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#79 APRIL 1993

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ANN ARBOR'S ALTERNATIVE NEWSMONTHLY

Students in the 90s

THEIR VIEWS ON EDUCATION, THEIR GENERATION, UNCERTAIN TIMES



PHOTO: Wm. JORDAN

Spencer Gusick, age 25,
3rd-year Law

SPENCER GUSICK

AGENDA: What do you feel are the most pressing issues facing our society?

Spencer Gusick: A sense of people working together; a sense of how to share the struggles between the people who are making money and doing well and the people who aren't but are still part of society.

AGENDA: Who are your heroes?

Spencer: So far I like Clinton, David Byrne.

AGENDA: Who are your villains?

Spencer: Bush, Hussein, Hitler.

AGENDA: How do you feel about student protesters? Have you ever participated in a protest? If so, describe it.

Spencer: It's a two-way street. I think it's really important for students to protest, to get out there and set the agenda. I think that the university, in particular, is really unresponsive, and we live in a part of the country where the powers that be are very unresponsive. So we need people out there, annoying people. On the other hand, student protests tend to be: "everybody jump on the bandwagon, follow this list of our 12 proscribed things." And every time I've actually tried to join a protest, I've found that the group was endorsing more causes than I cared to endorse on that day.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Every generation of students has its defining characteristics. Mention the 60s, the 70s, or even the 80s, and certain images come to mind. But what about the 90s? What defines today's students? What are their concerns and attitudes? How do they view themselves and the world?

In an effort to gain a glimpse into the "student psyche" (while not attempting to conduct a formal poll), this writer, AGENDA editor Phillis Engelbert, and editorial assistant Sarah Akhtar, spoke with 16 students last month at a campus coffee shop.

We arrived at Amer's about 1:30 pm on Wed., March 17, and picked out the table nearest to the front door. We set up tape recorders and a sign-in sheet and draped a sign over the table beckoning students to come talk to AGENDA.

We made our way through the crowded coffee shop, asking people at each table if they were students. We handed a set of questions to those who answered yes. We requested that they look the questions over, and then join us for an interview.

What follows is an abridged version of five interviews.

AGENDA: The 80s was described as the "me" generation. What are the defining characteristics of your generation?

Spencer: I think in these next couple of years, the Clinton administration is going to define it. He's trying to make people aware that there are responsibilities attendant with wealth and being an American citizen and being a global citizen. And I think if people buy into that then we're in good shape and it will be the "everybody" generation, the "us" generation.

AGENDA: Is there anything else you'd like to say about being a student in the 90s?

Spencer: I'm lucky I have a job waiting for me. But I think it's ridiculous that people can go to school, even get higher education, and not have a job, or not have very good job prospects. And I think a lot of that had to do with (the fact that) the 80s was kind of a time to succeed, succeed, succeed, and not really think about long term effects. As people succeed in the future, they have to learn to plan ahead, plan for people, so you don't have thousands and thousands of urban poor with no hope in every city.



PHOTO: Wm. JORDAN

Emi Narcazato, age 21, Women's
Studies & Psychology, undergrad

EMI NARCAZATO

AGENDA: What do you feel are the most pressing issues facing our society?

Emi: One of the things across the board, no matter what field you're in, it's really important to push for the eradication of "isms." To list a few of them: sexism, racism, homophobia, heterosexism, ageism, and ableism.

AGENDA: Who are your heroes?

Emi: I tend to not want to glorify anybody. I think there are a lot of people who serve as good role models, but there's no one I'd really like to mention.

AGENDA: How do you feel about student protesters?

Emi: I'm all for them. I think there's not enough of them. And I think they're not radical enough.

AGENDA: Have you ever participated in a protest?

Emi: Yes, I have, plenty. I've participated in anti-war protests, protests for housing rights for gay couples on campus; I protested with ACTUP. I can't even think of all the protests I've been at. I've done pro-choice protests: Take Back the Night. That's the only ones that come to mind right away.

(see STUDENTS IN THE 90s, page 4)

EDITORIAL

AGENDA Turns 7

U.N. Truth Commission Confirms AGENDA's Coverage of El Salvador

If you haven't been reading AGENDA for the past seven years, the Ides of March may have taken you by surprise.

On March 15, a United Nations Truth Commission released its report on the repression in El Salvador. It found, among other things, that Salvadoran soldiers killed four North American church women, that Major Roberto D'Aubuisson ordered the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and that the U.S.-trained Atlacatl Battalion, acting on orders from the Salvadoran high command, killed six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter.

The U.N. report also documented a disinformation campaign waged by Reagan and Bush administration officials with respect to these incidents in particular and the deaths of over 75,000 Salvadorans generally.

The mainstream news outlets in this country quickly feigned outrage about having been lied to. National Public Radio gave one of the principal liars, former undersecretary of State for Latin American Affairs Elliott Abrams, air time to justify his behavior.

Some government officials also expressed dismay. U.S. Representative Robert Torricelli (D-NJ), who heads the house subcommittee on Latin America and who repeatedly approved military aid to El Salvador on condition that the Reagan and Bush administrations certify human rights improvements in that country, expressed his anger at having been misled.

Enough of this disingenuous whining by slippery politicians and journalists. Let's toss their historical re-write in the editorial trash basket. That's where it belongs, along with tales of how the Nazi Holocaust never happened and analyses about how the world is flat.

From its first edition, AGENDA told the truth that corporate newspapers, the TV and our government tried to conceal. That first issue, in April 1986, featured a speech by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Adolfo Perez Esquivel, about liberation theology and human rights in Central America. On the front page was an editorial urging a "yes"

(see AGENDA TURNS 7, page 3)



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Etcetera Editor, AGENDA,
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Ferency Dies; His Legacy Lives On

On March 23, East Lansing city councilmember and legendary activist Zolton Ferency died of heart disease.

As the head of Michigan's Democratic Party in 1967, Ferency fought Lyndon Johnson's ouster for the Vietnam War, an act for which he was ostracized by the state Democrats. As a lawyer, Ferency won lawsuits against overcrowding in state prisons and to abolish the state police "Red Squad."

In 1970, he founded the Human Rights Party, of which several members were elected to the Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor city councils.

In recent months Ferency had been promoting a petition drive to abolish the State Senate and create a part-time unicameral legislature. Coming at a time of unprecedented scandals in the Michigan legislature, this radical restructuring seemed headed to a spot on the 1994 ballot. Ferency's friends and supporters vow to carry on the petition drive. A statewide meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 28. For more information, call (517) 337-2825.

