

Jaded

ISSUE 11 WINTER 2007
PROGRESSIVE CULTURE FOR ALL

涼煙糖





WELCOME TO THE RED ISSUE

Fear and Loathing in America

Our cover image is from a Chinese cigarette candy package. It reads, "liang yan tang" which translates to "cool smoke candy." The tiny candy box resembles a Marlboro box, the top half is red and the bottom half is white. It depicts a young lad with a cowboy hat, American you can say. The image resembles both the cheesiness of a 50s Coca Cola ad and a Communist propaganda poster. It is interesting because it exists between consumer propaganda and political marketing. Issue 11 of Jaded uses the theme, red, to look at the conflicting tensions of consumerism and power.

We decided this would be the last year for Jaded. We are proud to have served our three at UCI, presenting strong, interesting articles and innovative design. We personally invite all our readers, student activists, design nerds, and everyday do-gooders, to come to a series of magazine publishing workshops. We believe in democratizing media and empowering others to start their version of a progressive community and culture.

Diana Jou

MISSION STATEMENT

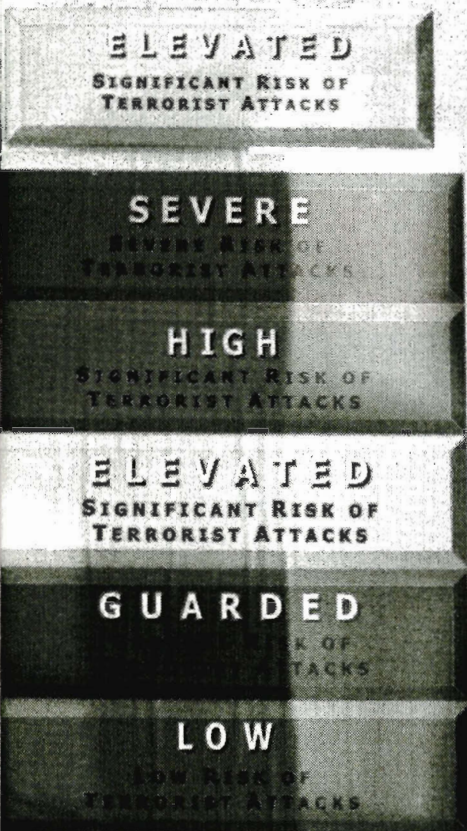
Jaded is an alternative media magazine that was founded and supported by an Asian American community at UCI. Though our identity is rooted in the community, we aim to make issues of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation relevant to our socio-political environment. We are committed to social justice and at the same time to arts, entertainment, and creative expression. Our progressive identity shapes the way we process information and the development of our articles. Jaded hopes to create a community of young, creative, and critical thinkers that can make positive change in our collective future.

COVERS

Front and inside cover by Chris Dea

DOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY SYSTEM

The Current Threat Level is



COMRADES

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Send them all to comments@jadedmag.org.

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DISCLAIMER

The ideas and opinions of the articles do not necessarily reflect those of the entire Jaded staff or UCI.

THIS IS HOW YOU SELL VALENTINE'S DAY CRAP

VALENTINE CANDY

T-4 FRONT
POG #110313602
SET BY 12/29/2006

LICENSED CANDY

BAGGED CANDY

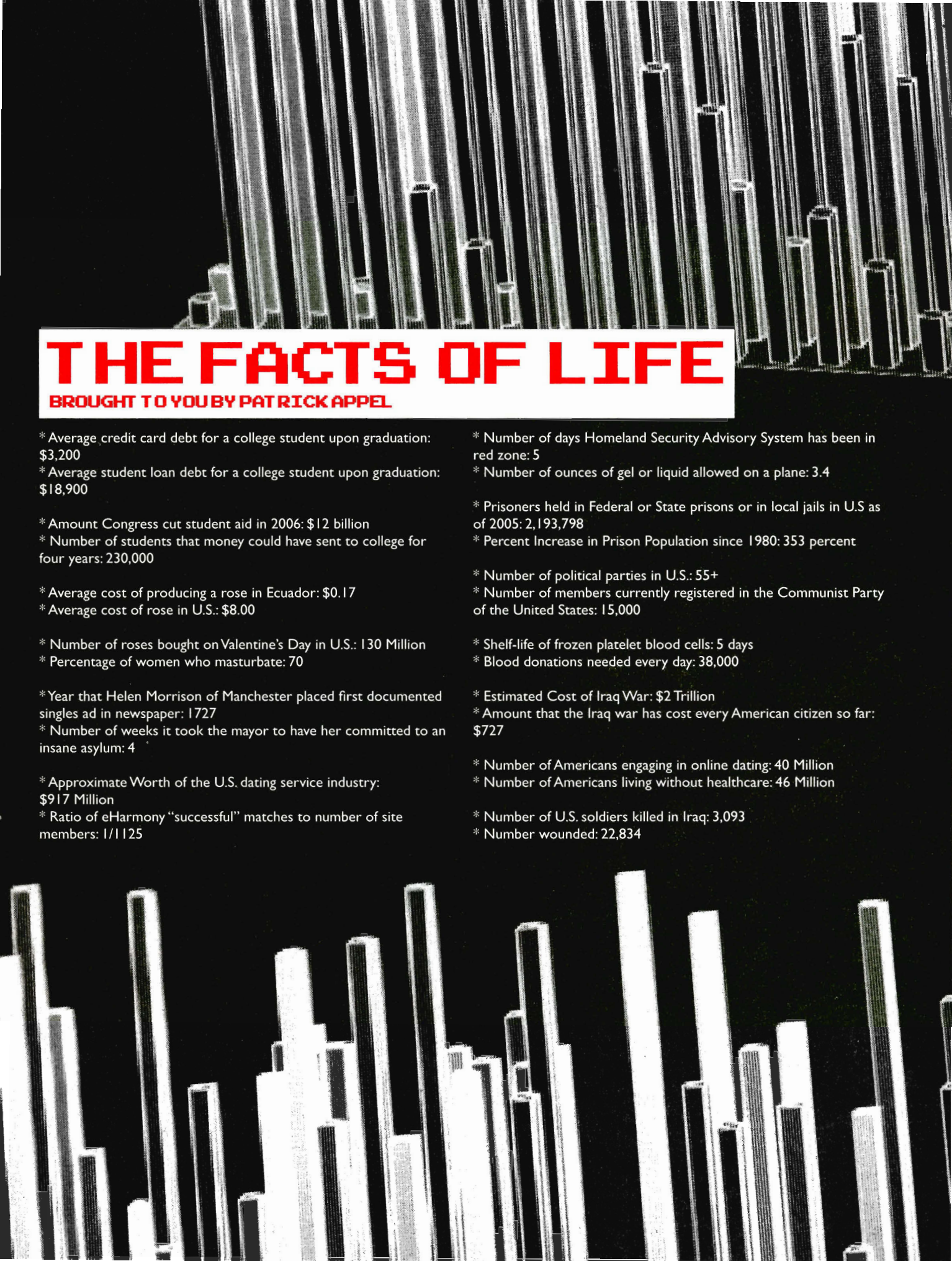


NOTES:

- 60" X 8' Presentation
- Measurements are from the base deck

FIXTURE INFORMATION:

- 11-19" Shelves
- 8- 3" X 4' Fencing



THE FACTS OF LIFE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY PATRICK APPEL

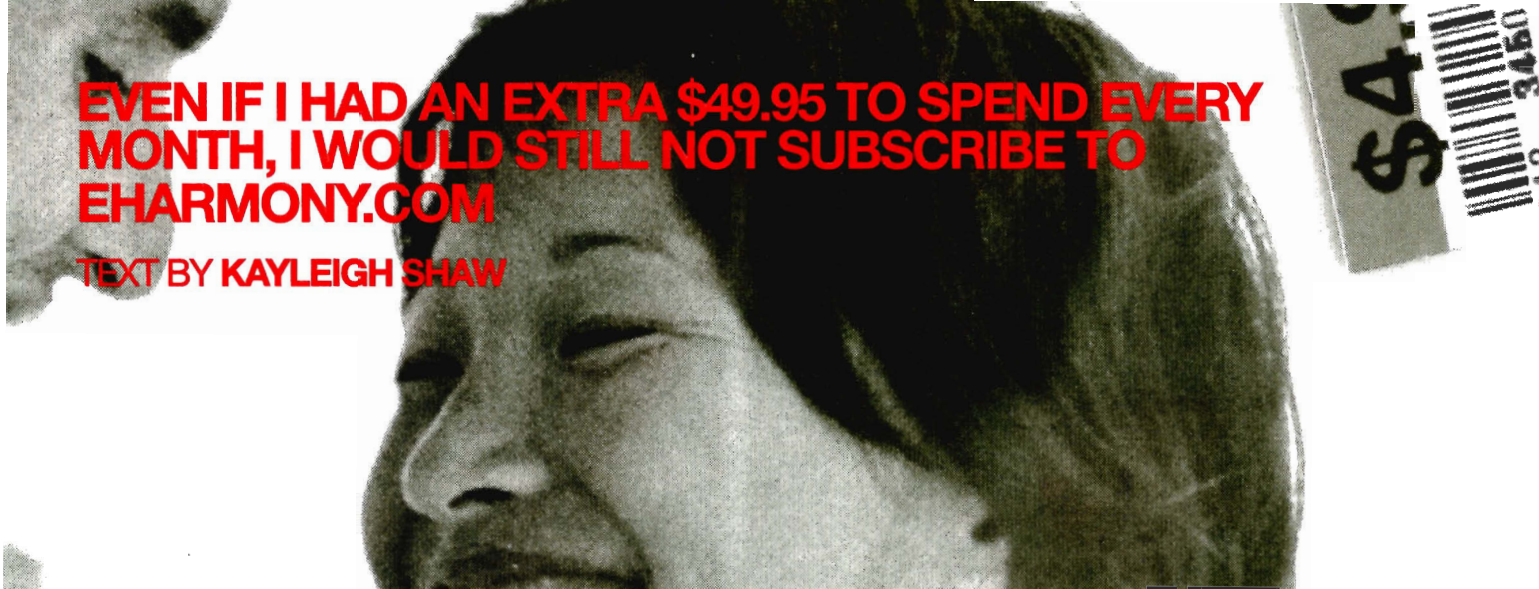
- * Average credit card debt for a college student upon graduation: \$3,200
- * Average student loan debt for a college student upon graduation: \$18,900
- * Amount Congress cut student aid in 2006: \$12 billion
- * Number of students that money could have sent to college for four years: 230,000
- * Average cost of producing a rose in Ecuador: \$0.17
- * Average cost of rose in U.S.: \$8.00
- * Number of roses bought on Valentine's Day in U.S.: 130 Million
- * Percentage of women who masturbate: 70
- * Year that Helen Morrison of Manchester placed first documented singles ad in newspaper: 1727
- * Number of weeks it took the mayor to have her committed to an insane asylum: 4
- * Approximate Worth of the U.S. dating service industry: \$917 Million
- * Ratio of eHarmony "successful" matches to number of site members: 1/1125
- * Number of days Homeland Security Advisory System has been in red zone: 5
- * Number of ounces of gel or liquid allowed on a plane: 3.4
- * Prisoners held in Federal or State prisons or in local jails in U.S as of 2005: 2,193,798
- * Percent Increase in Prison Population since 1980: 353 percent
- * Number of political parties in U.S.: 55+
- * Number of members currently registered in the Communist Party of the United States: 15,000
- * Shelf-life of frozen platelet blood cells: 5 days
- * Blood donations needed every day: 38,000
- * Estimated Cost of Iraq War: \$2 Trillion
- * Amount that the Iraq war has cost every American citizen so far: \$727
- * Number of Americans engaging in online dating: 40 Million
- * Number of Americans living without healthcare: 46 Million
- * Number of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq: 3,093
- * Number wounded: 22,834



