THE MICHIGAN REVIEW

Volume 12, Number 11 The Campus Affairs Journal of the University of Michigan March 2, 1994

Hello? Hello? Is Anybody There?

BY RACHEL CARDONE

TIRED OF RUSHING OUT OF class to get to the head of the line in the basement of Angell Hall during CRISP or waiting for computers to check for open classes at the last second? This may soon change as the University of Michigan replaces its current system of manual registration with an automated registration system that will enable students to register for classes by phone. The University hopes to have the new system in place by the 1995–96 academic year.

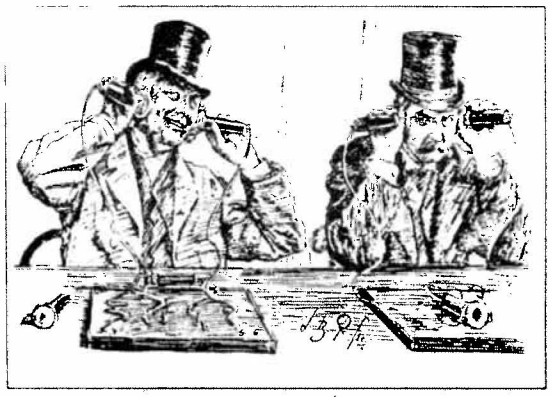
The CRISP office at the University of Michigan hopes to have the new system implemented by next fall. As of yet, an independent vendor has been selected to handle the networked system, but no attempted tests have been made.

U–M's system of automated registration will resemble other networks across the country. Students will receive a slip in the mail detailing their registration time (like they do now). They will be instructed to call in from a touchtone phone and select courses with the help of an automated voice by punching in numbers. The automated voice has the same function as other phone services, much like the phone networks already in place on campus (e.g., Student Financial Operations). To ensure the authenticity of the caller, students will be given a personal identification number (PIN) and an access code. They will also be assigned a specific period of time to call based on the number of credits each student has accumulated. With this information, students will be able to register from anywhere in the world.

CRISP will not change its basic functional structure. The only notable difference will be that the lines of students waiting in Angell Hall to register will disappear. Times for dropping or adding classes will lengthen after the initial registration. Also, both registration and drop/add could be offered after normal business hours.

The initial transition will cost money, but in the long run, the benefits of fewer employees and vacated office space will outweigh the cost of implementation. An additional benefit is noted from an environmental perspective: trees will be saved due to the computerization of drop/add slips and registration forms, and there will be no need for paper. Finalized schedules will be either sent by regular and/or electronic mail to each student.

The only major drawbacks are that the period of registration may have to be lengthened to accomodate all of the students and the increasing reliance on technology presents more opportunity for a malfunction to occur, much like the computer failure at North Campus CRISP during registration last fall that forced hundreds of additional students to register on Central campus. Hopefully, any such system will not be prone to regular breakdowns.



Uh–oh, Frank. They both want the same class.

Automated (or telephone) registration is currently used across the country with few complaints. The only notable ones are that a large amount of time is required to create a schedule that works. and it is difficult to find out what classes are open. These are problems with registration in general and have nothing to do with means of registering. Michigan students need not worry because CRISPinfo, a computer program run through MTS, will still exist to allow students to check the status of classes.

Overall, the transition from the current manual hassle to telephone freedom is just another example of technology making life easier. And although it could make students more lax — no more running from department to department for overrides, down to a counselor, going to CRISP — it is more convenient, and will give students more time to spend on bigger and better projects. MR

U–M Offers More English Options

BY GREG PARKER

BEGINNING NEXT YEAR, incoming freshman will have another choice in fulfilling their English composition requirement: "Gateway" sections. While the full details of this program will not be announced until the publication of this month's LS&A Course Selection Guide, some details of the program are known.

"Gateway" borrows from the themes of the Engineering 160 class, where experienced faculty members teach students how to write by exploring various aspects of engineering. It differs, however, in that other disciplines besides engineering are offered. For instance, a student interested in math could take the appropriate "Gateway" English for math and explore the field of mathematics while learning to write better.

Like Engin. 160, respective departments will have control over their "Gateway" English sections; the math department, not the English department, would control the math "Gateway." It is also of note that English faculty will not be teaching the "Gateway" sections for departments other than English; a professor in quantum physics could teach freshmen how to write effectively in college.

While it is certain that "Gateway" sections will be offered in a variety of disciplines, there will be only a limited number of sections availible. The whole English department will only offer approximately ten sections in its catalogue of hundreds of sections, and there will probably not be a great demand for a large number of "Gateway" sections in other departments.

Another interesting consequence of "Gateway" is the decentralizing of control from the English department. With students electing to take "Gateway" sections in departments other than English, a smaller number of students will shuffle through the English department each year. This could either benefit or harm students: are non-English teaching faculty qualified to teach freshman English composition? Or will the increased competition lead to a greater choice and better quality within the freshman English composition program as a whole?

