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KLIPSUN

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STATIC NOISE

Klipsun has been accused of lacking a plan, but that's just not true. Our methods are simple. We set people free to seek out stories and shoot photographs in an attempt to live up to the sunset mentality: A sunset is spontaneous. It's brilliantly colored one day, causing one to stop and stare; the next day it may be colored sparsely, with puffy clouds covering its paleness. The reaction a sunset evokes is dependent on a plan that is pure, uncontrolled, and impossible to define.

Our plan, however, is easy to define. We respect passion as a propellant for quality. Its energy flows from minds and hands to our pages. Welcome to our impression of a sunset. 



Up on the Hilltop

The Hilltop in Tacoma is no place to spend an evening. Kristin D. Tomlinson faced her fears and took a ride in this high-crime area.

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Enzymatic Artisan

Brewing beer is an art, a science, and it even relates to Philosophy. Josh Godfrey tips a glass with Orchard Street's Master Brewer.

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Cryptic Confessions

It's the newest form of white collar crime. Damien Joldersma chats with a member of the software pilfering underworld.

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Parable from the Pulpit

Peacefulness is not out of reach. Steven Uhles listens to a human rights advocate tell her side of the events in Sandpoint Idaho.

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Search Light

They are the the last hope, awakened at all hours to find the lost and injured. Christine Root finds out what motivates them.

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**D i m e n s i o n &
P e r s p e c t i v e**



Bigger is Better?

Corporate culture has spread its tentacles to Bellingham. Al Bentley spends a day examining its influence on the community.

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Alienated

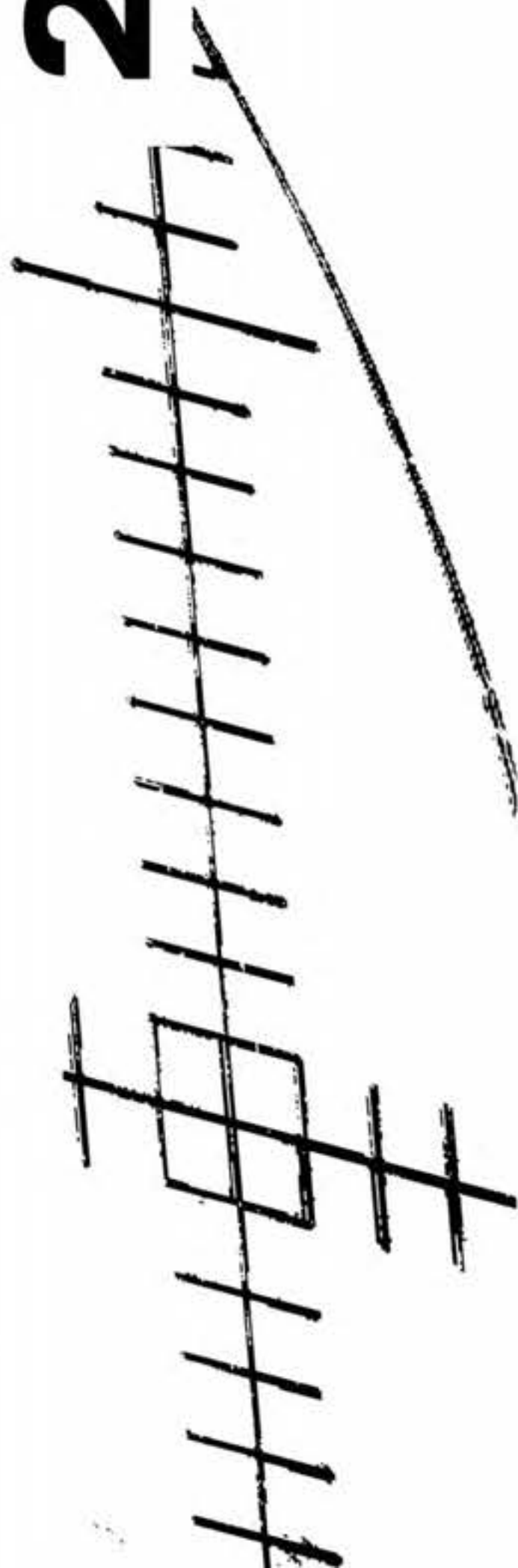
Are Aliens cluttering society with images of themselves to desensitize humankind? Derek Reiber seeks answers from the experts.

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Humdinger House

Artistic expression need not be marketable, especially at the Humdinger House. Tina Potter finds a place where musicians make themselves at home.

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BIGGER BETT



“Do you need shoes, but don't have enough money?”
Al Bentley scuffs his way through 151,000 square feet of Wal-Mart Culture.

At first I feel sorry for Wal-Mart—all stuck out near the northern tip of Bellingham at 4420 Meridian, beyond Bellis Fair, past the brazen 10-foot-high letters of Value Village, past Toys'R'Us and Cost Cutter, even past Olive Garden and the distant Costco. The blue Wal-Mart sign at the street even looks wistful and puny. It is not nearly as big as its neighboring signs. But Wal-Mart isn't just some measly little planet.

In August 1996, a construction company from Idaho filled in the extensive marsh, which once thrived on the land and built the biggest Wal-Mart store in the Northwest. More than 151,000 square feet from wall to wall, the Bellingham store is

one of the largest, single, retail stores in Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

Another sign, this one on the corner by the streetlight kitty-cornered to Taco Time reads: "Wal-Mart Tire and Lube Express—open 10-6." A 40-oz. bottle of Budweiser lies, forgotten, underneath it. A short distance behind the sign, ripples cover the surface of a small pool of water. Submerged in the water, a disintegrating Doritos bag seems only half way excited about its newer, zestier flavor.

Red 3-foot-high letters on the massive gray wall display Wal-Mart's alluring promise: We Sell For Less.

I park my bike underneath the sign and walk towards the entrance. On my way

into the store, I pass a stack of Dogloos—little plastic huts customers can buy so their golden retrievers can pretend to be Siberian huskies.

To get to one of the two bathrooms in Wal-Mart (it was a long ride from Lakeway to Meridian), I have to walk through a McDonald's, which rents the space from Wal-Mart in what amounts to a shrewd business move for both parties. Wal-Mart gets their customers to rest and eat burgers, and this energizes them for more shopping: McDonald's gets a loyal and predictable patronage, already in the mood to consume.

The smell of freshly bleached floor melds with fat fryer. A plastic statue of

ERP



Klipsun/Stuart Martin

Ronald McDonald sits on a bench by the south entrance of McDonald's. I hate clowns. His eyes follow me wherever I go. I want to take his big, floppy, red boot off and slap his exaggerated smile into teeny-tiny paint chips.

The red, neon glow of the McDonald's sign glints off the shiny paint on Ronald's laser-beam pupils. His piercing glare is satanic. It is pure evil. I have to get away from him.

As I walk into the store, the brightly lit mountains of stuff stacked from floor to ceiling send my senses into overload. Everything about Wal-Mart is gigantic. I step quickly sideways and narrowly avoid being hit by two angry, balding, young men

who are racing to the return counter with a cart full of pink-packaged Barbies.

An odor of new plastic fills the space between the "More For Your Money!" signs, which hang from the ceiling in front of every aisle. Huge, yellow, smiling faces hang symmetrically on either side of the signs.

Enormous crates full of "Spices-2/1.00," plastic laundry baskets stacked to eye level—it's too much to take in at once. I rest at a "wooden" desk tucked neatly between toaster displays and take out my notebook.

"Good afternoon Wal-Mart shoppers!" a woman's muffled voice says cheerily over the loudspeakers. "Do you need shoes but

Compare & Save

(facts as of December 31, 1997
wal-mart.com)

**Wal-Mart employees in the
US of A: 700,000**

**Stores in Germany:
21**

Spices: 2/\$1

**World-wide Wal-Mart take
per week:
\$16.5 (billion)**

**American Wal-Mart loca-
tions (including Supercenters
and SAM'S Clubs):
2802**

**First Wal-Mart store:
1962**

**Customers per week:
90 (million)**

**Spiral sliced turkey
breast:
\$32.97**





Photos and illustration by Justin Coyne

don't have enough money? Well, stop by our shoe department and check out our clearance racks, and, as always, thank you for shopping at Bellingham Wal-Mart!"

I meet the manager at the front of the store. He takes me to a door with a little copper plaque that reads, BILL GATES—MANAGER, in black inset.

"Bill Gates, eh?" I quip, trying to make him feel comfortable.

"Yeah, it's pretty funny," Gates says, nodding and brushing his mustache with his fingers.

Gates wears a short-sleeved, buttoned shirt with the company's colors running stripes down the front and back—red, blue, red, blue.

He wears a pocket protector and his brown hair short. If I blur my eyes a little he could actually be the Microsoft mega-billionaire.

Gates manages one of the 2,823 American Wal-Mart stores.

The ones in South America, Gates says, are the biggest problem.

"And it wasn't the language either. It was the, uh, Wal-Mart culture.

"Wal-Mart culture has a lot to do with customer service," he explains. "A lot of people say that is the best thing about Wal-Mart—we have the best customer service. That's why we could buy up Woolworth's. Their business went downhill because they had a bad reputation for customer service."

"So people in South America had a problem with good customer service?" I ask.

"Well, it seems ridiculous, but, in fact, yes. It was hard to motivate them about that.

"We were well accepted in this community," Gates says. "We were up front with everybody, (about when and where

the Wal-Mart would exist). We looked at the growth pattern of Bellingham and decided on the Meridian site. Of course, we'd rather have one closer to the Interstate, but there was no land available."

"How has Wal-Mart affected the local mom'n'pop stores in the area?" I ask.

"Well, that's one of the biggest criticisms of places like this, like K-Mart or Wal-Mart—that we're taking away business from other local businesses. But you know, I've worked in 10 different cities in the past 13 years, and I'll say this—I have never seen a well-run business go out of business because of a place like Wal-Mart.

"But being located out here next to all these other retail stores," he continues. "Man, there's gotta be more retail per square foot in Bellingham than in any other town I've ever seen. So, yeah, we've got the biggest store, and if the sale is good, then wonderful. But if it isn't ... " he chuckles.

His walkie-talkie springs to life and he hurriedly switches off the radio.

"I saw one of your cart people with one of those," I say, pointing to the radio. "Why do you need those?"

"Well, it keeps the chatter down on the intercom system," Gates explains. "When you have this many employees, it's convenient and nicer on the ears if you don't have people interrupting the intercom all the time. It's also for security purposes."

"What kind of security purposes?"

"Well, like 'Code Adam.' It was on 'America's Most Wanted' a couple of years ago. Some kid got kidnapped out of a store like this one, and there was no way for the employees to stop it from happening. With these," Gates says, cradling the small, black radio, "When somebody has a missing child, we can let everyone know, and we put one person on each door, and we don't let anyone that has a child by that description go past unless the kid knows where his or her parents are."

I wander dazedly out of Gates' office, squeak my sneakers





Klipsun/Stuart Martin

over the dappled cream linoleum and promise myself not to buy anything. There are batteries, though, which operate my bike light, and Sno Seal, which keeps my boots from turning into puddle-collectors. I pick up a package of each and feel horrible. But it's cheap and I'm here, so what the hell?

There's a fish and pet section at the back wall. Murky fish eat murky food in the dull water. A clerk helps a golden-haired girl net a "shark"—a black-tip finned goldfish that she has already named Wally. He's a hard catch, and it takes the worker almost five minutes to trap the fish.

Two old ladies in pink and yellow hair bonnets walk toward the plastic bag display.

"We gotta keep our eyes open for bargains," Pink says to Yellow.

"A dollar eighty-two!" Yellow exclaims. "I don't understand it. How's it so cheap?"

"The thing of it is, though, I like this Hefty bag. It's a good bag," says Pink.

"Yeah, but this is cheaper," says Yellow, grabbing the Zip-loc.

I avoid any confrontation and wander into the "flower" aisle. A wall of plastic flowers towers scentlessly over me: blue roses, fuschia carnations, rainbow-colored tulips. I discover a display of individually wrapped, green, Styrofoam flower arrangers at 77 cents a brick.

"As soon as you say 'Gimme!' you're not going to get it," an exhausted-sounding dad tells his whimpering son. "You should ask nicely, and maybe I'll get it for you."

