Morgan

Fireside Bowl, at 2646 W. Fullerton Ave., does five to six local band showcases a week. The Fireside's primary purpose is to give exposure to new local bands. The bands vary from day to day and the cost is \$5 unless otherwise noted. 773-486-2700.

By Eileen LaVelle
Staff Writer

House of Blues, at 1111 N. Dearborn St., does a three-band showcase every Thursday until recently because Duff Rice, the head of the company, quit unexpectedly. Hopefully, the showcases will start again next month. 773-327-1667

The Elbow, at 1572 N. Milwaukee Ave., does a three-band showcase every Thursday of every month. The showcase is called "Uncommon Ground," features acoustic, coffee-shop style bands. 773-489-3160

The Cubby Bear, at 1059 W. Addison St., was doing a three-band showcase every Thursday until recently because Duff Rice, the head of the company, quit unexpectedly. Hopefully, the showcases will start again next month. 773-327-1667

The Double Door, at 1572 N. Milwaukee Ave., does a showcase the last Thursday of every month. The showcase, called "Uncommon Ground," features acoustic, coffee-shop style bands. 773-489-3160

Elbo Room, at 2871 N. Lincoln Ave., where every Wednesday night is a three-band showcase and the bands are always new to the Elbo Room. The showcase is called "Three bands for Three Bucks." 773-549-5549

Metro, at 3730 N. Clark St., where every Tuesday Q101 sponsors a three band showcase, the cost is usually \$5. 773-549-0203

WXRT (93.1 FM) does a showcase once a week on Sunday nights called Local

Sumo's savvy sounds satisfy spectators

By Eileen LaVelle
Staff Writer

Imagine a band that has all untitled songs, a new unnamed CD and a name with no specific meaning, and you have Sumo. The ten-member band plays every Sunday at the Elbo Room, taking the time slot Liquid Soul used to fill before they started the Double Door gigs.

Sumo's uniquely eclectic sound is difficult to describe because the band has so many various musical backgrounds and influences. They all blend together into one pretty strong full sound, with one-of-a-kind vocals and a wide range of instrumentals, not to mention an air-tight rhythm section.

Sumo originally started out with the name Zo, but when Leddie Garcia, the percussionist, parted ways from the band last September, he kept the name Zo and the rest of the band kept the Elbo Room gigs. The band then came up with the name Sumo, feeling it was fitting for the '90s. Leddie and Sumo's saxophone player, Paul Mertens, now plays with Zo and Poi Dog Pondering.

The show on Sunday, May 11 started off kind of rough. The PA system was out for the beginning of the first set. Singer Mark Vickery had to sing through a megaphone (police style and all) to be heard since he was without his microphone. Vickery said, "It was a weird feeling when the PA wasn't on, but then it all came together."

I thought it really came together during the second set. Jose Rendon, Steve

Gillis and Newt Cole all did a short, cool drum session and then the rest of the band joined in an expressive improvisational jam. Sumo creates their sound strictly by improvising. There are no set lists, titles to songs or set chords to a tune. The band just plays and takes it to wherever the music flows.

The horn section really adds a broad sound to the jams. Mike Levin and Paul Mertens, on sax and flute, add even more diversity to the band's style. Their diversity comes partially from the fact that most members of the band play other gigs or in other bands in the Chicago area. But all have one thing in common—as Vickery puts it: "There are no rules, we just get funky and make it happen."

One thing that would enhance their show is to set up their stage differently. As it is, the sound in the Elbo Room is pretty lame, and the way the percussion is set up in the front causes the drum section to overpower the other musicians. It still works for their sound, though.

The female vocalist, Astra Kelly, has an excellent, raspy, Janis Joplin-like sounding voice, just not as "Bluesy." Kelly and everyone else on stage seem to lure the listeners in with raging grooves and inventive harmonies that cause non-stop dancing.

These guys are worth checking out, the cost is \$5 and for Sunday entertainment they're pretty cool. Sumo is also having a CD release party at the Elboroom on Sat. June 7, in addition to their regular Sunday shows.