"Gateway" is the University's attempt to make the freshmen English requirement more applicable to "real life." Many students receive a rude awakening when they jump head first into a discipline and midway through their junior year find out it is not for them. "Gateway" will attempt to alleviate this with its interdisciplinary themes. The jury, however, will be out on this until next year. MR

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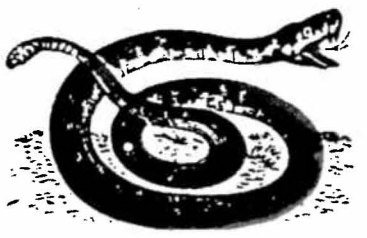
❑ SERPENT'S TOOTH



We're still waiting for the new Winter Olympic sport: homosexual ice dancing.

A new band of bank robbers has struck the Netherlands. It is comprised of women who hold up banks topless. One benefit to this method, besides the fact that none of them have been identified as of yet, is that they don't need to tell male clerks to "Stick 'em up."

According to the *Lansing State Journal*, a woman in Florida was buried without her legs despite protest from her family. Apparently, the funeral home had misplaced her amputated limbs. The incident certainly won't help the mortician get a leg up on the competition.

The *U. Magazine* reported on a Japanese vending machine that sells girls' underpants for $30. The owner of the machines says that sales are great except that the money is usually quite sticky.

A woman is suing a movie theater for discrimination based on the Americans with Disabilities Act. She claims her weight is a disability and hopes to force the theater to install double–wide seats for herself and other obese people. Fine with us... as long as she pays taxes for two.

During a motorcade from the golf course to the White House, an unidentified male rugby player stripped bare except for running shoes and a stocking cap, and ran past President Clinton. Anonymous witnesses say that the streaker was Janet Reno.

Louis Farrakhan said it. This time he was quoted as saying, "white people were created by God for an evil purpose – to torment blacks." Wrong. It's people like you, Louis, who torment blacks by speaking 'for them'.

According to the *Detroit News*, 300 students at Towson State University heckled senatorial candidate Oliver North by repeatedly calling him a liar. Liar is such an ugly and dirty word. Use perjurer.

The *Daily* reported on South Quad residents who expressed disgust at the apparent raw sewage that flowed from their hall drinking fountain. A review of the University's recycling program is expected soon.

William H. Gray, III, president of the United Negro College Fund, was qouted in the *Daily*, "We all know that when America catches an economic cold, African–Americans catch economic pneumonia." The cure? Get two jobs and call us in the morning.

A Dartmouth College magazine called *Inner Bitch* is being published by a group calling themselves SNIP (She–beasts Not Impressed by Penises). A spokesman for the penis community has responded by saying that he's not impressed much by the she–beasts either.

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THE MICHIGAN REVIEW

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Left and Right

"Capitalism begins with giving."
George Gilder

"There ain't no such thing as a free lunch."
Robert A. Heinlein

❑ WHAT'S GOING ON?

The Death of Campus Parties

BY TRACY ROBINSON

WHILE THE MAJORITY OF students at the University of Michigan were taking midterms and making plans for spring break two weeks ago, something significant to the state of campus politics occurred. The Michigan Party, one year old and the ruling party on the Michigan Student Assembly, and the Student's Party, a more liberal "alternative," both announced their candidates for this month's MSA officer elections. During the last two days before the filing deadline, three other brand new parties declared that they will be running candidates as well.

The significance of these announcements lies in the absence of similar proclamations from the two major rivaling parties of old: the Conservative Coalition and the Progressive Party. Of these two formerly powerful groups — CC held the presidency three years ago, and the Progressives two years ago — one is disorganized and the other announced it would not be running anyone this time around.

The probable death of CC and the Progressives is significant since it means that there will be fewer alternatives for students to chose from. With fewer choices, a narrower range of student opinion will be represented to the administration in the name of MSA.

Additionally, the end of these parties will decrease debate and indicates the general decline and disorganization of all campus political parties.

The Michigan Party won control of MSA last year on a platform of all–inclusive, non–partisanship. While this position sounds innocuous, it is harmful in the long run. Even now, limited debate occurs on the Michigan Party–controlled assembly as its representatives claim to take "common sense" stands on issues. The problem is, the phrase "non–partisan political position" is an oxymoron; the recent appropriation of more than $10,000 for computers for the MSA offices, for example, was a debatable question which the Michigan Party conveniently framed as an issue of mere practicality. Allowing the administration to provide scholarships and free parking permits for MSA leaders is another of the Michigan Party's recent non–partisan, "practical" positions. Despite their continued claims that such payments create no conflicts of interest, the issue was a volatile one. If there had been no opposition parties speaking against these recent actions, they would have easily passed with little fanfare.

The Michigan Party is not alone in its advocation of ending the messy, partisan nature of campus politics; U–M Vice President for Student Affairs Maureen Hartford has argued in favor of killing campus parties as well.

In the *Daily* two weeks ago, Hartford said that MSA would be improved without parties. "I think sometimes they use that artificial difference to create arguments that might not necessarily be necessary," she said. Despite the poor phrasing of her statement, Hartford's point is clear. The administration favors a "non–partisan," unified voice in student government which can be bought off with "campus leader" scholarships, because such a voice can be controlled more easily than ideologically divergent factions.