UCI BIKE POLICY

TEXT BY PATRICK APPEL

UC Irvine's Bike Policy over the past few years has been contradictory. In the past, the University contended it was interested in the eco-friendly nature of bike riding by giving students \$50 towards the purchase of a bike. They even encouraged use of motorized bicycles, which are arguably more dangerous (but easier to outrun the bike cops on). This year, these programs have ended, and under the veil of safety concerns the administration has made bike riding on campus almost impossible. The administration claims that with the growth of UC Irvine there are too many people on campus for bike riding to be safe, but other UC schools are experiencing similar growth and they find ways to accommodate both bikers and pedestrians. A reported 84 percent of the UC Davis student population brought their bike to campus this last year. The solution should not be eliminating bike riding, but giving bike riders their own space. In the 1980s a bike lane was proposed around Ring Road. It seems long past time that lane was built. ■



EVEN IF I HAD AN EXTRA \$49.95 TO SPEND EVERY MONTH, I WOULD STILL NOT SUBSCRIBE TO EHARMONY.COM

TEXT BY KAYLEIGH SHAW

I am one of the 70 million American adults who have no reason to celebrate anything on February 14 (unless you count mopping the bathroom floor or watching a *Next* marathon on MTV some sort of celebration). We single people are a pretty sizable demographic; the number of single Americans over the age of 18 has been steadily increasing over the last few decades, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This is not to say that people have stopped looking for love or for long term partners. Quite the contrary is true if online dating indicates anything. In 2002, dating websites reported an astounding \$304 million in profits for hosting user profiles and for selling matchmaking services. We haven't stopped looking for love in all the wrong places: we're just doing it from the comfort of our own homes. What could be more American than taking the ancient tradition of courtship and debasing it by mate-shopping online?

While some dating sites allow you to post a simple profile and a picture for free, the most popular ones require a monthly subscription fee. In terms of the most users, Yahoo! Personals and Match.com are the undisputed winners. But they are relatively uninteresting from a sociological standpoint. Of the ten most popular dating sites, eHarmony.com ranks seventh in terms of sheer users. Yet eHarmony is made a more intriguing social experiment for the way its founder Dr. Neil Clark Warren promises to match me with one of the other hopeless 70 million singletons. Dr. Warren claims he has matchmaking down to a science (it took him 30 years to figure it out), and he says he's willing to share that special formula with me. His "29 dimensions of compatibility" matching system is even patented. It's that valuable. For only \$49.95 per month (or \$251.40 for 12 months), I can join the millions of other eHarmony users in my quest to find true love.

What's so special about eHarmony? Well, Dr. Warren wants to make sure that he's finding someone who really understands what I'm like (without ever having met or talked to me of course) so he administers this 10,000 question personality test to determine my likes and dislikes. I'm given statements that range from the general ("I get stressed out very easily") to the oddly specific ("I always read ALL of the warning literature on side-effects before taking any medication") and I have to rate how closely I agree/disagree with them. Seems simple enough. Heck! It's even fun. I'm learning a lot about myself. For instance, I never realized exactly how pessimistic, cynical and disillusioned I was until I started answering Dr. Warren's questions. Am I quarrelsome? You betcha! Emotionally stable? Not at all! Up until now, I had always thought of myself as a bright ray of California sunshine, but I've never had to rate how I feel about such tough, hard-hitting statements as, "It is important for me to take time to 'smell the roses.'" I hate roses.

After 7 hours of self-reflection, I complete my personal compatibility profile, which is free. Now I sit back and wait for Dr. Warren and his minions to set me up with potential matches. I can see some

preliminary information about my possible soulmates, but to view pictures or to establish "open lines of communication" I have to subscribe. Within a few weeks, I've got an inbox full of matches, 26 to be exact. This is great! I'm ready to see the type of men that Dr. Warren has found for me.

To put it nicely, the profiles that I've been matched with are less than promising. And that's without even being able to see what my matches look like. To take the category of occupation alone, apparently I am not looking for someone with a professional job, or even a stable source of income. My potential future husbands include machinists, assemblers, non-professional skateboarders, semi-professional poker players, and occasional/seasonal wildland firefighters. It's not exactly the group I was hoping for, but I'll look past their professional shortcomings for the time being. Everyone has to answer the question, "Besides your parents, who has been the most influential in your life and why?" One of my matches answered, "My sister, because she's super cool and four years older." Another respondent put that he had "no response for this," and a third wrote "The Harris's and the Jessops." This is the best you could do, Dr. Warren? I'm disappointed and I haven't even subscribed. I'm not so sure that \$49.95 a month is worth it for a date with a crane lift technician. Couldn't I just walk past a construction site and get the same date for free?

But millions of others have ponied up and paid serious money for eHarmony's services. The website is full of user testimonials, attesting to Dr. Warren's successful matchmaking science crap. Their obnoxious commercials are all over my television, interrupting my *Top Chef* marathon, reminding me that I'm not one of the happy couples who found the love of their life online. Looking closer at the statistics though, it turns out that only about 4,000 "true" matches can be attributed to Dr. Warren and his patented compatibility profile system. Out of 4.5 million users. Suddenly, I don't feel so bad about my qualifications as a decent, single American.

I do feel a little bit foolish though. Did I really believe that a website based on a standard (and not very accurate) personality test could match me up with the man of my dreams? Heavens to Zeus no! After sifting through four or five of my 26 matches, I was convinced that perhaps the universe holds a different fate for me. I could never picture myself as one of those stiff, average-looking people starring in eHarmony commercials. Still, as Match.com spokesperson Dr. Phil says, "It's okay to look." And I agree. But if that process of "looking" requires my Visa card and the naivety of a 10-year-old, count me out. We 70 million single people will be perfectly fine this Valentine's Day. We'll take our \$49.95 and spend it on the most valuable person in our lives: ourselves. And Dr. Warren? You can take your patented compatibility matching system and shove it. I wouldn't be bragging about a 4,000 in 4.5 million success rate. ■



FOR THE LOVE OF ROSES

TEXT BY JANELLE FLORES

What do roses mean to those who buy them, and to the workers who harvest them?

A rose, it seems, has always reigned the queen symbol of love. As far back as ancient Greece and Rome, the rose was associated with the goddess of love, every petal symbolizing lust, sexuality and beauty. Gorgeous, softly scented roses, when used appropriately, can turn a date into a passionate romance, and create a relationship as beautiful as the roses themselves. But why do roses—the universal symbol of love—have an average lifespan of only five days? How can something this fleeting be used to signify a lifelong love affair?

United States florists and flower vendors profit most on Valentine's Day, when Americans buy chocolates, fancy dinners, and, most of all, roses. But, this is also a holiday that is important in the global economy, for Valentine's Day generates \$300 million dollars for Ecuador every year.

In Ecuador, roses are everywhere, but the love associated with them doesn't have to do with pagan gods or romance; it has to do with commerce. Rose workers labor intensely to cultivate enough roses to accommodate the United States' demand for the flowers. For Ecuadorian flower merchants, Valentine's Day is like the Christmas season is for American retailers; Ecuador ships two-thirds of its roses to the United States. Thanks to the symbolism of roses and Ecuador's tropical climate, it would seem like everyone wins. Lovers get their roses, and Ecuadorians get their hard-earned cash.

Sadly, roses only last five to seven days on average, and that's

with proper maintenance and dousing chemical sprays. It takes time, money and pesticides to import thousands of delicate roses from Ecuador. They must undergo numerous chemical showers until they are finally boxed and shipped to the florist near you. Although Ecuadorian workers, primarily women, are given protective clothing and gloves, it is not enough to shield them from the health hazards they're exposed to 12 hours a day.

Rose workers are paid well above the Ecuadorian national average, earning about \$140 a month, but they only get this salary by working 80 hours a week. Studies conducted by the International Labor Organization show that these "laborers of love" are having more miscarriages, and that more babies are being born with birth defects due to the chemicals. Women who handle these roses daily often complain about nausea, headaches and loss of appetite.

The health risk is a compromise these women have to make when the Ecuadorian economy has 50% of population below the poverty line, and a 12% unemployment rate. Some women even claim to feel liberated and independent because of this job. Trends show that more and more women are making enough money to be financially independent from their husbands, and even to support the family entirely. Jobs like this allow women relief from traditional duties in the home and a sense of independence, but this liberation comes at the cost of their health.

Some workers say that the workplace is splitting up their marriages. Spouses complain that the workers' lifestyles are "unbalanced," and the prevalence of deformed and stillborn children must wreak havoc on their relationships. While these women produce symbols of love for American lovers, their own love lives suffer; they are forced to compromise their own reproductive rights to make a living. Instead of growing their own love—or nurturing healthy children—these women grow roses. ■



MY GRANDMOTHER, MY VIBRATOR, AND ME

TEXT BY DIANA JOU

.....
For \$24.99 you can sleep like a baby, moan like a porn star and obtain happiness.

Writing an article on the power of vibrators isn't easy. There is a lot of research that goes into each article in Jaded. I can honestly tell you, this article is well researched. Let's start with the "history of" from our friends at Wikipedia.

"Western doctors invented vibrators in the late 1800s to help cure women of a Victorian-era condition known as "hysteria." This condition was believed to encompass a variety of symptoms including irritability, lack of appetite for sex or food, nervousness, faintness, and even a "tendency to cause trouble." Doctors would physically massage their genitals until they had an orgasm."

While I am mainly interested in first hand sources, the above background from Wiki tells me two things: that we live in a sexist society unjustly gendering "unwomanly" traits as diseases and that women can outwit a professional group of men into massaging their clitorises. Though it is nice to have a professional do all the work for you, there is little privacy in sitting in an uncomfortable chair under harsh lighting and having a stranger touch you "down there." A vibrator offers much more than sexual release; it also provides an opportunity for self-discovery and independence.

It takes a courageous and curious woman to dive into the deep sea of orgasmic pleasures. And I didn't think I was that woman. Not only was I not curious, I was actually initially fearful of all the dark complicated areas down there. Forget vibrators, I even went through half a box of tampons before deciding they were safe to insert all the way in.

I finally decided to give the vibrator a try after some shocking discoveries about my grandmother. Two summers ago, when I visited her in her small town of Lock Haven, Pennsylvania she eagerly showed me her stash of porn, highlighting one magazine with all its models over 50 years old. I found out later she secretly gave my female cousin a dildo as a gift. After the shock and embarrassment subsided, I real-

ized what she was doing was empowering herself as a woman. She was interested in seeing women of her age represented sexually and explicitly in magazines. When my grandmother gave my cousin a rubbery penis, she was giving her granddaughter a chance to explore her own sexuality. It was a present from a woman to another woman. Her commitment to her sexual health even the age of 64 is something rare and inspiring.

Once I understood how masturbation is gendered to congratulate male sexuality and stigmatize female sexuality, I saw the vibrator as a tool of empowerment. Men are thought of as sexual beings; we always understand their need to masturbate. He comes every time during intercourse. On the other hand, she can have sex without reaching orgasm. In the public discourse there are more room for negative names like "slut" and "whore" than positive images of women exploring their sexuality. It is powerful to know your own body and what turns you on, and be able to come at a moment's notice with the whir of a switch. The process of finding your orgasm with a vibrator is daunting but well worth the search. And after that, you'll be able to sleep like a baby.