NOW Presents Feminist Awards

On Sunday May 2 the Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County chapter of the National Organization for Women will honor four community members for their contributions to women's rights. They are: Dr. Deloisteen Person-Brown, creator of the Neighborhood Health Clinic in Ypsilanti; Ralph Michener, past NOW board member; Mary Sexton, a contraceptives educator/researcher; and Nancy Moustakas and Cathy Baldwin, founders of the Community Action Network.

The Feminist Achievement Awards Banquet will take place at noon at the Gollywobbler, 3750 Washtenaw Ave. State senator Debbie Stabenow will be the keynote speaker. The cost is \$25 (proceeds benefit NOW). For more information call 995-5494.

Rape Prevention Month

The U-M Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center is sponsoring Rape Prevention Month on campus March 16 through April 17. Numerous activities are designed to raise awareness about sexual assault. This year's programs include sexual assault and the role of alcohol in the Greek system, sexual assault and people with disabilities, sexual assault issues facing people of color, and the media's portrayal of sexual assault.

The month's activities will culminate with the 14th Annual Take Back the Night March and Rally, sponsored by the Ann Arbor Coalition Against Rape. The march and rally will begin at 7 pm on Sat. April 17, at Ann Arbor City Hall. For more information call SAPAC at 763-5865.

Israeli Military Resister to Speak

Hanoeh Livneh, spokesperson for Yesh Gvul, will speak in Ann Arbor on April 25 and 26. Yesh Gvul, an organization of Israeli soldiers who refuse to serve in the West Bank or Gaza, was formed by reservists who refused to participate in the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Livneh was one such reserivist. After serving one month in Lebanon he told his commanding officer that he would not return to service. When his reserve unit was called up for the intifada, he refused to serve and was jailed.

Yesh Gvul has recently been drawing attention to Israeli army's undercover units in the Occupied Territories. These units, whose members masquerade as Palestinians, have been linked with the 95 deaths.

On April 25, Livneh will speak about the Israeli peace movement at 7 pm at Hillel, 1429 Hill St. On April 26, he will speak about conscientious objection. For more information call 769-5680.

U.S. Aids Guatemalan Military

The Clinton Administration recently authorized U.S. troops to join with the Guatemalan Army in combined military operations lasting through mid-1993. The agreement breaks President Clinton's promise to respect human rights, as Guatemala has one of the worst human rights records in the world.

The Guatemalan Army, long linked to death squad activities, is currently waging "scorched earth" drives in the Quiché province. Homes, schools, clinics and churches have been destroyed as a result.

Write to President Clinton, asking him to stop the joint U.S.-Guatemalan maneuvers. For details contact FINDING, 205 West Monroe, Chicago, IL 60606-5033.

The Kashubian Tapes

On April 22-25, the Performance Network will present "The Kashubian Tapes," a one-man play starring Peter Reineman. It tells the true story of a government employee in Chicago whose life is ruined when he tries to blow the whistle on arms shipments to Iran.

The play, written by Dan Sutherland, examines the notion of collective responsibility and the painful ambivalence of living within a system that is noble in theory, but rotten in practice. The Sun., April 25 show will be signed for the hearing impaired. For information and reservations call 663-0681.

Depo-Provera Now Available

Planned Parenthood of Mid-Michigan announces the availability of Depo-Provera in its family planning clinics. This birth control drug is injected and provides effective contraception for 12 weeks.

Although Depo-Provera has been used by some nine million women in 90 countries, it was only approved by the Food and Drug Administration last October. Planned Parenthood will only provide Depo-Provera after a complete gynecological exam and education session. It is available on a sliding scale fee and is covered by Medicaid. Call 973-0155 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

"Blocked Out" Block Parties

The Homeless Action Committee (HAC) will soon be having a Block Party at a neighborhood park near you. On April 3, HAC and friends will gather at West Park, and on April 21, at Salvation City (at N. Main St. and Ann). The message to be conveyed by the homeless and their advocates is: "We still don't have a block to live on, and we still don't have a party to vote for." For more info, call 930-0601.

AGENDA

Ann Arbor's Alternative Newsmonthly

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Sixties Drugs Also Caused Addictions

I just finished reading your February issue. While I enjoy AGENDA (I often feel other newspapers aren't being objective, or even honest!), there was one article that disturbed me. This was "Ruminations of a Radio Therapist" by Arwulf Arwulf.

As a product of the 60s, I can relate to the article. I remember the free concerts, Mark's Coffee House, and my father helped renovate the Rainbow People's house on Hill and Washtenaw. I was raised going to "Be-ins," "Sit-ins," and at the ripe old age of 10 I was a Psychedelic Ranger. I got a lot from this way of life. I came up free from the chains of bigotry and learned to develop and voice my own opinion.

My problem is this: Arwulf stated that marijuana and LSD were *proven effective treatment* for alcoholism. As a recovering addict, I know a little about the misconceptions of the disease of alcoholism and the treatment thereof. An alcoholic (just as an addict) must abstain from the use of *any* mind- or mood-altering chemical in order to recover. Anything else is just "switching" addictions.

I agree wholeheartedly with Arwulf about looking more closely at the "legal" drugs in this country. Some of my favorite "pushers" were at the U-M Hospital.

The ends of this disease are jails, institutions, and death. Because of the seriousness of these outcomes, any journalism regarding alcoholism or drug addiction (one and the same really, alcohol is a drug) must be responsible and well-researched.

Anonymous
Ann Arbor

AGENDA TURNS 7

(FROM PAGE ONE)

vote on an Ann Arbor ballot proposal opposing U.S. intervention in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Our editorial pattern was thus set—we took a stand for positive political action, and we published thoughtful analysis of an important aspect of the Central America story. In over 25 articles about El Salvador, AGENDA reported the story without the mainstream media's compulsion to print government lies in the name of "objectivity."