Although MSA is not the U.S. Congress, the death of the two major parties on MSA will create voting problems similar to those that would be made if the Democrats and Republicans disbanded. Without the more easily identifiable party platforms and names to go by, students rely more upon individual name recognition, leaving students to vote randomly or for their friends, instead of for the issues. The fact that new, smaller parties, such as the Outsider and Wolverine parties have formed is encouraging, but they are young, lack readily identifiable positions on the issues, and, like many small parties in the past, will likely dissolve after this month's election, leaving the campus political scene in no better position than it is now.

The only thing more pathetic than the present state of campus political parties is the fact that no one cares about campus politics in general. Until students begin to care, no substantial improvements can be made, and it will be the students' own fault that they will continue to receive a raw deal from the administration.MR

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❑ FROM SUITE ONE

E–Mail Policy Flawed

SHOULD PUBLIC CITIZENS HAVE ACCESS TO THE ELECTRONIC mail (e–mail) of public officials? Is a computer conference subject to the same laws as those that govern written communication? These are two of the questions Chet Zarko has raised in his lawsuit against the University of Michigan.

Zarko, a 1993 U–M graduate, is suing the University for denying him access to University President James Duderstadt's e–mail and a restricted access computer conference open only to the Board of Regents.

While Duderstadt's personal e–mail should remain private, his e–mail pertaining to official business should be made public. The University should also allow access to the private Regental conference, since the Regents are elected public officials and the conference could easily be used to conduct University business.

There are existing laws governing written communication among members of the administration pertaining to the business of the University, but there are few laws pertaining to e–mail or computer conferences, due to the fact that these are fairly recent trends in interpersonal communication. Because e–mail uses telephone systems, some could consider these messages as analogous to telephone conversations, yet the laws governing these vary from state to state. For these reasons, universities throughout the country will carefully watch the outcome of Zarko's lawsuit, which will likely set a precedent for cases of this type.

The Regental computer conference is intended for discussions concerning University issues. These discussions should occur during the regularly scheduled Regents meetings, that fall under the Open Meetings Act and are required to be open to the public. The Regents could use private conferences to circumvent the law and conduct business without public oversight. Opening the computer conference to the public would insure that decisions could not be made in private.

Furthermore, the Michigan State Ethics Act mandates that public officials cannot use public funds for private purposes. Both the Board of Regents' computer conference and Duderstadt's official e–mail are produced while performing an official University function and are publicly funded. Therefore, according to the law, they should be accessible to the public.

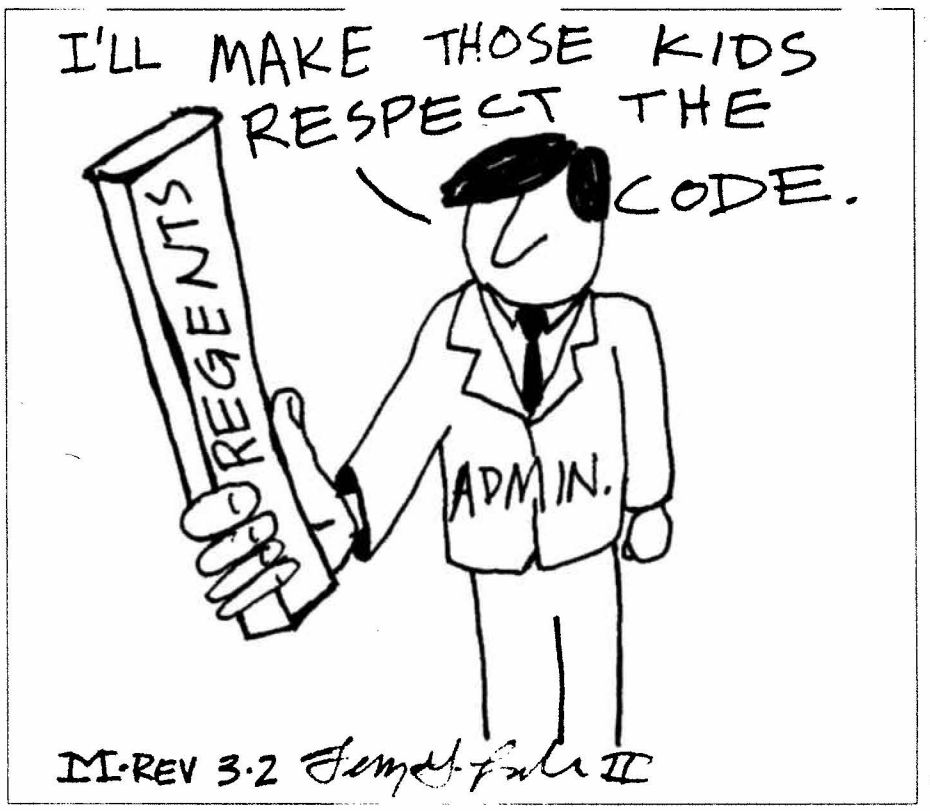
Interestingly, the University administration's publicly funded e–mail remains private while the University reserves the right to inspect students' e–mail, which is privately funded by tuition dollars. It is a common reflection of this administration's disrespect for students' rights (also seen in the Code and the Diag Policy). The Electronics Communication Protection Act (ECPA) was passed in 1986 to protect individuals from having their e–mail messages made public. The University cites the ECPA in defending the right to keep their e–mail private. However, the wording of the act does not protect the University because it is both the sender and recipient of the e–mail.

Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), all records made during an official function must be accessible to the public. The University claims that electronic communication is exempt from the ramifications of FOIA. If this holds true, any public records could be converted to electronic memoranda and withheld from the public eye.

Zarko's claim to Duderstadt's personal e–mail is frivolous at best. Personal e–mail is roughly the same as a telephone conversation or an informal note sent to a friend or colleague. Under current law, these are not required to be made public. What is more, Zarko's interest in Duderstadt's private e–mail is trivial. He is attempting to gain access "just to see if [I] can."

Access to Duderstadt's official e–mail, however, and the Regents restricted–access computer conference should be allowed. They should be treated just like any other form of official communication and be subject to the same requirements, including FOIA and the State Ethics Act. The Information Technology Division, which oversees the e–mail and computer conferences, currently has a postmaster who handles concerns with e–mail and could easily determine which e–mail was generated and received by administration personnel. This could then be examined by the FOIA officer to determine if it should be released, much like written communication is presently handled. The contents of the computer conference should not contain private messages and should therefore be made public without concerns for the privacy of personal communications and without having to be governed by FOIA.

The University's policies covering electronic communication need to be changed if the University is going to conduct business in a fair and open manner. Hopefully, Zarko's action against the University will do just that. **MR**



❑ COMMENTARY

Olympics Go Geraldo

DURING BREAKS IN OLYMPIC COMPETITION, SPORTSCASTERS often show clips about a particular athlete's background. With amazing frequency, tragedy is involved. These interludes blemish the essential meaning of the sport (friendly competition) and have succeeded in turning the games into a three ring circus with Dave's mom as the ringmaster.

This year, Dan Jansen finally won the gold for speedskating this year, in his third and final attempt. In 1988, the day before he was supposed to skate, his sister died of cancer. The media made a huge deal about how he was going to dedicate his gold medal to her memory, and assumed he was going to win. He fell.

Dan is just one example of an athlete affected by mishap. There are seemingly thousands of them, which leads one to question the role of the media: are they there to survey and comment on the day's events, or are they there to publicize every last detail of these athletes' lives beyond the sport?

The Olympics is a challenge of athleticism; yet it seems to be a sympathy challenge: whoever has the best sob story wins. Poor Oksana Baiul. Even though she won the gold, the focus was on a personal struggle. Her father disappeared when she was three, her mother died when she was twelve, her grandmother at thirteen. Ah, another tale of trauma. At least she won the gold on her first try, so we won't have to hear it over and over again.

Swallow this: USA's Elizabeth Punsalan and Jarod Swallow are newlyweds. They celebrated their marriage by having the honor of competing in pairs figure skating this year. Isn't it awful that Punsalan's father was stabbed to death by her crazy brother?

Must we be bombarded by these stories? The Olympics should be an athletic venture, "the thrill of victory, the agony of defeat"; not the thrill of Geraldo, the agony of murders and insane asylums. It is simply not in the proper context. It may be sad, but it becomes comic after listening to it every night.

Sometimes disasters happen to the athletes themselves. This year, the ski jumper who was scheduled to light the torch broke his leg on a practice run. Other broken legs were suffered by six CBS sportscasters and an American skier, who broke his leg running to catch a bus back to the Olympic Village.

Speaking of the Nordic competition, one cross–country skier from Norway's brother is missing. This story isn't as heart–wrenching as the others. Maybe if we learned that he was chopped up with a chainsaw because his closet Finnish lover got angry that the Norweigan was winning—wait, this is sounding *too* much like Geraldo. The Olympics should focus more on the sport, so people worldwide can feel pride in their country and these athletes for their dedication, rather than feel pity because of all the tragedies. **MR**

❑ SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING

The Truth About Hubble

BY BRIAN SCHEFKE

IN APRIL 1990, THE HUBBLE Space Telescope was released from the space shuttle Discovery amid much excitement over its capability to see distant objects more clearly than existing ground–based telescopes. Unfortunately, an error in the grinding of the main mirror severely limited the sensitivity of Hubble.

Much of that has changed since shuttle astronauts repaired Hubble in December 1993. With corrections made to the main mirror, Hubble can now view distant objects with remarkable sharpness.

But what exactly is Hubble and how does it work? Essentially it is a very sophisticated robot. According to Douglas Richstone, professor of astronomy at the University of Michigan, the programming of Hubble's computers "is probably the most complicated program of any civilian computer, except for the international telephone system."

Hubble maintains a link with ground computers at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. Astronomers who have been granted use of Hubble for a certain period of time have their programs fed into the ground computer. Then, says Richstone, "the computers generates orders that get sent up to the telescope, and a queue is created."

"Next, Hubble's computer translates the orders and executes them according to the queue." This means that Hubble is pointed in whatever direction its orders dictate; for example, a certain celestial object for a period of time.



I can't believe it! They fixed Hubble!

Light collected by the mirrors is distributed among five instruments aboard Hubble. There are two cameras, the Faint Object camera and the Wide Field and Planetary Camera, two spectrographs (the Faint Object Spectrograph and the Goddard High–Resolution Spectrograph) for examination of different kinds of astronomical radiation, as well as a photometer to measure brightness of objects.

