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Community College

CAMPUS NEWS

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Cool! Free on Campus!

October 2010

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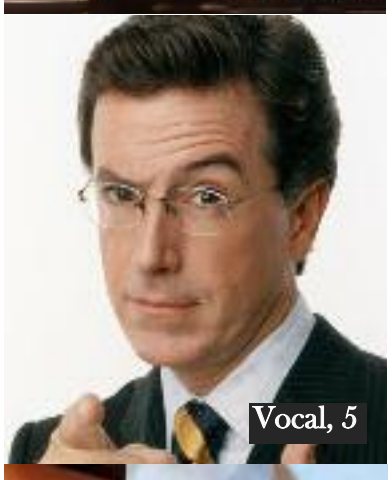
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Cafeteria food got you down?

Svetlana Sforza
Campus News

As I sit here jotting down notes and ideas while eating my protein bar, I reflect upon how I tried to stay healthy during that hectic time in life known as college. We're thrown into a cluster of classes and disarray of scheduling. I know that running around replaces relaxation, and napping tends to take the place of a full night's sleep. But, how does one keep up – or start upon – their good eating habits, which enables us to have energy and stay fit during those crucial years (of life)? Here are some wonderful tips.

First of all, the best dieting rule is always one of balance. That should be first and foremost on everyone's mind. Any extreme type of weight watching is bad for you. Of course, you should watch your fats and sweets intakes, but having absolutely none of those will only make you crave that more. So opt for healthy alternatives. For instance: fruit (dried and fresh), pumpkin or sunflower seeds, granola, yogurt, pretzels and nuts are portable, cheap and delicious, while providing lots of vitamins to help keep you energized and focused. You can get those pre-packaged, which are quicker, or make

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A-Rod's "Body by milk" (and perhaps some steroids) advertised at the Washington (NY) County Fair last month.

Avoid year 3+ at a 2-year college

Laura LaVacca
Campus News

Community College is a great jumping off point for those who didn't do so well in high school, those who want to get their grades up or those who genuinely want a taste of college before embarking to a 4-year university. But community college is just that, a 2-year jumping off point—not a place to stay for much longer.

Often life gets in the way and students attending community colleges take longer than the two years to finish a degree but what most don't realize is an AA/AS degree is not necessary to attend a 4-year institution.

Halley Shefler, president and founder of The Arts Edge, a college admissions and education consulting service and former Dean of Admissions at Boston Conservatory and Director of Admissions for Boston University School of the arts concurs, "A community college education is a beginning but far from an end... There is just so far you can go with a community college education and students should set their sights on the long-term goal. The ideal for any student in community college is to complete their studies there and move on to a 4-year program as soon as possible."

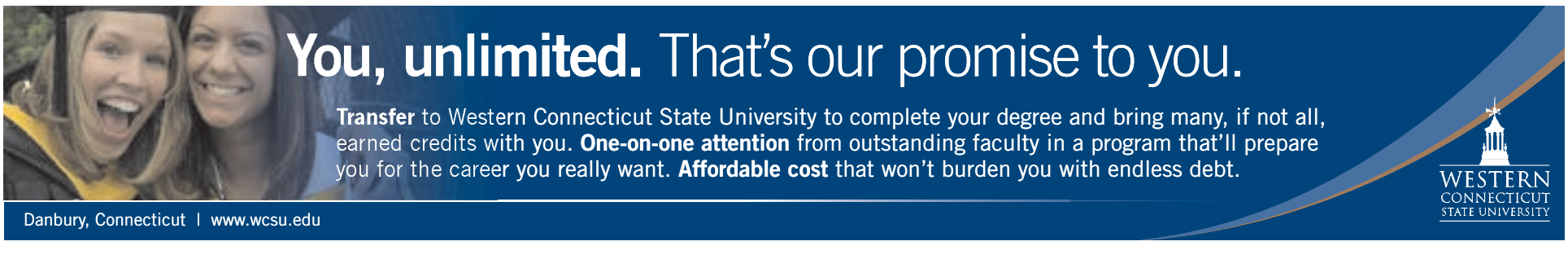
Don't stick around too long: 'The benefits of a BA over an AA degree are vast.'

Shefler also suggests ways to finish in the 2- years. Students can make an extra push to finish their community college degrees by taking advantage of summer classes, she explains, "by taking classes during two summer sessions – one before the first fall semester and one in between freshman and sophomore years – a student can secure a number of credits and be well on their way." In addition, online courses are another convenient way to add credits to your degree.

While completing an AA degree is great, it is not necessary when transferring to a 4-year school. In fact, most completed courses with a C or better will transfer to a 4-year institution. A helpful way to check admission requirements is to simply check out the university's website for more information. Advisors are also available to discuss. For example, colleges like the University of Buffalo and Oswego offers a chance for students to bring their transcripts in for review. Upon completion, the university sends back an "offer" with the amount of transfer credits they will accept — no AA degree necessary to be admitted.

As Shefler put it, the bottom line is that "students shouldn't stress if they need to attend an extra semester" and are not on track to complete a 2-year program because they can transfer before completion. "The benefits of a BA degree over an AA are vast, more job opportunities, higher compensation, just to name a few," she notes.

So after two years, get out there and seize the opportunities of a 4- year school!



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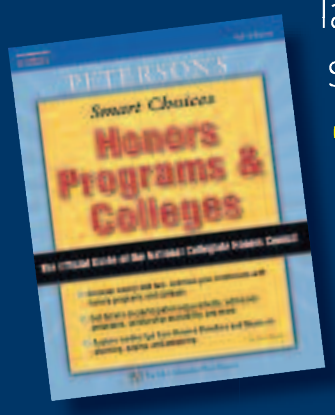

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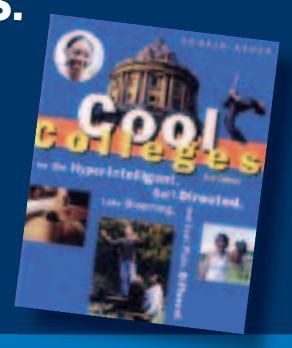

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2-year students should study abroad

Jen Marx
Campus News

Eager freshmen often crowd study abroad meetings, excited to learn about possibilities in England, Ireland, Germany, Australia and so forth. By the time the opportunity rolls around though, some students have decided to stay on United States soil, while others' wishes to journey have been vetoed by their parents. Yet those who do follow their goals often return with a fresh outlook on life and experiences that they talk about for a lifetime.

However, why does it seem that community college study abroad programs are not discussed as much as other study abroad programs? A research study entitled Fast Facts from Open Doors 2005: Report on International Educational Exchange by Hey-Kyung Koh, a member of the Institute of International Education, found that "Community college study abroad generally mirrors study abroad at all institutions." What exactly does it mean to make such a statement, though?

"Generally mirrors" could refer to more than one aspect of the program. To generally mirror might mean that the components of the program are the same, or that colleges tend to offer programs constructed in the same way in many of the same countries. However, to generally mirror could also mean that the percentage of students who attend study abroad programs is the same in community colleges as in four-year institutions.

Whenever a term is not clearly defined in a study, not only is there cause for confusion, but there is also cause for questioning why that definition is lacking. Let's break down some numbers. According to the same study, approximately 5,776 community college students participated in a study abroad program during the 2003 to 2004 school year. The American Association of Community Colleges states that about 11.5 million students are enrolled in a community college on a yearly basis. Therefore, .05 percent of community college students attended study abroad programs that year.

Next, let's look at the bigger picture. Approximately one percent of all undergraduate students study abroad. If .05 percent come from community colleges, then .95 percent come from the other institutions. Surely both of these numbers are relatively small, compared to the millions of students attending college. However, the figures mean that a student at a four-year institution is about 19 times more likely to enroll and participate in a study abroad program than his or her community college counterparts. In other words, 95 percent of students who study abroad hail from a four-year school.

Nicole Potachniuk, a past student of Nassau Community College, says that her institution did provide a study abroad program, but she did not participate in it. She also says that "I do believe that colleges should offer this program, because I think it is a wonderful opportunity to go away for the semester and see what the real world is like." Potachniuk's words echo the sentiments of America. Transition Board reports that "while nearly 80 percent of Americans believe it is important for undergraduates to study abroad, only 1 percent do so."

We must not only gawk at the discrepancy, but we must also figure out why this gap exists in the first place. When students think of studying abroad, they often picture first or second semester juniors, comfortable enough in their own skin to navigate a foreign country and mingle with the residents, without the worry of missing out on senior year at their own institution. That image is not just some whimsical adolescent fantasy though. The facts support it! Vistawide World Languages and Culture, reports that "36 percent of study abroad participants go abroad during their junior year." Although that leaves 64 percent of those involved going abroad at another time, the majority is represented by that 36 percent. Here in lies the first issue. If students are attending a two year school, they do not actually ever have a junior year. Studying abroad during the first year of college can be extremely overwhelming, and by the second year, students are preparing to graduate.

Perhaps the time constraints are not only one of the problems, but are also the heart of the issue. There's really only two ways to deal with this issue. First of all, the students can adjust their mindsets. Going into college with the intention to study abroad during one of two years is helpful. Therefore, the students will know what they are preparing for. Planning to go during the second semester of the first year or the first semester of the second year still allows time to adjust to the college life and enjoy the last few months of school before graduation.

Schools can help with this situation as well. By offering programs during the summer months or winter semesters, not as much pressure is placed on the students. Perhaps they can take a lighter course or an elective credit that is not as difficult to pass. Furthermore, they do not have to worry about missing out on any of the traditional schooling experiences during fall and spring semesters. Additionally, programs can be shorter than an entire semester. Students could take some of their credits for a semester abroad, and then enroll in half-term courses when they return. However, a guidance counselor should always be consulted, in order to make sure that such a course of action is even a possibility. For example, Nassau offers an array of programs: short term, travel courses, semester programs and year-long study abroad classes.

Nassau devotes an entire section of their website to the study abroad programs. However, one of the most striking features of the section is where they list that "87% of students in the United States between the ages of 18 and 24 cannot locate Iraq on a world map, 83% cannot find Afghanistan, 58% cannot find Japan, and 11% cannot even find the United States." Not only is this information rather disturbing, particularly the last bit since these students live in the United States, but it is some of the greatest proof that we have supporting the idea that enrolling in a study abroad program is not only exciting, but also funda-

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Internet privacy no more?

Cassie Stone
Scripps Howard Foundation

Congress is seeking to update law that governs online privacy, but is struggling with balancing the rights of individuals with the needs of law enforcement. Witnesses spoke in September at the Senate Judiciary Committee to give direction on revisions to the law.