AGENDA analyzed corporate news coverage of El Salvador from early on. In our June 1986 issue Alexander Cockburn recounted the fate of former New York Times reporter Raymond Bonner, who wrote about the El Mozote massacre of hundreds of peasants: "[Bonner] actually went up into the hills, he actually looked at a group of guerrillas and came to the sound investigative conclusion that they weren't Russians. But you have to be highly 'professional' for that kind of thing. His reports aroused fantastic indignation... and that fantastic indignation fairly rapidly resulted in the rather abrupt departure of Raymond Bonner from El Salvador, charged with unprofessionalism in sources." In March 1990, AGENDA published Jon Reed's account of the cover-up of the murders of six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter at the University of Central America: "[U]nder the expert direction of White House spin doctors Cristiani and company are learning how to put a kinder and gentler mask over their bloody deeds."

While AGENDA was Washtenaw County's source for the printed truth about El Salvador, national alternative journals like *The Nation* and the late *Guardian* also published similar accounts. Editors at major news outlets had plenty of access to the truth, had

they wished to disseminate it.

Because we got the story right with few resources at our disposal, we at AGENDA might snicker at today's pompous proclamations by the *New York Times* (which censored reports by its own Raymond Bonner) or *The Ann Arbor News* (which ignored local activists who spoke the truth about El Salvador) but for the fact that it's no laughing matter. People died in great numbers because newspapers and television in this country lacked the courage to report the truth, and lacked the integrity to call a lie a lie.

Our coverage of El Salvador was also unhampered by snobbish notions that some people matter and others don't. While *The Ann Arbor News* and its ilk sometimes reported allegations of the Salvadoran army's more notorious crimes against church people, usually with equal or greater space devoted to denials or excuses, AGENDA told of less-famous atrocities which got absolutely no coverage from the *News*. In July 1986, we reported the murders which led the Celaya family to seek sanctuary in Ann Arbor. In September 1988, AGENDA ran the terrible story of Francisco, a Salvadoran bible teacher who took refuge in Ann Arbor's Unitarian Universalist Church. The December 1989 issue not only correctly identified those responsible for the murders of priests, but also told of an otherwise-unreported attack at San Salvador's cathedral. The January-February 1990 AGENDA featured an interview with a Salvadoran army deserter, who told of U.S. advisors' participation in massacres. In May 1990, we ran a lengthy account of the air war against Salvadoran peasants, with details of an army rocket attack that killed five and wounded 17—a story which, because the victims weren't church people or rich or famous, never saw the light of day in the mainstream press.

While cliches replaced analysis elsewhere, AGENDA published solid pieces by local activists who traveled to El Salvador and speeches by famous critics like Noam

Chomsky and Phillip Agee. We covered seldom-discussed economic aspects of the story. We ran extensive reports on the anti-war movement, about which there was a virtual news blackout in the mainstream press.

The U.N. Truth Commission report vindicates AGENDA's work. Yet we have not, and will not, rest on our laurels. We will continue to cover many important stories, from the local to the global, which are important for an understanding of our world but which are ignored, garbled or misrepresented by other news media.

AGENDA's strength is in our principles. Those we will keep. We will maintain both our advocacy and our integrity, secure in the knowledge that hiding one's point of view does not equal "objectivity." We don't plan to adopt the corporate media's confusion of public office with respectability.

While AGENDA lacks financial resources, we enjoy the support of a well-educated activist community. Dozens of local people went to El Salvador, conducted interviews, transcribed speeches, translated from Spanish to English and otherwise made it possible to cover a major foreign war, even though we never had the money that the *New York Times* or *The Ann Arbor News* could dedicate to the story. Space considerations and several correspondents' needs for anonymity prevent us from acknowledging the dozens of people who helped us cover the story, but that in no way lessens our profound gratitude.

At AGENDA we are proud of what we've done, and we intend to continue for another seven years, and then some.

We can do a better job with a little help from our friends. You can help by subscribing, by contributing money, or by writing articles when you have a good story to tell. To help out, or to obtain copies of the articles mentioned in this editorial, call AGENDA at 996-8018.

MAYOR LIZ BRATER

Making tough choices ...and getting things done.



On the Gelman contamination problem:

"Mayor Liz Brater, you held back a tidal wave of pressure. We actually witnessed threats made against you and admire you for your courage and determination. You were the first person to separate the fact from the fiction about Ann Arbor's role in the clean-up. You never let us down and we will not forget it."

—from a speech to Ann Arbor City Council, Myung Raymond, 9/7/92

On managing Ann Arbor's finances:

"...the City's financial position has improved. And this year it improved rather dramatically. ...it's hard to believe you are in that posture when five years ago...the City had a general fund deficit. Overall, the City is in very good financial condition, particularly given the state of the economy, and the problems at the state level, I think the City had an outstanding year."

—presentation to City Council by CPA firm of Coopers and Lybrand, 1/4/93

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Students in the 90s

(FROM PAGE ONE)

AGENDA: The 80s was described as the "me" generation. Does that characterization apply to the 90s as well?

Emi: If "me" is supposed to speak to the specific economic situation, then in terms of the flow of capital in the U.S., I think that's pretty inaccurate. The people who were very focused on "me" and what their needs were, and were bringing in capital, were a really small percentage of the people. And a large proportion of the people were suffering and the homeless numbers were increasing. What would define the 90s? I hope that change would define the 90s but I'm a lot more pessimistic than that.

AGENDA: Is there anything else you'd like to say about being a student in the 90s?

Emi: I think it's really important that students in the U.S. recognize the amount of power that we have. ...I would hope that students organize and put a lot political pressure on different institutions to change some of their policies, to further the eradication of the "isms" I talked about earlier.



John Marshall, age 24,
2nd-year Medicine

PHOTO: Wm. JORDAN
community service, and change.

JOHN MARSHALL

AGENDA: Do you have any heroes?

John: I suppose a few, not very many: Van Morrison, Tom Waits, and Franz Kafka. That's about it.

AGENDA: How do you feel about student protesters?

John: I suppose it depends on which protesters you're talking about. I don't mind protests. I think it's a good thing, in general. Whether it ever accomplishes anything, I don't know. But I've participated in a few.

There was the Gulf War protests and the code of conduct protests. There was the minor riot outside the Fleming Bldg. a couple of years ago—that "No Cops, No Guns, No Code" riot—protest.

AGENDA: What do you feel are the most pressing issues facing our society?

John: I would say, the bankruptcy of the nation, which seems to be relatively inevitable, and it goes hand in hand with the health care crisis. I think the growing movement in the world towards tribalism is a problem. I don't have any solutions to any of these problems. It's sort of inadequate integration, for lack of a better word.

AGENDA: The 80s was described as the "me" generation. How would you describe the 90s?