A woman with big hair and a cart full of Friskies cans examines a display of heart-shaped wall plaques—\$13.97. She smells like cigarette smoke.

A sign says kids have to be at least 16 before they can purchase a foot-long CO2 pellet pistol. I can buy a gun here at Wal-Mart. It is crow season, according to a giant hand-written sign laying out what you can shoot, how much of it

and where you might find one. I notice there is no limit on crows. I could kill all the crow meat in Whatcom County if I wanted to.

Three stuffed deer heads are mounted on the wall in a row. Next to them, a fierce-looking duck wages battle with a mounted pheasant. A brown bear torso, complete with forearms and claws, jumps from the wall with its lips pinned to its face fur. It's good they caught that thing before it started mauling children in the toy section next door.

The wall-sized poster above the pharmacy displays a disturbing quantity of drugs spread out on a table. Either this is the table of someone who is very ill, or of someone who is about to commit suicide. Mounds of colorful blue and red pills and white and green ovals, which look like candy, cover the table. A half-full spoon of red liquid juts toward me from the left edge of the frame. Vials filled with yellow fluid lay carelessly on their sides above a white pile of Q-Tips.

I take my items up to the counter and peruse trashy magazines. "Billie's Pregnant! What will happen to Bo and Hope?" The Soap Opera Digest does not allure me. "New Secrets of Winning Dieters!"—neither does Reader's Digest.

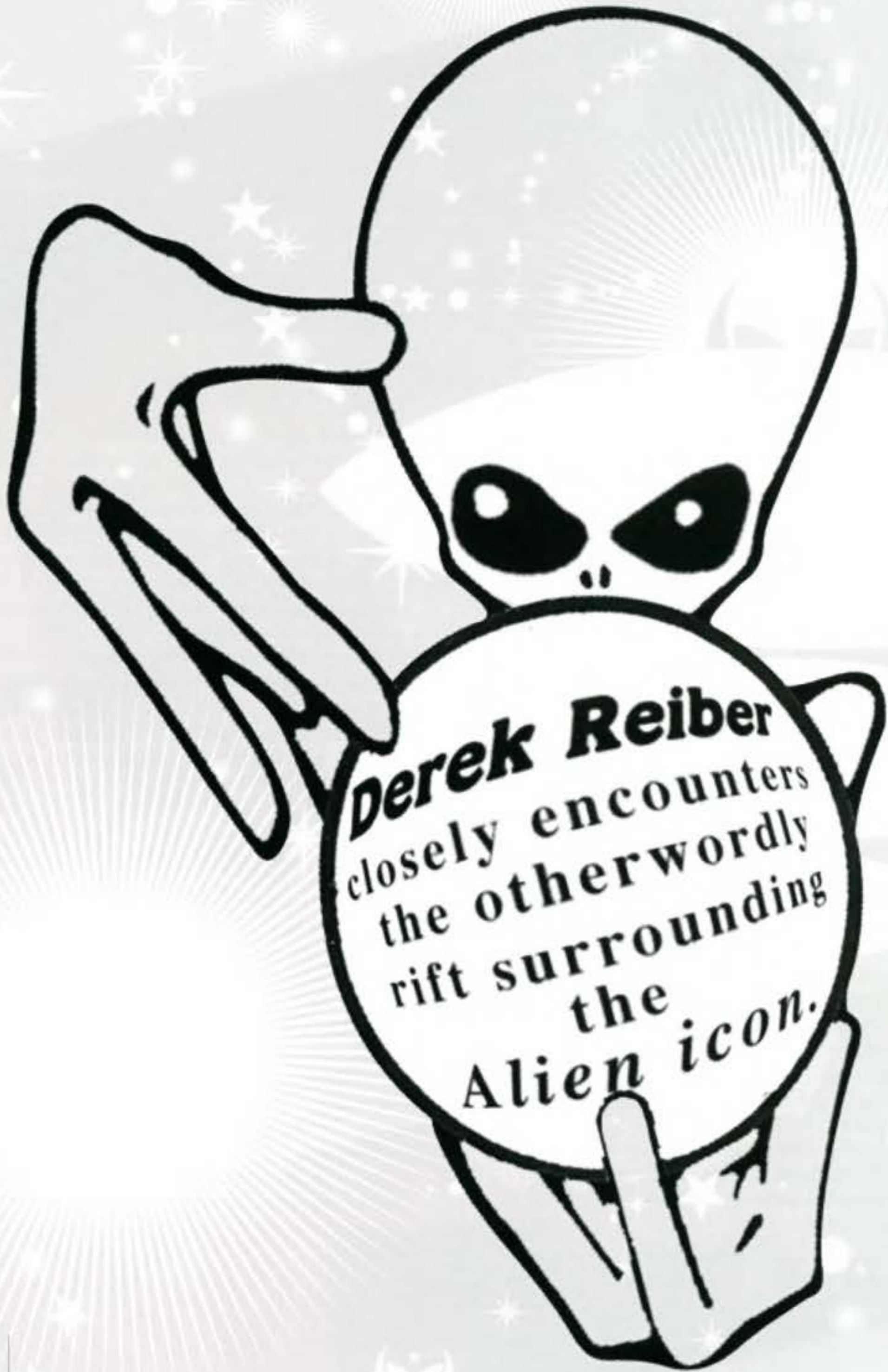
Outside the store, without an ounce of sympathy for Wal-Mart's distant location, I can't understand why I bought anything at all.

If I ever end up buying a fake plant or anything fluorescent, please let there be some 16-year-old CO2-pistol-packin' kid right behind me with a hate for hippies and an itchy trigger finger. That will be the end for me. I tap the receipt again and crunch it up in my pocket. It's 5:30. I still have time to take this merchandise back. **K**



Dimension
& Perspective

ALIENVA



Derek Reiber
closely encounters
the otherworldly
rift surrounding
the
Alien icon.

Illustrations by Hoa and Matt Finlinson

reed

THE INVASION HAS BEGUN.

They have arrived and exist among us. We are powerless to stop them, so we go about our daily lives, feigning normalcy. Soon, their appearance becomes routine, and we fail to notice them. We also fail to question their intentions: are they evil or good? Will they bring slavery or paradise? We may never know.

That is because "they" have not yet truly arrived—at least in the physical sense. Instead, "they" are, to many, a harmless, ubiquitous symbol: a guitar pick-shaped head with two large, black oval eyes. It is the icon of the alien, a representation of UFOs and extra-terrestrial life. And it has a firm grip on our culture.

The alien image personifies America's fixation with UFOs. Since the first reported UFO sighting at Washington State's Mount Rainier in 1947, UFOs have bordered on a national obsession, saturating the movie industry, television and literature. Television's "The X-Files" continues to soar in popularity, while thousands flock to Roswell, N.M.—the center of UFO mania—to view the alleged crash site of an alien spacecraft. The most recent Gallup poll on UFOs, conducted in 1996, shows that 72 percent of those polled believe some form of life exists on other planets, and 71 percent think the government knows more about UFOs than it is revealing. Perhaps even more telling, 48 percent believe UFOs are "something real."

"The fact is that more people are seriously interested in UFOs now than they ever have [been]," says Don Ecker, news editor for UFO Magazine. "Convincing the government may be an exercise in futility, but it's not hard to find believers on the streets."

Regardless of widespread belief in UFOs, the world's largest UFO organization—the 5,000-member Mutual UFO Network (MUFON)—estimates that well over 90 percent of UFO sightings are, in fact, IFOs—Identifiable Flying Objects, such as airplane lights, meteors and weather

balloons. MUFON says only 5 percent of UFO sightings are real and legitimate.

Although organizations such as MUFON attempt to lend credibility to the field of UFO investigation, the study of UFOs has been plagued by looniness, hoaxes and misinterpretations of natural phenomena. The stereotype of the typical UFO wacko—a crazed cultist with eyes glued to the stars—still remains, but nevertheless we are still fascinated with aliens and UFOs. Millions glue to the TV watching "The X-Files" weekly. Anything depicting an alien, the weird head with big eyes, is a hot commodity.

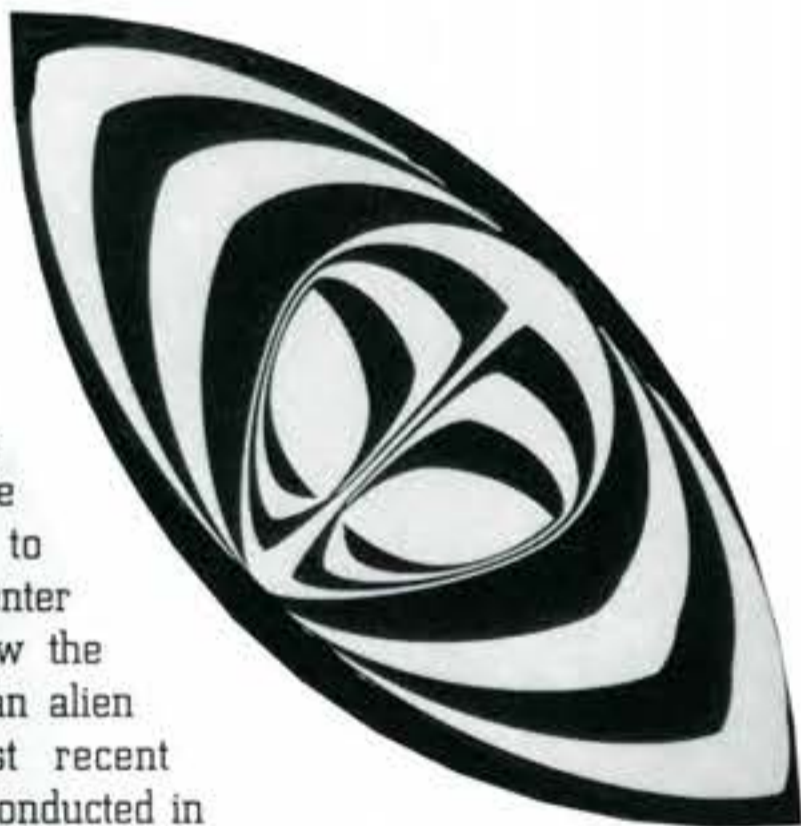
How did it all begin? The standard image of the alien started with the reports of "abductees," who claimed to have been kidnapped by aliens and used in genetic experiments.

They spoke of small, skinny, gray creatures, no more than 4 to 5 feet tall, with large heads and enormous black eyes. This depiction was viewed by millions in

Steven Spielberg's movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and has since been merchandised on stickers, T-shirts, coffee mugs and just about any other commercial object. Our acceptance of the alien archetype and its pervasiveness in consumer culture could stem from a variety of origins. It could be a distillation of our collective paranoia surrounding UFOs, or a representation of our obsession with the mysterious and strange. Or it could simply all be a flash in the pan, a trend that will die out in time.

But some among the field of UFO research take the alien face icon and its saturation in our culture very seriously. The immersion of UFOs in the commercial marketplace could potentially damage what is considered by some the credible and serious field of UFO research. Alien-based gimmickry could demean the subject in the eyes of the general public, who may deep down remain skeptical as to their reality. But, all the while, they are still increasingly receptive to aliens in pop culture.

"I think the additional spotlight placed on the subject is making more and more people aware of the phenomenon," Don Ecker says. "Only



history will tell us whether this ultimately ends up being good for the research field or not."

But there are those who prefer to act now, rather than wait for history to explain aliens' impact on our society. Spread The Word, an organization based in Stanwood, Wash., is using a medium of commercial pop culture—the sticker—to combat the ubiquitous nature and acceptance of the alien face. The organization's anonymous founder, simply called V2, began in 1995 a worldwide "Say NO to Deceptive Alien Entities" campaign by disseminating stickers and information to anyone interested. The campaign's slogans include phrases such as "Stop the Alienation," "Advocate Discernment" and "Represent Truth." Spread The Word's emblem is the common alien face, only with the international "No" symbol of a circle with a line through it superimposed over the alien.

"Spread The Word began like a bolt out of the blue. We attribute its inception to divine intervention," V2 says. "There seemed a need to counter the blind display by our society of an entity which has done nothing to merit our trust or adoration. The STW campaign acts as a reality check for the individual, its emblem a call to stop and discern."

V2 points to the tales of abductees to reveal the truth about these "alien entities."