One thing I learned from my grandmother was that it is important to share. Since I have a healthy relationship with my vibrator, I've introduced it to the women in my life and found vibrators make the most unexpected but gratifying presents. They are truly the gifts that keep on giving. To share tools of pleasure from a woman to a young lady is a generous act of womanly-love and self-love.

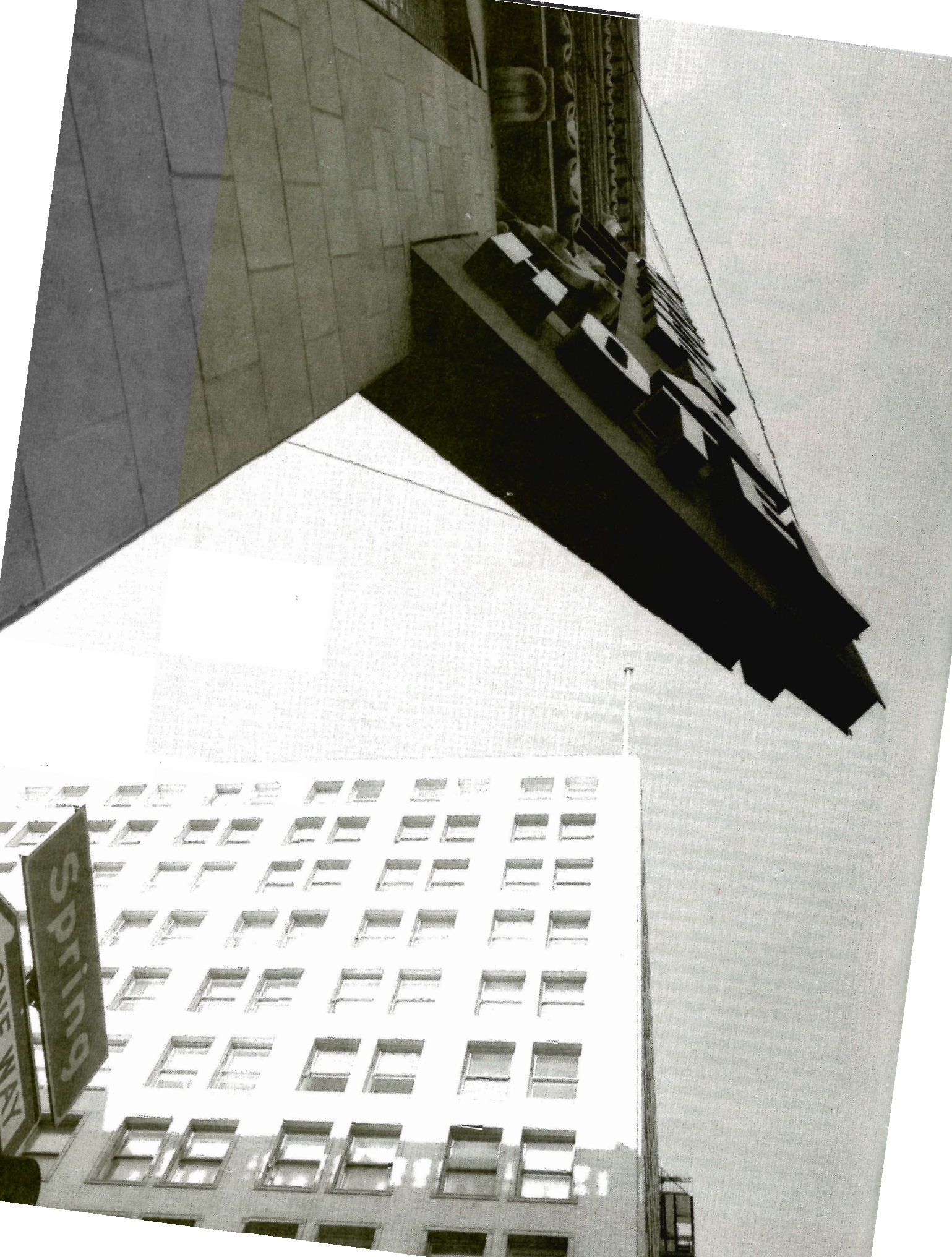
If hole-in-the-wall porn shops aren't your thing, check out these bourgeois sex shops, complete with jazz music, corporate slogans, and smiling employees dressed in matching polos:

Spankys - "Adult Emporium Since 1968" Also home of the world famous Monkey Spanker, Chicken Choker, Rocket Polisher and Strong Arm character tee shirts. Store located in Santa Ana. <http://www.spankysxxx.com/>

Good Vibrations - "Promoting sexual health and pleasure since 1977" They also have a weekly online magazine and information sessions called "Pleasure Parties" Stores are located in San Francisco <http://www.goodvibes.com/>

Babeland - "Sex Toys for a Passion World." Locations in Los Angeles and New York. <http://www.babeland.com/>

ConRev - "World's finest Erotic Gift Shop." Shops in Costa Mesa and Huntington Beach <http://www.conrev.com/> ■



“Los Angeles politicians have recently promised to end homelessness in L.A. within ten years; it’s a noble proposition which, so far, has yet to separate itself from previous attempts at ‘renewal.’”

city within a city

TEXT AND IMAGES BY PATRICK APPEL

There is a man in the community with “Black Power” and “187” tattooed on his neck who has written five books, “mostly about spirituality and mysticism,” he tells me. There’s the self-appointed King of Fashion who can be seen strutting up and down the block, giving high fives, wearing gold sequined pants and a plastic crown. *More Love!* reads a cardboard sign around the neck of a homeless activist, who explains how the housing crisis in L.A. is only getting worse. “Ice Cold Sodas. Hot Chicken,” yells an unlicensed street vendor, who smiles to friends as he pushes his cart up East Fifth Street in downtown Los Angeles, a street commonly called “The Nickel,” for a nickel is how much people in the surrounding district are thought to have to their names.

Others say the name stuck because it’s so easy to buy a nickel bag of pot on the corners of East Fifth Street. Whatever the reason, the street forms the stem of a neighborhood referred to over the years as Wino’s Valhalla, Bum’s Heaven and, most commonly—Skid Row.

Observed from a distance, through the glass of a car window and through the lens of old stereotypes, everyone on Skid Row in Los Angeles appears homeless, dangerous and drug-addicted. Up and down East Fifth Street people hobble along, babbling through shattered teeth, hitting their arms against their sides, and yelling. On the fringes of the district, people will ask for change or a dollar. In its center, they stop asking.

A boy of no more than sixteen sits on a box, shaking back and forth, muttering to himself. Women give odd looks at passersby and call their daughters to their side. Lying in the shade, a man uses his black Nikes as a pillow. The mentally ill and drug dealers stare out at you with varying degrees of lucidity and hostility. Upon a first glance, the newspaper reports about a “gaudy nightmare in neon lights,” calling the place Los Angeles’s “open sore,” don’t seem to go far enough. That first time, most outsiders can’t see through the surface of Skid Row.

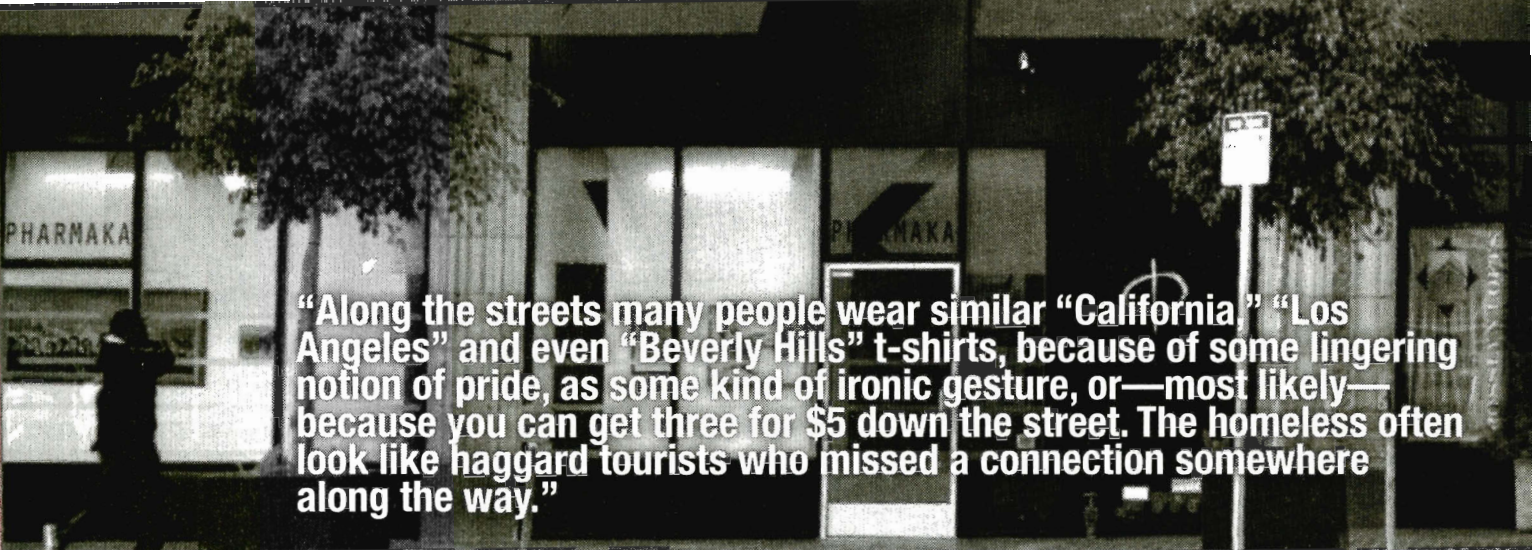
They don’t see the families that live in the district, who cram as many as eight people into a single hotel room; families who suffer for want of a real grocery store and a real school in the area. Outsiders don’t notice the old and the disabled barely surviving on Social Security and disability checks. Then there are the workers who toil in the nearby garment district, and those who sweep the streets. People here earn minimum wage by sitting in studio audiences for game shows, or by collecting signatures for political consulting groups. Those are the official jobs. Young and old alike sell individual cigarettes; twenty-five cents for one, forty cents for two. Scavengers with trash bags full of bottles and cans scour the garbage bins and walkways. They drop off their collections at the recycling plant, where the man in charge, Moe, can be seen sitting back in his lawn chair, listening to the music of bottles clinking away.

Walking the district, just past the pictures tacked to the front of the Midnight Missio saying “Have you seen me?” or “Missing, please call,” I see a middle-aged man who feverishly glances from face to face, sorting through the largest homeless population in the nation one person at a time, waiting for someone to meet his gaze. In front of him, people sleep rolled up in soiled blankets, the slow rise and fall of their chests out of sync and disconnected from the fast-paced city around them.

In the 1950’s and again in the 1970’s, the city of Los Angeles tried to “erase” Skid Row.

Connecting the structural fatigue of the buildings to that of the residents, officials promised to cure both problems, and quick. Eleven acres were flattened in the 1950’s, and then hundreds of buildings more were torn down in the 1970’s. The loss of cheap housing, mostly residential hotel rooms, pushed much of the Skid Row population onto the streets. But, despite the “rejuvenation,” Skid Row remained Skid Row.

Over the years, the city considered other plans, including pushing the whole community away from the



"Along the streets many people wear similar "California," "Los Angeles" and even "Beverly Hills" t-shirts, because of some lingering notion of pride, as some kind of ironic gesture, or—most likely—because you can get three for \$5 down the street. The homeless often look like haggard tourists who missed a connection somewhere along the way."

heart of L.A., and housing the poor in a ship moored in the harbor. The district was re-imagined as an addition to the Financial District, as a Philippine Village to compliment Little Tokyo, and as an 1890's themed adjunct to downtown.