The highly publicized error in the main mirror made it appear to many that the telescope was rendered useless, but that was a hasty judgment. Hubble has been quite useful in studying our own solar system, such as the planets Jupiter and Saturn. In addition, the Faint Object Camera has been able to provide clear images of Pluto and its moon Charon, which appeared fused together when viewed from Earth.

Even more distant objects were observed during the time of Hubble's near–sightedness. The High–Resolution Spectrograph was used to examine ultraviolet emissions from the star Beta Pictoris, according to the June 1992 issue of *Scientific American*. These observations will be useful in studying the later stages of the birth of stars.

Richstone's work involves finding black holes at the centers of galaxies. "We could do part of our work before, with the telescope in poor condition." Furthermore, Richstone explains that, "We have discovered two kinds of elliptical galaxies. Low–luminosity galaxies have very dense central regions, while high–luminosity galaxies have central regions of low density." This unexpected observation, according to Richstone, will "pose a challenge to current theories of galaxy formation."

Still, the repairs done on Hubble have markedly increased its usefulness. Richstone and others took a gamble on applying for time last May, when the results of the repairs were not certain. "We're doing a second round of observations," says Richstone, "and they could have already started. We expect the results to be done about a year from now." Observations like these, many hope, will give us all a taste of what Hubble can really do. **MR**

Brian Schefke is a senior in cellular and molecular biology and a former contributing editor of the Review. *He wishes everyone all the best.*

A Look at Club Sports: Cycling

BY MOHAN KRISHNAN

IMAGINE RUSHING DOWN A road in a pack of 30 cyclists, averaging between 20 and 30 miles per hour. This is a common occurrance for members of the University of Michigan Cycling Club, according to club president Ryan Hopping.

Bicycling is a co-ed club sport at the University of Michigan. The Cycling team competes against many other midwestern schools in the National Collegiate Cycling Association (NCCA). They participate in a number of races, starting at the end of February and continuing until the regional and national competitions in early May.

In the past, collegiate cycling has been focused primarily on road bike racing, yet there is a rising interest in mountain biking and the club is looking to participate more actively in mountain bike racing next season.

Typical road races consist of a 20 to 30 mile criterium—a short, fast race on a closed, one–mile loop—as well as a longer road race, often containing several climbs, for more experienced riders. Typical mountain races include trail racing and a downhill slalom event much like the skiing event of the same name.

The NCCA is part of the United States Cycling Federation (USCF), which holds cycling races on both the professional and amateur levels. Hopping said that while some riders on the U—M team also participate in USCF races, the team itself only participates in NCCA events. The NCCA categorizes riders into three levels — A, B, and C — on the basis of experience (A being the most advanced), so that riders of varying ability can compete against those with whom they are most evenly matched.

In addition to fund raisers, yearly dues, and a small amount of support from the University, the Cycling Club enjoys sponsorship from at least two local merchants: Ulrich's Bookstore and Great Lakes Cycling & Fitness.

The club is continually striving to remain competitive with the best of midwestern NCCA colleges. They are currently expanding their options in coaching, structure, and riding opportunities, as well as in types of races, such as mountain biking events, and they welcome new members.

Hopping, as well as fellow member Jude Burke, emphasized that interested students should not be concerned if they are inexperienced with the world of bicycle racing. Students can expect to compete and get into the swing of things their first season. Hopping mentioned that he himself is still somewhat new to racing, but has advanced quickly upwards from the beginner level.

In fact, he said, "We don't need expert riders! We can work on that." The Club can also work together with students who want to participate but are too busy. Rather than holding regularly scheduled practices, the club members cooperate to place riding and training time within their schedules and practice primarily in small groups.

Not every member is expected to compete in every race. On average, 7 to 10 members go to a given race. The races occur on most weekends, once the season is underway. Hopping said that the riders usually explore the campus of the host college, go out to the surrounding town, or study at the host's library when they're not racing.

The more serious members, according to Hopping, ride four to five days each week to train, substituting indoor riding and cross training when the weather is unfavorable for outdoor riding, in addition to racing and attending logistical meetings that are held roughly once a week.

While there are no tryouts, and all one really needs is a bicycle and a love for the sport, Hopping said that since the season is so far underway this year, interested students should look for the club's stand at Festifall on the Diag next fall term or possibly for an informational meeting at the end of this term. Burke added that since mountain bike racing is a relatively new field, the club is especially looking for prospective members who have an interest in it.

The essence of the Cycling Club lies in its members' interest in this sport. Hopping stressed how much they enjoy the competitions and said, "Mostly, we have a great time when we go to our races." **MR**

Mohan Krishnan is a freshman in engineering and a staff writer for the Review.

❑ INTERVIEW: BILL CLINTON

Slick Willie Talks

OVER SPRING BREAK, TWO of our staffers, Charles Montgomery Burns and Nathaniel O'Connor went on a road trip to Washington, D.C. While there, they spotted the president of the United States at a local pub getting, well, tanked. Over the course of the evening, the leader of the free world had some curious things to say. Being Reviewites, the staffers had hidden tape recorders affixed where no one, not even Michael Jackson, would look.