"I believe people who say they've had these experiences," V2 says. "They're abducted against their will. They're manipulated and treated as victims. They're probed, implanted, raped and otherwise abused."

The often horrifying stories abductees tell clash sharply with the accepted notion of aliens as gentle "E.T.s," along with the belief that if aliens are technologically superior, then they must be benevolent.

The solution is to combat the alien phenomenon individually, to fight against the idolization of the alien in our culture, V2 says. V2 proposes an "inoculation" alien invasion theory to explain the prevalence of the alien image. In this theory, the alien head serves as our inoculation to the aliens' imminent arrival, much like an actual inoculation of a virus into the body to help foster antibody growth. The common acceptance of the alien image is our inoculation, so that when they do arrive, we are accustomed and prepared. Whether it be alien propaganda, a government-organized effort or a worldwide subconscious realization,

the appearance of the common alien face seems more than a simple coincidence to Spread The Word.

To believe the modern myth of aliens as benign, loving and kind is wrong, V2 stresses. Instead, we should pay attention to the often terrifying stories of abductees.

"I think we can embrace the alien in terms of their existence and teaching us something," V2 says, "but don't embrace them as idols."

"I actually think it's people would let an so much and with so

As to skeptics who say Spread The Word is just a joke, V2 responds, "It doesn't matter to us what one's orientation on the alien issue is as long as the emblem is spread and seen."

If V2 and Spread The Word are to be believed, the threat of alien invasion is very real. But others have adopted the alien face icon, in a similar fashion to V2, but with drastically different intentions and results. Perhaps none differs as greatly from Spread The Word as Bill Barker and SCHWA.

In the summer of 1992, a friend of Barker's gave him a copy of an article titled "The Secret Government," which outlined a conspiracy theory that the world has been run by aliens since the 1940s. The commercial artist, based in Reno, Nev., saw the perfect makings for a self-proclaimed "corporate art project."

Within days, Barker had completed 35 line drawings, depicting the alien invasion of a planet populated with stick figures, using a geometric and stark black-and-white style.

His drawings were enigmatic, intriguing works, mounting up in no sequential or narrative order to become, as Barker calls it, "relentlessly incomprehensible."

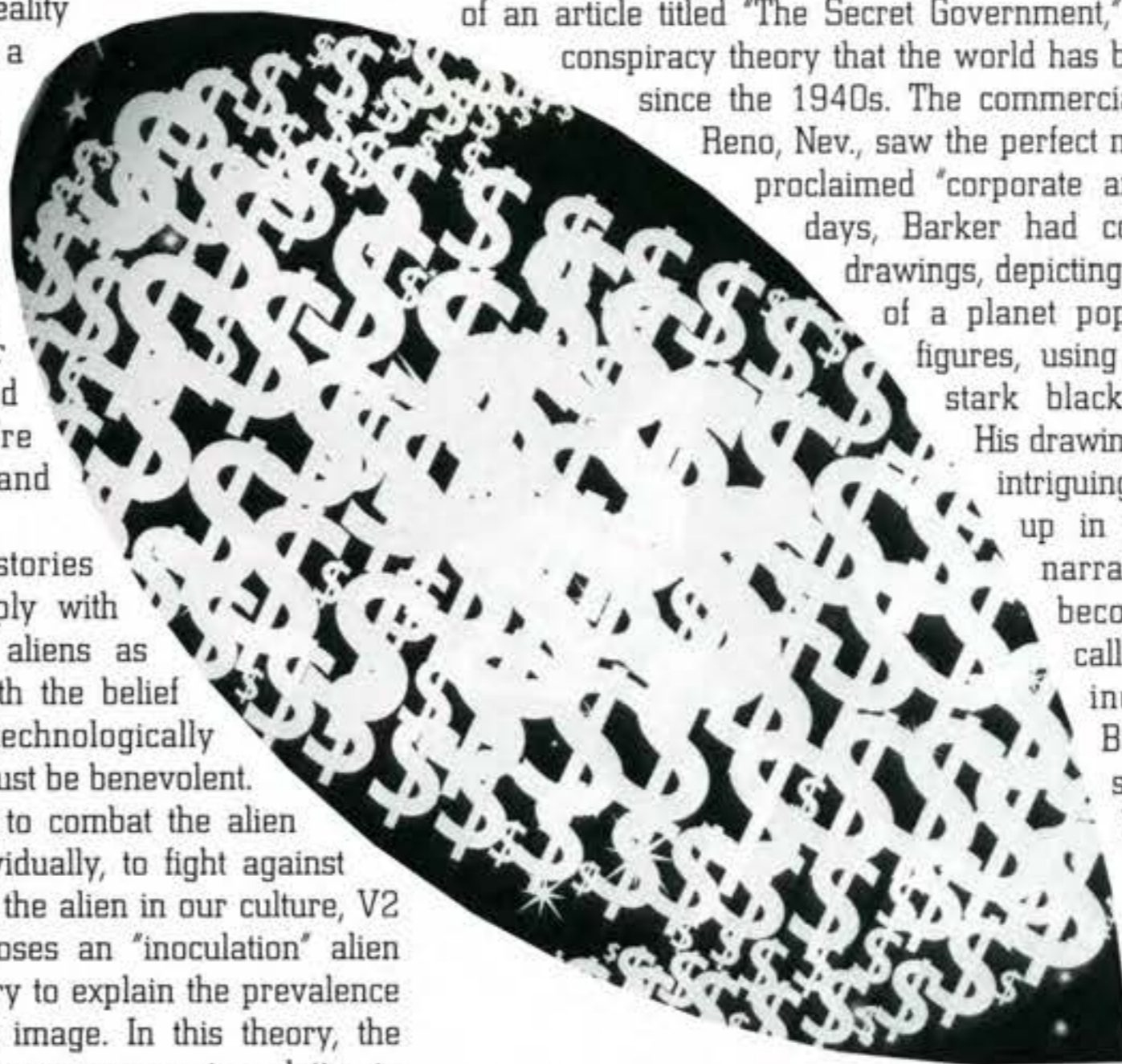
Barker was soon self-publishing books of his drawings under the name of SCHWA.

What began as a hobby soon

turned into a one-man industry and phenomenon, as SCHWA has since released three books and scores of stickers, identification cards, key chains and assorted trinkets. Revenues increased 350 percent the first year, and nearly 650 percent the second. The rapid growth is now beginning to level off, but SCHWA remains popular even though a majority of people don't really "get it."

That is precisely because SCHWA is not just a fantasy about aliens or a prediction of doom. There is much more going on in Barker's drawings than it at first appears.

In the words of art critic William L. Fox, "There are beamed abductions, mass hysteria, a resistance movement, the coercive brainwashing of the populace, existential despair and suicide—along with sly self-references, a vaguely Marxist critique of capitalist society, sight gags and double-takes, and some genuinely disturbing commentary on the American propensity to



pretty funny, conceptually, that oddly shaped face affect them little thought as to why."

suspend its disbelief while watching television's pseudo-documentary show "The X-Files."

In the end, it is irrelevant to Barker whether or not aliens truly exist. What is important is the myth of the alien and UFOs may be the most accessible theme of our subconscious.

"There's a subtle line between what may already be happening and what we make up," explains Barker, 39, who says his intent with SCHWA is to challenge our grasp of reality for a short while. "SCHWA is a projection. You decide what it means."

Barker chose the name SCHWA to embody the vague and confusing nature of his creation. His first book begins with a definition of SCHWA.

SCHWA: "noun. The indeterminate vowel sound of most syllables not stressed in English, as in the a in alone, the e in debris, the i in sanity, etc. 2. The phonic symbol denoting that sound (upside-down e) 3. Any strange or unexplainable occurrence."

Barker uses the well-known alien face as a basis for his drawings, defining it as a satirical symbol for our contemporary confusion, our inability to distinguish between what's real and what's not. The face, representing the alien "other," is a satirical force, says Barker, because it leads us back to the notion that someone else is causing our confusion, when in fact it is our own.

"I actually think it's pretty funny, conceptually, that people would let an oddly shaped face affect them so much and with so little thought as to why," Barker muses. "The funny thing about SCHWA is that if I had been giving it away, I probably would have been locked up by now. But since I do charge for it people say, 'Well, at least he's trying to make money.'"

So the rest of us are left to wonder: who to believe? Is the alien image all fun and games, a satirical poke at our faults, as used by Barker and SCHWA? Or should we

take it seriously, as V2 and Spread The Word does, and fight against the ubiquitous image? In the end, we may never know. Although aliens and UFOs remain a popular subject in our culture, those who truly believe in them as a reality remain in the fringe, operating in an underground world where they preach to the already converted.


For most of us, we simply think that aliens and UFOs are "cool," and do not ponder their deeper meaning. But behind their popularity may be more than meets the eye.

"Part of the popularity of alien imagery must be related to a deeper need to believe that there is something higher than what surrounds us on a day-to-day basis," says Naida Osline, a Huntington Beach, Calif. art center director who recently showed an exhibit dealing with aliens in popular culture, in UFO Magazine.

Tyler Stallings, who organized the exhibition, told the publication, "I feel that UFOs, as mysterious objects in the air, evoke deep feelings of incompleteness in humans. Their otherworldly nature reminds us that indeed there are things which humans do not know."

Who knows what the future will bring? Chances are we will still remain fascinated with UFOs, perhaps until the day when aliens really do arrive, step out of their spaceship and say, "Take me to your leader." Or, we may remain alone indefinitely, haunted by the tales of abductees and sightings of strange spacecraft.

Either way, in the meantime we will remain questioning and confused as to our place in the grand universe. And as we ponder, we can enjoy the satirical wit of Barker's SCHWA, whose aliens represent our subjugation to society's commercial control systems.

Or we can follow the grave warnings of V2 on alien invasion: "Think about it, absorb it, use your intuition and find your own truth. Most importantly, take an educated stand." 





Tina Potterf discovers an underground hot spot where bands jam for kids of all ages.

Justin Coyne photo



Humdinger

Robert Blake hosts all-ages shows two to three times a month.

Klipsun/Stuart Martin



Jon Collamer of Kola performs at the Humdinger House

House

The aging chair is stained in blached hues of lime green. Its stuffing hangs in folds like sodden drapery, and its torn seams stream outward to gather and interlace like spider veins. The chair, a conspicuous fixture posited below the weather-beaten awning, has become acquainted with a motley cast of characters—artists mostly—in its two years nestled on the leaden-cement porch. A scuffed, lanky door is the threshold into a domain where inventiveness and ingenuity are imperative.

The two-story house at 1255 Humboldt St., an ominous, tenement-like structure, wears its age like a Mardi Gras hooker dangling beads like a pendulum in front of a hapless reveler. Its exterior is marred by bubbles of paint that peel as the days slip forth. The worn pavement, bearing the signature sign of many feet, beckons entrance



Justin Coyne Photos



Robert Blake at home

Even though it is minutes away from the urban sprawl of supermarkets and the dizzying roar of automobiles loitering on the Interstate-5 on-ramp, the dwelling emanates a colloquial feel.

Once inside, the interior of the abode is unassuming even as it teems with symbols of an artist's Mecca. Mounds of vinyl records, caricatures and paper dolls of local rock "gods" Scott McCaughey and Bellingham's hero Ken Stringfellow adorn the creamy kitchen walls.

Slipping through the back door of the abode and descending the concrete blocks is like drifting into a world as comfortable as a lover's kiss. A new door is encountered, the entry way into an annex that has put 1255 Humboldt Street on the map.

Tucked just feet from the main house lies a performance space that has garnered a reputation as an "artist friendly" zone.

Down the stairs, below the bulbous fluorescent letters blaring "Humdinger House," is a diminutive, padded room that boasts a maximum capacity of 100 occupants. This room doubles as a practice space for various Bellingham bands and flat occupants. It serves as a viable venue that has grown into one of the best rec-

ognized and most respected "basements," hosting a slew of bands in an all-ages atmosphere.

An erect beam, the backbone of the performance space, is ornate with the bumperstickers and set lists of bands such as Pacer, Counter Clockwise and Revolutionary Hydra.