Residents had their own ideas. One old man, who had lived in the city since 1920, wrote in to the Los Angeles Times suggesting that "we build a large walled city of Skid Row out in Death Valley," so that the Skid Rowers could "dry out in the hot sun," and so Los Angeles could replant the district with "rows of lettuce or citrus fruits." In the 1980's, a Little Tokyo Councilman agreed that the city should create a "open air farm" for the poor, where they could grow vegetables to eat and learn a trade, though he suggested Santa Clarita instead of the desert.

Los Angeles politicians have recently promised to end homelessness in L.A. within ten years; it's a noble proposition which, so far, has yet to separate itself from previous attempts at "renewal."

The old hotels that have survived the waves of "development" and "rejuvenation" now provide the last reservoir of low-income affordable housing in Los Angeles. People live in the single-room-occupancy hotels for decades at a time, paying a daily, weekly, or monthly rate. They are the last practitioners of a lifestyle more common in the days when work was seasonal and when booming defense factories needed a glut of cheap housing for workers. Those who find lodging today in the hotels—while usually quite poor—are far more stable than the homeless of the Skid Row population, who reside in mission beds, tents, cardboard cities, and jail cells.

A former L.A. sheriff used to joke that he ran the largest homeless shelter in the nation. With the biggest jail in the world down the block, the Twin Towers Correctional Facility, and with Los Angeles County Central Jail right next to that, there are more than 28,000 prison cells within a mile and a half of Skid Row, more than double the number of residential hotel units and mission beds available.

A hundred years ago, before the city disintegrated into rolling suburbs, these residential hotels were the center of Los Angeles. Their neon signs still point east, towards the memory of Central Station, the main railway depot before Union Station took over as the hub of L.A.'s train travel in the last days of the 1930's. Before the trolley lines were severed to make way for cars and freeways, before Skid Row was ignored and neglected by the rest of downtown, anyone coming to Los Angeles went there first.

Men from as far as Kansas poured off the trains look-

ing for work herding cattle or harvesting and shipping produce, the type of vanished unskilled jobs that the men and women of Skid Row still search for in vain. In those days, long tracts of rich soil nourished by the L.A. River sprouted citrus trees and rolling vineyards.

By the end of the 19th century, millions of gallons of wine flowed from the region, a drink which remained long after the grapevines had been paved over. Dime wine and fifteen-cent soup defined the district up through the 1940's. Notorious for its fall-down drunks, Skid Rowers filled the LAPD's paddy wagon twenty times a night. When drinking became considered a disease instead of a crime, the police couldn't just haul in drunks by the truckload anymore.

They found other ways to keep tabs on residents. Violations which go un-enforced anywhere else—such as littering, riding a bike on the sidewalk, or jaywalking—regularly result in offenders getting handcuffed and strip-searched. A resident explains that, in his experience, even gang members are less likely to use casual violence than the LAPD, a widespread sentiment in a community constantly under surveillance. Young and under-trained police officers, who often are assigned to Skid Row as greenhorns, don't help the situation, the general distrust making it harder for good cops to do their jobs.

Around the district posted on metal plaques is Municipal Code 41 18(d), a law which reads, "No person shall sit, lie, or sleep in or upon any street, sidewalk or other public way"; it's an impossible rule in the homeless capital of California. The police and the ACLU have been battling for decades over the implementation of this ordinance. Judges have repeatedly struck down the law, calling it unconstitutional to ticket and arrest the homeless when it cannot be proven that enough mission beds are available, but still, the sweeps go on.

The private security guards and street cleaners—more prominent now that property values along and around Skid Row have risen—perform other types of sweeps, clearing homeless people's belongings if they leave them unattended for more than three hours at a time. Hired by the business district, often out of the same population they are policing, the guards and street cleaners ride by on mountain bikes with their radios tacked to their shirts or they scan the streets for rubbish. Dennis, a long-time resident of the Alexandria Hotel and former street cleaner, was quickly replaced when he got hurt on the job. He survives on his worker's compensation money, which, after six months, is already a quarter gone. He does recycling to earn a little



cash, keeping a shopping cart in his room. He has become the type of person he once was paid to hassle. The cart he sometimes pushes is the same sort of debris he would have moved off the streets in his former job. Moving from one role to the other was a humbling experience he tells me, while he is wearing a "Los Angeles" t-shirt, with stars and stripes painted across it.

Along the streets many people wear similar "California," "Los Angeles" and even "Beverly Hills" t-shirts, because of some lingering notion of pride, as some kind of ironic gesture, or—most likely—because you can get three for \$5 down the street. The homeless often look like haggard tourists who missed a connection somewhere along the way. They wheel luggage along Skid Row's corridors, cheap knock-off bags that they buy for as little as \$10 from the tangle of wholesalers in the Fashion District. The Cecil Hotel even claims to be a tourist hotel, and from the front, with its gold trim, fake Doric columns and long marble corridor, this seems plausible enough, though not many tourist hotels have residents living in them for years at a time, or Meals-on-Wheels deliveries instead of lobby restaurants.

Tourist status is a class of housing that gives a hotel the ability to avoid granting certain tenant rights. According to UC Berkeley professor Paul Groth's research into residential hotels, a net loss often helps hotel owner's tax accounting, and long periods of neglect often make repairs to the buildings more costly than potential earnings; due to this, many property owners neglect even small repairs and find low-dollar solutions to major problems, such as plastering over large holes in the wall, or ignoring lead and infestation problems. I met one woman in the Huntington Hotel who claimed she wasn't going to pay rent again until the rats started paying half.

Hotels were once grand affairs, pillars of social life. They were the place where many newlyweds first settled down to get their leg up in the world. An early New York journalist once dubbed hotel life America's "intangible republic." Anything which threatened the social boon of hotels was declared, "directly opposed to American ideals of democracy."

Real human interaction is hard to avoid in Skid Row when residents walk everywhere they go, and when the walls in some hotels seem about as thick as a slice of bread. On the roof of the Alexandria Hotel, residents hold barbecues from time to time; on the fourth of July, they stand on the roof together, watching fireworks

splash against the night sky, the silhouette of the San Gabriel Mountains in the distance.

Out on the streets, two men sit down next to a wheelchair-bound man to make sure he is okay, while everyone else walks past, staring. Support groups meet daily, like the Skid Row Drifters, who have gotten together for years in San Julian Park at dusk, a place where I see a man shouting out at those around him, offering the last mouthful from his plate of soggy beans.

There are people here like the director of the Midnight Mission, who used to be homeless himself before he worked his way back up. There are activists and volunteers on every block, and there are former addicts and alcoholics, like Michael Key, who despite having lost his license to practice law decades ago, has virtually become the community's lawyer, always ready to help people in understanding their rights.

This rough and tumble community, full of personalities, memories, problems and pride, is being scattered by developers, landlords, and the police. Already there are fewer people on the streets. The side of a building that residents call the "Berlin Wall," which is infamous for the hundreds of people usually camped along it, can be seen vacant in the daytime. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's promise to clean up the area, a statement made by mayors of L.A. for fifty years, has been getting rid of the people along with the trash.

One day, I look up at the sixth floor of the Frontier hotel, and see a boy of no more than eight playing at the windowsill. Caution tape billows from the windows above him, where residents have been moved out for new lofts. The caution tape stands in place of the Christmas lights, crucifixes, and laundry that fill the windows of other hotels in the area. Soon the boy's room too will be vacated for the incoming lofts.

The boy turns over a pair of binoculars in his hands, and moves them up to his eyes. I watch him as he looks out and over the street below, East Fifth Street, "The Nickel." He looks past the shapes of people and the tops of buildings, gazing over more than a century of architecture. He looks down at the two cops standing on the corner and the huddle of men around the adult book shop. He takes in the sounds and smells of the streets: the honking of cars, the smell of trash and exhaust, and the collective footsteps of thousands of people. He stares out and he surveys what is left of the neighborhood he calls home. ■

LITTLE RED LICENSING DEAL

TEXT BY JULIANNE HING
IMAGE BY ARA JO

On March 6, 1960, Cuban photographer Alberto "Korda" Gutierrez captured a brooding Che Guevara's gaze as the guerilla fighter attended a funeral for victims of the Le Coubre explosion. In 1966 Mao Tse-tung's *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung* was published, and the thirty-three-chapter tome, nicknamed the *Little Red Book*, became compulsory reading for all Chinese citizens.

Fifty years later, these artifacts from the Communist Revolution and Cold War era exist not as historic ephemera, but as commodities. When Andy Warhol appropriated photographs of Che and Mao, he participated in the commodification of these leaders' images, a practice which has continued to this day. Che's image maintains iconic status in the pop culture sphere, and has been reproduced on t-shirts, murals, posters, print ads, and thong underwear. Today the *Little Red Book*, once the cornerstone of Communist dogma, is available for purchase in Beijing as a souvenir for tourists. The massive industrialization which has rocked China over last few decades, giving China a leading role in the global economy, has produced a Chinese state eager to capitalize on the novelty of its Communist past. The images of Mao Tse-tung and Che Guevara have been manipulated beyond the point of recognition. Mao, with his plump cheeks and glazed expression, has been reduced to harmless kitsch, while Che's photo emptily connotes subversive action and vague anti-authoritarian practices. While Mao and Che's ideals may have been abandoned, their images have endured into the 21st century to join the ranks of Disney and Coca-Cola as symbols of global capitalism. ■





A WALKING TOUR *across continents*

TEXT BY JULIANNE ONG HING

In Washington, D.C. the White House, with the National Mall nearby, stands with pride midway between the north and south ends of the capital. Halfway across the world, The Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square are at the geographical center of Beijing, China. And here, in Irvine, corporate parks and shopping malls make up core of the city. The urban planning decisions for each of these cities are not merely fortuitous or coincidental, each is a direct demonstration of power.

Both the National Mall and Tiananmen Square are monuments to the long, storied histories of the United States and China, respectively. They were designed and continue to be controlled by the state, but they have also been the sites of revolutionary protests and demonstrations. Our public spaces are the battlegrounds of political unrest, and over time these spaces have become living, dynamic participants in civic life themselves.

When I visited Tiananmen Square in Beijing several years ago, it was during the summertime, and the heavy Beijing heat gave the air a thick weight that made it hard to breathe. As I ascended the underground sidewalks at the perimeter of Tiananmen Square, I immediately became disoriented, at first thinking it was because of the heat. I was standing at the northern end of "The Gate of Heavenly Peace," Tiananmen's English translation, looking southward at the iconic monuments dotting the landscape. The Great Hall of the People stood in the distance and the Museum of Chinese History sat amid other monuments. All the structures fit neatly within the snapshots of Tiananmen I'd seen before in books and magazines, but in real life the structures appeared miniaturized. Tiananmen Square was massive.

I started walking south toward the Monument to the People's Heroes, which was the focal point of the 1989 student protests. It was a surprisingly busy scene for midweek, and midday. Parents pushed strollers with their sleeping toddlers' legs dangling over the sides. Middle-aged men flew kites that quivered like wilting flower petals in the humid air. Chinese tourists from other provinces meandered across the square. There was a noticeable police presence, but they seemed to be hanging around as window dressing. I became distinctly aware of each of my footsteps at Tiananmen. The grand scale of the space reinforced the power and reach of China and the Chinese state, and my tiny size in relation to it.

It was a humbling feeling, and the exact effect the designers of the Square intended when Mao Tse-tung reconfigured Tiananmen after 1949, knocking down walls that had stood for hundreds of years to make way for the new spatial identity of China. Since then the space has undergone continual renovations as the government refashions its image and renegotiates its relationship with the Chinese people.