The Electronic Communications Privacy Act went into effect in 1986 when the online world was still in its infancy. Critics of the law say the explosion of technology created confusion about what records law enforcement can access and how they acquire them.

The Department of Justice maintained that because Congress wrote ECPA to be "forward-looking and flexible" and it has been updated several times since its enactment, it sufficiently covers modern technology.

"Changes to ECPA came in response to requests from the Department of Justice, and not citizens," said James Dempsey, the vice president for public policy at the Center for Democracy and Technology. "The changes usually made investigations easier."

The Center for Democracy and Technology, which fights for open Internet, said the law creates confusion for service providers as well as consumers about what law enforcement must do to get different kinds of data.

Daniel Solove, a professor at George Washington University Law School, cited e-mail as an example of the complexities of the law. Solove was not a witness at the hearing. "The law was created under a system where e-mail was downloaded to a desktop computer and saved," Solove said. "The law had no idea of Google or Webmail."

If e-mail is stored on a desktop computer, it is fully protected and law enforcement must obtain a warrant to see the message because it is stored on private property. However, if the e-mail is stored online, ECPA says a service provider such as Google can be subpoenaed to provide the information. Protection also depends on the age of the message and whether it has been opened. If an e-mail message is fewer than 180 days old and has been opened, it can be obtained by subpoena. But an unopened e-mail fewer than 180 days old requires a warrant. After 180 days, officials can obtain the records by subpoena even for unopened e-mails.

Warrants provide greater protection to the user because they require a specific request and link to a current investigation. Subpoenas do not specify information and are not required to be linked to a criminal investigation. Digital Due Process, a coalition of companies and organizations in favor of reforming ECPA, is asking that most requests for information come as warrants and to completely eliminate e-mail's age provisions. DDP members, including Amazon, Google, AT&T, eBay, Facebook, Hewlett-Packard and Microsoft, concede that there should be exceptions to the warrant requirement in extreme cases, but that subpoena requests be specific.

No txt 4 u

Cassie Stone
Scripps Howard Foundation

Accidents and injuries resulting from distracted driving have national organizations asking drivers to take a moment to turn off their cell phones.

AAA and Seventeen Magazine teamed up at a rally in Washington, D.C., in Setember to ask teens to sign a "Two-Second Turnoff" pledge.

The rally drew about 50 people, mostly adults, who pledged to turn off their cell phones while driving.

To find out what kind of habits young drivers have, AAA and Seventeen Magazine conducted a survey in May of more than 2,000 teens ages 16 to 19. The survey, released in August, found that 28 percent of teens surveyed admitted to texting while driving, and 36 percent said they have been involved in a near crash because of their own or someone else's distracted driving.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that 6,000 people died as a result of distracted driving in 2008 and nearly half a million were injured.

"Distracted driving is as bad as drunk driving," said Debbie Harris, past president of a Louisiana chapter of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, one of the event's sponsors. "When you're driving, you can catch something out of the corner of your eye and react. If you're on the phone, you won't see that."

Though 30 states have enacted bans on text messaging while driving, it is not enough for Yolanda Cade, AAA's managing director of public relations. Cade said all cell phone use should be banned for drivers, young and old.

A study released last year by AAA reported that even using a hands-free devices to talk on the phone is no safer than using a handheld device.

David Strickland, National Highway Traffic administrator, said the Department of Transportation is studying how drivers react to different communication technologies, such as hands-free devices, while driving. Strickland said the safest thing to do while driving is to turn cell phones off.

The Department of Transportation will host the second Distracted Driving Summit. The first summit sparked a flurry of activity, as states adopted distracted driving laws. This year's meeting will examine how the previous summit influenced this legislation and what steps still need to be taken to make roads safer.

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Crowd tails Colbert to Capitol Hill

Andrew Polk and Danielle Alberti
Scripps Howard Foundation

The growing crowd outside the large wooden doors of the House Judiciary Committee milled anxiously as the hour drew near.

As the doors swung open, a diverse audience of suited Capitol Hill interns, union members clad in red "Take our jobs" T-shirts, United Farm Workers staffers and college-aged spectators flooded in to claim a limited number of seats. In the crowd of news photographers surrounding the witness table, a declaration of "There he is!" caused a wave of long lenses to swing around – a false alarm from a cheeky photojournalist.

Stephen Colbert, the Emmy-winning host of Comedy Central's "The Colbert Report," entered on time from a side door, setting off a flurry of camera shutters and a cry of "Thank you, Stephen!" from the still-shuffling crowd. As the hearing began, Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., the subcommittee chair, asked the press to step back from the witness table and the crowd to maintain order, lest they be removed from the room.

"I haven't seen this many cameras here since when, Madame Chair?" Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., asked.

"I think maybe it was the impeachment," Lofgren responded.

Lofgren invited Colbert to speak before the Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugee, Border Security and International Law after he spent a day picking beans and packing corn in boxes at a farm in Upstate New York. Colbert spoke in character, testifying that his experience, which was documented on his show recently, led him to believe that many Americans would be unwilling to do work of that nature.

"We have to do something, because I am not going out there again," he said. "At this point, I break a cold sweat next to a salad bar."

The subcommittee is examining the guest worker program, which allows people into the country temporarily to do farm work. Many illegal immigrants also work in agriculture. Growers say they hire the immigrants because they have a hard time hiring U.S. residents. Opponents of the guest worker program say hiring immigrants, depresses wages and leads to poor working conditions, making the jobs unattractive to U.S. residents.

Five representatives of UFW, who began the "Take Our Jobs" initiative, which offers agricultural jobs to Americans, were in the audience to support Colbert and the union.

Arturo Rodriguez, president of UFW, said the initiative's website has received more than 3 million hits in three months and 8,600 job inquiries. Of those, seven Americans have accepted farm jobs.

"We expected a lot more response, given high unemployment rates," Erica Lomeli, UFW project coordinator, said as she waited with the crowd before the committee doors opened. "But people look at this and realize this is a hard job."

Rep. Steve King, R-Iowa, said that the claim that Americans were unwilling to work hard was offensive.

"Maybe amnesty supporters should spend less time watching Comedy Central and more time considering all the real jobs that are out there that require hard labor and don't involve sitting behind a desk," he said.

Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Texas, said the spectacle was overblown.

"It's no laughing matter to pretend that Americans don't want jobs," he said.

Ridge: Mass transit systems are vulnerable

Cesar Noriega Ramos
Scripps Howard Foundation

Trains, ferries and urban transit systems are more vulnerable to terror attacks than air travel, which has benefited from a decade of tightening security.

In a discussion in September in Washington, D.C., hosted by the Ripon Society, a Republican-minded public policy group, Tom Ridge, the Bush administration Homeland Department secretary, and Rep. Charles W. Dent, R-Pa., talked about U.S. security challenges after the ninth anniversary of 9/11 terror attacks and the deadly anthrax letters.

"We had invested hundreds of millions of dollars to improve our security systems," Dent said "Now, are we safe from terrorist threat? And the answer is absolutely not."

Dent, the senior Republican member of the subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, said Congress has responded promptly to the needs for improving aviation security.

This year, the government spent $5.2 billion on aviation security, which includes $438 million in equipment and personnel to expedite the delivery of 500 advanced-imaging body screeners for U.S. airports.

These machines generate three-dimensional images of passengers or carry-on baggage.

Terrorists may decide to target more vulnerable points of the U.S. transport services, such as railroads, ferries and mass transit systems.

Dent said the government spent $110 million this year for security in surface transportation, a sum he said seemed "paltry" in comparison to what was spent at airports.

Providing same security levels for surface transportation is "infinitely more difficult," Dent said. "The very nature of these systems makes securing them counterproductive to their purpose and undermines the efficacy of a mass transit system."

Nine years ago, President George W. Bush addressed Congress to announce the creation of the Department of Homeland Security and appointed Tom Ridge, then governor of Pennsylvania, to head it.

Ridge said that after a decade there is still resistance among U.S. government agencies to share intelligence information.

"We have made enormous progress," Ridge said, "but I still scratch my head in disbelief and wonder what went on and who knew what before the tragedy of Fort Hood."

On Nov. 5, a gunman shot and killed 13 people and wounded 30 at Fort Hood in Texas.

Maj. Nidal Malik Hassan, an Army psychiatrist, has been charged in the case. Questions about his job performance arose after the shootings.

"It suggested to me that perhaps that that notion of sharing and enacting hasn't been embedded as deeply as you want it," Ridge said.

Ridge suggested that the language describing what is going on needs to change to reflect that the conflict is with extremists.

"It's not a war against terror," Ridge said. "It's a war against a belief system."

Summer's over – focus!

Prof. Jack K. Mandel
Nassau CC

Here's a quick multiple choice question... Which of the following is true?

A. All good things come to an end.

B. The only constant in life is change.

C. Some things we have no control over.

D. All of the above are TRUE.

Congratulations if you selected "D." You get an "A"!

The question above is my little way of calling to CCCN readers the fact that summer of 2010 has ended — like it or not. Sleeping late, enjoying the sand, surf and sunshine, even bar-hopping at your favorite clubs are now over.

As the weather turns cooler, it's time to focus on those ???? And I have a few options for your consideration ...

* WHOM do you have as a good friend or mentor to guide you this year?

* WHAT choices will you make to improve your work and/or study habits?

* WHEN is the time for you to commit to a more positive, healthy, spiritual and emotional lifestyle?

* WHERE can you best utilize your talents, knowledge and perspectives in your day to day life ... be it at college, the workplace or your family/home environment? And last,

* HOW will your actions make your dreams become reality (goal-setting)?

It must be the college educator in me realizing that your time is NOW. It's been awhile, but I can assure you that I have walked in your shoes. When I was a college student at Baruch, I was excited, confused, challenged, unsure, confident — every emotion that a person can feel becomes apparent as you strive for adulthood.

And so, as the summer of 2010 is now a memory, remember that a good day today is nothing compared to a better day tomorrow IF you are willing to answer those ????

PS: A special "shout out" to my son Jared who graduated from Roslyn High School this past June. Son, as you embark on your new college experience at the University of Florida, I trust you will strive to answer your own ???? Just stay focused. Good luck to all freshmen!

CAMPUS NEWS

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Study: College education fails

Shea Northcut
Scripps Howard Foundation

Economics, U.S. history, intermediate-level foreign language, mathematics and literature – these subjects are not required at a majority of American liberal-arts universities, according to a study released in late August.

The American Council of Trustees and Alumni released the study "What will they Learn?" comparing more than 700 universities through a detailed review of online catalogs rather than by reputation. Only 16 schools received an "A" (average tuition $13,200), and more than 100 schools failed (average tuition $28,200).