Under the inventiveness and guidance of folk singer/songwriter Robert Blake, 20, a former Western student, and one of his roommates, Steve Cannon, the "Humdinger House" and its concerts have provided Whatcom County with uplifting and galvanized shows since the pair moved into the house two years ago. Within weeks of unpacking, Blake was tacking up fliers around town to promote the inaugural show.

The organization and execution of some 75 performances over the past two years filled a gaping hole that has swallowed venerable all-ages concert spaces such as the Show Off Gallery and the Allied Arts performance annex.

In part, the proliferation and success of performances at the "Humdinger House" is the result of Blake's "do it yourself" mentality and his tireless passion and conviction as a musician whose lifeblood is creating art.

After graduating high school, Blake moved to Bellingham from Kirkland, Wash. with his sights set on continuing his education at Western. But after two years, Blake decided a respite was in order, opting to trade in his books for the acquaintance of an acoustic guitar.

"I grew up around music. My dad is a folk singer and he played Irish music, sea shanties and American folk songs all the time, and this is what I grew up listening to," Blake recollected. His thick, tousled hair was capped tightly under a popsicle-blue stocking hat, save for a few roving wisps hanging heavy around his mischievous face, accentuated by his heavy sideburns and forward manner.

"I've always thought of myself as guitar player even before I had ever picked up a guitar. I learned to play through osmosis really, and have been in bands, folk duos and an American bluegrass band from age 14 on."

Since arriving in Bellingham, Blake has established himself as an impressive, analytical and candid musician whose compassion for preserving the essence of the art materializes in the performances hosted at the "Humdinger House." When the subject of music is broached, Blake is visibly consumed, engaging in conversation and questions pertaining to his love: His art and music is omnipresent in his own nook within the house, a modest bedroom where a cascade of records linger. With animation, Blake explained how he lives art, creating it with virtually every breath he takes.

"Bellingham is a great place to live and do art of any sort—music for sure. It's a city of subdued excitement," Blake explained. "I see myself following the progression of the American songwriter, starting with Woody Guthrie and Dylan, and everyone else who've tried to write a song to convey something to other people. That is where I come from."

As a musician married to the folk genre,



Blake recognizes the challenges musicians face when looking for venues to play, particularly in a city the size of Bellingham.

"How many times can you play in Bellingham? Two times a quarter, maybe? Bands may be overdoing it at that," Blake admitted. "There are a lot of people in Bellingham who play music, but it's certainly no Olympia ... I think Bellingham is a good town to live in and work but maybe not perform in.

"The whole deal with being a solo act can be challenging ... Sometimes I feel if I was to call a venue or promoter up and say 'I'm a rock band,' people would know what to expect, and there would be no problem fitting me onto the bill.

"We've turned down only a few bands, but the goal is to not turn down anyone. Everyone who calls wanting to play, can play," Blake explained. "Some say 'I'll send tapes,' but I don't care about what they sound like. It's not about what I like.

"It's about there being available a space where people can play music that is outside the market economy. The bars have to have bands that draw. We don't. When the music doesn't have to satisfy the needs of entertaining so much, like it is expected at a bar so people will come and buy drinks, a space is created for people to try new things and do whatever they want."

Although "not everyone in the house has been into the idea of having shows in the basement," Blake admitted, the roommates at one show or another participate in various ways from taking tickets to ushering the bands out if the shows go beyond the 10:30 p.m. limit or if the music gets "exceptionally loud."

"Luckily, we've had no problems with the shows, but anytime you invite people into your house like this, you take a risk," Blake said.

The "Humdinger House" policy on concertgoer etiquette is fluid, save for the issue of alcohol.

Blake upholds stringent rules regarding drinking at all-ages concerts.

Many of the shows at the "Humdinger House" are free unless a band requests a cover charge, which is on a donation-basis only with a \$2 cap.

The success of the "Humdinger House" is remarkable in its capacity to attract audiences without alcohol or marketing ruses.

"You don't have to deal with 'the man' at the 'Humdinger House.' That is, in part, why it works so well," said Lucas Hicks, Western student, sax/vocals and lyricist for Bellingham's emerging trio Pacer. "It's not about dealing with someone who has to make money or who is into selling beer ... People are there for the music."

Artists who've hammered out guitar chops and manipulated bass lines at the "Humdinger House" know why the engine of the operation runs so smoothly.

"Blake is so open. There's no pressure on the musicians or the fans, and a lot of kids can and do go because it is so accessible," explained Joe Chilcote of the Revolutionary Hydra, a local outfit that has performed at the "Humdinger House."

"The Humdinger House is the best place for all-ages shows in Bellingham. It has become recognized here and has a following. A lot of people go based on previous shows," he said.

Although Chilcote admits his band doesn't play many all-ages gigs save for the "Humdinger House," it isn't for lack of want.

"We've done a couple shows at (former) all-ages venues in town such as the Allied Arts, but there were all kinds of rules, such as no one under 18 admitted. No one could stand out in front of the building and smoke; they had to go

in the alley," Chilcote said.

"There were so many restrictions that it was more trouble than it was worth."

Initially, Hicks didn't like the semi-constrictive space of the basement at the house.

"I saw a show last year, it was the Creeps, and I couldn't get over how the space was so small," Hicks explained. "But after playing there, I really liked it because the crowd is totally jammed up against you, and the crowd interaction is great. All-ages shows are always much more involved."

The "Humdinger House" proves that all is not lost in the all-ages domain. Blake organizes and hosts some two to three shows per month consistently, with the assistance of his roommates holding down the fort while he is away touring.

Although Blake is content with the success of all-ages performances at the "Humdinger House," a watchful eye never strays from the original concept of the house to showcase music.

"(The shows) can't get any bigger. I don't want to see the house get bigger than it is now because if things get too big it becomes a problem," he said. "I'd hate to see it get to the point where bands are playing still, but people are just coming to hang out. That's when cops show up. My only hope for the future is that we focus on the music.

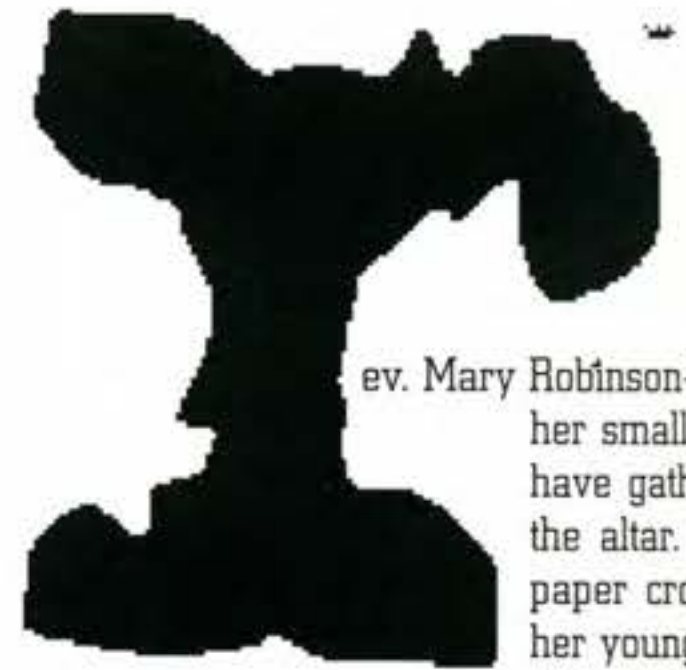
"Ultimately, you've got to do it yourself, in terms of creating venues. It isn't much of an excuse to say 'oh, we'd like to play all-ages, but we can't because there are only bars out there,'" Blake concluded. "There are a lot of ways of putting these shows together. There are spaces to rent; this is done all over the country and in different countries. People find basements, warehouses, art galleries, whatever. I think you've got to build it yourself if you want 'all-ages' to work, but that's okay. It's good to create your own things." **K**



er's surrender Parable from the



Photography by Ryan Hooser

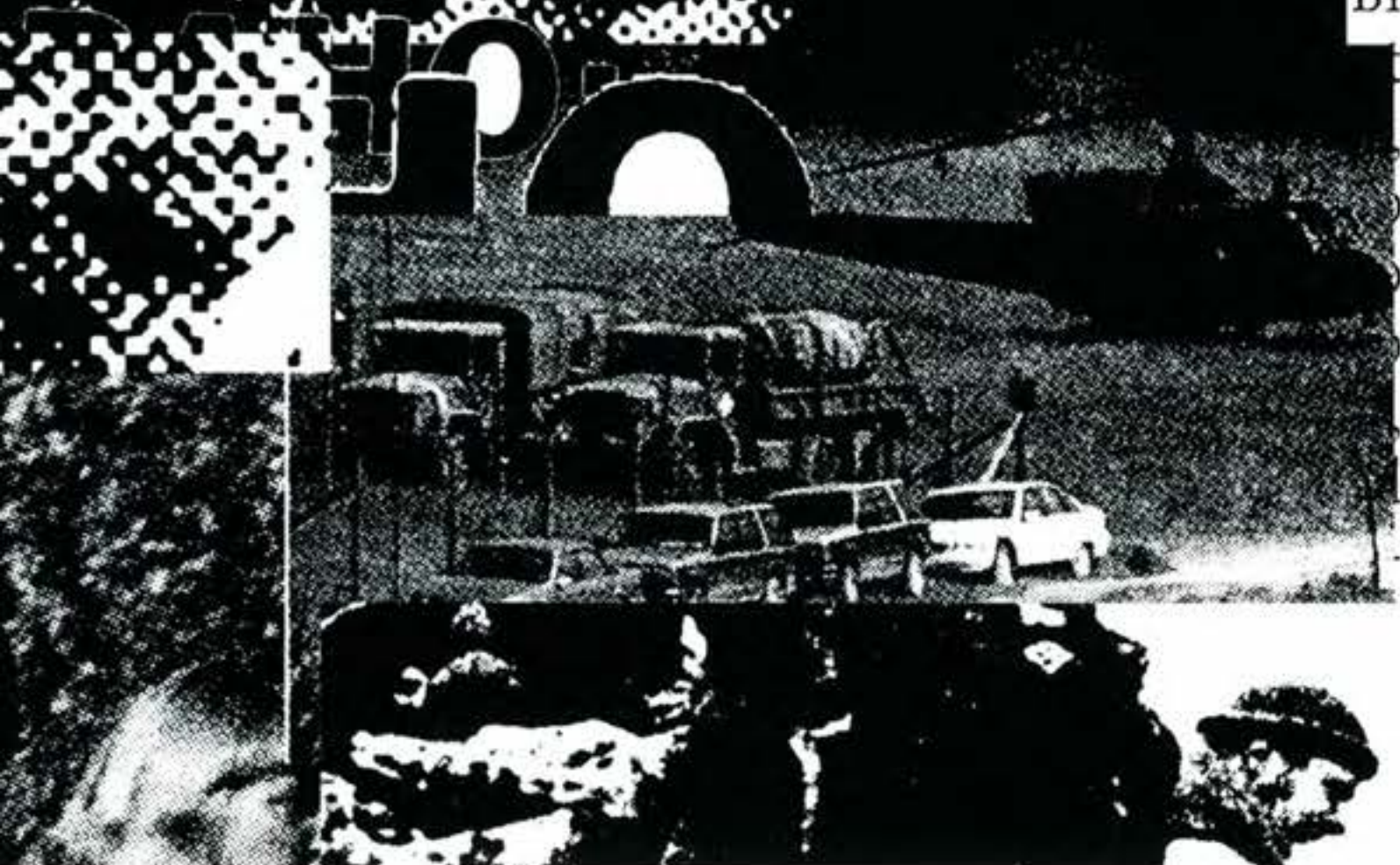


ev. Mary Robinson-Moh
her small fran
have gathered
the altar. She
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Pulpit

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... listens to a local minister about her life in
Idaho, her active stance against racism and her
perspective on the tragedy at Ruby Ridge.