John: I think it's more along the lines of the "ugh" generation. There isn't really much room to be a "me" generation. I think people in the 80s exploited every loophole that was possible in order to further themselves, you know, monetarily, power-wise. These things have sort of come to a close, which is certainly for the best. But not without some cost. There's no place for it to be a "me" generation. Probably three-quarters of my

friends who have graduated college can't get a better job than waiting tables. It's hard to be a "me" generation when you're just trying to be a "subsistence" generation.

GRACE RIM

AGENDA: What do you feel are the most pressing issues facing our society?

Grace: The economy, racism, and environmental pollution and environmental injustice.

AGENDA: Do you have any heroes?

Grace: Yeah, I like Oprah Winfrey, Ross Perot in some instances, and my parents.

AGENDA: Who are your villains?

Grace: Well, being in the environmental policy field, I would say sometimes the big corporate CEOs who are removed from society in general.

AGENDA: Are you involved in any social change or community service organizations?

Grace: I believe so. I'm very active in the Korean Student Association and that is very much a part of community in a way, community change.

AGENDA: How do you feel about student protesters?

Grace: Fine, great. Go for it.

AGENDA: The 80s was described as the "me" generation. Does that characterization apply to the 90's?

Grace: The 90s—possibly...the "later" generation. All I know is it seems like everyone wants to push everything back in time. They want less responsibility. They want responsibility later in life. Maybe the generation with too much opportunity? I don't know.



Grace Rim, age 21, Environmental
Policy, undergrad senior

PHOTO: Wm. JORDAN

the people who aren't very well off. It's very pronounced here. It's something I noticed growing up here. It's probably one of the most pressing issues, that some people can come and get educated and others can't.

AGENDA: How do you feel about student protesters?

Katt: I think there's not enough here. I remember when Betty Friedan came to speak. She (said): this town used to be so active, what happened? And I think the students here, they come and they spend all this money and they get an education and they go out and they don't consider they should be giving something back. They've got the privilege, you know.

KATT HERNANDEZ age 18, Music Comp./ Jazz Violin, 1st-year undergraduate (not pictured)

AGENDA: What do you feel are the most pressing issues facing our society?

Katt: There are so many of them that I don't think there's any single one. There's a basic economic inequality which causes a lot of social inequality, as far as I can see. Especially living in Ann Arbor, where in downtown you see all the well off people and if you go out Packard Rd. you see all

Cuba Blazes Trail in Alternative Agriculture

By John Vandermeer

Nowadays, what one hears about Cuba in the corporate news media are tales of economic collapse and hunger, mixed with speculation about the Castro government's downfall. Yet, economic pressures against the island nation, coupled with scientific advances in alternative agriculture, have pushed Cuba into a position of a world leader in developing the sort of sustainable agricultural system that the U.S. and the world will need to feed itself in the 21st century.

As Cuba undertakes this bold experiment, the U.S. economic blockade against the island nation remains in place. The blockade, which prohibits U.S. companies from trading with Cuba, costs Cuba about 30 billion dollars a year. This policy runs counter to the historical evidence that the blockade has failed. The rest of the world regards it as not only immoral and illegal, but also counter-productive to the U.S. goal of ending socialism in Cuba.

Due to the tremendous perseverance of the Cuban people, Cuba has been committed to its new agricultural path for over two years now. The alternative model is not merely a stopgap measure, but is thought to represent the future of Cuban agriculture. As it becomes more apparent to people everywhere that petrochemical-based agriculture is not sustainable for long into the future, Cuba's experience will be of great value for the entire world. The success of Cuba's alternative agriculture may also serve to remove prejudices in other areas of the world, including the United States.

Cuba's pre-revolutionary agriculture was based on small self-sufficient peasant farms and large plantations on which landless farmworkers grew sugar for export. After the 1959 revolution, Cuba adopted the developed world's agricultural systems. Fidel Castro often cited the amount of pesticides used as evidence of Cuba's progress.

In 1989, however, Cuba's easy access to inexpensive petroleum products crumbled with the fall of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies. Since 73% of Cuba's international commerce was with this political bloc, Cuban society plunged into crisis. Everything had to be rethought, and agriculture was no exception.

In the same year, the prestigious U.S. National Academy of Sciences published a study noting that it could find no evidence that the modern (high chemical input) agricultural model actually produces better than alternative forms. This report gave impetus to the global alternative agriculture movement, which depends on organic fertilizers and non-chemical pest controls. However, due in part to the influence of powerful chemical companies, this report had little impact on agriculture in Western capitalist nations.

Cuba, however, has been more or less forced to adopt the alternative agriculture model—a shift requiring the adjustment of crops and their husbandry to local ecological conditions. Cuban farms now use organic fertilizers (what Cubans now call "biofertilizers"), biological pest controls, animal traction and other forms of alternative energy, crop diversification and local labor. This approach stresses environmental protection and technologies based on local knowledge.

Two technologies adopted by the Cubans are most impressive: the widespread application of biological controls and the use of biofertilizers. Perhaps the most successful has been their biological control program, a program that was developed in the 80s. Almost all major pests are now controlled through biological agents. Various bacterial and fungal diseases, along with parasitic wasps, are produced on a large scale. At this point they appear to successfully control almost all insect pests.

Special techniques have also been developed as methods of biological control. For example, the transfer of lion ant nests in stems from banana plants to sweet potato fields has virtually eliminated the sweet potato weevil problem. (The weevil eats the sweet potato, the ant eats the weevil.) This has completely eliminated the pesticide costs in this system.

Equally impressive results have been obtained in the field of biofertilizers. Throughout the country various forms of organic waste are converted into high quality fertilizer. For this, Cubans use the old organic gardening technique of vermiculture: worms eat the waste and process it through their gut, leaving worm feces, which are rich in nutrients. In 1991, Cuba produced over 73,000 tons of this fertilizer.

Probably the best example of the application of cutting edge technology is the use of certain soil bacteria to provide nitrogen to the soil. These bacteria (e.g. *Azotobacter*, *Azospirillum*) can draw nitrogen from the air and incorporate it into their bodies, which then becomes part of the soil when their bodies decompose. Cuban agricultural scientists produce such bacteria on a large scale by a process of fermentation. Airplanes that used to spray poisons on the fields now spray nitrogen-fixing bacteria. It is an example of what the Cubans mean when they point to the use of "cutting edge"—but appropriate—technology.