"Too many schools across the country are allowing college students to graduate with great gaps in their knowledge," said Anne Neal, ACTA president, at a press conference. "We shouldn't let education be a hit-or-miss situation."

The study found that less that 5 percent universities require economics, and less than 20 percent require broad surveys of American history or government.

Some of the schools acing the test include Baylor University, Texas A&M and the University of Arkansas. At the other end, Harvard and Georgetown universities received "Ds," and Northwestern and Johns Hopkins universities received "Fs."

Graduation rates were also at opposite ends of the scale. Vanderbilt University received a "D" in the study but has a graduation rate of 91 percent. East Tennessee State University received an "A" but graduates 43 percent of its students.

The study evaluated seven elements comprising a liberal arts education: composition, literature, foreign language, U.S. government or history, economics, mathematics and natural or physical science. To receive an "A," universities had to require six or seven of the core subjects as part of their curriculum.

Some other experts agreed there has been a downward shift in education. Herbert London, president of the Hudson Institute and founder of New York University's Gallatin School of Individualized Study, spoke about the deterioration of education before the study was released.

In his new book, "Decline and Revival in Higher Education," London provides anecdotal illustrations of what he termed a decline. He said it started in the post-Vietnam period when student radicals "dominated" their institutions.

"Today, freshmen bring almost nothing in, and seniors take even less out," London said. "The consequence is that you don't have the level of intelligence you once did."

More than 18.6 million students were enrolled in higher education institutions in 2008, according to the Census Bureau.

Herbert London, president of Hudson Institute, discusses what he calls the decline of higher education at a news conference in Washington.

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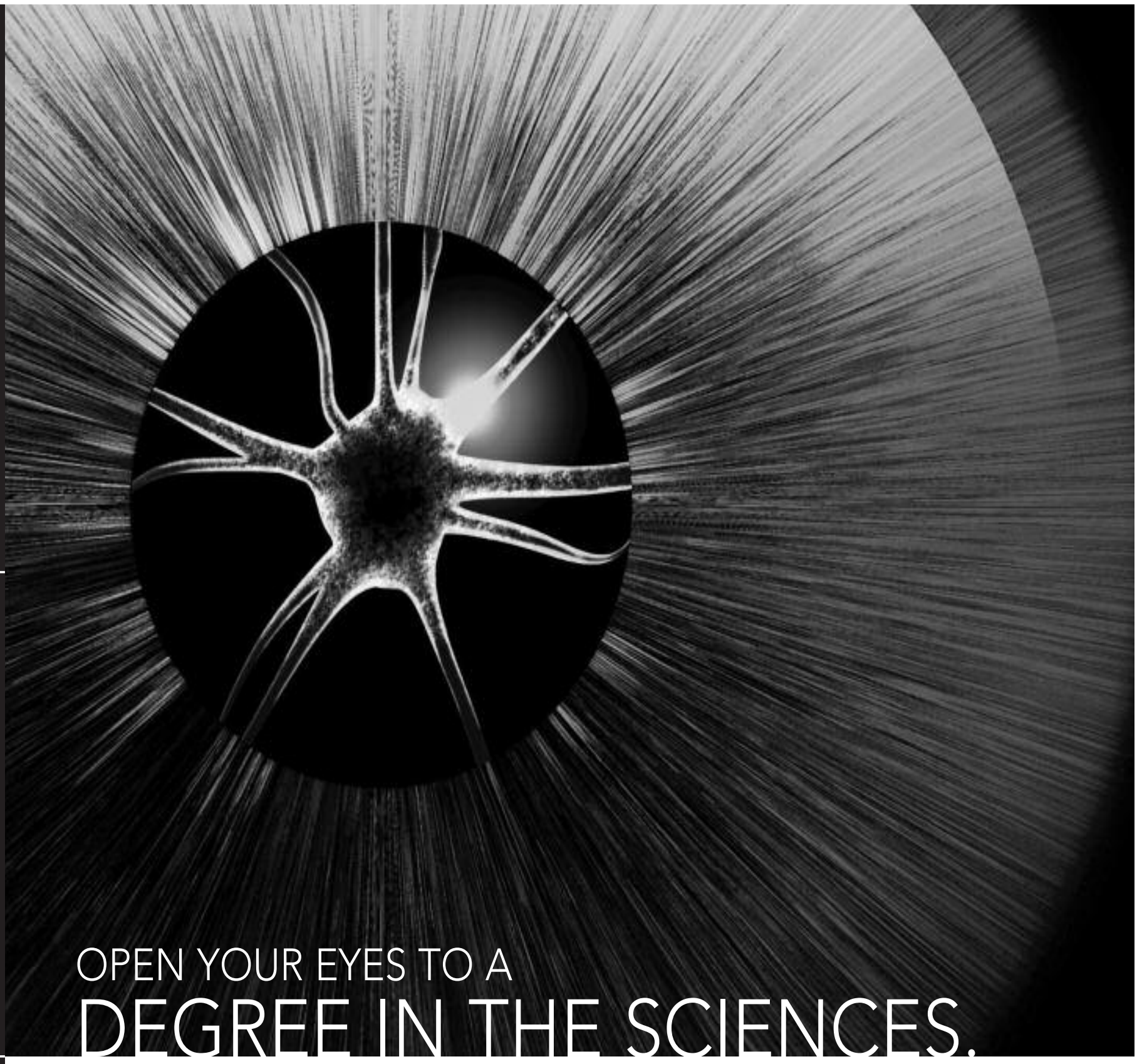

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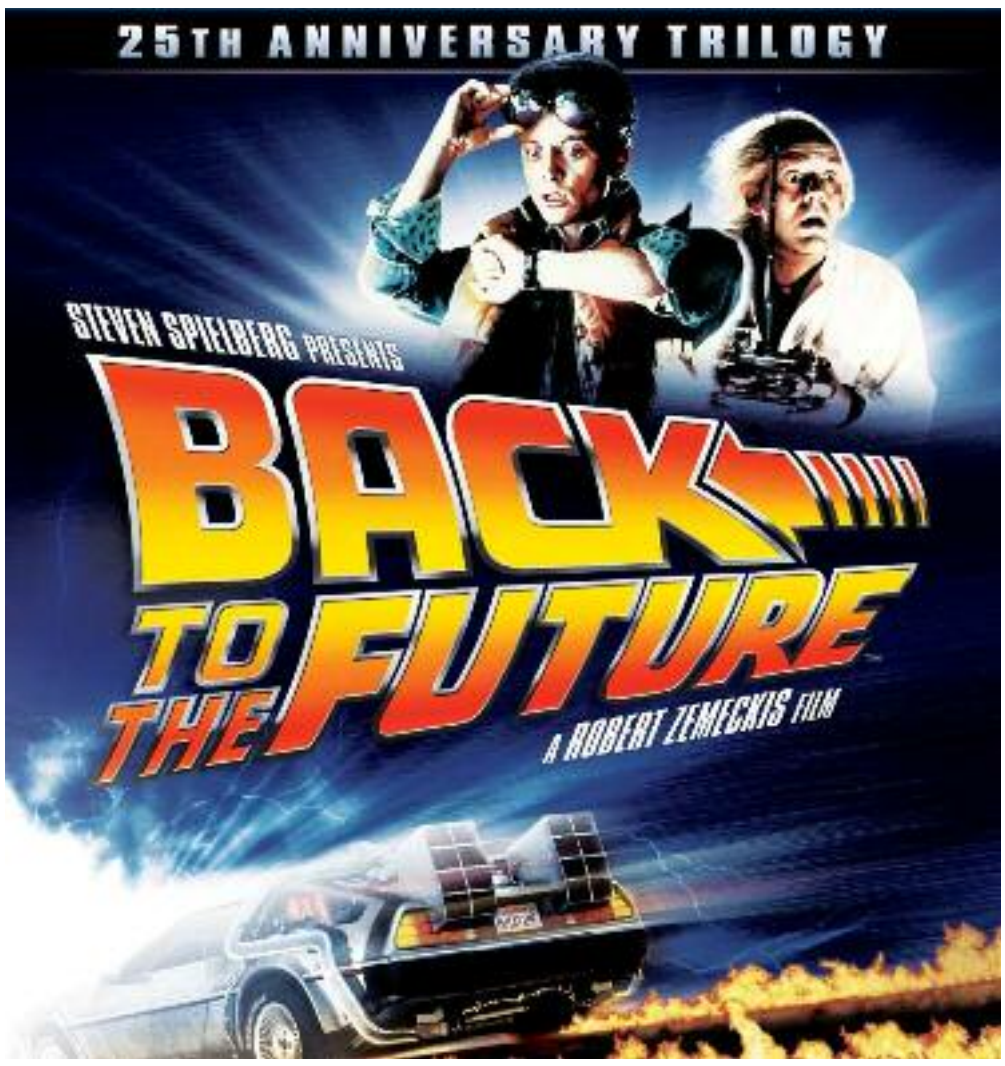
New, retro DVDs are 'Back to the Future'

Laura Tucker
Campus News

It's retro month with October's DVD releases. The movie that made Michael J. Fox a huge star is having its silver anniversary. Marty McFly first traveled back to the time when his parents first met back in 1985, and now we get to go back in time remembering the fun of both "Back to the Future" and its two sequels. Not only did it make a star of Michael J. Fox, but it also infiltrated pop culture making us all know what a flux capacitor is and making us laugh as people in 1955 questioned who JFK was and how an actor ever became president.



Christopher Lloyd, Lea Thompson, and Crispin Glover star in this movie that has become the archetypical story of time travel. "Back to the Future: 25th Anniversary Trilogy" is being released on October 26, and this box set is in widescreen and includes all three movies on DVD and also includes a digital copy.

While it hasn't been twenty-five years, "Elf" is also being re-released in a Collectors Edition. Will Ferrell created a lovable character that made this film a new holiday family favorite. "Elf (Ultimate Collectors Edition)" includes audio commentary with Will Ferrell and the director, a film school for kids featurette, information on how they created the North Pole for the film, Elf Karaoke, an Elf Decoder Card, Buddy's Adventure Game, and a read-along. This hits stores on October 26.

"The Karate Kid" being released on October 5 is both retro and new. The film originally made a splash a quarter of a century ago, just like "Back to the Future," and also had its share of sequels, yet this year Columbia Pictures created a re-imagining of the original film. The basic story plot stays the same, but many other key elements have been changed to update the story to 2010 standards, such as switching from karate to kung fu. It stars Jackie Chan as Mr. Han (the recreated Mr. Myagi character) and Jaden Smith as Dre Parker, the kid who needs to learn some martial arts to keep himself armed and to change his life.