... steps down from her pulpit and sits
... among the crowd of children who
... in a squirming mass at the base of
... pauses briefly to adjust a slumping
... in a little girl's brow and then asks
... shioners about the nature of royalty.
... e microphone from child to child,
... tly to each child's comments. For the
... children are more concerned with the
... own amplified voices than the subject
... at doesn't matter to Robinson-Mohr
... ly steers the conversation in the
... ants it to go.
... ns to speak to the children, bundles
... ained only by the natural fibers of
... est, the squirming and chattering
... s are on "Reverend Mary" as she

... recounts a story from the New Testament.
... A quick glance around the sun-lit sanctuary of St.
... James Presbyterian Church reveals that all present are
... similarly hypnotized by this woman's easy demeanor. She
... has captured yet another audience. No one stops to think that
... this warm, caring, mild-mannered Bellingham minister had
... the courage to go toe-to-toe with the white supremacists,
... Neo-Nazis and militia groups of Sandpoint, Idaho.
... It may seem odd to many that Robinson-Mohr chose to
... take an active stand against these extremists. Raised on
... Bainbridge Island and educated at Whitman College and
... Princeton University, this small, soft-spoken woman does
... not seem to fit the "freedom fighter" mold. However, after
... spending a short time with her, one discovers a wealth of
... integrity, determination and confidence in her beliefs that
... eliminates any preconceived notions about what a "free-
... dom fighter" truly is.

Sandpoint, located in the center of the northern Idaho panhandle, has gained a reputation as a kind of Mecca for the extreme, far right. It is the town the infamous O.J. Simpson witness Mark Fuhrman retired to (a block and a half from where Robinson-Mohr and her husband then lived). It serves as the base for the Aryan Nation, who plan on making it the capital of their new country—after the Revolution. And Sandpoint was home to the Weaver family who, in August of 1992, held out for 11 days against the combined forces of the FBI and the ATF at a place called Ruby Ridge.

ness of these groups to the region's demographics.

Sandpoint is part of a region that has, for years, been dependent on the timber and silver industries to sustain itself. When the lumber industry slumped and silver prices dropped through the floor, the economy of northern Idaho plummeted. Robinson-Mohr compares much of the region to the most poverty-stricken parts of Appalachia.

She explains that when hit by dire economic straits, many people "... get angry and lash out, and it's very easy to scapegoat

cabin on Ruby Ridge.

Robinson-Mohr remembers the town being "in emotional chaos" during and directly following the siege. She attributes much of the chaos to the town's inability to assign blame.

"It was obvious to people that there were no winners," she explains, her brow furrowing as she recalls that difficult time. "There was a high level of resentment from everybody at the way the ATF and FBI handled the situation."

Robinson-Mohr explains that what many found most appalling was the way Weaver



When Robinson-Mohr talks about her former home, these are not the things that immediately come to mind. Her eyes light up as she recalls the 13 years she spent there, the people she met and the town she came to love. She does not remember it as the hotbed of hate portrayed in the media, but rather as "a wonderful place to live."

She does not deny that some people in Sandpoint fit the far right stereotype, but says that out of a county of 30,000 people "there are maybe 100 or so that would be seen as really scary."

"What is scary," Robinson-Mohr says, "is the organized and visible manifestations of that (extreme, far right) movement."

Robinson-Mohr attributes the vocal-

people of another color or sexual orientation ... anything that differentiates."

Robinson-Mohr says that some people have moved to Sandpoint because it has a largely white population.

"Many people who have gone there have chosen to flee what they see as a mixing," she says, her hands drawing invisible figures to illustrate her point. "They just assume the world will be fine if they see no people of color. For people like that, Sandpoint is heaven."

For the past five years, former resident Randy Weaver has served as the poster-child for northern Idaho's extremist nature. It was Weaver who focused the eyes of the world on sleepy Sandpoint as he held the FBI and ATF at bay from his

"... hid behind his family; jeopardized them." She shakes her head slowly. "I don't think that (part of the story) always comes out."

In response to the incident at Ruby Ridge and the emphasis it placed on the problems of intolerance in Sandpoint, Robinson-Mohr and a group of like-minded citizens formed the Human Rights Task Force to act as a counter-balance to the region's hate groups. Robinson-Mohr was appointed the organization's first president, a post that did not come without problems.

She recalls waking up one morning to find white circles with crosses running through them marked on two trees in front of her house. Robinson-Mohr and her husband thought the city had marked them for cutting down. After a few months

passed and the trees were not cut down, they called the city.

When the city informed them that they had not marked the trees and had no intention of cutting them down, Robinson-Mohr called a friend to look at the mysterious markings. He told her they were Ku Klux Klan markings, left with the intention of intimidating the now-quiet Task Force leader.

Robinson-Mohr laughs. "They (the KKK) didn't realize we were too stupid to be scared!"

She goes on to say that if she had

"It was wonderful to be part of a group that visibly said, 'We are tolerant, and your voice is not the only voice present here,'" Robinson-Mohr says proudly.

Opposition to the Human Rights Task Force and its efforts came primarily from the Aryan Nation, a powerful Neo-Nazi group operating out of a stronghold just south of Sandpoint. Pastor Richard Butler of the self-styled Church of Jesus Christ Christian presides over the group. From his pulpit, Butler preaches a theology of white supremacy and violence.

She goes on to explain that the Aryan

Aryan Nation's message of intolerance.

Robinson-Mohr believes the Aryan Nation might be on its last legs. Butler is in poor health, and no strong voices have stepped forward to take his place.

Robinson-Mohr is quick to point out that she does not believe this far right extremism is a trend particular to northern Idaho. She recalls coming to Whatcom County for the first time and seeing Confederate flags flying in front of homes along the country roads; she later discovered that Whatcom County is the headquarters for the Washington State Militia.



**"I will not let fear and
intimidation take
the upper hand."**

Illustration by Stuart Martin

known they were Klan markings, she wouldn't have reacted any differently. She wouldn't have given the mysterious markers the satisfaction.

"It comes down to whether or not you're going to cove down," Robinson-Mohr says, the conviction in her voice rising. "Well, sometimes that might be a smart thing to do, but you know, you can't just let fear rule. It becomes a conscious choice—you say 'I will not let fear and intimidation take the upper hand.'"

Robinson-Mohr smiles as she explains how the Human Rights Task Force combated the region's hate groups. The smile grows, seeming to take on a life of its own as she recalls rallies with more than 500 participants and working with the community on education programs.

Nation's "master plan" is to take over eastern Washington, northern Idaho and western Montana. Sandpoint, being geographically centered, would be the capital.

"I know it sounds like fantasy," Robinson-Mohr says. "I would tell people 'I feel like I'm living in a Batman comic.'"

"I don't believe for one second they can do that, but we should take their thinking seriously," she continues, "because they can do harm, and if they do harm to just one person then that's enough to say no to."

The Aryan Nation garners much of its strength from the recruitment of disenfranchised youth. To combat this practice, the Human Rights Task Force set up a program in local schools called "Teaching Tolerance" to offer an alternative to the

She laughs wryly at the irony.

"I don't think there are any more or less supremacists anywhere right now," Robinson-Mohr says, "and I think that should concern everybody."

Although proud of her accomplishments, Robinson-Mohr remains philosophical about her experiences in Sandpoint.

"It's very easy to simplify things, to say, 'Oh, we're such heroes' and it was so obvious what to do or say," she says, leaning forward in her chair to emphasize her point. "Well, it's not always. Sometimes you say things or do things and they may be the wrong things, but you have to do them. It's either that or you don't act." **K**



Portrait

SEARCHLIGHT

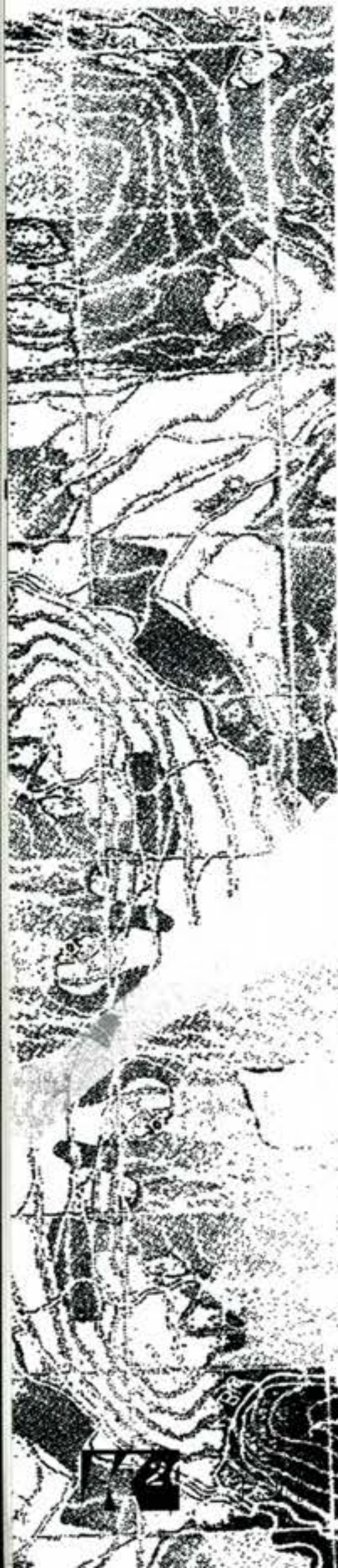
SEARCHLIGHT



**Christine
Root**
hunts down
an experienced
mantracker.



photos by Justin Coyne



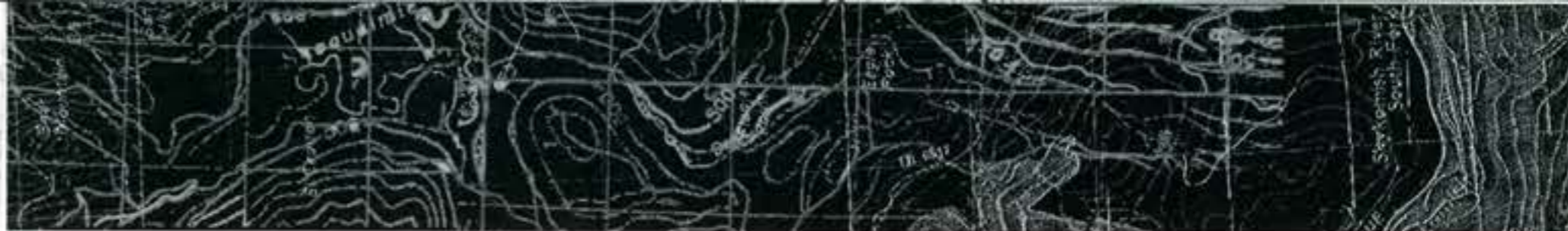
His lips can't keep still. Open and shut, they sporadically pour out descriptions of endless memories and visions. His body can't remain in his seat. Up and down his body moves until, finally, he rises abruptly from his chair. On his feet, he paces on the linoleum kitchen floor and, while he speaks, runs his fingers habitually through his gray hair.

His eyes appear to be filled with mixed emotions—pride, sadness, enthusiasm, disappointment and reluctance. There are many memories he keeps to himself and "just won't talk about."

"It's for people's own sake," he says.

He knows most would not choose the life he lives, but for him, his work is what fulfills his mind, body and soul.

"I've been doing this for 24 years now and have never quit," said Fred Knight, 49, Vice Chairman of Search and Rescue (SAR) Council in Whatcom County. "I can't imagine



doing anything else."

Search and Rescue, whose motto is "So others may live," is a 30-year-old organization comprised of various government agencies and hundreds of volunteers devoted exclusively to searching for and rescuing those in need. It is a hidden treasure that many don't know about.

Some of the most active agencies located in Whatcom County include: Explorer Search and Rescue (ESAR), Bellingham Mountain Rescue, 4x4 Search and Rescue, Dive Team Rescue, Swift Water Rescue, Back-Country Horsemen, Civil Air Patrol, Sheriff's Posse, Snowmobile Club, and Radio Communication Services (RACES). All agencies are able to reach the most remote points of Whatcom County in the shortest possible time in any given situation.

"Being involved with Search and Rescue is not a job, for members are not paid a cent for their time. It is not a hobby because you can't call collecting body parts 'fun'. It is a group of caring individuals who care about others and volunteer their time freely to saving lives," Knight said.

Members of Search and Rescue drop everything—family, work, friends—and risk their lives to go on a search. Members' families are used to the phone ringing in the middle of the night. They know from the first ring that a hunter didn't come home that night, a hiker is overdue or a family has given up looking for their child themselves and has called for professional help.

The call could come at SAR members' work, and in many cases they know that they are forfeiting their pay for the time they are away on a mission.

Knight is ready for anything that comes his direction and he knows his priorities.