The alternative model requires a great deal more labor than the modern one. Much of this added work is associated with the switch to animal traction, but not all of it. In general, one might think of agricultural chemicals as having the same effect as mechanization, reducing the labor used in weeding, fertilizing and other necessary farm chores. Thus, the alternative model implies a larger labor force.

Cuban planners saw the problems that this would create in a society that for the past 30 years had been mechanizing agriculture and creating rural to urban migration. The labor force simply did not exist in rural areas. Programs in place since 1980 to equalize urban and rural wages did little to stem the tide of rural-urban migration.

To deal with this problem Cuba has devised short-term and long-term strategies. In the short term, volunteer brigades spend anywhere from a few weeks to two years in the fields. Since work is guaranteed in Cuba, their normal city jobs will be waiting for them when they return, at the normal wage rate. For their stint in the countryside they are paid at least the same wages they received at their city job, sometimes with additional perks.

The long term solution to the labor problem is more ambitious. The alternative model calls for use of local labor with a high degree of community participation. Thus rural communities must be redeveloped. Rural apartment complexes are being built with all necessities of life (e.g. health clinics, sports facilities, shops, etc.), with the hope that short-term volunteers will decide to permanently relocate.

State farms are also experimenting with new forms of labor organization, in which the farms are parcelled out as individual production units and workers are assigned to activities on a particular piece of land. The idea is to try to recapture old notions of the responsibility of land ownership, without engendering the profiteering that normally goes with them.

Perhaps the most radical social experiment is one in which young people work on farms as an alternative to required military service. It is hoped that these younger people will opt for futures that include relocating to rural areas.

Cuba faces many technical and social challenges in its attempt to reorient its agriculture. For instance, types of biofertilizers and biocontrol have to be continually updated and improved. Another obstacle is the social transition back to rural life and the acceptance by the Cuban people that resources they had taken for granted are no longer readily available. And, of course, no one can ignore what may be the biggest obstacle—the U.S. economic blockade.

John Vandermeer is a Professor of Biology at the University of Michigan. In November 1992 he participated in a tour of Cuba, sponsored by Global Exchange, a San Francisco-based non-profit research and education organization.

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VIDEO

"The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle"



JOHNNY ROTTEN

1992. Directed by Julian Temple. Starring Malcolm McLaren and The Sex Pistols. A Warner/Reprise Video Release.

HIDDEN GEM

Pity poor Malcolm McLaren, he just hasn't seemed to be able to get the hang of failure. McLaren, a London Boutique designer of questionable quality and taste, originally conceived of The Sex Pistols as an radical affront to the music industry. To that end he rounded up four of the worst musicians he could find—Paul Cook, Steve Jones, Johnny Rotten, and Sid Vicious—and managed to make them even raunchier as a group, than the sum total of their individual raunchy parts.

Instead of the affront he envisioned, McLaren's creation of "punk music" has redefined rock and roll with a verve. And it came at a time when rock badly needed redefinition. The genre, in the 70s, could have slipped in the other direction and we'd all be listening to Barry Manilow. More importantly though, punk (through its step-children, grunge and slash) is still reverberating as a vital sound in our global village. Such is nihilism with a 4/4 beat.

Likewise, McLaren's video documentary history of his band is meant to be an affront to the film industry. The narrative is virtually pure drivel. (On first exposure of McLaren, one learns that this sort of juvenility is to be expected.) The footage of their concert appearances has the fascination of an impending car wreck. But lots of people do stop to look over the damage—and what else is rock and roll anyway?

One thing McLaren wasn't able to destroy is the sheer charismatic presence of The Sex Pistols themselves. This led to The London Daily Mirror call the film "A masterpiece of tasteless tat." The Sunday Times (of all places!) breathlessly proclaimed it "A freewheeling, foul-mouthed, spitballing, anarchic mess, foaming with manic energy." And Variety said it's "The Citizen Kane of Rock and Roll Pictures."

The "Citizen Kane" of Rock and Roll movies!?

Well, yes. "The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle" may just be the "Citizen Kane" of rock and roll movies. And whether or not one agrees with this assessment, one thing's for sure—it's easily the best rock and roll movie since the 1964 release of "A Hard Day's Night."

Interspersed with concert footage are staged interludes of McLaren's descriptions of his exploits over record and entertainment corporations. This aspect of the documentary is most certainly sophomoric, but maybe we've become so sufficiently jaded that McLaren's antics are simply self-defeating. For whatever these interludes are meant to convey, they certainly don't shock with the urgency McLaren seems to desperately want. Moreover, they pale insignificantly in contrast to the fascinating glimpses of the The Sex Pistols in action.

The comparison with "A Hard Day's Night" can be made in the realm of the musical retrospective documentary. The comparison, however, doesn't go much further. Where Beatles manager Brian Epstein deliberately smoothed the edges off his wards (resulting in the "mop top" image), McLaren has sharpened the points of his fearsome foursome into uncompromising daggers. It's this stridency which overshadows all the silliness surrounding the documentary.

The two bands are indeed the Apollinian and Dionysian antipodes of the history of rock and roll. In many respects they're the alpha and omega of modern popular music. Do yourself a favor and see both films as a double-bill.

McLaren, once again, has snatched victory out of the intentional jaws of defeat. "The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle" is similar to The Sex Pistols themselves, in that the very fact that they were supposed to be so inept may have spurred them on. Such logic as this makes about as much sense as anything else surrounding the band, its origins, and eventual demise. Whether belting out "God Save the Queen," "No Feelings," or "Belsen Was a Gas," this quartet somehow mysteriously was able to rivet their audience with an undeniable stage and sound presence.

As a retrospective, "The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle" is a masterpiece. Love 'em or hate 'em, it's useless to deny that The Sex Pistols were a great band—no matter the circumstance or their manager's intent.

— John Carlos Cantú

FILM

"Unforgiven"

1992. Produced and Directed by Clint Eastwood. Starring Clint Eastwood, Gene Hackman, Morgan Freeman, and Richard Harris. A Warner Bros. release.

RECENT RELEASE

As film genres go, most critics will tell you, the Western is just about shot. Some would insist it's been dead for twenty years. Yet as Clint Eastwood's "Unforgiven" demonstrates, the saga of the West is still potent, the closest thing to a founding myth we share, with meanings worth taking out of mothballs and fighting over.