O'CONNOR: Dude, what's going on?

CLINTON: Well, not much. Hillary's out of town, trying to spread the gospel of socialized medicine, so being the wildcat that I am, I thought I would add to our gross domestic product by swilling some brew.

BURNS: Aren't you looking to get laid, too?

CLINTON: Hell, yes I am! Who do you think I am, Brian Boitano? Speaking of ice skaters, if I see Tonya Harding's fat ass waving in front of my face one more time on television, I'm gonna nationalize the networks.

BURNS: But you've got a penchant for huge, corpulent butts, Mr. President. Just look at Gennifer Flowers and your wife.

CLINTON: True. Hey, did you guys check out the spread of Gennifer in *Penthouse*? I loved the interview, too. She was right, you know. I am the Champ.

O'CONNOR: Of what? Making the American people slaves of the state?

CLINTON: Well, that too. But I was talking about my skills in bed, on the kitchen floor, or in the parking lot of Chelsea's school for that matter.

BURNS: What about in the Oval Office? Come clean, dude, did you or did you not have sex with the First Lady in the Oval Office during your first night in the White House?

CLINTON: No. As the *American Spectator* reported a few months ago, she only gets it twice a year. My being inaugurated as the forty–second president wasn't a special enough occasion. She begged me to, so I sent her over to Vince Foster as a replacement.

O'CONNOR: Ah, yes, Mr. Foster. What's up with that, Champ?

CLINTON: This is completely off the record?

O'CONNOR: Of course.

CLINTON: Well, I caught him jacking off to old photos of Ronald Reagan and howling in ecstasy, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that wall!" I was so ticked off that I threatened to go public with the information unless he satisfied Hillary's unending sexual appetite for the next four years. I can't blame him for reacting the way he did.

BURNS: Talk about hasty reactions, what was the deal with you blowing up at Brit Hume when he asked about Ruth Bader Ginsburg?

CLINTON: That little shrew pissed me off. Just before the press conference, she told me that she would actually refer to the Constitution when making legal decisions. Can you believe that? How does she expect me to create Utopia on earth with that sort of attitude? I wanted to yank her nomination right then and there, but then I remembered Lani Guinier, Zoë Baird, Kimba Wood and decided it wouldn't be such a good idea. Besides, Hume ticked me off, too. I can't afford to have any freedom–loving, right–wing journalist biting at my heels all through my term, uh, terms. As president, I need to be able to usurp all the power I can, so that I can make the New Deal look like those greedy eighties.

O'CONNOR: Oh, really? I thought that the government that governs best is the government that governs least. At least that's what Jefferson believed.

CLINTON: I didn't know George Jefferson was into politics! How did Weezie let him get away with that?

BURNS: I think he was talking about *Thomas* Jefferson, the third president of the United States and the man responsible for the Bill of Rights.

CLINTON: Isn't that the document that checks governmental power and prevents me from taking away everyone's guns and civil liberties with the stroke of a pen? What a crock. As president, I should be able to do whatever I damn well please. For example, if I want to firebomb a bunch of gun–loving, government–hating, non–tax-paying, pot–smoking Texans, I should be able to do it! Wait a minute. I did do that, didn't I? Maybe I *can* trample on the Constitution and get away with it after all! Yee haw!

O'CONNOR: But I thought you were in favor of pot smoking?

CLINTON: Well, you're right about that. Hell, back at Oxford I had a bong the size of a corn silo.

BURNS: So you did inhale?

CLINTON: Hell yes I did! I not only inhaled, I drank the bong water along with it. I tell you, man, it tasted sweeter than the sweat off of an Arkansas high school cheerleader.

BURNS: We heard you did some other things while you were at Oxford. Like, I don't know ... traveling to Russia during the peak of the Cold War?