One of Mao's first architectural orders was to enlarge the square from its original holding capacity of 70,000 people. He demanded it be able to hold one billion people. A 1959 renovation expanded the square to its present size of 440,000 square meters, making it the largest public square in the world. According to Mao's rationalization, Tiananmen's enormity must be proportional to the supreme power of the Chinese Communist Party and, of course, its Chairman. Each of the monuments and structures, constructed at various times, were designed to reinforce the centrality of Communist doctrine to the Chinese state.

Tiananmen Square's majesty and gravitas made it a natural destination for protesters, dissidents, and citizens of every political persuasion. The open layout of Tiananmen Square was an architectural representation of the Chinese Communist Party's ideology, and therefore an ideal place to criticize the state.

Dr. Wu Hung, Professor of Art History at the Uni-



"You see, the space at the beginning was created, designed, founded by the Party, by the new regime. So the intention was very clear. But the space, the meaning, cannot be controlled by any single power because we know that any public space is ultimately controlled by the public."

versity of Chicago and author of *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space* argues that this social phenomena is quite natural. Wu explained in an interview that, "the space at the beginning was created, designed, founded by the Party, by the new regime. So the intention was very clear. But the space, the meaning, cannot be controlled by any single power because we know that any public space is ultimately controlled by the public." Because power is often associated with the domination of a space, when the people occupy that which they do not control, they can transform the space so that it comes to embody their political agendas.

In the United States, the National Mall has been similarly transformed by political protest. Its layout holds many of the same material features as Tiananmen Square. Large, open lawns are bordered by monuments, gardens and cavernous museums. And just as in Beijing, how a nation builds a monument is reflective of the ideological foundations and values of that nation.

On the western side of the National Mall stand the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the recently added World War II Memorial. On the Mall's eastern side are the National Gallery of Art and the collection of Smithsonian Museums. The United States dedicates half of the National Mall to the celebration of natural history, art, and science, and the other half to war and foreign US-led military campaigns. It is a telling combination.

During my visit there, this deep symbolism and the Mall's long history seemed to bear no weight on people's mood or enjoyment of the space. I saw people move through the space freely and joyously. I kept to the gravel path that lined the grass lawns because the grass was all filled; groups of families were lounging around picnics on the lawn next to casual games of volleyball and softball. People treated it as a free public space that they felt total ownership of, not fragile hallowed ground.

This scene did not detract from the political significance associated with the National Mall. Political protesters organize demonstrations just as easily as vacationing tourists stroll across the space. The National Mall serves as a gigantic soapbox for the expression of an oppositional ideology. Professor of photography at University of Maryland, Baltimore Mark Alice Durant wrote that, regardless of legislation passed by Congress in 1882 banning "any oration or harangue" at the National Mall, "since the late-nineteenth century, the Washington Monument has functioned as a kind of activist Maypole, around which millions of Americans have assembled."

In the 20th century, civil rights, reproductive rights, women's rights, and anti-war movements have all lain claim to the vast stretches of the National Mall. This surely was not part of Pierre L'Enfant's 1789 intention while drawing the blueprints for the National Mall. The National Mall was intended for large ceremonial parades and events, and the monuments that surround the expansive lawns are a neoclassical ode to our representative democracy.

Today the vision of protesters packed into the National Mall is a familiar sight. Even though protests of the most recent decades have not achieved the same degree of cultural resonance as the demonstrations in the 1960s and 70s, the National Mall is still the symbolic axis of American politics. As recently as January 27, 2007 thousands of Americans exercised direct democracy by protesting the current war

in Iraq and pointedly criticizing the politicians and current presidential administration who have unjustly extended control into foreign nations. Political protest is not only a civic tradition, but also a necessary component in the political dialogue of a nation.

But political protest can transform more than just our national capitals. Elsewhere – indeed everywhere – in cities, towns, suburbs, and rural areas, just exercising your voice is a political act that can change your environment. The government and elites may hold the deed on public space, but it is the people who own it.

In Irvine, managed largely by The Irvine Company, space, time, transit, economic activity and our social interactions are dictated by the architecture. One aspect of city life that is conspicuously absent from the Irvine master plan is a public space (outdoor mall and commercial enterprise The Irvine Spectrum notwithstanding) where people can meet, socialize, and converge.

Unlike other major metropolitan areas, the parks in Irvine are generous, the wide streets all have ample shoulders, and the Irvine pedestrian, a rare breed, never has to share the sidewalk with others. On occasional walks around Irvine I am usually the only person on the sidewalks. This sounds laughable given the size and population of the city, but nobody walks here.

In Irvine we value sterility, our property values, and above all, personal space. So much so that the design of Irvine allows for thousands of one-family homes and tract housing, but not one central public space for civic engagement or socializing. A bird's eye view of Irvine reveals pristine homes lined up in cul-de-sac configurations of paisley designs. On the ground, the resulting city is quiet and calm, but harsh for its isolating design. Residents of Irvine must muscle their way through the maze of freeways and curvilinear roads to find a public space in which to enjoy the company of strangers.

This has a profound effect on civic life in Irvine. "Political protest" and "Irvine" are rarely mentioned in the same sentence, but then again "active," "lively," or "open" aren't used to describe the town either. Irvine is oddly removed from the sparking political debates, public conversations and social interactions that give a city character and life. It is an aggressively privatized, commercialized, and depoliticized space. Unlike the monuments in Washington D.C. and Beijing Irvine is a monument to the fiction of the American Dream. While most memorials mark a traumatic or exceptional event Irvine celebrates conformity and sameness.

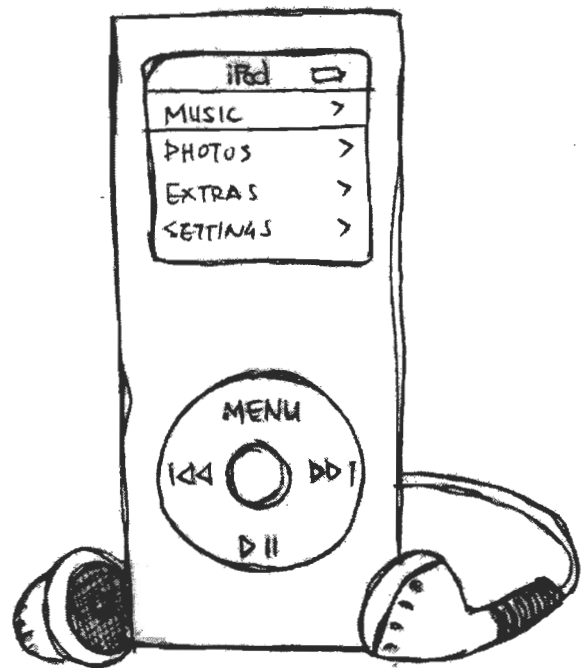
Our public spaces are a literal translation of the functions of the state and local power structures, but they also take on greater symbolic meaning as time, history, and most importantly, people, transform the space and the political dialogue. Just how this is accomplished varies over time and from city to city and state to state, but the common denominator in every equation is the active participation of citizens and inhabitants. The state builds a public square, but ultimately it is the people who endow these spaces with its politically symbolic textures and deeply ingrained social memory. ■

STOP, DROP, AND SHOP

the (product) red project

TEXT BY JULIANNE HING

"BY MARRYING A MERCHANDISING DRIVE WITH SOCIAL ACTIVISM IDEALS, AMERICANS ARE BEING DECEIVED ABOUT THE REAL EFFORT IT TAKES TO FIGHT THE STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY THAT GIVES RISE TO OVER 3 MILLION AIDS-RELATED DEATHS EVERY YEAR."



In Western culture the color red is a directive to stop and pay attention, an appeal to our most passionately felt emotions, and a warning against danger. Red is the color of love, anger, blood, and even debt. It is also the shrewdly chosen trademark of the eponymous (Product) RED campaign. (Product) RED, which launched in the U.S. in October of 2006, uses the symbolism of red as part of a marketing initiative; the campaign licenses major corporate brands to issue (RED) products, with a portion of the proceeds dedicated to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

The basic concept of (Product) RED is not new. It is built on a classic business model of "cause marketing," an advertising technique that ties the purchase of an item to a charitable donation. "Cause marketing" taps into the social conscience of consumers — who are made to feel enriched and empowered by their purchases. It has been successfully executed before; several years later you can still catch a glimpse of Lance Armstrong's Nike-backed "Live Strong" bracelet cuffing the occasional wrist. And these days Paul Newman may be more well-known for his Newman's Own salad dressing than his acting. But it is the unprecedented scale of (Product) RED that is so impressive. The ambitious behemoth of a corporate campaign is the brainchild of U2 front man Bono and brother-in-law to Arnold Schwarzenegger, Santa Monica Councilman Bobby Shriver. They are the co-founders of Debt, AIDS, Trade in Africa (DATA, an organization that was created to bring equity and justice to Africa, and which is currently using most of its resources in the (Product) RED campaign. The two men have clearly been flexing their celebrity muscle to full effect for (Product) RED.

Less than a year into the campaign (RED) has landed an all-star lineup of partnerships with Gap, Giorgio Armani, Motorola, Apple, Converse, and American Express. You can deck yourself out in an entire (RED) wardrobe and lifestyle, with a red-colored (RED) cell phone, jeans and t-shirt, iPod, credit card, and sneakers.

(Product) RED has been propelled onto the market by an aggressive cross-media barrage of television and print ads. It has "roadblocked" airtime on MTV and VH1, and even been given a stamp of approval from Oprah Winfrey herself. Winfrey dedicated an entire show to (Product) RED and the coverage, which amounted to an hour-long commercial for (Product) RED, followed Winfrey and best pal Bono as they bounded along the streets of Chicago on a (Product) RED shopping spree. Gap's advertising alone features a roster of powerhouse celebrities like Don Cheadle, Dakota Fanning, Steven Spielberg, Penelope Cruz, and Jennifer Garner, who is wearing only a (RED) shirt and a "come hither" expression.

How can American consumers resist? The (Product) RED campaign holds the enticing promise of fulfilling the doubly satisfying pleasures of shopping and contributing to a pressing global health issue. Its launch in the US in October of 2006 was perfectly timed to coincide with the holiday shopping season. In the United States, around \$90 million was generated in sales from those first six weeks of the campaign alone, producing at least \$6 million in Global Fund donations. In the UK, where (RED) debuted in March 2006, the project has already tallied \$200 million in sales, with \$10 million donated directly to the Global Fund. The Global Fund donations have so far been spent on medication, equipment, and counseling for women and children in Rwanda and Swaziland.

That the project, which has no set end date, has led to concrete, material gains for poverty-stricken countries in Africa is certain. That Americans are a generous people with tremendous buying power is uncontroversial. But something about (Product) RED seems suspicious to folks who know the corporate agenda has only one real concern: maximizing profits at a minimum cost.

(Product) RED is not charity. It is not pure-hearted altruism. Both Bono and Shriver acknowledge this openly and are explicit about their intentions. Shriver was quoted in an October 3, 2006 New York Times article as saying, "We don't want [companies] to be thinking, 'I'm not making money on this thing,' because then we

failed. We want people buying houses in the Hamptons based on this because, if that happens, this thing is sustainable."

And (Product) RED guarantees participating brands will make a profit. Actual donations vary depending on each brand's individual licensing contract. For some companies (Product) RED donations are calculated from profits, not sales. Sales figures are a closer reflection of customer behavior whereas posted profits are dependent on a given company's accounting practices. This can mean a big difference in the total donation tally. The details are in the fine print. At 40% of gross profit from (RED) sales, Emporio Armani has one of the more generous agreements. Gap donates 50% of its profits after marketing costs. Apple gives \$10 of every (RED) edition iPod nano sold, about 5% of the product's retail price. Motorola donates \$17 for every MOTORAZR V3M phone bought, and another \$5 per Bluetooth headset.