Eastwood's film turns the tropes of the traditional Western on their ear, and in doing so shows how many old ways of picturing America are worn out, grown all but laughable in 1992. Piety and patriotism, the film suggests—in both film and history—have too often masked just uncertainty, greed, and violence.

The story itself isn't new. The aging warrior Eastwood plays, drawn back to duty for an ostensibly just cause, is one of the stock figures of Western drama. Characters like Munny—rough-hewn, at odds with new values—are a staple of many frontier fictions, in which the old days and wild places are continually being lamented, and the gentler, symbolically feminine influences of culture ridiculed.

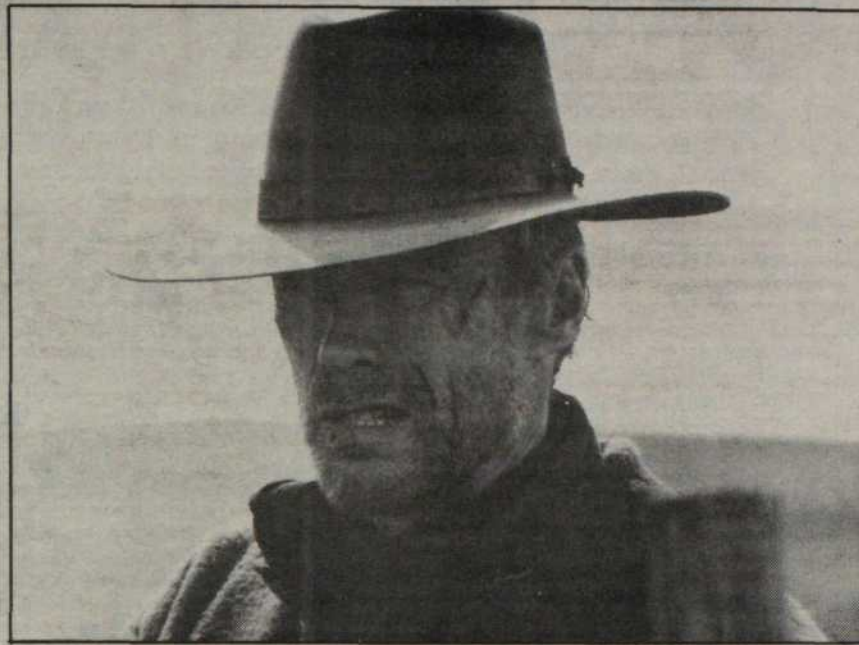
Like its counterparts in contemporary film, in which greedy business-types—today's cowboys—must overcome their antisocial tendencies and win a way back to family and community through good deeds and repentance ("Hook," "Regarding Henry," "Rain Man," "Doc Hollywood," and "Other People's Money," to name a recent few), the Western is about how men learn to harness competitive "natures" for greater good. The subtext of the taming of the West was, is, and shall forever remain how we tame ourselves.

But in "Unforgiven" it's also money that draws Eastwood's hard-bitten character (his name is Munny, after all), down on his luck with two young mouths to feed, back to the killing he once gloried in. A prostitute's face has been slashed, and her fellow hookers are offering \$1,000 to whoever will kill her attacker.

Munny was once the baddest dude of all, but under a good woman's influence got reformed. Unfortunately, she's gone "to her reward." Munny clings to the hope of eventual redemption too, but the difficulties he suffers staying clean make his ambivalence clear. Time in virtue's harness has laid waste his masculine skills—his inability to mount a horse is the film's running joke, and his aim has slipped badly. Salvaging his lost pride soon comes to rival both philanthropy and poverty among the reasons Munny doggedly continues gunning for the whore's attacker.

There's a *wealth* of uneasy—and quite interesting—humor about threatened male pride in "Unforgiven." The cowboy slashed the prostitute when she laughed at his minuscule pecker; the film's writer/historian character pees in his pants when guns are cocked near him; and one hapless cowboy gets killed while he's taking a squat.

Guns (the film waves its phallic subtext around a bit) are outlawed in Little Whiskey, home to the film's main events. To



Clint Eastwood as Bill Munny

The Decline of America in the Western Imagination

become citified, it seems, is to get yourself unmanly. Yet infantile town deputies—the only people with legal approval to carry guns—mess obsessively with theirs. And Sheriff "Little Bill" Daggett (Gene Hackman), another legendary figure who civilization has reduced to little more than caricature, takes vicious pleasure disarming the manliest men.

Real cowboys don't articulate all these tensions, of course; they act them out with their manly ways and instruments. Honey-tongued eloquence has always been scarce in Westerns, and guys with command of the language are viewed skeptically.

The first sweet-talker into town, in fact, (Richard Harris as "English Bob") gets the stuffing knocked out of him. But the man with him, a writer, the author of a "penny-dreadful" novel about Bob's exploits, gets better treatment. It's taken for granted he's a wuss—intellectuals *are*. Still he's grudgingly respected. At once an assertion of history's uneasily passive position and the film's authenticity, the author gets passed from bad man to bad man—absorbing their boastful stories of the West—until Eastwood finally disabuses him of any romantic misconceptions forever.

One story we're denied, though, is Munny's Black sidekick's—Ned Logan's. Morgan Freeman fills the Sancho Panza role here, playing another in a long line of Nigger Jims and Tontos who take the kicks aimed at White heroes.

Logan's Native American wife has no voice whatsoever—she's literally mute. Her pairing with Logan suggests how easily the traditionally voiceless—savages, Blacks, women, whatever—get lumped together in the West of our imaginations. When Logan admits missing her favors, Eastwood remarks that it's "nothing," a remark of the sort Hamlet's forever making about the pesky Ophelia. Women are zeros, nullities, such quips suggest—forget about 'em.

Women are something, of course, a source of confusion and emotion, of silent accusation: saints, like Munny's wife,

or saintly whores. The temptation to shut them up for good—even in name of their honor—is always strong.

Complete silence waits for the soft-spoken Logan too. Whatever ugly behavior he may once have engaged in all those years back as Munny's comrade-in-terror gets completely elided by the film so that he can be caught, tortured, and delivered into saintly martyrdom by Little Bill (reprising in passing the whipping Hollywood loves to administer to muscular Black torsoes, from "100 Rifles" James Brown to "Glory's" Denzel Washington).