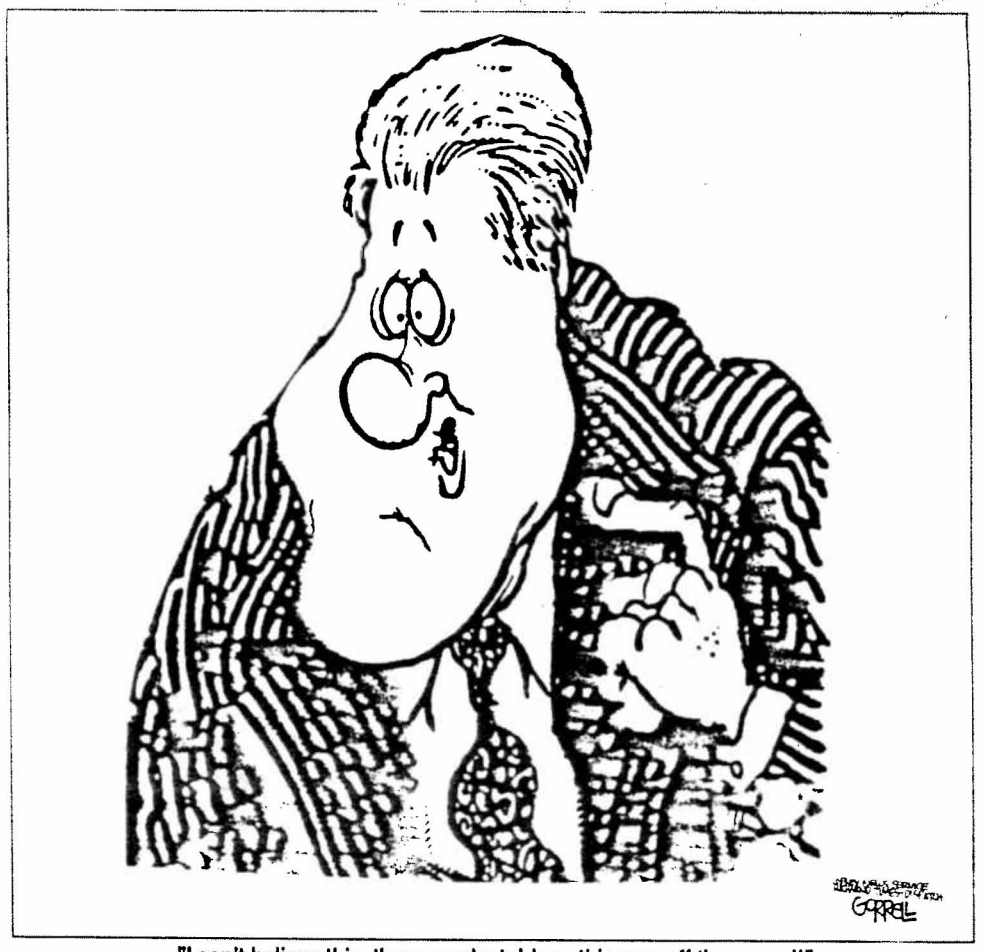
CLINTON: Yeah, that was fun. Despite the fact that I was on acid for most of the trip, I do remember some things. For instance, there was that time I pissed on the American flag in Red Square right outside Lenin's tomb. Damn that was great. I can tell you one more thing, those Russian babes can suck a snowball through a garden hose. It's a lot more fun carousing with a bunch of Communists than it is getting shot at by them.

O'CONNOR: How would you know? Weren't you one of those losers who dodged the draft, not on the principle that conscription is an abuse of state power, but rather because you were too much of a wimp?

CLINTON: Call me what you want. In fact, you can call me Mr. President, you low–life serf of my discretion.

BURNS: Okay, Bill. Lets change the subject. Lets talk about your half–brother, Roger.

CLINTON: Just a second. [Calling to the waitress] 'Hey, baby. Shake that over here and bring me another Red, White and Blue while you're at it.' I'm gonna need to be totally inebriated when I talk about Roger. What a loser that guy is. I can't believe that out of three billion sperm, he won. I mean, I've never done anything productive in my life — unless you consider being a lifetime bureaucrat living off stolen money and ruling the lives of my underlings being productive — but this waste of space makes me look like Sam Walton. Did you see him sobbing on Barbra Streisand's shoulder like a little wuss when my track–bettin', two–colored–



"I can't believe this, those punks told me this was off the record!"

haired, illiterate, drunken sot for a mom kicked the bucket? Damn that pissed me off. I was planning to bed Barbra that night but she was so turned off by the snot on her dress that she blew out of town.

O'CONNOR: How did Chelsea take the death of her grandma?

CLINTON: It's hard to say. She's so pathetic looking that it's practically impossible to tell whether she's upset or not. I can't believe she's my kid.

BURNS: With the sexual mores of your family, she might not be.

CLINTON: Hell, that's what I initially thought. But fifteen blood tests can't be wrong.

O'CONNOR: [Looking across the bar] Hey, that looks like the wooden Indian, Tecumseh, from *Cheers*.

BURNS: No, I think that's the vice president.

CLINTON: Dammit! I just *knew* he'd follow me here. That guy is the stupidest, dullest, and most lame–brained idiot I have ever met. And I come from Arkansas, where if a person can read, people treat him like he's a Rhodes Scholar. The only reason I chose him as my running mate is because he enjoys pushing a socialist agenda, taking away people's private property, and halting the capitalistic advancement of man — all under the guise of environmentalism! It's such a brilliant strategy, I don't know how in the hell he ever thought of it.

BURNS: But the media keeps reporting that you two are such good friends.

CLINTON: Friends?!! What a joke! The day Albert Gore and I are friends is the day I choose to seduce Janet Reno instead of Gore's daughters. Have you guys seen those babes? They're all so close together age–wise that Tipper must have been popping 'em out like a Pez dispenser a few years back. Boy, I'd like to have some of that candy! Hot damn!

O'CONNOR: You've got some butt–ugly cabinet members, Bill, but I must say, Janet Reno takes the cake.

CLINTON: Please. Don't use the words "Reno" and "member" in the same sentence. It gives me the heebie–jeebies. But you're exactly right. Between those living corpses Lloyd Bentsen and Warren Christopher, and those Wizard of Oz–looking midgets Donna Shalala and Robert Reich, my cabinet makes the members of the National Organization of Women look like inhabitants of the Playboy Mansion.

BURNS: Christ, look at the time! We've got to be going, Bill, but it was great getting to know you.