"Search and Rescue comes before anything in my life because I know that if my child, wife or someone I loved were

missing, I'd want everything possible to be done to find them," he declares.

Knight's eyes look ahead intensely. "In a search, time is critical and absolutely cannot be wasted," he said. "The minute I get a call for a search, without a thought I'm immediately on my way."

Most of the searches are not the glamorous heroic efforts that get members names in the evening paper; for the most part, they are hard, dirty work that someone has to do. Unpredictable in their nature, searches can last from as little as a couple of hours to as much as seven days.

Knight shakes his head side to side, takes a deep breath and lets out a quick "hmpf" under his breath. He vividly remembers one of his longest searches.

"I was on a search for four days, hiking up the steep sides of Mt. Baker looking for a group of goat hunters. (The search) was cold, wet and strenuous. I could barely see at times because of the huge snow drifts," he pauses and lets out a sarcastic chuckle as an annoyed expression suddenly appears on his face. "When my team and I finally got to the top, there the hunters were, in perfectly fine condition. They had decided to stay longer on the mountain but forgot to inform their worried family and friends. They had even watched us rescuers come up the mountain the entire time."

During last year's snow storm in December, Knight was awake for roughly 96 hours straight searching for various people lost in Whatcom County, assisting the State Patrol with accident victims and transporting medications, from pharmacies and the hospital, back and forth from downtown Bellingham to Sumas. The medication went to injured victims or those in need, such as dialysis patients, whose cars couldn't make it through the snow to town to get the medicine they needed.

Driving his prized "Black Beauty," a huge big-wheeled 4x4 Chevrolet truck, he could go where many ambulances could not.

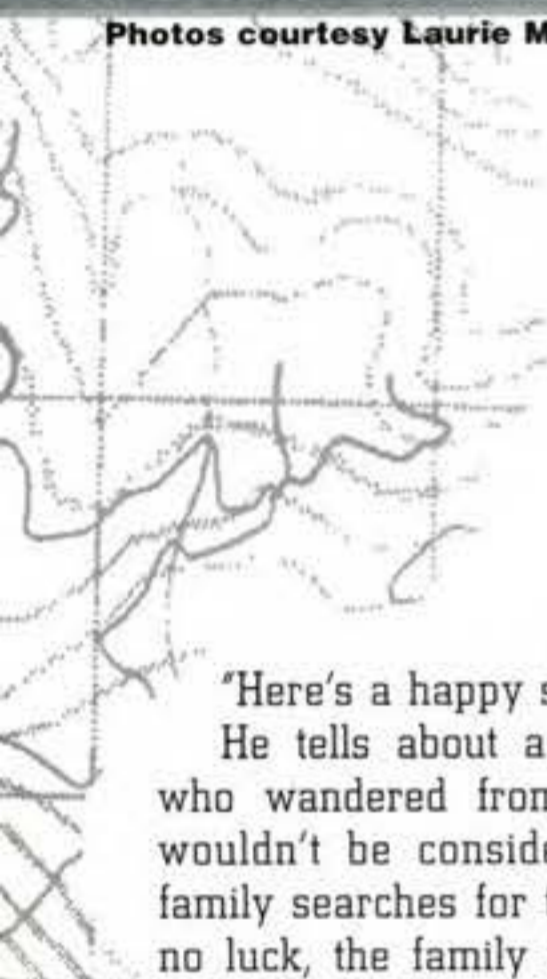
These are only a handful out of the thousand of searches Knight has been on.

"There are so many stories, some with good endings and some with bad ones. Which ones do you want to hear?" Knight asks and then begins telling more stories.

Again, the stories part his lips quickly. The tales wind around like a curvy road. Around an abrupt corner another story lies.



Photos courtesy Laurie Macbeth Davies



"Here's a happy story," Knight states with enthusiasm.

He tells about a mentally handicapped, 14-year-old girl who wandered from her family's farm. Thinking that she wouldn't be considered missing until after 72 hours, her family searches for their daughter for a day and a half. With no luck, the family finally makes the call to the police, and SAR is immediately informed.

Within an hour, 56 SAR rescuers surround the farm and begin searching for the girl. In less than four hours she is found crouching behind a stack of plywood. Her one pink tennis shoe poking out from one of the pieces of wood revealed her location.

"If only her parents would have called sooner, they could have saved themselves 68 hours of worrying and pain," Knight said.

Not all searches have happy endings. Many parents never see their children again. Knight finds these searches the hardest to endure.

"Any search dealing with a child is hard because you don't know what you'll end up having to tell their parents," Knight said.

Again, his lips part and, quickly, a story pours forth about four teenagers, two brothers and their girlfriends who wanted to go party on Larrabee Island. They traveled by boat to the island and never returned. The call came in and searchers were on their way. The car was found. The boat was found. Tracks were found. The teenagers were not.

To this day, their families do not have closure.

"It was a tough search for all of us. We felt like we hadn't

done our job to the fullest, a feeling we have whenever we don't find a subject. We feel like we have left someone alone and injured out there," Knight said.

One of the rescuers involved in this search felt so sorry about the parents' loss that he bought and donated a hover craft, (a fast moving water vehicle), to SAR in memory of the four young teenagers.

Knight takes a quick breath. He can't seem to stop speaking. Words shoot out of his mouth rapidly like round shot by a machine gun. So many experiences have daunted Fred's life path, so many he can't forget.

Recently, Knight found a boy, naked with a broken neck, who died after jumping off a rock and hitting his head on the shallow ground below while skinny dipping.

"I remember holding him down in the water on the side of the boat so that camera men couldn't get a picture of him. I didn't want his family to see such a horrid image of their son in the papers." Knight pauses and stares blankly ahead of him as sadness fills his eyes.

"It gets hard sometimes and my mood varies on a day-to-day basis. When I do come in contact with death, I blanket it out and say to myself 'things have to be done'".

Knight vividly remembers a plane crash where he collected charred body parts into bags for evidence.

"I remember going behind a tree after (the incident) and releasing my insides," he said.

No longer married, Fred thinks back sometimes and remembers how hard it was going home to his wife after a search.





Justin Coyne photo



Fred Knight's rig, Beauty.

"When she asked how a search went, I always gave her a general overview and made light of it so she wouldn't inquire about it. I felt more comfortable discussing a search with a debriefing crew, chaplain or another SAR member. I didn't want to bring my pain into my home," he said.

Members who have a hard time dealing with what they encounter in a search are provided with many facets of support.

"SAR members never ridicule each other for the various ways in which each express grief and the way they choose to deal with it. Everyone has their own way of getting through with things," Fred said.

Knight knows that when members start making crude jokes about a search victim, it is time for them to ask for help and talk to someone with whom they feel comfortable. This behavior is a "warning sign" that they are having a difficult time dealing with a search.

He sold his truck, deeming it "bad luck," after it had carried five deceased victims over a period of 18 months.

The victims ranged from the 5-year-old boy, who fell off a rock onto railroad tracks below, to a 23-year-old man, who died after going over a 190-foot drop down Nooksack Falls.

He continues on, however, and never envisions himself quitting.

"In about six years, I see myself taking a step down from being a leader and becoming, instead, an observing member,

passing my knowledge to someone confident enough to take over my past role."

It will be difficult to take over Knight's role.

Besides being Vice Chair of SAR Council, he is recognized as a top man-tracker, a training officer for the 4x4 unit, a "Hug-a-Tree Instructor" and a First-Responder.

He is certified in first-response, advanced first-aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). He can operate a hover craft and various water vehicles, including a 34-foot amphibious vehicle called the "duck," which can travel 50 mph on land and 10 mph in water. This vehicle was originally a World War II landing craft used to take troops back and forth from the boat to the beach. The list is endless.

"Every other year, I recertify myself and keep learning new search techniques and methods to better myself as a rescuer," Fred said.

These qualifications do not have to appear on one's resume to become a basic SAR member. Four simple technical requirements must be met: members must be at least 21; they must register with the county to obtain an Emergency Workers Card; they must take a short course in first-aid/CPR, and they must have three available hours a month to attend meetings.

However, the most important requirement is dedication.

"Like a volunteer fireman, anyone can grab a hose and put out a fire, but the ones who can actually go into a burning house and save a life is dedicated."

To Knight, any member is a valued member, but those who go a "step beyond" and choose to be more than just a "basic member" are those who truly obtain self-satisfaction. **K**



Up on the

*Hands on your head and spread 'em.
Kristin D. Tomlinson goes downtown with one of Tacoma's finest.*

Speeding down a narrow street, your mind shifts from the speedometer to the clock—you're late. Out of nowhere, it hits you. The elongated blare of the siren fills your ears as your eyes shift quickly to the rearview mirror. As your life flashes before your eyes, the red and blue lights perform their seductive dance, entrancing you. A wave of panic takes over, the blood rushes from your face and for one brief moment your legs feel like the Jell-O you ate for last night's desert.

This experience strikes fear into the hearts of people everywhere. But for one night, I became the predator instead of the prey. I would spend the night traversing the gang-infested jungle known as Hilltop. Former Western student and 22-year-old rookie patrol officer Lindsay Jackson would be my guide.

8 p.m. I arrived at the station. I quickly met up with Jackson. At a slender 5 feet 7 inches tall, Jackson hardly fit the stereotypical cop profile. She received her car keys and checked which sector we would be patrolling.

"Good," Jackson said, "We are in the one sector tonight."

"Where is that?" I asked.

"Hilltop," Jackson replied.

Hilltop is the largest trouble spot for criminal activity in Tacoma. I was excited to be where the action was, but felt a little—OK, a lot—uneasy, as I looked behind the Plexiglas shield that would separate me from God knows what in car 465. The plush comfort of the front seats looked like a luxury suite compared to the hard-molded plastic seats in the back, reserved for Tacoma's "finest citizens."

As we prepared to embark on our 10-hour adventure, we had to check in with the dispatch office. From the moment we pulled out of the police station, we would be identified by the call sign "Nora 1-7."

9:20 p.m. While patrolling the streets, I sat speechless, staring at the dilapidated houses. Two 5-year-old children sat innocently playing on the dark street, oblivious to any danger around them. Driving down the dimly lit street, the silence was broken when two African-American women emerged from a small blue single-level home. A heavy-set woman waved her hands in a frantic attempt to catch our attention.

"I think that lady was trying to flag us down," I said to Jackson.

As the words escaped my lips, a call came across dispatch reporting a domestic violence situation. We turned around, and the woman

approached the car sobbing uncontrollably and nursing a fat lip.

Jackson got out of the car and attempted to calm the woman down. She called her by name; obviously, this was not Jackson's first visit to this residence.

The unmistakable stench of alcohol lingered in the air as Jackson placed the woman in the back of the car while she and officers Shawn Moore and Tim Lowry went into the neighboring apartment to investigate. Sitting alone in the police car with the woman, I kept hearing the same question over and over.

"Am I going to jail again?"

Moments later, Lowry escorted a stumbling, handcuffed man across the street. Inside the apartment, the officers found the man asleep and a broken chair he used to strike his girlfriend. Our first arrest of the night was about to take place. This meant a trip to jail. I never thought I would see the inside of a jail.

On our way downtown, the man appeared to be relatively at ease while he and Jackson discussed the finer points of his relationship with his girlfriend. Jackson informed him that it may be in his best interest to kick his girlfriend out of his house.

"But I don't hit women," the man said.

"I didn't mean physically kick her out," Jackson said trying not to laugh at his obvious misunderstanding.

Approaching the jail, the man began to lose his once friendly composure, becoming increasingly bitter towards Jackson.

10 p.m. We pulled into the parking area in front of the jail. Its large stone walls housing windows no wider than three inches across made the jail look like an impenetrable fortress. Jackson helped the man out of the back seat and began the 100-yard march to the jail.

We entered a large wide-open room called the "Sally Port." The room was like a warehouse with two large, yellow, retracting doors on either side, which allowed cars to enter directly.

Jackson removed her gun from the holster on her right hip, locking it in the safety boxes serving as the only adornment on the walls of the large room. She directed the man to stand in a small red square directly in front of the jail entrance. While patting him down for weapons, the man spouted off at Jackson.

Following the inspection, we led the man to a large metal elevator leading to the booking floor.