A newly-enlightened Eastwood can then avenge the whores and—in the big finale—a Black man, scoring the somewhat dubious twin blows for feminism and race relations that will allow him to reenter Hollywood's liberal fold, and also (as it happens), perfunctorily reenacting the Bloody Golden Rule that brings most Westerns to bad ends.

But it's an especially hollow denouement. *Everyone's* made nothing, this nihilistic turn suggests. We're all going to hell in a handcart; life makes right bastards, death "nothings" of us all.

In the end, it seems, only the meanest mofos get to identify with the flag (look closely or you may not see it, waving gloriously and more-or-less semiotically behind Munny as he blazes his way out of town), and justice.

"Fuck the fine points," Munny seems to say, "I can out-tough all you mofos." Subtext—flag and all—being what they are, it's hard *not* to read this eruption of the heavily symbolic into the film: We may not ever have been on the side of the angels, but it's hard-asses who make history—and whatever "truth" about it is—well, *tertiary* at best.

Munny, we learn, has gone to San Francisco with his kids and the reward, and is rumored to have begun a dry-goods emporium. If it were an *emptre*—like so many corporations begun under similarly questionable circumstances—that might be more fitting.

—Matthew Kopka

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The U-M Michigan Student Assembly is coordinating the efforts of various student organizations sponsoring events during U-M's "Earth Week" (held the week before Earth Day to avoid conflict with exams). The "Earth Week" kick off is 10 Sat, when Eclipse Jazz will sponsor "Illuminations 93." The day-long event features music and information tables on Palmer Field (behind the "hill" dorms on Observatory). For more information call 763-0046.

The next Earth Week event, 13 Tue, is a panel discussion with four U-M professors—John Holland (Psychology), Bruce Chin (Public Health), Robert Abrams (Law/Natural Resources) & Maria Comninou (Engineering). It's happening in the Michigan Union Pendleton Room. For more information call Meg at 764-7069. On 14 Wed, the Hindu Students Council is sponsoring a talk entitled "Nonviolence, Vegetarianism, and the Environment." This will be held in room B135 of the Modern Languages Bldg. (the contact number is 763-3241).

The Earth Week Information Fair, sponsored by the Environmental Action Coalition, is taking place 15 Thu on the U-M Diag. It features a rally, music and information tables. For details call Payal at 747-3295.

U-M's "Earth Week" concludes with three events on 17 Sat. You can start the day by participating in The Green Corps' "Spring Clean" of the Huron River." This event is also a fundraiser for Green Corps, PIRGIM and Earth Day Resources. Meet at the Michigan Union at 11:30 am. Pre-registration is required, so call Jacqui at 994-6389.

Then, if you're still in the mood to celebrate Earth Week, join the Environmental Law Society in planting a ginkgo tree on the South face of the Law Quad at 1 pm. Call Chris at 764-8978 for more information.

Finally, catch the "Beyond Beef" action, at any of the five area McDonald's. The Students Concerned About Animal Rights will be out there from 11:30 am to 7 pm, demanding that McDonald's add a vegetarian burger to its menu. Monali

can fill in the details at 668-0132.

"Arbor Week," sponsored by Friends of Nichols Arboretum, runs from Mon. April 19 to Sun. April 25. It includes a tour of the arboretum each day (Mon.-Fri.) beginning at noon, at the Washington Hts. entrance to the arb. On 20 Tue, Charles Cares, Director Emeritus of the arboretum, will give a talk entitled "Using Native Plants in Your Landscaping." It begins at 7:30 pm in room 1520 of the School of Natural Resources (Dana Bldg.). On 22 Thu at 4 pm Friends of Nichols Arboretum member Betty Graham presents "Nature and Poetry." Her talk will take place in room 1520, Dana Bldg. Be sure to attend the Planting and Transplanting Demonstration at noon on 24 Sat in the arb's rhododendron glen. For more information on any of the above events call Liz at 763-5832.

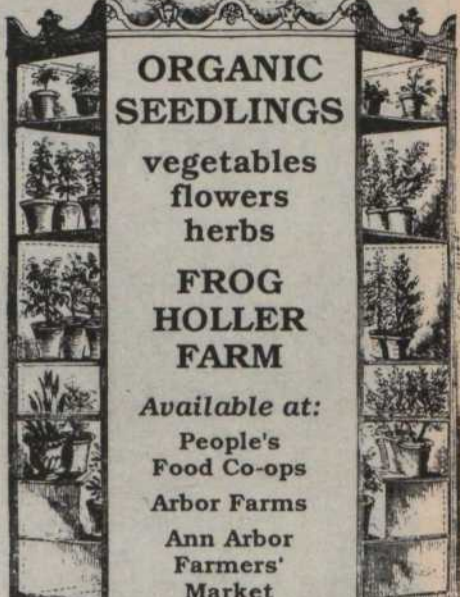
Also on 24 Sat is a "Fly Fishing Workshop on The River that Runs Through It." School of Natural Resources Prof. John Bassett leads the workshop at 2 pm on the banks of the Huron River. Call Gwen at 763-6632 for reservations.

Arbor Week concludes with a Volunteer Recognition Celebration 1 pm, on 25 Sun. There will be a meeting, talk on "90 Years of Birds in Nichols Arboretum," and reception in room 1040 Dana Bldg.

The Ecology Center, on 21 Wed, is celebrating Earth Day (on the eve of the holiday) with the indigenous democratic tradition known as a Consul Circle. Gather in the Mich. Union Pond Room at 7 pm to voice your opinion on the condition of the earth. Call 761-3186 for details.

On 24 Sat you can tour the Recycle Ann Arbor facility during their Earth Day Open House. It takes place from 9:30 am-noon at 2950 E. Ellsworth. RAA's number is 994-7400.

Ecology Center, Project Grow, and Ann Arbor Parks & Rec. join forces on 25 Sun for a final Earth Day Celebration. The time is 1 pm and the place is Leslie Science Center, 1831 Traver Road. There will be entertainment, demonstrations, storytelling, outdoor games, and more—all for \$1. For more information call 662-7802.



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PHOTO: TED SYLVESTER

Hash Bash 1992 as seen from the steps of the Grad Library: Can you find anyone smoking pot in this picture?