Companies are ensured a profit, but whether or not (Product) RED can provide a long-term, sustainable cash flow just because it is based on a commercial initiative remains to be seen. (RED) is enjoying rapturous media attention because it is a novel campaign, but after each company's five-year contract expires, fickle market forces, not generosity, will determine whether these companies and the American public continue to pay mind to the needs of African countries. AIDS is a byproduct of structural inequality and deeply entrenched poverty, as well as the leading cause of death on the African continent. The AIDS pandemic may be the fashionable cause du jour, but it is also a desperate reality.

One of the taglines for Gap's advertising campaign puts forth an interesting question. "Can a T-shirt Change The World?" it asked shoppers. The in-store video advertisement paused for a dramatic second before the voice replied to itself, "This One Can. All Gap (Product) RED clothing is designed to help eliminate AIDS in Africa." Bono and Shriver's clever campaign is admirable, but also raises larger questions about "cause marketing" and American shopping habits.

In America, national holidays and heroes are celebrated with weekend sales. Department stores help us remember landmark dates in United States history with "One weekend only!" red-lined discounts. Shopping is a national pastime, and also a powerful barbiturate. We often mistakenly use our material worth as a barometer to gauge our value as human beings. What we own can define who we are. For (Product) RED consumers, the self-satisfaction of making a charitable purchase is equaled only by the enhancement of one's personal image that comes with being seen as an informed and socially conscious shopper.

By marrying a merchandising drive with social activism ideals, Americans are being deceived about the real effort it takes to fight the structural inequality that gives rise to over 3 million AIDS-related deaths every year. With only minimal effort — and a fashionable trinket to boot — American consumers are disproportionately congratulated for turning over what amounts to a grain of salt in the scales of economic equality. Fighting for long-term change demands organizing, community building, and an active engagement with the social realities of our globalized economy. American pharmaceutical companies should put more money towards the development and distribution of generic drugs. People in Africa and the United States need full access to education about sexual health and safety. It's not the Gap t-shirt that is so powerful, it is America's position as a world leader that is powerful. Our voices are much louder than the brands of shoes we wear and the phones we use.

The (Product) RED campaign is an odd creature for people skeptical about the corporate agenda, but (Product) RED has shown that profit growth and socially conscious business practices are not necessarily mutually exclusive pursuits. But it should not be heralded as the turning of the tides in the AIDS effort. A movement cannot be sustained by branded t-shirts and trendy merchandise alone. It is built by the active and organized efforts of you, me, and us together. ■

DEFENDANT / RESPONDENT



SMALL-TIME CRIMINAL

TEXT BY PATRICK APPEL

"Kevin's crime seemed like an unremarkable commercial burglary. No one had been hurt. Nothing had been stolen except the four chocolate chip cookies. But, according to the law books, that didn't change the gravity of the crime."

It was May 14, 1995, Mother's Day, a day celebrated with cheap perfume, boxed chocolates, and Sunday brunch. Up and down Harbor Boulevard in Santa Ana, California, restaurants were beginning their workday, waiting for hungry families to tumble through their doors. Nearby, in an abandoned warehouse, Kevin Weber slept, his fiancée, Debra, at his side.

They awoke early that Mother's Day morning, and dressed in the matching knit caps they always wore; his blue, hers purple. The pair stepped out the door and walked toward the "feeds," as Debra called them, where Catholic volunteers handed out food to the homeless.

As Kevin ate his breakfast, the hard lines of his face moved up and down. A portrait of Chief Joseph—a maker of his Native American heritage—was inked into his olive skin, buried beneath his left coat sleeve, while two inky tears trailed down his left cheek, prison tattoos.

For as long as Kevin could remember, he had been drinking; rumor had it that his Mom's boyfriend would spike his bottle with Jack Daniels when he was still in the cradle. After his Mom abandoned him at age 11, he flew out to California, where he spent his days in his grandparents' bar, and where he soon found himself using harder drugs.

Kevin took the last swallow of his Mother's Day breakfast and he began a day with Debra—like many of his days—in which the hours were marked by empty beer cans. As the day wore on and the sun went down, time became hard to judge and Debra fell into a drunken stupor. While she slept, Kevin stumbled out of the warehouse, and into the night. Debra wouldn't even know he was gone until the next day.

A few blocks away stood Eric's Gazebo Café, where a full moon illuminated Kevin's path as he clambered up an unsecured emergency ladder. His feet scraped across the grey gravel roof; his gloved hands forced out some slats placed over a ventilation cover. He moved past bags of rock salt and a hot water heater, and down a red ladder, where large chocolate chip cookies, which had been baked that morning, sat in rows on the restaurant's cookie sheets. Kevin made his way to them as the eye of a motion detector trawled the floor; it sensed Kevin, and the alarm started blaring. A few minutes later, on the restaurant's roof, Officer Smith crouched along as Kevin came out of the hole in the roof.

"Put your hands behind your head!" Smith yelled.

"Oh, shit!" Kevin replied. Smith had Kevin lie on his belly and cuffed him. After patting him down, all Smith found was four chocolate chip cookies, two nestled in each of his jacket pockets. Smith took Kevin to jail.

Kevin's crime seemed like an unremarkable commercial burglary. No one had been hurt. Nothing had been stolen except the four chocolate chip cookies. But, according to the law books, that didn't change the gravity of the crime; burglary only requires that someone enter a building with the intent to commit a felony, this crime not to be confused with actual felony theft. Someone can burglarize a place even if there is nothing to steal.

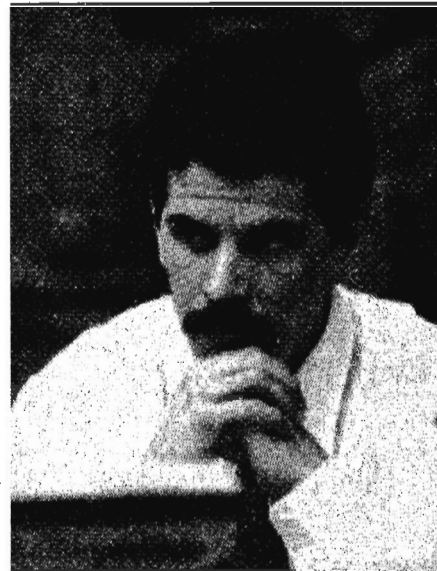
A few years ago, Dan Hess, the district attorney trying the case, would have been happy with a four year sentence for Kevin's crime. That changed on November 8, 1994, when California's voters approved Three-Strikes.

It was a law that didn't even look like it was going to get enough support to qualify for the ballot, but with the kidnapping, rape, and murder of Polly Klaas—a 12 year-old Petaluma girl—lines of people wrapped around the corners of grocery stores to sign Three-Strikes petitions. Within weeks, a proposition which didn't look like it was going to qualify became the quickest qualifying initiative in California history. As Californians read about Polly's murderer, Richard Allen Davis, and stared down his long list of his priors, they made their decision on the issue. A law passed which was meant to save the Polly Klaases of the world and put away the Kevin Webers.

California's Three-Strikes Law provided a means of incarcerating three time offenders for 25 years to life. Not everything counts equally though. In a Three-Strikes case the first felony has to be serious or violent, while the other two just need to be legitimate. Kevin's charge of 2nd degree burglary could count as his third strike, but not his first.

In a way, Kevin's trial had started six years prior, a few days after Christmas. Kevin had been working two jobs, both in apartment maintenance. He was making decent money, but he had rent due, \$690 dollars in child support to pay, and an addiction to feed.

Kevin clicked his maintenance mas-



ter key in the lock of apartment D-219 at 4302 Pickwick Circle in Huntington Beach. He found a gun inside, which he stuffed in his pants, just as a cop happened to return home. They both drew their guns and took off running.

For ten minutes, the men ran through the apartment corridors and up the stairs. Neither of them fired a shot, but as the cop rounded one last corner, Kevin confronted him. The cop saw the heads of bullets through slits on either side of Kevin's revolver.

"I wonder who is faster," the cop heard Kevin say, but Kevin didn't have the nerve to shoot, not at the cop anyway. He put the barrel between his lips, and through a mouthful of metal, threatened to pull the trigger.

Kevin's fingers wrapped around the brown plastic handle. Thoughts of his daughter raced through his mind.

The cop tried to calm Kevin down. He kept Kevin talking about his daughter. The fingers eased off the handle. Kevin took the revolver and tossed it away. He removed his gloves, steadied himself, and started to smoke a cigarette.

At trial, he faced two counts of 1st degree burglary, and one count of assault with a firearm, three felony counts, tried concurrently. Kevin made a deal. He got a reduced sentence, two years in prison, for a guilty plea.

Kevin's crimes were serious felonies, but not strikes—not yet. Strikes didn't exist in 1989. It was a full five years before Three Strikes became law. The prior crimes just sat

continued on page 30



things of interest

Red Swedish Houses

Nothing screams "Swedish!" more than a lush countryside lined with bright red houses. Initially, the red paint was used in the 1600s to imitate expensive brick buildings. The ubiquity of the red house paint in Sweden, called Falu Rodfarg in Swedish, is a result of industrialization and the booming of the copper mine in Falun, Sweden. Falu red paint was cheap enough for farmers and also commanding enough for royalty and government buildings. It quickly became the choice of paint color for homeowners all over Scandinavia. Falu red paint contains pigment from ore with a low copper content, iron ochre, silicon dioxide and zinc, which together have a protective effect on timber. In warm evening light, the red color becomes so intense that it almost glows.

Bulls are Colorblind

Bulls cannot actually see the distinctive red cape that has come to symbolize Spanish and Portuguese bullfighting. Bulls see dark gray when the matadors prance around, waving the cape; what the bulls are really attacking is the moving cloth. Bulls bred for bullfighting are tested at age three to see if they are aggressive enough to enter the performance ring. The 300-pound feisty animal enters the ring with, of course, major disadvantages. Picadors will stab at the base of the bull's neck to damage the neck muscles so it won't be able to raise his head and make it even more irate for the performance. The grand finale is the theatrical performance of killing the bull. Animal rights groups and the Spanish Environmental Minister are reforming bullfighting

to be bloodless and less violent.

50 Cent Condoms: Coming to a Rite-Aid Near You

On a recent promotional campaign for his three new novels about life as a G-Unit-ter, rapper 50 Cent announced his plans to launch his very own line of condoms. Fiddy told the New York Post that "the kids become immune when you constantly beat them over the head" with information about safe-sex practices. So he made the logical decision to bypass the whole "PSA featuring big name celebrity telling the parents to talk to their children" move and just market the damn things himself. He pledges to donate a portion of the proceeds to HIV awareness. No details on how much the condoms will go for, but anything over \$0.50 would just be ludacris.

POM Wonderful: "Screw Cute Little Animals, Drink Our Juice"

The company that makes POM brand pomegranate juice in that exquisite little bottle has been under fire from PETA for their funding of deadly animal testing. According to PETA, some of the experiments funded by POM include inducing brain damage in week-old mice and then decapitating them to study their brains, and damaging the arteries of rabbits to prove that pomegranate juice can alleviate erectile dysfunction. After PETA's months long barrage of negative press, the head of POM issued a press statement saying, "Neither POM Wonderful nor its related entities provide funding for ongoing animal testing on POM Juice." Way to succumb to radical

animal rights pressure, POM! We're all very proud. Though it's quite possible that you're still a bunch of evil furry animal-haters.