The excitement didn't seem to be the same for the "Sex and the City" sequel as it was for the original. The movie that once again stars Sarah Jessica parker, Kim Cattrall, Kristin Davis, and Cynthia Nixon doesn't seem to have the same elements of what made the original film and the series it was based on and seems to have the women becoming caricatures of themselves. Instead of buying "Sex and the City 2," a better bet seems to be the "Sex & the City: Complete Collection" which features all seven seasons of the series, as well as the two films. It also includes alternate endings, deleted scenes, behind-the-scenes, a featurette, and interviews. Both are available October 26.

The animated film "How to Train Your Dragon," starring the voice talents of Jay Baruchel, Gerard Butler, America Ferrara, Jonah Hill, Christopher Mintz-Passe, Craig Ferguson, and Kristen Wiig is being released on October 15. The story comes from the book of the same name by Cressida Crowell and is set in a mythical world with Vikings and dragons. A teenage Viking doesn't fit in and instead of slaying a dragon as he's supposed to, he and a dragon together try to change the other Vikings to see the world differently.

YOU TALKIN' TO ME?!!
631POLITICS.COM

Eating (cont. from cover)

your own for cheaper with any ingredients that you really like. Try mixing these : dried cranberries, white grapes and walnuts. I always carried dry cereal in little sandwich bags too.

Next, we must be cognizant of the fact that fast food is not always cheaper, but will certainly be less healthy. Whatever happened to the beautiful simplicity of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches? And I know that we all love snacks, so you can slap that crucial combination on crackers too.

I recommend any with grains or whole wheat, as opposed to plain white. Now, if you take the average price of cold cuts and bread versus pre-made sandwiches, you'll definitely save dough if make your own.

Use your dormitory or kitchen power to wave a bowl of soup, and then add a side of crackers. You can top that with other things, like broiled chicken in already-made chicken soup. If you find the sodium content perturbing, you can always water that down.

Lastly, just some things you can do on your own to help wallets and waistlines. Invest in and bring around your own cup to drink out of; tea and honey are always needed, especially with the cold weather approaching. Actually, get two portable cups, one for cold drinks and the other for hot. Learn to love the inherent greatness of containers that carry leftovers.

That cheap box that easily holds a pound of pasta from last night can go a long way, and be tossed with vegetables. If you have a car or not, walk to the grocery store as often as possible.

And finally, just drink water. Trust me, I'm as fervently addicted to caffeine as anyone, but if you cut out soda, I guarantee that you'll just watch your pounds shed and wallet grow.

SEE DEAD PEOPLE!
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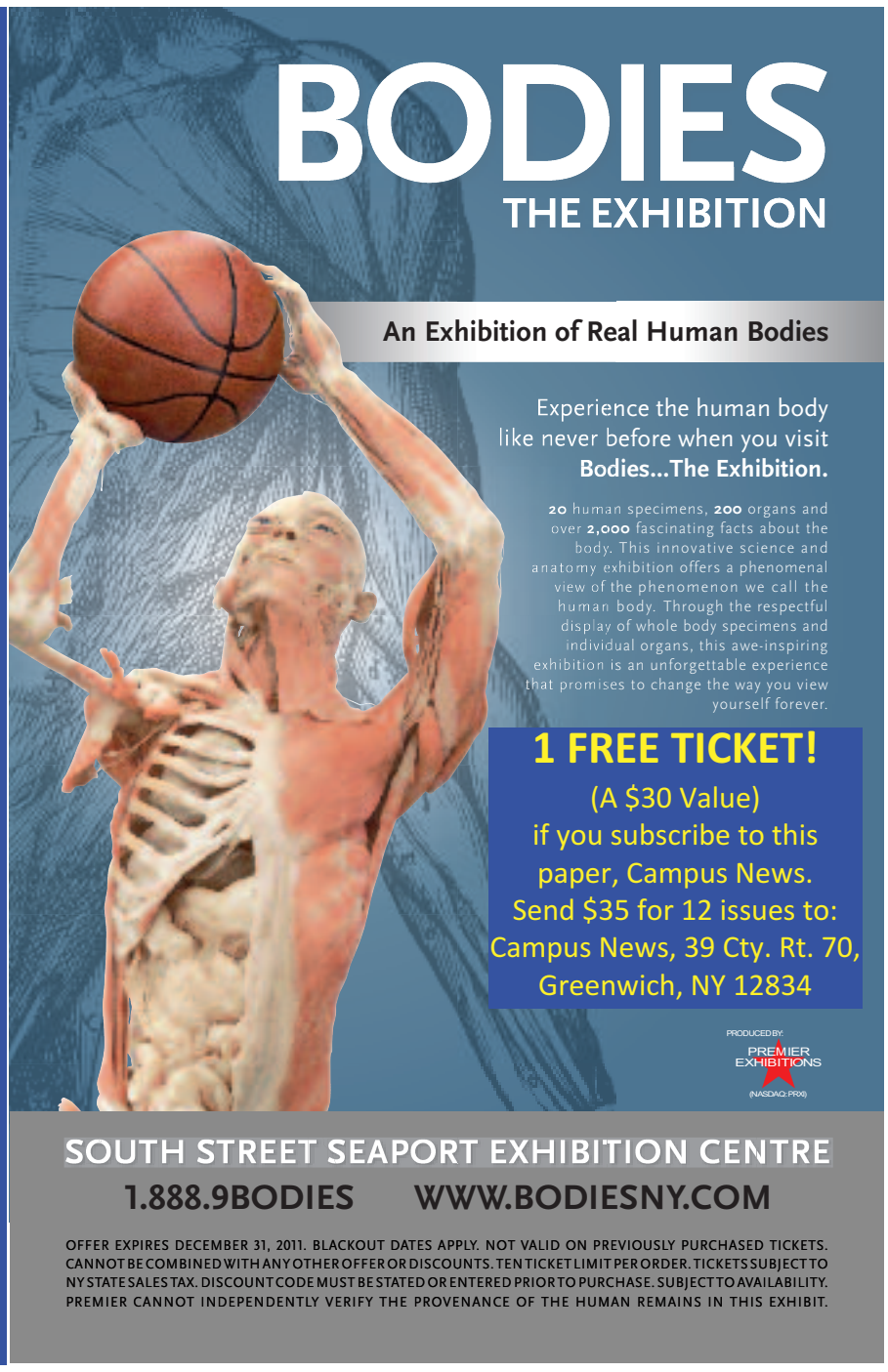

Cool Halloween flicks

Laura Tucker
Campus News

Looking for a few scares this Halloween weekend? There are two scary movies in theaters that weekend to suit your fancy, starting with "Night of the Demons." Starring Shannon Elizabeth, it focuses on a young woman who goes along with two of her friends to a Halloween party being thrown at a mansion in New Orleans. Eighty years before, six people disappeared without a trace from the mansion, and the woman who lived there hung herself.

The party ends up getting very out of control with the women getting really wild. The police break up the party, and afterwards the party guests discover a terrifying secret, then find their cell phones don't work and the mansion gates are locked. There are supernatural natural forces at work in the mansion as it's home to demons. Like all good horror movies, the party guests start falling one by one. "Night of the Demons" is opening on October 29 and is rated R for bloody horror violence/gore, language throughout, some sexuality, nudity, and drug use.

Of course, what's Halloween without a "Saw" movie? "Saw 3D" is opening the same night, joining the long horror franchise. With cutting-edge 3D effects, a group of Jigsaw survivors get together to support one another with a self-help guru who is also a fellow survivor, yet he ends up having his own dark secrets. With the same type of 3D effects, and some might say just as brutal, "Jackass 3D" opens October 15. The movie can probably best be described with their shooting locations that include Knob Lick, Kentucky; Mianus, Connecticut; Fukang, China; Buttzville, New Jersey; and Gayville, South Dakota. The film is unrated.

Clint Eastwood directs a supernatural drama, "Hereafter," which tells a story of three people touched by death, all in different ways. A blue-collar worker has a connection to the afterlife, a French journalist is shaken up after a near-death experience, and a London schoolboy needs answers after he loses the person closest to him. At one point, each of their lives will intersect. Matt Damon stars as the blue-collar worker. "Hereafter" is rated PG-13 for mature thematic elements including disturbing disaster and accident images, and for brief strong language, and will be released on October 22.

Bruce Willis, Morgan Freeman, John Malkovich, and Helen Mirren star in a movie based on the D.C. Comics graphic novel, "Red." They're top agents for the CIA, but become expendable and the Agency's new targets. They have to collectively use their talents to stay one step ahead of those after them, and in the process find the biggest conspiracy ever being covered up by the government. This action comedy will debut in theaters on October 15 and is rated PG-13 for intense sequences of action violence and brief strong language. Malkovich also costars in "Secretariat," the true story of how this horse became a Triple Crown winner, backed by a housewife (Diane Lane) with no experience in horse racing. It's rated PG for brief mild language and debuts in theaters on October 8.

The movie everyone seems to be talking about is "The Social Network" about the start of Facebook. A Harvard undergrad who is a genius in computer programming, Mark Zuckerberg, gets an idea and bangs it out there in his dorm room one night. Six years later, he has 500 million friends and is the youngest billionaire in history; however, it comes with a price with legal and personal complications as along the way his friends turn on him, saying he stole the idea of this social network. Jesse Eisenberg and Justin Timberlake star. Rated PG-13 for sexual content, drug and alcohol use and language, this movie hits theaters on October 1.

Katherine Heigl stars in yet another romantic comedy for her, this time with Josh Duhamel, as it seems she is working through every leading man younger than thirty-five. In "Life As We Know It," they're godparents to the same little girl, but don't have a relationship with each other outside of that, but know they dislike each other. The little girl's parents die, and they have to find a way to amicably be the little girl's new family, and try to figure out why the parents thought this would ever work out. It's in theaters on October 8 and is rated PG-13 for sexual material, language and some drug content.

'Saw 3D'

Bret Michaels' thorns

Laura Tucker
Campus News

There's no doubt that the life that Bret Michaels knows this year is one that is on a roller coaster. The former front man of Poison started out the year as a contestant on "Celebrity Apprentice," battling such stars as Sharon Osbourne, Cyndi Lauper, Rod Blagojevich, and Michael Johnson. Before the season had finished, crowning him Donald Trump's newest faux apprentice, the diabetic Michaels was rushed in for an emergency appendectomy, and less than two weeks later, was in critical condition with a brain hemorrhage. Fifteen days after getting out of the hospital, he had been taken to the hospital again, this time with a warning stroke and previously undetected hole in his heart.