O'CONNOR: Yeah, unlike bureaucrats such as yourself, we have to make ourselves productive in the free market tomorrow and earn our money instead of stealing it. Later.

CLINTON: Now just hold on, boys! It's only five–thirty in the morning. The night is young. Ted Kennedy should just be getting out of his fourth bar of the evening. Let's go join him.

O'CONNOR: Shut up you damn loser. I told you we had to go. Go back to the White House and pray that you don't ever have to earn your keep in the marketplace, because you'd surely starve with your feeble skills.

CLINTON: All right, all right. Just remember, this was all off the record

BURNS: Of course. MR

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❑ MUSIC

Jar of Flies Needs a Buzz

BY JOE MUMMA

AFTER BEING FORMED IN 1987, it was two years before Seattle's Alice In Chains signed a contract with Columbia Records. Their 1990 release, *Facelift*, displayed the band's knack for chunky, somewhat eerie riffs perfectly highlighted by Layne Staley's heavy vocals. After odd but successful tours with Van Halen, Iggy Pop, and Megadeth, and a slot on the "Clash of the Titans" Tour, *Facelift* sold half a million copies.

Alice in Chains
Jar of Flies
Columbia

In November of 1991, Alice in Chains recorded the semi–secretive, acoustical masterpiece *SAP* with such artists as Chris Cornel and that fat chick from Heart. The band showed that they could take their dark sound to an unplugged realm.

Less than a year after that, the "Singles" soundtrack brought Alice In Chains' "Would?" into every fraternity across America, paving the way for their second release, *Dirt*. Continuing the freak–metal tradition of *Facelift*, *Dirt* went double platinum after a tour with Ozzy Osbourne and a stint on Lollapalooza, which afforded a chance to play in front of thousands of alternateens.



Alice in Chains used to kick ass.

After such success, Alice in Chains, much like U2 and Guns n' Roses, has reached the point where they can get away with releasing total crap. Their latest release, *Jar of Flies* is close to that.

The band has released the truly unique recording they trying to achieve (Layne Staley has found something else to sing about besides drugs) and has blended the heaviness of *Facelift* and *Dirt* with the acoustics of *SAP*. However, the songs encompass the band's signature experimental acoustic sound and/or the potentially stale, four–part, wall–of–vocals courtesy of Staley, while guitarist Jerry Cantrell rips out riffs that are too reminiscent of old Chains songs. We've heard it all before.

The strings on "I Stay Away" are a suitable touch (again, before the generic AIC antics kick in), and Staley occasionally dubs in less than 6 vocal tracks. But the pseudo-emotional guitar work on the EP, highlighted by "Whale and Wasp," seems to rival Joe Satriani and Def Leppard more than anything else. Iced by predictable melodies and overall inconsistency, *Jar of Flies* is piss poor. **MR**

Joe Mumma is a bad mutha.

BY CRUSTY MUNCHER

THIS 7-INCH SINGLE IS ONE of the first releases on the new Detroit–based indie Rust Belt Records. On "Beautiful" Big Block makes a convincing brand of guitar pop that recalls fellow Detroiters The Junk Monkeys. The flip side, "Grounded", is an emotive 70s arena–rock ballad driven by Nick's raspy voice, much like that of the young Tom Waits.

Big Block
Beautiful
Rust Belt Records

Catch Big Block at St. Andrew's on March 8th with Surgery. **MR**

Deth Kills Competition

BY CRUSTY MUNCHER

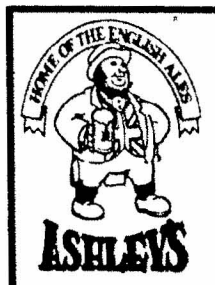
IN 1992, BRITISH METALHEADS Lawnmower Deth released *Return of the Fabulous Metal Bozo Clowns*, a comedic punk/metal LP loaded with erratic riffing and wrenching time changes, the very ingredients that make heavy metal records so doggone tedious. The Lawnmower Deth on *Return* recalled other jocular, hyper-active bands like Scatterbrain, D.R.I., and even Mr. Bungle. But on Lawnmower's new record, things have improved.

It seems that the blokes have spent the last few years listening to lots of the melodic punk rock of the 70s and 80s and have traded the spastic yelling and screaming for infectious melody. And have no fear, the band have *not* nixed the speedy tempos, crunchy guitar work, and funny lyrics that mark past Lawnmower records. All of the goofing off is still here and is exemplified on the album–ending lounge–act rendition of Hendrix's "Purple Haze." Lawnmower murders the classic with a new set of lyrics and pleasantly dissonant ivory tickling.

Lawnmower Deth
Billy
Earache Records

Gone are the passé heavy metal riffs. Instead the listener is treated to songs delivered in the manner of the incipient punk bands. Tunes like "Buddy Holly Never Wrote A Song Called We're To Punk" and "Kids in America ('93)" chug on with poppy melodies reminiscent of old Buzzcocks works, while "I Need To Be Your Main Squeeze" and "Do You Wanna Be A Chuffed Core?" rely on the same 50s rock n' roll influence that made the Ramones legendary.

Fans of the punk–pop of old 7 Seconds, NOFX, and Bad Religion will enjoy this superb offering. **MR**



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