"Red-yolk" Eggs

Farmers in the Hebei province in China had been feeding red dye to ducks so they could produce the expensive red-yolk eggs to sell to the markets in Beijing. The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer found that red-yolk eggs contain a carcinogenic red dye that can cause cancer. Last year the ministry banned the production, sale, and use of red Sudan dyes used in leather and fabric, and found in some brands of pepper sauce, chili oil, and KFC's New Orleans roast chicken wings. China's Ministry of Agriculture recently ordered local authorities to investigate the poultry farms, destroy eggs that contain Sudan dyes, and crack down on the illegal process of adding the dye to duck feed.

Endangered Species: Redheads

According to the Oxford Hair Foundation in England, (now suspiciously under Proctor and Gamble's Beauty website) redheads will be near extinction by 2100. Only 4% of the population carry the red hair gene and it's a recessive gene, meaning both the mother and the father have to be carriers of the gene to produce a baby redhead. The Oxford Hair Foundation are scaring redheads everywhere, making one concerned redhead from Kentucky ask an online Geneticist if she could freeze her eggs to preserve the red hair gene for the future. ■



AN ABRIDGED GUIDE TO SOME-MOVIES-WITH-RED

TEXT BY NICK REFUERZO

No. 5: Circular Tensions (Homage to Oskar Fischinger) (Harry Smith, 1950)

An experimental use of animated circles and reds that was crazier than his No. 4: Fast Track but not as crazy as his No. 12: Heaven and Earth Magic.

Le Ballon Rouge (Albert Lamorisse, 1956)

Lamorisse's classic movie of innocence, loss, and the biggest red balloon France ever saw.

The Birds (Alfred Hitchcock, 1963)

As one of Hitchcock's most popular and influential movies, the arguably allegorical invasion motif and the use of the color red in conspicuous points during the film point to the most definitive analysis: communist birds.

Cries and Whispers (Ingmar Bergman, 1972)

With an overwhelming use of red, Ingmar

describes the color in the film as "an exploration of the soul ... I have imagined the soul to be a damp membrane in varying shades of red." He would later be proved wrong in 1973 when surgeons successfully operated on a blue soul.

Ran (Akira Kurosawa, 1985)

Ran is an epic adaptation of Shakespeare's "King Lear." As the most expensive movie ever produced in Japan, Ran uses vivid colors to illustrate its themes of chaos, nihilism, and pure amazing-ness.

Dead Alive (Peter Jackson, 1992)

Possibly the most fake-looking blood to ever grace the silver screen.

Schindler's List (Steven Spielberg, 1993)

Spielberg poignantly uses color only once to illustrate the innocence, life and death of a girl in a red dress. The girl in the red dress later makes another poignant cameo in the first of the Matrix movies, exploring similar themes.

Rouge (Krzysztof Kieslowski, 1994)

As the final installment of Kieslowski's color "trilogy" (exploring the three colors of the French flag, blue, white and red), Kieslowski uses red throughout the trilogy's conclusion to bookend and unify its French revolutionary ideals. Like Star Wars.

Run Lola Run (Tom Tykwer, 1998)

Red is constantly evolving throughout the movie as a symbol of passion, love, lust, urgency, violence, and German Fun.

American Beauty (Sam Mendes, 1999)

Roses. Easy.

Sixth Sense (M. Night Shyamalan, 1999)

Shyamalan's use of striking reds in the mise-en-scene warns the audience of the impending presence of the dead. Or Oscar nominations.

Hero (Yimou Zhang, 2002)

As China's most expensive movie, Hero uses brilliant shades of colors to differentiate perspectives in its arguably pro-autocratic epic. ■

image by Ara Jo



LIPSTICK COMMIES

TEXT BY JEGGI ELINZANO

The New York Dolls were confrontational. Their music, their way of living, and their look were abrasive to a music culture that had its head stuck in the sixties. "Music had just become so bloated," lamented Richard Hell, one-time member of the music group Television and leader of the Voidoids. "It was all these leftover sixties guys playing stadiums, you know, being treated like they were very important people," Hell continued, "It wasn't rock&roll."

While the state of rock&roll suffered at the hands of these sixties leftovers, The New York Dolls dressed in high heeled boots, tights, tu-tus, and left lipstick traces over every stage they strutted onto. Their sound, raw gritty rock&roll, harked back to the days of Bo Diddley and Chuck Berry, while also becoming a model for punk music.

The band gathered a large following in New York City based on their lipstick theatrics. In the Dolls, you had a group of people who sounded worse than they looked. The music was rough and rowdy. The guitars of Johnny Thunders and Sylvain Sylvain were a wave of distorted strumming and raucous, booze-fueled solos. Arthur Kane played the bass in its simplest form; in a description of Kane's playing, Dolls biographer Nina Antonia wrote, "Arthur couldn't breathe and play bass at the same time." However, as a unit, with David Johansen's cigarette croon

and Jerry Nolan's tight drumming, the band sounded unique. According to Jon Savage's book *England's Dreaming*, Malcolm McLaren, a London clothing shop owner known for marketing through sensationalism, thought that the New York Dolls debut album "was awful...but so awful that it crashed through into the other side, into magnificence."

Eventually, this same Malcolm McLaren fell in love with the band and took over as their manager in a time when they were desperate for any form of guidance. Motivated by the mantra, "WHAT ARE THE POLITICS OF BOREDOM? BETTER RED THAN DEAD!" McLaren dressed the band in red leather and put them in front of a hammer and sickle flag.

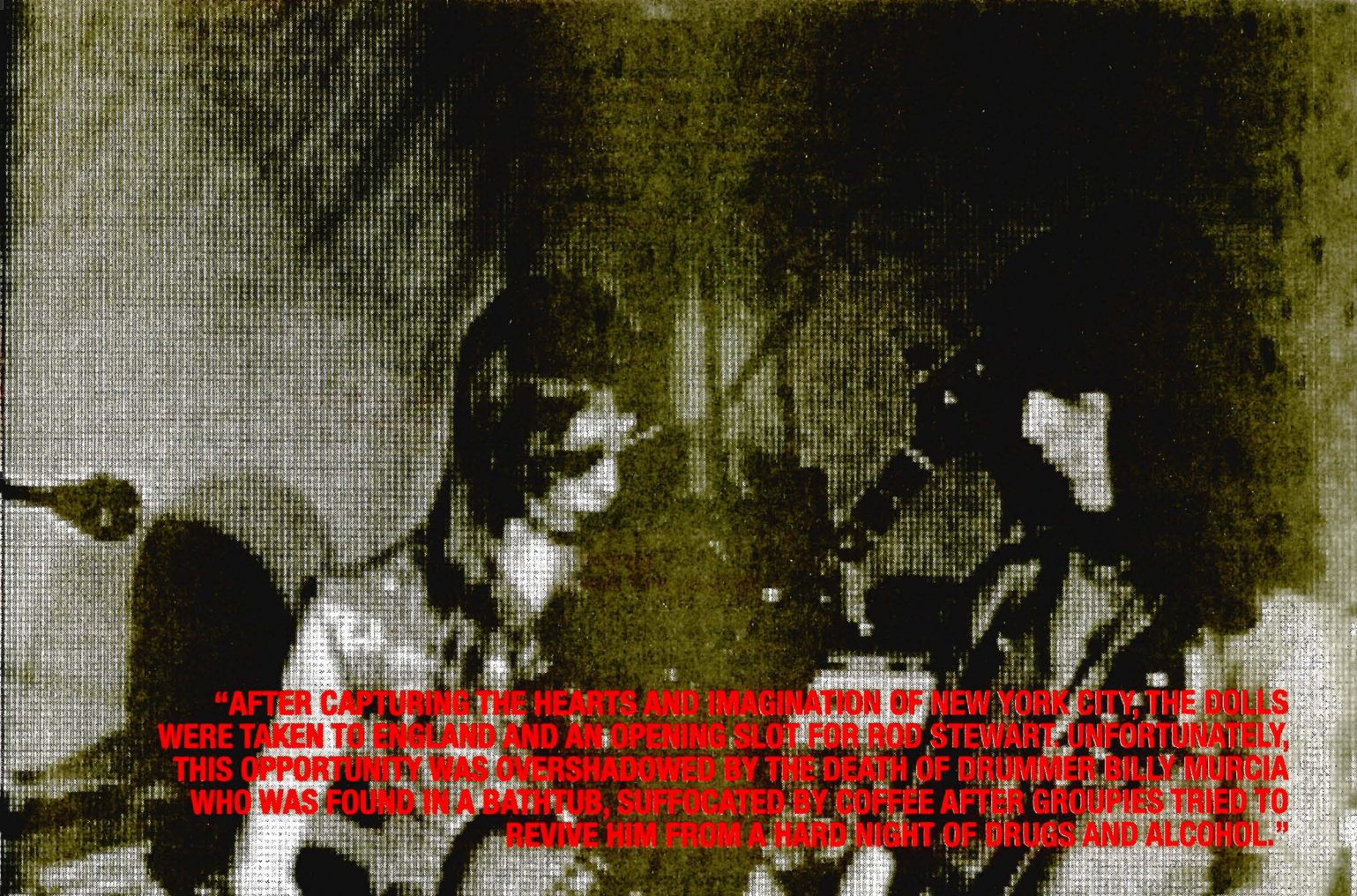
"The Vietnam war was just about to end" McLaren later wrote. "For me, red was the color; and I thought it needed to be their color. Their lyrics, I felt, should have the word 'red' in them at least six times... [Lead singer] David [Johansen] waved Chairman Mao's Little Red Book. Everyone drank red-colored cocktails and sat on red upholstered chairs."

The New York Dolls had always been on the cusp of commercial success. After capturing the hearts and imagination of New York City, the Dolls were taken to England and given an opening slot for Rod Stewart. Unfortunately, this opportunity was overshadowed by the death of drummer Billy Murcia who was found in a bathtub, suffocated by cof-

fee after groupies tried to revive him from a hard night of drugs and alcohol. Recovering from this heavy loss, the Dolls recruited Jerry Nolan and recorded two cult albums, 1973's *New York Dolls* and 1974's *Too Much Too Soon*. Although, for the most part, critically acclaimed, both albums failed to catapult the Dolls towards the stardom that they desperately wanted. Soon after *Too Much Too Soon*, they were dropped from their label. The band then fell into the hands of Malcolm McLaren and became the "Red Patent Leather" Dolls.

The problem with McLaren's gimmick was that it contradicted with the original appeal of the New York Dolls. The New York Dolls were supposed to be a band that confronted the audience with a combination of raw, gritty rock&roll and unacceptable pan-sexuality. This is the combination that provided them with adoration from fans and interest from record labels. When McLaren turned the New York Dolls into "Red Patent Leather" Dolls, he destroyed that simple image. Instead of arousing the sensational excitement he was looking for, he further isolated the band from record labels and, more importantly, their fans. Gail Higgins, in the book *Please Kill Me*, wrote that "[McLaren] was putting the Dolls in those red commie-inspired suits and doing the whole political thing...[but] the Dolls had nothing to do with politics. None of them knew anything about politics."

The final curtain for the New York Dolls



"AFTER CAPTURING THE HEARTS AND IMAGINATION OF NEW YORK CITY, THE DOLLS WERE TAKEN TO ENGLAND AND AN OPENING SLOT FOR ROD STEWART. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS OPPORTUNITY WAS OVERSHADOWED BY THE DEATH OF DRUMMER BILLY MURCIA WHO WAS FOUND IN A BATHTUB, SUFFOCATED BY COFFEE AFTER GROUPIES TRIED TO REVIVE HIM FROM A HARD NIGHT OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL."

would be drawn in a Florida trailer park owned by drummer Jerry Nolan's mother. This plebian location was far from the glamor and decadence that the 'almost famous' New York Dolls had previously known. Surrounded by an air of dissolution and tensions from the realities of a career that 'could have been', the band struggled through a tour of Florida. The end came when, unable to obtain dope and disillusioned by the direction that McLaren was taking the band, Johnny Thunders and Jerry Nolan quit and went back to the heroin streets of New York City. The departure of the two members left the band in a haze of confusion and betrayal. Without Thunders and Nolan, the band could no longer continue.