Amazingly, Michaels made it through all these medical travesties and showed up on the live finale of "Celebrity Apprentice." He was definitely moving gingerly, which was hard to watch, but in the end he triumphed. Unbelievably, three days later on the "American Idol" season finale, when Casey James started to sing "Every Rose Has Its Thorn," it was Michaels coming out onstage to sing and jam with him. Shortly after this there were rumors that Michaels was in the running to replace departed judge Simon Cowell on the show, but that never panned out with the job recently being awarded to Steven Tyler of Aerosmith.

Not that Michaels is using this time to rest, though. Days after the "American Idol" finale, he was back on the road touring, and this month has a new reality show hitting the VH1 airwaves. "Bret Michaels: Life as I Know It" aired the pilot as a teaser of sorts back in May, and on October 18, the series, which focuses on all the different crazy aspects of Michaels' life, will pick back up again.

In the series, viewers will follow Michaels on the road, and also get to see what his busy homelife is like on the compound he calls home with daughters Raine and Jorja, two young girls who refer to him as "Poppa Rocka," and their mom, Kristi Gibson, Michaels' on-again off-again girlfriend. Admittedly, they know the cameras are on them, but they seem like any other family, that is a family with a dad who has long hair, is always wearing a bandana, is constantly leaving for one project or another, and is also really lucky to be alive.

Fall TV is more than just the Yankees

Laura Tucker
Campus News

October is always all about one thing, the baseball playoffs. It always seems just as the fall season takes off in full swing, that we always have to put it on hold during October to watch the season of baseball play out. At press time, it was, of course, too soon to learn who would be representing the National League and American League, but we do know the series will be airing on Fox and starting on October 27. The champions of those two leagues will have been determined in playoffs happening throughout the month on TNT and Fox.

This month is always good for a scary time or two for Halloween, and this year "Ghost Hunters" has a very special episode lined up for Halloween night as they go live on Syfy. The series that dedicates themselves to following up on rumored stories of paranormal activity were rumored to be doing a live Halloween show last season, yet it never panned out. This time, Jason Hawes announced on his Twitter that they will be doing a live Halloween show and that details would be announced soon. And, of course, "The Simpsons" will also be doing their annual Halloween spectacular, this time with Hugh Laurie and Daniel Radcliffe providing guest voices.

Also worth a good scare or two usually is the cast of "Celebrity Rehab." Slated to premiere on October 18, the fourth season roster will include "The Hills" star Jason Wahler, Janice Dickinson, Tiger Wood' first extramarital affair Rachel Urchitel, one-time teen idol Leif Garrett, Jeremy London, the extremely wealthy Jason Davis, Keyshia Cole's mom Frankie Lons, and Eric Roberts. It sounds like they were too late for Lindsay Lohan, but there's always season five ... hopefully.

Another celebrity is heading to reality TV as well. Except, Tony Danza's not doing it because of any bad behavior. It seems to be a lifestyle change. While everyone knows about Danza's past as a boxer, not many know than he has a degree in History Education. He takes that degree and heads to Philadelphia's Northeast High School to teach two sophomore English classes. Along with teaching, he also helped the football team, band, debate team, and helped organize a fundraiser. It's not just a photo op for him. He was really in there doing it. "Teach: Tony Danza: Back to School" premieres October 1 on A&E.

Saint Rose makes top 40

Saint Rose is ranked 40 out of 172 colleges and universities in the "Best Regional Universities – North" category of institutions that offer a full range of undergraduate and master's level programs, up 14 spots from last year's ranking of 54. This marks the first time that Saint Rose has cracked the annual ranking's top 40 in its category.

Saint Rose President Dr. R. Mark Sullivan said: "We are delighted to break into the top level of the U.S. News rankings. Students cite the strength, distinctiveness and variety of our academic programs, our location and our small class sizes as key to their decision to apply for this fall's entering class. As we celebrate the opening of two multimillion-dollar centers for arts and communications over the past three years as well as a sparkling new sports complex, we are pleased that our peers are noticing the superb quality of our programs, facilities and students at The College of Saint Rose."

Saint Rose received more than 6,000 applications for the Class of 2014, representing a 35 percent increase in total applications over the past five years. The College will welcome 660 first-year students and 300 transfers to campus August 28 for the start of the fall semester. Nearly 50 percent of the first-year students rank in the top quarter of their high school class. Thirty percent of the incoming first-year and transfer students have selected majors in the School of Arts and Humanities, 23 percent in the School of Mathematics and Sciences, and 13 percent in both the School of Education and the School of Business.

According to U.S. News, among the many factors weighed in determining the rankings, the key measures of quality are: peer assessment, graduation and retention rates, faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources and alumni giving.

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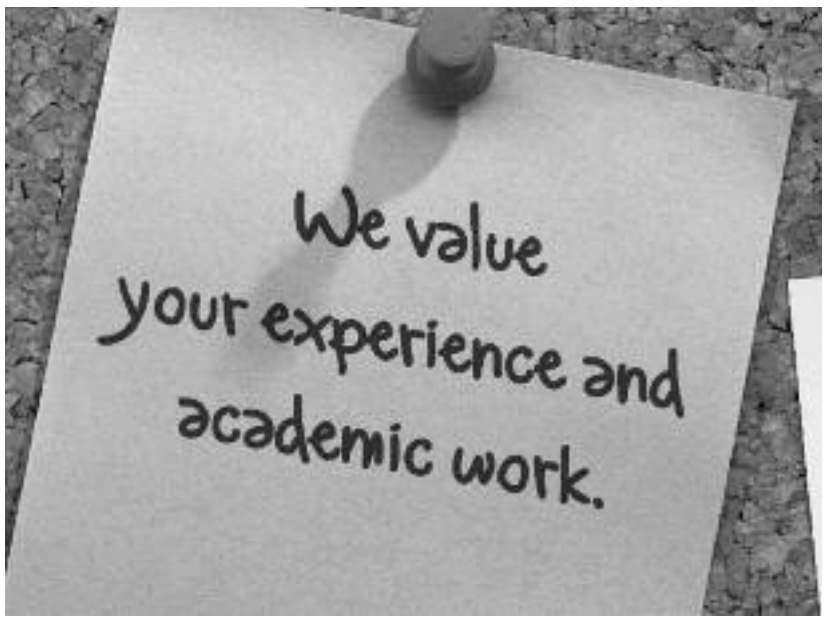

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Fiction: 'Eddie Cacciatore, Private Eye, and the Case of the Sapphire Cell Phone'

Darren Johnson
Publisher

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Much of the turmoil that had preceded these events is long over now, and many of the legal issues are resolved or at least look like they are unresolvable, and thus I feel comfortable telling the story of Eddie Cacciatore, Private Eye, three years after he gained his greatest fame — well, a couple of headlines and photo boxes in the Tri-County Pennysaver — and I hope none of the survivors of the events in this retelling take any offense.

Prof. Joe Reality, M.F.A.
Part-Time Fine Arts Instructor
Blackwater Junior College
Blackwater, Fla., August 1, 2010

PROLOGUE

Eddie Cacciatore beamed as finally, shortly after turning age 40, he opened his first ever Private Investigation office. Before that, he'd spent nearly two decades on "The Force," and in the 1990s had a private line installed in his two-bedroom bungalow on Starfish Ave. Mostly an old-fashioned tape-machine with Eddie's garbled voice giving instructions to leave information — "but not too much information" — after the beep.

In recent years, he'd migrated to a cell phone. He liked this better as he didn't have to go home to check his messages, or have to worry his at times overbearing, larger-than-life and just plain large wife, Celeste, would start cursing at him for Lord knows what in the middle of a business call, perhaps unnecessarily suspicious that an attractive woman were on the other end of the line; though she had little reason to pester poor Eddie, as, for awhile, he was holding down two jobs, until "The Incident" with his lieutenant, Meier, at the precinct that Eddie doesn't talk about – though the lieutenant was in the hospital for a week after. "It's pointless saying anything as the lieutenant and I have a different set of facts," he says, "so the truth will never really be known until one or the other of us dies, and I'd like to tell you the truth very soon."

A loyal type, Eddie befriended the girl at the Verizon Store who sold him his cell phone, and his virtual freedom, Shannon McDonough, about age 21 (none of us really knew her age exactly, and getting a straight answer from her was hard and started with a snap of Juicy Fruit and a "Y'know, I get asked that a lot, and let me tell ya', I'm not sure myself 'cause you can't believe everything you read, even your own birth certificate."). A former long jumper on her high school track team — lithe and blond and no one could deny beautiful in a wholesome, early 1900s Coca-Cola ad kind of way — she ended up being Eddie's "Gal Friday" of sorts, a term as antiquated as it is, she and Eddie embraced; a unique couple, he being twice as old and twice as heavy, still good looking in his own way, though they both hovered around 5-foot-8. "And it's 100-percent platonic, you sicko," he'd say to anyone who even mentioned her and him.

After Eddie Cacciatore lost his public job, he had to up his game as a P.I. to make rent, feed his kid, 9, and keep Celeste off his back. Not that she would ever get so desperate as to find a job, but when their joint checking account would dip into the double digits, poor Eddie's cell phone would light up like a Christmas tree, its voice mails filled with her curses and about how her debit card was rejected at Wal*Mart.

I gave him one of his first cases after his dismissal — "It's 'resignation,' Reality. I resigned, damn it!" — from The Force — getting the evidence on my cheating then-wife, Claire, but it soon got out of control. In the end Claire, who was running for county District Attorney at the time, even respected Eddie's expert work in exposing her and her unique choice of an affair partner, Tim "Timdawg" Rashan, a 27-year-old three-time felon who had somehow gotten a part-time security guard gig at her firm. Even though Eddie had gotten lurid photos of her and Timdawg (on a picnic table, no less), and the pics just happened to appear on an anonymous political posting site, she eventually used some of her campaign funds to hire Eddie to expose even worse dirt on her opponent.

'The truth will never be known until one or the other of us dies, and I'd like to tell you the truth very soon'

Eddie had no problem with that, as the then sitting D.A., Byron Allen Brownstroke, didn't help him at all when he was going through his problems with the Lieutenant. "In fact, he suppressed evidence," Eddie said. "And planted stuff in my El Camino. I caught it just in time, but I know it was his men who tried to plant it."

The election over, and Claire a narrow winner, Eddie Cacciatore, Private Eye — now well known in the Tri-County region after his work for Claire and me — worked a deal for an 800-square-foot storefront in the center of Blackwater's mostly boarded-up downtown, in between a failed Krispy Kreme and a failed Computer Repair Shop, a giant, fading floppy disk still painted on its yellow facade.

'I call it the Magic Button. Carry it with you at all times. Press it, and you'll be OK, understand?'