Entering the jail, violent screams came from one of the 13 holding cells on the perimeter of the

room.

"What is that?" I asked.

"Someone must have failed booking," Jackson said.

"How do you fail booking?"

"I'm sure you'll find out," she said.

Jackson instructed the man to sit on a hard plastic bench. As I scanned the room, I saw nine men and two women draped in Pierce County Jail issued gray-cotton suits and brown rubber sandals. I caught myself staring, wondering what each of them had done to wind up here.

My thoughts were interrupted as the man's true nature began to emerge.

"What's my charge bitch?" he yelled at Jackson.

"Did you just call me a bitch?" Jackson replied staring at the man.

"No Ma'am," the man said quietly.

No more than two minutes later, the man opened his mouth again, using "bitch" repeatedly. A correction's officer bolted from his seat and headed towards him.

"He just failed booking," Jackson said with a smile.

1:39 a.m. Continuing our patrol, we passed a late-model, tan-colored vehicle that was driving erratically without headlights.

"Should we pull him over?" Jackson asked.

"Yeah, sure," I said, excited I was consulted in the decision.

We turned around and tailed the car just as it pulled into a convenience store. Jackson flipped on her lights as she pulled up behind the dented chrome bumper. Two men emerged attempting to enter the store. Jackson stopped the driver. By this time, another squad car appeared in our rearview mirror—our backup.

Jackson continued to question the driver as officer Barry Paris emerged from the car with a small baggy containing an ivory-colored, grainy-looking substance. He shot Jackson a look, held up the baggy and returned to his car to conduct a field test for drugs—the test came back positive for methamphetamines.

Jackson immediately cuffed the suspect, asking if he had any weapons in his possession.

"No," the suspect claimed.

Jackson and Paris continued to search the suspect pulling a knife and several razor blades from his layers of tattered clothing.

While reading the suspect his rights, Jackson sat in the car with an expression of satisfaction on her face.

Hilltop



"That was my first drug arrest," she said smiling.

2:48 a.m. Time for lunch at Shari's.

3:30 a.m. We headed to the small police substation in Hilltop. I didn't know if I was going to make it to 6:30 a.m. I couldn't fathom how officers worked shifts like this four nights a week.

4:42 a.m. As we departed the substation, I asked Jackson if anything ever happened after 4 a.m.

"It depends on the night," Jackson said, "Sometimes you get lucky."

As I plunked my tired body into the squad car, the woman over dispatch spewed jargon sounding like incoherent rambling as Jackson ripped her seatbelt over her body and advised me to do the same.

"What's going on?" I asked.

"Armed robbery," she replied.

I felt a surge of adrenaline shoot through me. It didn't feel like 5 a.m. anymore.

We pulled up to the curb, approximately one block away from the 7-Eleven.

"You can follow me in," Jackson said. "But stay behind me, just in case."

Two male officers had beaten us to the scene. A visibly shaken female clerk stood behind the front counter. A second clerk, a middle-aged man with graying hair, had seen the assailant's face.

While watching the real-life drama unfold on videotape in the back room of the store, a call came through from officers Dave Yearbury and Kahn Phan. They pulled over a car with two people inside, one matching the clerk's description.

Yearbury and Phan placed the suspects in the back of their car until they were sure that the suspects were the ones they were looking for.

Jackson and I brought the male to the scene to make a positive identification of the suspect. The once quiet neighborhood street looked like a 1970s disco as four police cars lined the road with their red and blue lights bouncing off the surrounding houses. Jackson shined her spotlight on the suspect, and a

wave of relief came over the clerk's face.

"Yep, that's her, that's definitely her," he said.

The officers arrested the panicked woman and placed her in the back of the car. Even though a positive identification had been made, the money was nowhere to be found.

Police searched the male suspect and asked the man to remove his shoe. In his left shoe, officers recovered the folded wad of cash. Frantic, the suspect claimed he had no idea how the money got there.

"Tell it to the judge," one officer said.

6 a.m. "Tonight was a pretty eventful night," Jackson said as we headed back to the station. I was pretty wiped out and definitely ready for bed.

Many times during the night I found my thoughts flashing each situation like a sick sideshow. I couldn't imagine myself displaying Jackson's calmness.

"I just can't believe that I make decisions that affect peoples lives the way they do," Jackson said. "I mean, I'm only 22 years old."

At 22, Jackson has seen more in her life than I would ever want to in mine. **K**



Enzym Ear t i

Brewing beer a perfectionist's work. Josh Godfrey downs a few with one of Bellingham's master brewers.



Photography by Ryan Hooser

He stumbles out of bed at 7 a.m. Moving quickly, he begins to ready himself for the day ahead. As his eyelids creep ever so slowly upward he clears his head and thinks of his wife and unborn child sound asleep in the next room. Chuckling aloud he gazes out the living room window upon the newly built picket fence surrounding his two story abode.

Despite the "Cleaver" appearance, Eric Lengvenis hardly fits the role of Ward or the Beav for that matter. Instead, the 30-year-old Portland native takes on an "alternative" look rather than that of the picturesque college graduate.

"I consider what I wear the attire of the blue collar worker," Lengvenis said.

The faded T-shirt and worn-out flannel shirt complement both his shorts and the brand-new Vans shoes he sports as he heads out the front door.

While many Bellingham commuters fight their way in the morning gridiron up and down Lakeway and Samish, Lengvenis mounts his bike as if it were a Kentucky thoroughbred. Still half-asleep, he fights his way through the morning com-

mute, churning away at the pedals of his mountain bike.

Twelve minutes later and now winded from the 1.4 mile bike ride, he tugs at the back entrance of Bellingham's Orchard Street Brewery.

Lengvenis struggles to stay awake: He drags his aching body across the cold cement floor to the boiler room. Knowing this room as if it were his own bedroom, he nonchalantly fires up the steam boilers, which are the lifeblood of brewing. With the flick of a switch and the turning of a few valves, steam begins to rise from one of the shimmering, silver tanks.

Still craving his morning sustenance, he settles down in an old rickety chair with a steaming hot coffee "bowl." Along with warming his chilled body, this helps to start his day.

Fighting the chair for a comfortable position, Lengvenis wipes the beads of perspiration from his brow and fiddles with the two earrings dangling from his ears. Once comfortable, he takes a deep breath and runs his hands over his crew-cut and brusk goatee. He stares off into space collecting his thoughts. His reflection dances on the surface of the mahogany table directly in front of him.

atic san



Not long from now, this haven will be filled with the smells of grandma's house, as an overly sweet cloud of steam fills the room. The oatmealish fragrance will escape from one of the many large galvanized vats. Later on in the day, the aroma will change as fresh hops, barley and yeast combine with the pungent odor of fermenting alcohol and the tantalizing smells from the nearby kitchen.

Lengvenis didn't come to the brewery to wash last night's leftover dishes or to wait tables. No, Lengvenis is the head brewer at the Orchard Street Brewery in Bellingham and has been since November 1996.

After he graduated with degrees in Philosophy and Russian in 1989 from Gustavus Adolphus College in Oregon, Lengvenis stumbled into the art of brewing beer.

Just as thousands of other college graduates, Lengvenis was unsure about his direction in life after graduation.

"I didn't know what I was going to do after college. I didn't want to go to grad school. I didn't want to work in an office. I had long hair and I didn't want to work anywhere they would tell me to cut it."

So on a whim, he decided to take some time off and collect his thoughts.

"I was actually just looking for a job that would get me through for awhile 'til I figured out what I wanted to do. I got into home-brewing because my roommate was," he said.

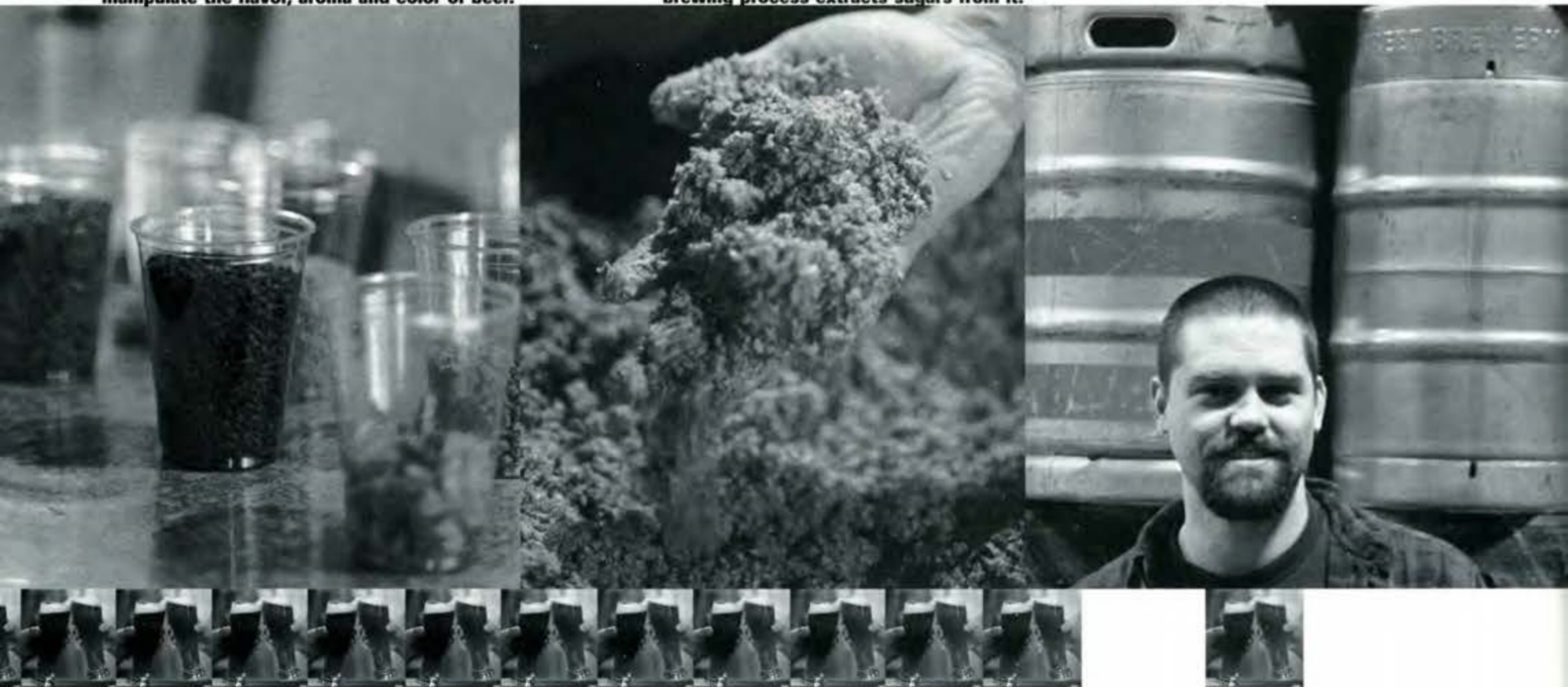
So, not long after graduation, he began to wait tables at a small restaurant in Portland, Oregon called McMenamin's. Not far from that place was another small restaurant owned by McMenamin's with a brew-pub nestled into the operation. The head brewer was planning on quitting, and they were looking for a replacement.

Lengvenis' boss recommended him after tasting his home-brew. Just like that, the skinny kid from Portland got the job and has been in the business for eight years.

"When I got out of college I was a skinny little kid weighing about 155 pounds. I put on about thirty pounds the first year I worked at the brewery."

Different malts are used in the brewing process to manipulate the flavor, aroma and color of beer.

Spent grain is what is left after the brewing process extracts sugars from it.



At that time, the McMenemy brothers owned 10 restaurants and five breweries, but just before Lengvenis left, it blossomed into 37 restaurants and 15 breweries.

Each profession holds vastly different rewards, ranging from the casual pat on the back to the ever popular Christmas bonus. However, one of Lengvenis' biggest rewards came after a hard day's work at McMenemy's.

"At the end each day there were always teachers, mailmen, bikers, Vietnam vets and businessmen drinking my beer, and we'd sit down and just talk about things, nothing in particular just things," he said. "I was happy every day I went to work just for all those reasons."