After the Dolls, Malcolm McLaren would achieve success with his second band, The Sex Pistols and their seminal album *Nevermind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols*. What separated the New York Dolls' success to the Sex Pistols' were the demands from the environment that surrounded each band. The New York Dolls were no more than a band that attracted the highest echelons of New York's hip scene. Attendance to one of their gigs became a requisite for fashionable acceptance. Whenever they played, the audience would usually be filled with the likes of Andy Warhol, Lou Reed, David Bowie, and other New York hip elite. People attached themselves to the androgyny and raw sound

of the New York Dolls. The limited success of their albums affirmed their position as a cult band with a cult following. Therefore, changing and politicizing their image was an abandonment of the simple rock&roll ideals that their fans fell in love with. On the other hand, England's "Winter of Discontent" under Prime Minister Callaghan made the Sex Pistols the rally cry for a neglected English population. The Sex Pistols became symbols of anarchy and rebellion, symbols that disaffected English youth could idolize. They came into the scene as nihilists, and through this became leaders to a bunch of street-rats walking through the alleys of London screaming "God Save the Queen" and spitting on everyone's face. Despite the efforts of McLaren, the New York Dolls became no more than a fashionable fad. Although punk's growing popularity and its inevitable movement from revolution to commercialism would eventually make the Pistols victims of the fad as well, at the time, with real social importance behind them, their look, attitude, and music transcended the inevitable downfall.

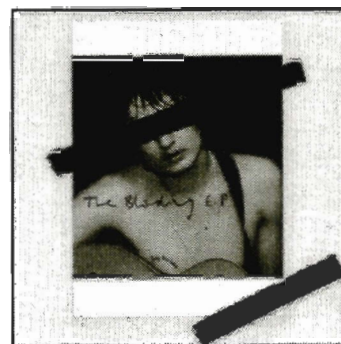
With the Sex Pistols, McLaren had Johnny Rotten; he had the resident "anarchist" and political "anti-Christ." In Rotten, McLaren had the man that would carry the weight of the Pistol's sensationalism on his shoulders. The New York Dolls didn't have a Johnny Rotten. They were just a simple group of kids from New York City that shared a love for sixties

girl groups, drinking, and looking like girls to get girls. When they changed, they became victims of their new image.

After the Dolls disbanded, each member's life branched off in completely separate directions. Lead singer David Johansen released a few solo albums and received commercial success as lounge singer Buster Poindexter. Johnny Thunders and Jerry Nolan would stay together for some time and form another seminal punk band called The Heartbreakers. Johnny Thunders would overdose in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1991. Sylvain Sylvain played for a few of Johansen's solo albums and, for a period, worked as a cab driver in New York City. Finally, bass player Arthur Kane pursued a few failed music projects and developed depression from a combination of alcoholism, a failed marriage, and the success of David Johansen. After an attempted suicide, jumping from the second-floor kitchen window of his apartment, Kane would join and devote himself to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

In the end, the New York Dolls could not bear the political and social burdens of McLaren's sensationalism like the Sex Pistols could. The only option left for the band was the drastic dissolution that they experienced. For the original 'lipstick killers', 'Red Patent Leather' was a 'personality crisis' that they just couldn't survive. ■

reviews



Babyshambles The Blinding EP

I'm cheering for Pete Doherty. I'm serious. I hope the kid can kick the crack and just go on making music with Kate Moss on his lap for the rest of his life. Although this EP is more of the same romantically depressing music that Doherty seems to like making, it is an undoubtedly cleaner outing than 2005's *Down in Albion*. Dropped by Rough Trade after Albion, this major label outing is an example of a band pressured by waning opportunities. Album opener 'The Blinding' is a rather dull but catchy garage outing and old acoustic number 'Beg, Steal, or Borrow' harks back to 50's skiffle with a little Eddie Cochran thrown in. The album's strongest track is the lighthearted ska track "I Wish." To all those who are counting him out, although not *The Blinding* ain't the *Libertine* masterpiece he needs, it at least counts as evidence that Pete Doherty is definitely "going on with the show."

-Jeggi Elinzano



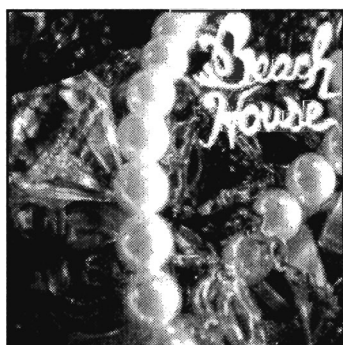
Menomena Friend or Foe

I don't know how to pronounce the name of this band. I've decided that it should be pronounced like phenomena, which is in some sense what they are. Menomena are that rare band that can occupy many musical camps, drawing on disparate influences while sounding all their own. As a three piece, they write songs that sound like the work of a collective thanks to custom software that assembles multiple loops into a cohesive song. This approach allows the band to construct a multi-layered, complex sound and to write songs



Image by Paul Oshima

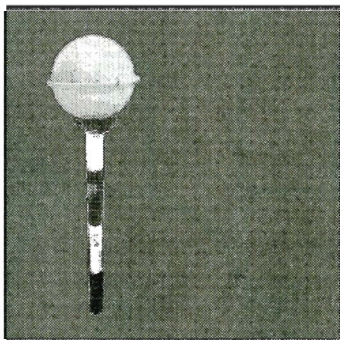
that seem to expand, contract and weave in and out of one another. Take the single "Wet and Rusting": it's a uniquely catchy track that starts over vague keyboards, and then introduces acoustic guitar that doesn't quite match up rhythmically. Then the drums explode and the song becomes an unexpected entity, drifts into a funky bass and piano interplay and then back to the whole. For all this experimental structure and the novelty of using self-made software, Menomena write damn good songs (highlights: "Muscle n' Flo", "Wet and Rusting", "My My"). The one consistent thing about the songs is the musicianship: these guys can play and sing well (which they all do). You can spot influences ranging from the Wrens to the Beach Boys to James Brown. It's indie rock, yes, but the term seems too narrow to apply to Menomena. Physically go and buy the album (preferably at Fingerprints), as it features great cover artwork by Craig Thompson, the artist/writer for graphic novels like *Blankets*. -Spencer Seward



Beach House Self-Titled

When you dissect all the intricate parts of a song, music is really just a bunch of vibrations in the air. But we prefer to envision it in the way a singer croons about a broken heart, or how a drummer precisely hits all the right skins in time. Music as scientific phenomenon is not as sexy. Beach House are a male-female duo from Baltimore who use minimal sounds to make sweeping, atmospheric songs. Their eponymous debut brings that organic, vibrating-air quality back into the consciousness of music enjoyment. At the beginning of "Tokyo Witch," I don't imagine someone sitting around, playing slide guitar. My mind pictures one of those generic screensavers where all the colors morph into countless shapes and lull you into a tired daze like an opium dream. Victoria Legend's vocal presence is somewhat akin to a higher-pitched, drawn out Annie Lennox. Music critics have been quick to make obvious (and somewhat obtuse) references to Broadcast, Mazzy Star, and various shoegaze-y groups when describing Beach House. But that would be unfair. They take a particular tone and let it drift for awhile; it's minimally hypnotic. The whole world is completely

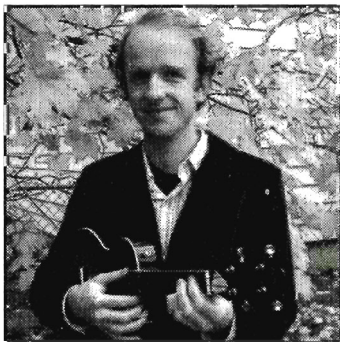
shut out and contained within the dimension of their haunting, oscillating organ-guitar-keyboard combinations. Beach House is a room without walls, where noise is carried on invisible waves, end without end. -Kayleigh Shaw



Fujiya & Miyagi Transparent Things (Dig)

After rocking faces all over the United Kingdom since its initial release date of May 2006, Fujiya & Miyagi's "Transparent Things" makes it way to American shores to start your 2007 off with a little ass-shaking. This Brighton trio writes subtle bedroom underpants-dance anthems that sound like !!! grinding up on Hot Chip, or LCD Soundsystem freaking Air. Slow, funk-based grooves bubble along while lyrics are lovingly whispered in your ear. Tracks like "Collarbone" and "In One Ear & Out the Other" trip along with the same kind of narcotic groove as Can's "Halleluwah", albeit more intimate. The whole affair, despite its electronic leanings, manages to maintain a nice, organic, stony haze about itself. These hushed electro-rock tunes aren't going to burn up any dance floors, but they may heat up some bed sheets if you know what I mean (WINK, WINK!).

-Kyle Olson

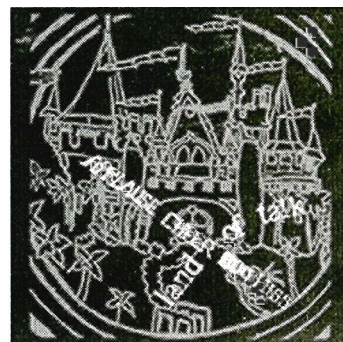


Jacob Borshard Songs for a Small Stereo/The Last Brontosaurus

Comin' straight out of Portland, Jacob Borshard is mastering the art of twee-pop songwriting. His weapon of choice? The ukulele. Armed with the tiny, tropical four-string, Borshard writes heart-achingly

adorable odes to the loves of his life, his high school punk rock days, Star Trek, and other endearingly cute pursuits. The bonus is that Borshard knows his roots. Tracks like "Grass Stains" are so charged with youthful naiveté and sexual energy that it immediately brings to mind why Beat Happening made such a huge name for themselves in the twee realm when they hit the scene. It's not cute for cute's sake; Borshard knows what he's doing. He sums up the entire ethos of twee-pop perfectly with the line, sung over his trusty uke with his youthful voice, "Punk's not dead/ fuck you/ 'cuz I'm still a punk." Both of these albums can be downloaded for free on his website: creebobby.com

-Kyle Olson



Land of Talk Applause Cheer Boo Hiss

Land of Talk are going to be so big this year. Like Kanye West, big. They are playing South by Southwest though. And they're Canadian, which is part of the formula in achieving moderate indie success. They only have 2,511 friends on MySpace but they're a young trio who are going to bring back good old guitar-driven rock to the elitist masses. No keyboards allowed at this after party. Only guitars, drums, and post-punk attitudes. Applause Cheer Boo Hiss is their first release; it's a 7 song EP that rocks out, slows down, takes a nap, then gets up and puts its own gear back in the van after the show. Every song is self-contained and has a distinct flavor, but singer Liz Powell keeps it cohesive in her own Kim Deal-ish sort of way. On "Summer Special," Powell sings, "Look at those girls/so young, so young/they still piss their pants," with an air of aloofness as if she's retelling someone else's anecdote at the dinner table. Behind all her curious lyrics is the constant presence of the bold guitar sound that pierces straight through the narrative arc of the tracks and injects it with aural bliss. Applause... reminds us that the best damn noise still comes straight from an amp. Watch out! Canadians sans keyboards coming to your town (if you live in Austin, Texas) soon!

-Kayleigh Shaw



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