His wife hated the idea. "You're spending money we don't have. Why don't you work out of the garage? This P.I. shit isn't going anywhere. Who's going to hire YOU? A disgraced former cop!" Celeste bellowed that morning at the Ribbon Cutting.

"I think Eddie can do anything he sets his mind to," smiled Shannon brightly. "He just solved two big cases, they were in the newspaper. He's on a roll."

"Yeah, sure, kid. If you were any wetter and stankier over him you'd be a fish," Celeste replied.

"What?"

After Eddie had signed a contract to buy at least bi-weekly ads in the Pennysaver, the newspaper sent a photographer down to shoot the Ribbon Cutting. We were a unique cast of characters standing there with a giant pair of hedge clippers Eddie had spray painted gold in front of his new office, "Eddie Cacciatore, Private Eye" painted in gold on the door, the windows tinted to protect client confidentiality. There was Claire, the D.A., her 5-foot frame made six inches taller by spiked heels (her tight skirt made the 42-year-old hotter than I'd remembered her) and the County Sheriff (Eddie had worked for the city, not the county), Gary Beasley, and obese man nearing 60, in an ill-fitting uniform, broad-shouldered Eddie with his dark hair and eyes, a short sleeve black shirt showing off his recent bicep work — they were his most prominent feature — slim and toned Shannon in an understated sun dress with a flower pattern, Celeste, beads of sweat rolling down the lines of a scowl, my new wife, Krystka, who, because of her similarity in age and beauty to Shannon, one would think would be her natural friend, but Krystka, being a college student from Europe with a very defined world view actually hates Eddie's "little toy," and I, Prof. Joe Reality — better known for my art and gallery shows. I specialize in paintings that are large enough to take up a living room wall and have sold such work, mostly to upperclass homeowners, coast to coast.

(One customer once wrote me, and I'm not proud of this, "Thank you, Mr. Reality, for the beautiful chartreuse painting. I'm not sure exactly what it is or what it means, but, I see you matched my swatches I'd sent you so well and thereby your art is the perfect complement to my sofa set and drapes. Again, thank you, thank you, thank you!")

Eddie had big plans for the new office. He had enough money saved up to get him to Christmas, he said. "Hopefully by then I'll get a few more big cases," he said. He was able to hire Shannon full-time to run the place while he was on the road.

"You'll be back at the Verizon Store in a month," his wife warned her. Shannon just pretended she didn't hear — a similar skill Eddie had learned many years before.

"I don't know what we're going to do now," Celeste said, turning to the Sheriff. "I mean, he can't work for the city again."

"Eddie can always take the deputy's test," the Sheriff offered. "The starting pay's not great, but we don't have an age requirement."

"I'll make sure Eddie takes the test," Celeste said. "Thank you, Gary."

Everyone did smile for the photo, and the Pennysaver ran it on the cover that week. Before that, the first week was a relatively quiet time for Eddie and Shannon as they organized the office using his manila-folder-red-white-and-blue-sticky-note system. Shannon set up the phones and the recorded messages for those who called after 5 p.m. or on weekends, with Eddie coaching. He carried in her oak desk, a relic from the Salvation Army up the street, on his big back, dropping it with ease as if it were made of styrofoam. The office used to be a car insurance place and the other room already had a desk, left behind by the failed previous owners. Eddie snapped together the chair he'd bought at Staples. Eyed it. Sat back with his hands behind his head and, on the old desk, finally put his feet up — something he could never do at home without hearing the wife's barks. Shannon bounded in, "Now that's the picture of a man's man, Eddie," and snapped a photo with her camera phone as Eddie looked in her direction and smiled a sincere, satisfied smile.

Later that day, the Pennysaver started hitting news racks, and Eddie would gain more notoriety than he could have imagined because of that little rag.

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CHAPTER ONE

During the first week after the opening of Downtown Blackwater's newest business, there was displayed, on the cover of the Tri-County Pennysaver, a shiny new office front with smiling faces lined up, above them in bright gold letters, "Eddie Cacciatore, Private Eye," but, the next week, the rag ran a photo of Eddie's place from the exact same angle — except this time his dark, tinted glass windows were in shards on the sidewalk, the facade and door full of bullet holes, and no people.

I guess the publisher figured Eddie was going to reneg on his new advertising contract, anyway, now that the startup was shot down, so why not run the gruesome pic?

But that photo was only the beginning of a lot more activity to come.

What had preceded that black and white photo was in living color.

Eddie had warned me at the Ribbon Cutting that he heard from Sheriff Beasley that Timdawg Rashan had posted $3000 bail and was free again.

"One of his friends from the hood got the money — who knows how?" the obese Beasley said, sweat stains growing from his arm pits and eventually turning the whole stiff, blue shirt a darker shade. Beasley knew the answer to the question, as he looked over at my ex-wife, the untouchable Claire.

"Yeah, I guess she's not over him, and now that she's won the election, who's going to tell her no?" Eddie had replied to the Sheriff, and then, later, me.

"I'm going to give you something," Eddie said to me, shortly after the big, gaudy red ribbon that had been in front of his office door was cut to mild applause.

He went to shake my hand. In his palm was a little silver tracking device, about the size of a quarter.

"I call it the Magic Button, Reality. Carry it with you at all times. Press it, and you'll be OK, understand?"

"Yeah," I said, perhaps a bit of doubt in my voice.

"You better believe it," he said, his thick arms tensing below rolled up short sleeves on a black shirt, perhaps a size too tight. The scent of Aqua Velva in the air.

A couple of days later, the Pennysaver would come out. Eddie had grabbed 100 copies off the stand at the Dunkin Donuts up the block — they were free, after all. He even took the rack itself, and displayed it, with the

continued on page 13

Poetry Corner: 'Truth'

Gail Goldstein
North Bellmore, Long Island

Sweep me under the rug,
conceal me
with tapestry woven of
blue and red, purple and gold,
a carpet of camouflage

I will not dissipate
evaporate
disintegrate

Bury me
in the ground, dig
until you strike rock, suffocate
my cries in soil until I pollute
the earth in which I am hidden

Instead of buds of beauty
I will grow
like maggots on carcasses
eating dead flesh

Drown me
in ocean waves to wash away
my wretchedness, pretend
I am cleansed

I will rise to the surface
with fervor, float with
the seaweed, gasp for air

I will not be replaced
with lies, secrets, distortions,
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though my presence irritates you

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‘Eddie, P.I.’ (cont.)

papers, in his new office.

“You look so handsome in that photo,” Shannon McDonough, approximately 21, his new Gal Friday, told him.

“You don’t look so bad yourself,” Eddie told her, picking up a rubber band, cocking it between his index finger and thumb like a gun and firing it at her, purposely missing by a foot.

“Hey, you,” she laughed, grabbing the rubber band to fire back.

“The wife kind of ruins the photo, huh?” Eddie laughed. He could only laugh around Shannon.

“You said that, not me,” she said, cocking back the rubber band to fire at Eddie.

But, just as she was about to let loose, a car with a loud muffler could be heard outside. Then Eddie’s tinted storefront windows started imploding, bullets whizzing into the office.

Eddie made a wild leap toward Shannon, who seemed frozen in horror, pulling her toward the ground while yelling. “Get down!”

As Eddie’s leaden weight sunk to the floor on his descent, his large, thick claw on Shannon’s shoulder, a bullet that would have hit her square in the heart instead pierced into her wiry left bicep. She screamed as a shard of glass tore through her calf.

“You’re going to be all right, hon,” Eddie said to her, his deep black eyes piercing through her light grey-blue eyes into some psychic place.

“I know,” she murmured.

As the shooting stopped, Eddie heard laughs from the car. He looked up and saw three men in a beat up, purple Kia Rio. The man in the back was fumbling with a silver automatic rifle.

“Oh, shit,” the man in the passenger seat said. “He’s still alive.”

In Eddie’s left hand was the 12-gauge shotgun that had been fastened under Shannon’s desk. They floored it. Eddie bolted to his desk, under which was a long-barrel .223 assault rifle with scope. (Eddie couldn’t carry a pistol in the State of Florida, due to The Incident.)

‘Yeah, one. Just a self-defense kind of thing. Shannon was hurt. They sped off.’

Instead of using the door, Eddie burst through what used to be the storefront window. Steady, poised, Eddie aimed the rifle at the speeding-away car, counting to himself coolly, “One, two, three...”

The car flew down Cypress, 50 yards away, 75 yards away, 100 yards away...

Eddie focused on the round, dark shadow of a head in the back seat, the guy who’d been holding the automatic. Eddie cleanly and without indecision pulled the trigger, watching the dark shadow suddenly fall as the back window of the purple car exploded. The car kept speeding off.

Eddie ran back to his crumpled Gal Friday.

“Oh, Eddie,” she said. “I’m bleeding. A lot. Am I going to ... am I going to?”

She looked as if she were about to pass out, her usually rosy cheeks now flush white. Eddie grabbed her by the chin.

“Of course not, sweetie.”

He pulled out the First Aid kit from the bottom drawer. It was a huge desk for a slim girl, after all, and was stocked for war. He tied tourniquets below her knee and shoulder. “The bullet’s still in there,” he said as ambulance and city police sirens converged.

Before the medics reached her, she smiled up at Eddie, one of those smiles that went straight to his heart.

“Hey, Eddie, thanks for the good time,” she said. “This is a lot more exciting than working at the Verizon Store.”

‘There must be 50 bullet holes in these walls, Eddie. Did you get off a shot?’

—

“What the frig happened here, Eddie?” Sergeant Thomas, a balding, smallish man with a cheesy mustache said, carefully trying to step over a menage of glass and red, white and blue sticky notes all over the floor. “I guess you opened your new business with a bang. Typical of you, huh, Eddie?”

Eddie didn’t respond. He knew most of the City cops were against him since The Incident. They had to be: Lieutenant Meier was still on the force.

And Eddie didn’t like them, either. After all, he was fired/resigned only nine months shy of his 20th year — when a policeman can retire at two-thirds pay.

“I see you had the hardware out,” Thomas said, motioning toward the guns. “Any idea who did this?”

“No.”

“You must have an idea?”

“I couldn’t make out who they were.”

“There must be 50 bullet holes in these walls, Eddie. Did you get off a shot?”

“Yeah, one.”

“Did you hit them?”

“Just a self-defense kind of thing. Shannon was hurt. They sped off.”

“Right,” Thomas said. “So you didn’t get a look at them? You just fired off a random shot?”

“Didn’t see a thing.”

It was at that time Eddie felt a vibration in his pocket. I had pressed my Magic Button. It was his receiver.

“I’d be happy to come down to the Precinct and file a report,” Eddie said, “but I’d really like to get to the hospital to be with Shannon. Poor girl has no family.”