Toward the end of his reign at McMenemy's, Lengvenis said he felt that he and the company were headed in two separate directions. So he quit his job and jumped ship to explore Europe and beyond. Six months and an empty wallet later, he returned to the states where he met his wife, Michelle. Not long after his return, he was contacted by Christian Krogstad, partial owner and manager of Orchard Street Brewery.

Krogstad was interested in hiring the youngster as his head brewer. "He was in Minnesota at the time I contacted him, and I thought that was talent wasted. I was doing all the brewing, and I had the business side to run," Krogstad said.

Krogstad knew of Lengvenis' work dating back to his days at McMenemy's. Lengvenis was the assistant general manager and was in charge of seven McMenemy brew-pubs. Krogstad just happened to be the brewer at one of those he was in charge of. After examining Orchard's equipment and operation, Lengvenis accepted Krogstad's offer feeling a renewed excitement for brewing.

Too often, college students end up in the

working world never utilizing their college degree and the subjects they studied. Never has a statement rung more true than in Lengvenis' case, right? Wrong. As odd as it may seem, his senior thesis and Philosophy degree complement the art of brewing beer quite well.

His thesis was on absolving Cartesian Dualism, which deals with the separation of the mind and the body as two distinct entities. Its main focus, however, dealt with knowledge, understanding and practice. Believe it or not, this theory and its properties relate to just about any job or hobby.

"You may have knowledge, but if you can't do it, what good is your knowledge; and if you can do it but don't know why it works or why you're doing it then what good is your practice," Lengvenis said. "Philosophy teaches you how to read and find a focus (in its writings) and either buttress them or find suppositions in them."

For Krogstad, tying Lengvenis' degree to his job is a bit more comedic.

"In the Monty Python movies, all philosophers were drunks, but more seriously Eric keeps his eyes open and is very quality oriented. It bothers him to make something that is not completely up to his standards," he said.

With his background, Lengvenis is able to look deeper than the surface issues and find the greater meaning in many things.

"Philosophy also teaches you invaluable critical reasoning skills and it helps you hone your reasoning skills as well," he said.

Brewing beer is a long, complex art form where a brew master has the chance to express his or her love for beer and its contents. This art form is also misunderstood and a mystery to most people.

For the most part, beer is consumed mindlessly without thought for its ingredients or content and is thus taken for granted. The process of making beer begins with a series of long, complex reactions involving micro-organisms. In the end, it will eventually end up in a chilled glass served with cheddar cheese fish crackers and popcorn at sporting

"The whole time I was sweating, my brain was running over enzymatic events of how to control it and what I was going to have to do to make enzymes ... and then try and come out with a final product that I was happy with."



events and happy hour.

"It's a combination of art, science and craft, and Eric's a highly critical person about other people's work and his own," Krogstad said.

Lengvenis remembers sweating profusely while working at his first brew-pub and the places his mind used to drift to.

"The whole time I was sweating, my brain was running over enzymatic events of how to control it and what I was going to have to do to make enzymes ... and then try and come out with a final product that I was happy with."

One down side to his job comes long after he's made the demanding, uphill ride home. It comes when its time for him to finally relax with a chilled glass of his favorite beer.

"I've certainly seen brewers quit drinking beer altogether and start drinking wine, but with me I tend to over-analyze a beer for quality and content, and that sometimes ruins my personal enjoyment, but hey I'm a beer guy," he said.

While in school, Lengvenis took only the necessary science classes and never went beyond the realms of university requirements. Had he known what he knows now, his diploma may read Science instead of Philosophy and Russian.

"I've learned a great deal about science I did not know before because nobody ever told me science could make beer. If they had, I might not have skipped my classes and ignored what was going on and might have actually paid more attention. I might have even been a science major."

Either way, brewing beer has brought him closer to science and has made him realize the importance of science to his job.

"Within brewing, there's science; in the terms of biology, there's chemistry. There's degrees of thermal dynamics and all kinds of things that you're only limited by how much you're willing to put into the knowledge you want to gain," Lengvenis said.

To Lengvenis and other brew masters alike, beer takes on a greater meaning than empty calories and toga parties. It's more than a bonding agent at high school and college soirees. It's more than liquid courage engulfed by drunken fraternity brothers doing keg stands and chanting each other's name. For brewers it is an art, and at times beer should be thoughtfully analyzed for taste, body and ingredients.

These masters harbor a love for their craft and truly understand the possibilities and the many characteristics of beer. Through working with, and controlling the processes of brewing, Lengvenis is able to control these micro-organisms, and in the end he turns out a beer with the taste, color, potency and the overall quality he desires. He has mastered the steps and has figured out how to tame and shape the ingredients into a fine product he is both proud of and very critical of as well.

Brewing beer is an extremely complex art form that's taken seriously across the world.

"And on top of that beer is one of the great social lubricants," Lengvenis said.

From the home brewer making 200 gallons a year to a major brewery that turns out 15,000 gallons a day, each brewer takes pride in his or her work and can appreciate the complexity of the famed liquid. **K**

CRYPTIC

CONFESSIONS

DAMIEN JOLDERSMA DOWNLOADS THE THOUGHTS OF A LOCAL SOFTWARE PIRATE.

Graphic by Hoa

Sax sits in his studio apartment, surrounded by a multimedia madhouse, which is really the control center for Sax's operations. Although he is alone in his room, Sax is encompassed by friends from around the globe—fast friends he has skillfully recruited through his two-year crime spree.

While he sits chatting with cohorts in his bedroom, the police are off chasing auto thieves, muggers and murderers.

The cops are not aware of the premeditated crime that Sax and his pirate gang have brewed in the tiny studio apartment in Seattle. They don't realize how comparable this rag-tag band of software pirates are to the clans who manage the gang scene of the inner cities.

Complete with a social hierarchy, slang language and territories, the Internet-pirate community—or the "Warez" scene as the pirates refer to it—is a thriving group of people constantly changing and evolving with the proverbial software flows.

As adolescent boys don their alter egos at night, the pirates cast aside their rather obscure personas and adopt a method of escape into a virtual world where, through anonymity, they are the elite.

In the real world, Sax is a 20-year-old student in Seattle. In cyberspace, Sax is a founder of a particular illegal software trading channel on the Internet, "#MacFilez."

The Software Publishers Association conservatively suggests that Sax and his fellow pirates contributed to over \$8 billion in lost revenues worldwide in 1994.

Sax doesn't feel too much remorse though.

"I don't even think about it now—what I'm doing," he said. "Only once, I felt kind of bad about what I was doing, but it didn't last too long ... maybe I was just feeling depressed in general."

Unlike other crimes, software piracy doesn't entail any precedence for other more violent crime. It's very unlikely that Sax will ever steal a car, or mug someone or commit any other form of traditional crime. Other than his piracy, Sax is a normal, law-abiding citizen.

Late into the night, every night, Sax downloads new software for his archive. In high school, he couldn't sleep at night if his modem wasn't downloading something—anything.

He has nearly every major application or game to hit the Macintosh market and many that didn't. He prides himself on such accomplishments as illegally downloading popular applications like Adobe Photoshop, Adobe PageMaker, QuarkXpress, and hard-to-find pieces like Electric Image. Sax's collection, if purchased legally, would be worth thousands and thousands of dollars.

His disk collection sits above his desk—16 zip disks brimming with software. He has been gathering for three years.

Sax can often be found on Internet Relay Chat (IRC)—a chat room on the Internet.

"People look up to you. It doesn't matter who you are or what you look like or what age you are," he said. "You're on IRC and you've got files that people want. You know you're important."

In high school, Sax enjoyed an alter ego. "I like to fantasize about ...

"Sax and his fellow pirates contributed to over \$8 billion in lost revenues worldwide."

walking around and no one knows that I'm Sax from #Macfilez with millions of gigs of stuff under my control."

His computer sits on his desk amidst a tidy collection of various electronic gear, a large stereo that he convinced his parents he needed for practicing his saxophone, a large TV-VCR, a Nintendo-64 and a Sony Playstation.

His recordable CDs line the shelf below his desk—six boxes of 10 each.

"I've bought software before. Like I've bought a couple of games that I really enjoyed," he said.

He pulls out his collection of Playstation games, flipping page after page of games he has copied from the rental store. He rents them overnight, copies them with his CD burner, and returns them the next day. He figures a total of \$4—the rental charge of \$3 and the \$1 CD—is better than paying \$50 to purchase the game. With a small computer chip, obtainable through the mail, soldered onto the main board of the Playstation, anyone can take advantage of this market.

Sax enjoys the Warez scene because it allows him to be more than himself.

"In high school he couldn't fall asleep at night if his modem wasn't downloading something, anything."

"You're divided by what you think and what you say and that's what separates people on IRC."

So why do they do it?

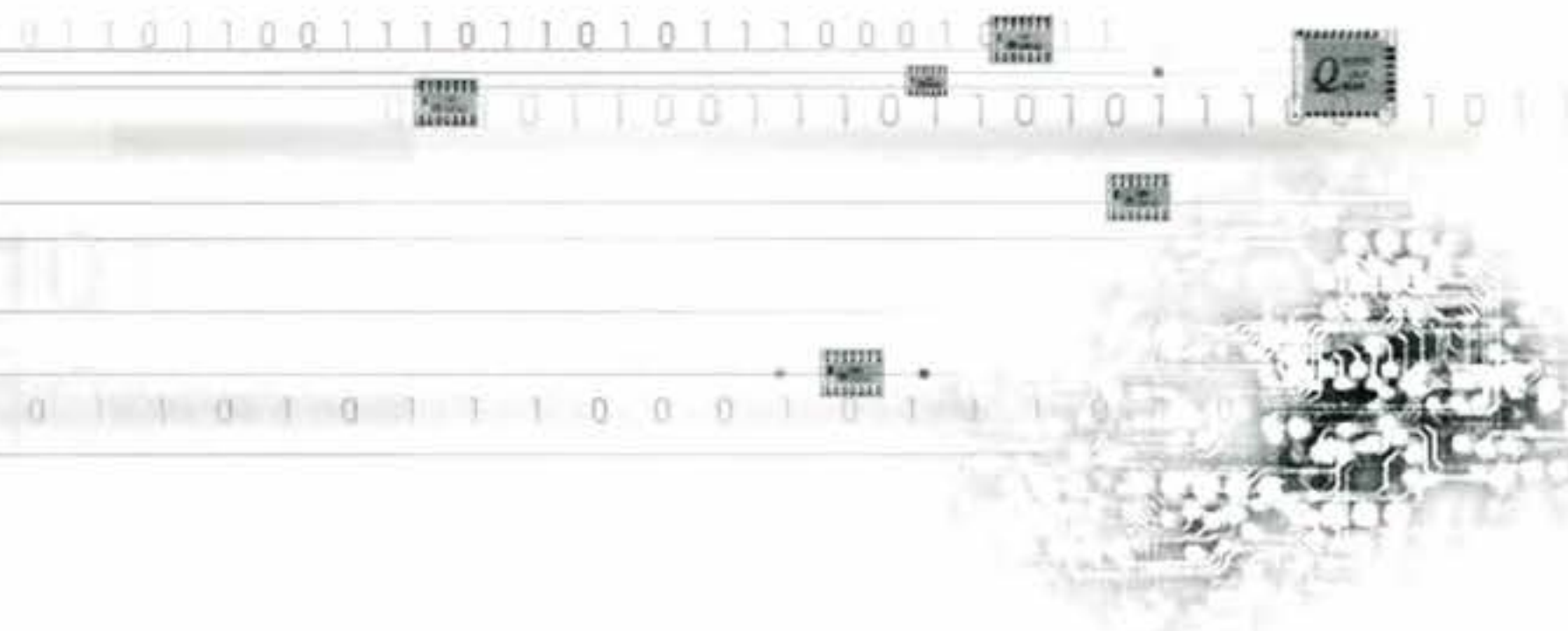
Sax describes a "number fascination."

It's like speeding on the freeway. They see the dial go up, and they can't resist seeing how much farther it can go. In Warez, you watch the megabytes and download times. The larger the file, the faster the download, the better.

It also has its lure in that fundamental, human quality of always wanting to be different and special.

Getting illegal software off the net is unique. It leaves the pirates feeling more clever and intelligent than the people around them who are hamster enough to purchase what

the pirates get for free. And it's the best way to truly stay on the cutting edge of technology. **K**



WWW LIBRARY ARCHIVES

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