From Hash Festival to Bash

5,000 people showed up in 1973. The Rainbow People put out a flier which said it all:

HASHISH FESTIVAL APRIL 1 DIAG: BRING FOOD, MUSIC, KIDS AND TOKES

Man I sure can write about drugs. I'd rather write about music, but *Homo Sapiens* keeps on talking about drugs and stuffing drugs into their ears, noses and throats. So here we go again. DRUUUUUGGS! A terrific word to toss around, applicable to any substance except tobacco, sugar, coffee and alcohol. These retain their own names. Everything else is a DRUG. Our people devote extraordinary attention to Drugs. Users, abusers, and nattering non-users. An ounce of pot is worth a million words.

Acne! Cancer! Tuberculosis! Sicken and eventually die. Bring on new dilemmas. There's real potential in every one of us for bashing our bodies and minds with any number of toxins. Intoxication is a part of the human heritage. It can be a devastation or a salvation, depending on how we apply the stimuli. Lord knows it's often too easy to shoot the moon and end up wiping yourself out.

There's two sides to this: Cary Grant dropped acid and benefitted from it. I think it was *Look* magazine ran a special profile on him, lots of photos of an introspective Grant looking peaceful and relaxed. If I'd had to work with Katherine Hepburn on the set of *Bringing Up Baby*, I'd opt for some trips later on. Wouldn't you?

The other side of it is every person who's had lousy acid or who ingested good acid in a rotten setting. Or who simply didn't fare well with the chemical itself. It would be wrong to imply that this never happens. It is also wrong to treat users as criminals. If there were counselors who could be available for friendly assistance during the initial trip, bummers would be quite rare. We must take into account all of the circumstances.

Upbringing is vitally important. Bringing up children intelligently is becoming a lost art. Fortunately, there are some very cool people having kids right now, at least in my home town, and I'm not afraid to think of what kind of adults are being raised by them. What scares me is the millions of assholes who have no idea what they're doing, and who procreate mindlessly, just because they yearn to replicate. I'd rather see a child being shown intelligent ways to deviate, I mean real alternative counseling, than the mob of beer-swilling dunderheads learning how to make bigger and better mistakes

By Arwulf Arwulf

while chanting *we're number one*. Ann Arbor has been a haven for alternative lifestyles for many years. That's why some of us never leave.

In 1972, somebody spray painted in lavender letters a brief but effective message on the wall near the engineering arch: HASH FESTIVAL APRIL 1 DIAG. It was a YIPPIE kind of spirit snuck onto campus and left that scrawl, and the prevailing Ann Arbor YIPster counterculture picked it right up. Hundreds came to the center of campus and blew jays in order to demonstrate their command over their own lives. Cops were not abundant. This was a time when security guards were cute little cartoon characters who didn't mess with you unless you really did something stupid. Today it's more of a police state scene, but the whole country has gone that way so here we are.

Five thousand people showed up in 1973. The Rainbow People put out a flier which said it all: HASHISH FESTIVAL APRIL 1 DIAG: BRING FOOD, MUSIC, KIDS AND TOKES. Note the emphasis on celebration and the inclusion of young children. This was a festival of life and freedom. It was a wonderful feeling. Cops busted people but there were lots more of us than there were of them. Still are. Keep that in mind.

When the Republican-dominated city council tried to yank our five dollar pot law, we stormed their chambers, drove them out and danced on the countertops, smoking big dubes and chanting our chants. Right in the guts of the cop shop, we took over. Then we got the hell out of there! I think a photo of that event made it into some encyclopedia yearbook somewhere. I'll never forget that feeling of dissent! Real American Stuff.

It must have been the student population who started calling it the HASH BASH. Not only does it rhyme, but the collegiate emphasis on the party element demanded a catchy slogan. So it's been a Bash ever since. The worst thing about the Bash is the swarm of high school kids, playing hooky and coming from Dearborn and other enlightened melting pots, spilling beer all over themselves and being ugly. It makes for sloppy proceedings. I think the transition from Festival to Bash was inevitable. But it's a shame. Because celebration is a wonderful thing, and shouldn't be confused with

making noise and trashing the place.

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws is a worthy institution. What they're trying to accomplish is the reversal of America's preposterous anti-herb statutes. A fellow named Harry J. Anslinger went around in the 1930s, spreading overblown lies about marijuana, and appealing to the North American fear of anything which hasn't been safely incorporated through church and state into the homogeneous American lifestyle. Reefers and Calvinism simply don't mix. Again I say the laws are based on fear and greed. Theories exist pointing to the nylon industry as a catalyst for Anslinger's one-man crusade, as hemp fibre was and is a bothersome competition for synthetics. No foolin. You should read up on this subject. It's fascinating.

I want to close by saying that the other side of the coin should always be observed. Unfortunately, we seem to like to speak in absolutes. In a recent article I spoke rather flippantly about certain substances. In no uncertain terms I happily announced my belief that LSD and Cannabis are in fact good for you if you use common sense and keep your sunny side up. My successes with acid in particular probably stem from an innate ability to keep my sunny side up, over easy, without getting scrambled.

Not everyone is so inclined. And even harmless old reefers can cause difficulties, or complicate the difficulties already existing within an individual. Some folks need assistance in quitting all toxins. I once mentioned my friends who are on prescription psychotropics, and how their lives have been bettered or at least rendered livable. Since then, one such friend tried to snuff herself out with a stockpile of anti-depressants, saying later that she really didn't care whether she lived or died. That's the other side of this woman's coin. Medication of any sort can help you to develop something better, or conversely it can forestall the very real problems inside, and in this case we were shown how ineffectual the wonder drug turned out to be.

Life is splendid. Wanna get a really good buzz? Go down to the Rendezvous Cafe on South University, sit down at the juice bar and order a large fresh squeezed pineapple juice. All the parties in the world can't deliver that kind of a rush. Life is splendid.



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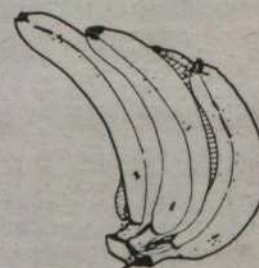
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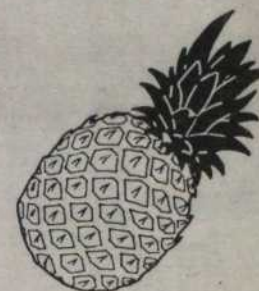
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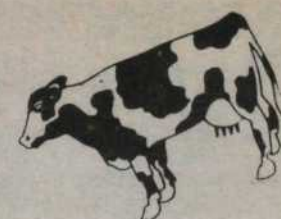
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