“Don’t let me keep you, Eddie,” Thomas said. “We’ll get a crew down here to board up the place, put up some tape. But we’re still going to have to take the weapons to forensics, Eddie. Hate to leave you naked, but if some dirt bag is found dead with your bullet in him ...”

“I understand,” Eddie said, grabbing the keys to his El Camino off of Shannon’s desk with a fast, clean swipe. “Call me if you need me. My number’s in the Pennysaver.”

—

Eddie had told me to never be predictable, but, there I was, at the same time, just before dusk, doing my same three-mile run around the half-mile dirt oval at the Blackwater Middle School, oblivious to my surroundings with ear buds in place, an mp3 player playing the same 35 1980s New Wave songs I’d put on there a few months prior. I liked this track because it was usually empty and I hated being around other runners, most of whom were faster than me.

On lap 5, I was taxing as the winter sun weakened. From behind the bleachers came Timdawg Rashan — my ex-wife Claire’s (former?) felonious lover — and a tall lanky guy, shaved head with tattoos everywhere, even on his neck. I reached into my plaid shorts and pressed the Magic Button.

The accomplice tackled me. I fought back, but then Timdawg came over, brass knuckles in his hand, shining for a second as he raised his fist toward a dying, blood-red sun.

“This is for ruining my life,” he said, punching me in the head. “You and that P.I.”

For a second, I threw off the accomplice — drugs users are weak, Eddie had always told me — and turned toward Timdawg, a mad Rastafarian with dread locks and a golden earing. I struck a wrestling pose from my varsity days, but the lanky accomplice pulled me down from behind, his bony arm around my neck, and Timdawg resumed beating me with the brass.

Before I blacked out, I heard him say, in a most perverse way, “You may have fucked me, but I fucked your wife and made her scream my name and she fucks good. She never had it like that with a boring tight ass like you. You couldn’t give her nothing.”

But then he suddenly stopped his assault. I was able to peer up from the dirt, still in a daze.

Through the chain-link fence that surrounded the track came the welcomed, busted up grille of Eddie’s ‘74 black El Camino, tearing to a stop right in front of me, kicking up a cloud of dirt.

“Oh, look,” Timdawg said to his lanky pal. “The old man is here. Two birds going down.”

“Yeah,” the accomplice said, a bit less assuredly.

Eddie at first walked slowly, his big tree-trunk legs in blue jeans, wide apart. Then, in a flash, he lunged at the accomplice, grabbing his Adam’s apple with his claw, a pained look frozen for a second on Eddie’s face. The accomplice couldn’t scream — he just crumpled in silence, like in sci-fi films when a man gets thrown into airless space without a suit.

Timdawg looked down at me, then up at Eddie, and decided to make a run for it.

One would think a young 20s, thin, V-framed, jail-hardened male could easily elude a 40-year-old man shaped like and with the density of an anvil, but, then again, usually the shortest, stockiest guy on the football team is the running back, and, somehow, the fat lion always seems to catch the gazelle, and Eddie caught him from behind, pulling him down to the ground in a heap. Eddie’s hand cocked back, aimed and punched the back of Timdawg’s lower head, putting him out instantly. Still, Eddie threw a few more punches to the same spot for good measure.

He picked up Timdawg in a fireman’s carry and threw him in the back of the El Camino. He did the same with the accomplice.

“Don’t worry, Reality, an ambulance is

continued on next page

‘Eddie, P.I.’ (cont.)

coming,” he said. “You were in a daze and didn’t see anything, understand?”

I nodded weakly from the ground. He reached down and took my mp3 player. “These unknown assailants took your mp3 player, OK?”

“OK.”

And Eddie was right. Moments after his El Camino backed out in a tear, speeding down the street, an ambulance pulled in.

A few blocks away, firemen responded to a car fire in an abandoned lot. It was a once-purple Kia Rio with a blown out rear window.

—

I’d like to say Eddie Cacciatore kept coming to the hospital to visit me several times a day — and he did peek into my room each time to say hello — but he was really there to visit Shannon. I had my new wife, Krystka, and our newborn twins there as support, along with an occasional visit from my colleagues from the junior college, anyway, and Eddie — even though he was a charmer with his own kid, Cyndi — seemed to shy away from babies and most academic types.

That first day, though, he did stop by with a present — a brand new, white iPod mp3 player with matching headphones. He also had a big, fluffy white teddy bear with him, but that wasn’t for me.

“I had a geek at the Apple Store put a bunch of those ‘80s songs you like on there,” he said, “like Talking Heads.”

“Oh, cool.”

“And Rod Stewart.”

“Uh, OK.”

“I dunno. Just delete the ones you don’t like. Don’t ask me how.”

“Thanks, Eddie.”

“Don’t mention it.”

He was peeking his head out of my doorway.

“I hear she’s in room 305,” I told him.

“Yeah, I know,” he said.

“The Sergeant stopped by already,” I said. “But I couldn’t remember anything. One minute I was running at the track, the rest is a blur.”

‘It’s a very forgetful neighborhood.’

“Good. Whoever did this ...” he said, trailing off to a whisper. “I have a feeling they are taking a long trip out of town and won’t be back.”

(Of course, out of town were the seven-mile-long Blackwater Swamps, filled with gators.)

“That’s good to know, Eddie.”

“The Sergeant said it’s the strangest thing,” I added. “Fifty shots fired and no one on your street saw anything.”

“It’s a very forgetful neighborhood,” Eddie said. “I’m trying to talk the landlady into installing bulletproof glass. I think she will.”

Most self-sufficient women over 40 seemed to have a thing for Eddie. This landlady surely was no exception.

Eddie left without saying anything more, heading left toward room 305. Sergeant Thomas was waiting in the hall.

“Took you a while to get from your office to here, Eddie,” he said.

“I had to pick up this bear,” he said in a monotone

“Hey, whatever, Eddie,” the Sergeant said. “You know, we’re all not against you. Half of us want to get P.I. gigs like you, you know? Hey, shit happens. If you’re going to make a go of this new business, we’ll be working together a lot. Anyway, you got this D.A. elected. That carries a lot of political capital.”

“It does, though ...” Eddie’s voice trailed again.

“Though what?” Thomas laughed. “Though Timdawg Rashan? Yeah, that’s a head-scratcher. How the county’s highest profile lawyer — and she’s not bad to look at, either — how she goes from a college professor to ... to THAT. It’s every self-respecting husband’s nightmare.”

“You can’t help it when love happens,” Eddie said, almost laughing at how trite and insincere he’d just sounded.

“Yeah, that, or crazy marathon sex. It’s the one thing I learned as a cop. Women always fall in love with that, and lose their heads.”

“Right, that sensitive guy fad was just a marketing scam,” Eddie pondered.

‘Fifty shots fired and no one on your street saw anything?’

“Anyway, Eddie, if a few dirt bags are off the street, this isn’t a pissing contest. Mission accomplished. But Claire Reality is going to have a hard time getting re-elected.”

“Yeah, I couldn’t care less.”

“Anyway, your secretary’s doing fine. She seems to have amnesia like everyone else, though. You even have Professor Reality trained well.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

—

“Oh, Eddie, I love you!” Shannon said as she saw Eddie enter her room with the big stuffed bear.

“Hey, sugar, you know what we’d said about saying that,” Eddie said softly.

“I know,” she said, grabbing the bear and hugging it. “But I’m so glad to see you.”

“Me, too, sweetie.”

“I can’t wait to start work again.”

“You have to rest here a few days, then home for a few days, sweetie. You’ve been through a lot.”

“Awww.”

“Besides, it’ll take a couple of days to get the office back together.”

Eddie caressed her soft arm. “I guess I better send in that health insurance premium for you. Your insurance from the Verizon Store is about up, huh?”

“Don’t worry, Eddie. I won’t get hurt again.”

“Just saying.”

Eddie sat by her, looking up at the TV she’d had on — “Wheel of Fortune.”

She started crying as he held her hand, an IV drip butterflied below her knuckles.

“What is it, hon?”

“I thought I was going to die there, Eddie, and I thought if I did I’d have no one at my funeral, Eddie, no one would care. I’m so incomplete.”

“Don’t cry, hon,” he said. “I’m just older than you and have had more people piled up on me in my life, so I’d have a few more people at my funeral than you, but not many more — and practically no one would be worried about me lying there in the box, that’s for sure.”

And that’s how Eddie and Shannon were alike — two people who blended into life without much consequence — who never asked for help because they never needed it and were resourceful — whose parents left them home day after day, year after year, to be babysat by “Scooby Doo” and “The Jetsons” and “Wheel of Fortune.” They were liked for their looks, and as problem solvers, furthering other people’s ambitions. Talented high school athletes, their coaches still could never get their names straight. About two decades apart in age, they both had learned a long time ago that they had to look out for themselves, because no one else gave a crap about them — not really. Especially when there was trouble.

So when Eddie had gone to the Verizon Store two years prior to get his first cell phone, they had instant chemistry, as if they had always known each other. And Eddie got a card with her hours written on the back, Shannon writing the “o” in her name in the shape of a heart. He’d visit the store, asking questions he surely knew the answers to, such as how to program a name into the phone or how to send a text message (Oh, my God, I text message all the time,” she beamed. “Let me be your first text message!”). He graduated to having her download ringtones for him. She chose as the ringtone to go with her calls “Don’t You Forget About Me” by Simple Minds.

“I want to visit you at your job,” she said once. “Only fair. You always come here to visit me.”

“I can’t take you to the Precinct. Lots of crap happening there. But I have a P.I. job — a lady is giving me two grand to follow her cheating husband around. You can come tonight on a stakeout. He’s a marshmallow. No danger.”

“That would be super!”

And that night, between a box of Twinkees and two liters of Mountain Dew, parking, sitting in the El Camino outside a no-tell motel with a half-lit sign that read “...cancy,” under a red, harvest moon, snapping pics of the cheating husband’s car — and the car next to it, the lover’s — Eddie and Shannon really connected. He’d never had anyone care about his job before. They laughed and kidded and told timeless stories of their high school athletics exploits. Eddie stuck his finger into a Twinkee and pulled out some white frosting, putting it on her nose. It was hot and humid as the El Camino hadn’t had a working A.C. in 20 years, and they stared into each other’s eyes in the haze — and then the door to the cheating husband’s room had opened (Eddie had previously replaced the light bulb outside of it with a 150-watter). Eddie told Shannon, “Go for it.”

Shannon grabbed his old 35 mm Pentax with the zoom lens and aimed it at the smiling husband, his clothes a bit disheveled, and then his lover exited — it was a tall, rather good-looking, older gentleman in a suit. Shannon snapped photos rapid fire in excitement as the two men embraced. “She’s a he,” Shannon laughed, and that night forward she was hooked on P.I. work — and a certain P.I.

To be continued ... next issue.
Feedback? cccn@twinforks.com.

Books: Bob Dylan remains the 'Rolling Stone'

David Marx
Campus News

Just like the subject upon whom Clinton Heylin so authoritatively and painstakingly waxes lyrical, "Still On The Road – The Songs of Bob Dylan Vol. 2: 1974-2008" is as equally complex, charged, involved, in depth, loaded, thrilling, provocative and mesmerising – and that's before even having reached the eighties!

Following on from where "Revolution In The Air" left off, this totally engrossing tome is the essential, if not quintessential thesis (for that is what it fundamentally is) on the mastery of Bob Dylan. It's everything any serious Dylan fan could ever wish for. It's also the perfect reference for all musicologists, Dylanologists, and those of an academic persuasion.

As John Somners (RIP), an old Irish friend of mine used to say in relation to Samuel Beckett: "You don't enjoy Samuel Beckett, you study him" – so too might the same just as readily apply to yer man Zimmerman. But where the Irish playwright was a nerve-rackingly cryptic contender, who simultaneously admitted yet (forever) refused to ever step down from his high wire of literary existentialism, Dylan, as recently as last year, professed: "I'm not a playwright. The people in my songs are all me."

Indeed they are, which makes them almost as interesting as the man himself. Hence his simultaneous donning of numerous, questionable hats: from that of Christian proselytizer to radio DJ, jealous lover to tempestuous troubadour, sage like sociologist to unnerving minstrel, musical and historical archivist to whom Allan Ginsberg once referred as "the greatest ever poet."

Like the songs themselves, all the aforesaid Dylans and a whole more besides, are wrought and written about in this book, in such a way as to be applauded at the nigh turn of each and every page.

For instance, commenting upon 1974's "Tangled Up In Blue," Heylin writes: "He later informed Ron Rosenbaum, 'I haven't come to the place that Rimbaud came to when he decided to stop writing and run guns in Africa.' Which is not what he says in 'Tangled Up In Blue' – and I'd rather trust the tale than the artist. The couplet 'Then he started into dealing with slaves/And something inside of him died' explicitly equates Dylan's Woodstock period with Rimbaud gun-running in Abyssinia."

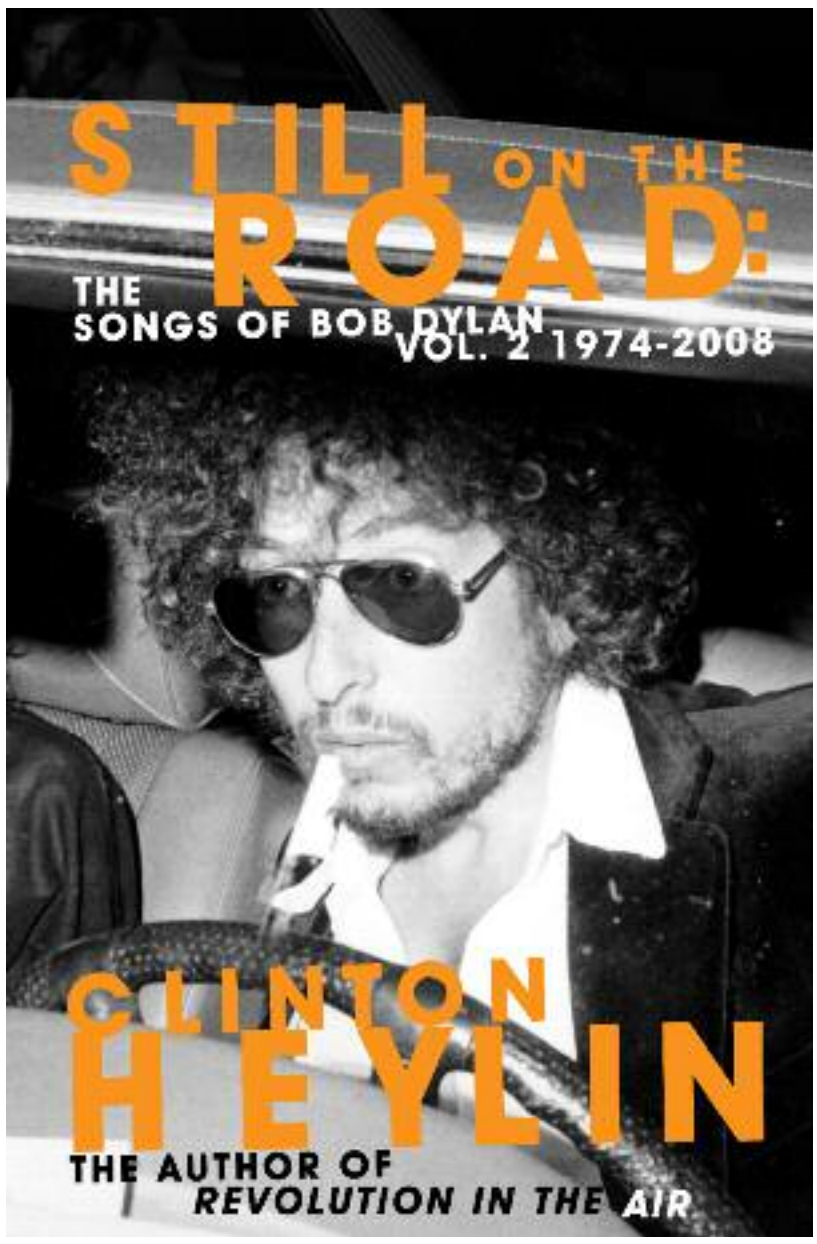
That the author admits in writing, that he'd sooner "trust the tale than the artist," is in itself, as defiant a statement as (m)any ever made by Dylan. Although the songwriter coming clean in reference, to not having reached such a pronounced precipice of change as that of the revered French poet, is as equally defiant as it is defensive and perhaps didactic in the extreme.

Similarly, Heylin homes in on Dylan being as equally defiant and didactic some eight years later (shortly after the space shuttle disaster of January 1986) when in Australia, he both defends and prefaces "License To Kill" with: "Here's something I wrote a while back; it's all about the space program. I suppose you heard about this [recent] tragedy, right? I don't need to tell you it really was a tragedy... You see, these people had no business going up there. Like, there's not enough problems on Earth to solve? So I wanna dedicate this song to all those poor people, who were fooled into going up there."

I didn't know Dylan had "a bee in his bonnet about the space programme, and [...] had decided it was time to start waving his arms and banging his drum."

Did you? Did anyone?

Perhaps the so-called "corny" couplet: "Man has invented his doom/First step was touching the moon," ought to have been the give away. But then Dylan refers and name checks so many people and places, themes and things, and the variant perplexities of history. So much so, that on many an occasion, his song writing can prove to be something of a smokescreen dalliance, especially when one chooses to take Dylan at his every word, diversion, subtext and subliminal trajectory.



In a way, the author hints at this, when he later writes: "'License To Kill" is one eighties work that successfully demonstrates Dylan's maxim: "Songs need a structure, stratagems, codes and stability, and then you hang lyrics on them... [but it is only] when we transfer all that to the stage... [that] all those elements come into play." In performance, time and time again, Dylan has transformed this righteous rant into a message-song that compels its audience to sit up and take notice (if not actually adhere to its edicts). And he began its transformation with its first live outing, on "Late Night with David Letterman," when he plugged into the song with a conviction last seen when he still carried the Good Book on stage with him.

The vast variance, depth and sheer complexity of Dylan's huge body of work, is, to a certain degree, anchored to that of a somewhat straight-laced, linear and profound understanding when placed in the mercurial hands of Clinton Heylin.

In fact, his last two books, strongly suggest that he understands Dylan more than Dylan does himself; which, from an objective and philosophical perspective of standing on the outside looking in – might not be that far removed the centrifugal (literary) truth of the matter.

As such, "Still On The Road" is an absolutely outstanding and imperative work.

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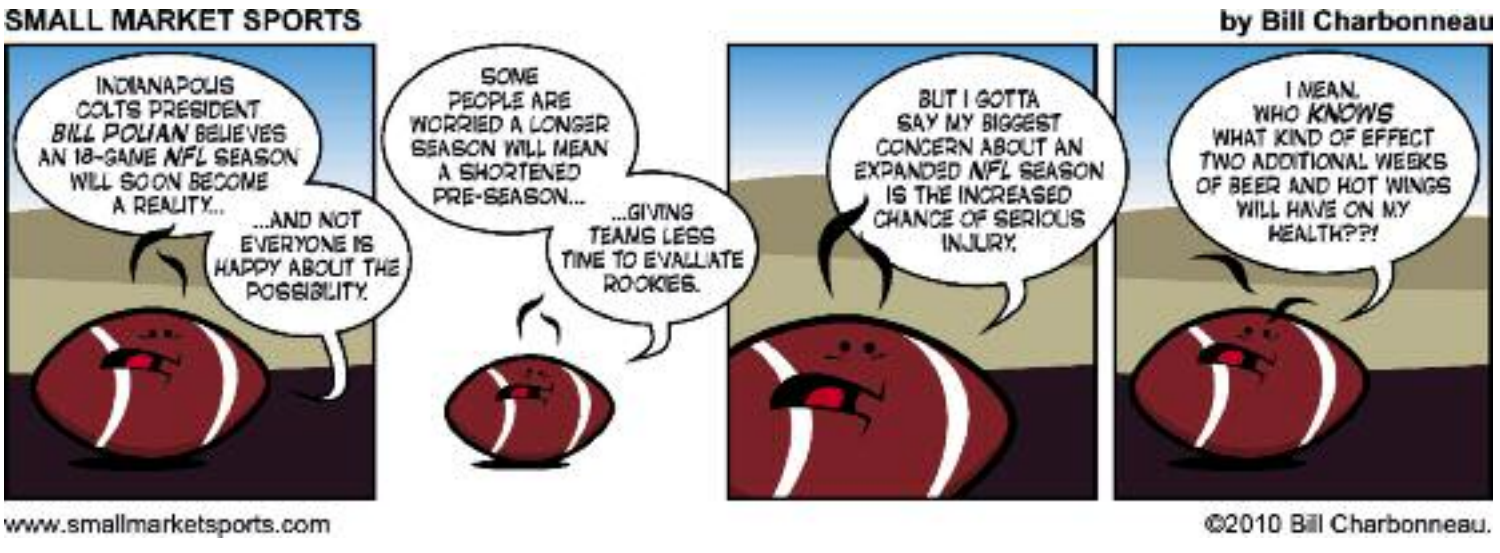

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