

inside: welcome to aggieland - the serpent & the trombone - introvisionaire - luca - kenny football - tx reds - in memorium: robin williams - join the melvins army - still thinking - pedal pushing lp reviews - concert calendar



979represent is a local magazine for the discerning dirtbag.

editorial bored kelly minnis - kevin still

art splendidness katie killer - wonko the sane

folks that did the other shit for us john barber - robert barragan - mike I. downey - todd hansen - jessica little - jennifer logan - william daniel thompson - jeremy vanacek

on the interwebz

http://www.979represent.com

emails to redchapterjubilee@yahoo.com

materials for review & bribery can be sent to: 979represent 15530 creek meadow blvd. n. college station, tx 77845



make way for kenny football



Just before I left my office late last month, only minutes before the Texas A&M University Aggie football team took the field to begin their 2014 season against the South Carolina University Game-

cocks, I predicted that the Aggies would get their butts handed to them. After all, that's pretty much what all the far more learned than I pundits were all saying. It might be something I should say before every game, as most everyone knows that A&M handed South Carolina a 52-28 beatdown. This was kind of a big deal, as SC came into the season ranked #9 and A&M was ranked #21. Most everyone assumed that A&M's stock would decrease significantly without their Heisman winning quarterback Johnny "Football" Manziel, not to mention that A&M's defense left A LOT to be desired last season. This game did nothing exactly to alleviate the worries about the defense (SC was still able to light up two big bomber 50 yard+ pass plays against TAMU's secon-dary and that ought to give any Aggie football fan pause) but considering that redshirt Freshman quarterback Kenny Hill beat all single game records with a 500 yard+ command performance it will certainly seem to make up for any deficiencies A&M has in the defense. Basically, the Aggies will just outscore everyone to make up for the weak defense.

So why should any of you give a fuck? It is no secret that our readership lies mostly off campus. Most of you go out of your way NOT to give two, even three fucks what goes on at A&M. The reason you should at least on the periphery pay attention to how successful A&M football is, well, it's because the recent boom in construction, retail and population in Bryan/College Station can be attributed in no small percent to Texas A&M's recent football successes. Once the school joined the Southeastern Conference of the NCAA a lot of the vacant lots that families sat on for years unimproved, holding out for the time when the market would meet their prices, started selling. They turned out to be right for holding out so long. Millions of development dollars started flowing down Texas Ave. and that trend continues and will most likely not dry up as long as A&M is a sports powerhouse that can attract media attention and the continual tailgate trade from former students and away team supporters.

Now, I have to admit it's not just athletics that is driving this Aggie renaissance. A nationally happening football squad attracts more students who attract more professors who need more staff who buy more houses and raise more families, etc. The biotech corridor in Bryan/College Station doesn't hurt, nor does the continued high placement on "Best Places To Retire" and "Best Places To Raise a Family" lists from myriad magazine articles. Nor does it hurt that former students want to return to Aggieland once their nests empty out. But for the most part, the move to the SEC was the catalyst and the continued success of the football program will only help to keep the boom alive. Not to mention that it can be kind of fun for random people to know where your town is for a change. Like the homeless guy I talked to in Houston last winter at 4am who knew College Station. "Ay yeah, y'all got Johnny Ball up there." Well, it's now Kenny Ball (Manziel says he can have the name but reportedly Kenny hates it) but yes, the attention continues. And as long as the attention continues, the money will roll right in.—KELLY MINNIS



The serpent and the trombone

Are you ready to fuck?, soft and sincerely spoke this girl engulfed in darkness. She was sprawled out on the bed completely dressed except for the fact that her tee shirt was lifted above her bare breast. I know this because it was the last image burned into my retinal before I killed the light. Shaky and nervous, I walked closer to the bed, sweaty palms, not knowing if I could go through with the act. I was terrified. Was I ready to become the guy in the locker room bragging about getting laid last night. I wasn't that type of person. Perhaps that's why I was in this predicament. I was a nerdy, morally aware trombone playing band dork. In fact I met this young, attention thirsty pet at a christian gathering. She knew what she was doing when she asked me come over after school to "hang out". I knew what she wanted, but I was interested. The same feeling you get when you first discover fire. You want to touch it, but you're naive to the final results. So there I was with my trombone case and backpack. It was 3:45pm in the back lot of school and I was boarding a bus that took me to another part of town. Anxiously I took my seat. The scenario played over and over in my head. I was going to get there and she would be there waiting for me in her bed. The lighting would be perfectly dim, rose petals randomly littering the room and bedspread, and her, posed like an Aphrodite statue, proudly exposing every inch of her virgin body. Ready to embrace me and fulfill every order I commanded. A slight breeze through her hair. Every inexperienced juvenile's jerkoff fantasy. It was so effective, it gave me a hard on while I was on the bus.

At that age you have no dick control. You try to think of other obscure things to try to make it go away, dirty diapers, old men throwing up, Jesus on the cross. DANG! Nothing was working and my stop was right around the corner. I gave up, so I just reached in my pants and tucked it up behind my belt line against my belly. Here we are, yelled the slouched troll of a bus driver. So with my hard dick pointing to the sky, I got off the bus and started walking towards her house. Excitement hit me like a bolt of lightning. It was going to happen, ecstasy in the flesh! I was going to finally indulge in all those things the church preached against. The things the penthouse forum (hidden under my cum stained mattress) spoke about. So, as discussed earlier in the day with her, I went to the window on the front right and knocked softly. The blinds cracked open sharply like a nervous fiend on a 3 day binge was behind them. The blinds quickly retracted enough to see her peaking around the edge. With her finger to her lips, letting me know someone was home and I wasn't suppose to be there. She slowly lifted the window and said, I need you to come in quickly, be quiet and hide under the bed. My brother hasn't left yet. Without thinking, I slowly slid into the room on my belly with trombone case in hand. I remember lying on my belly for what seemed to be an eternity.

With my case, backpack and me all stuffed under this twin sized mattress, I turned my head to kill the sting running down my back. There, about two inches in front of my face, was a single lonely sock. I looked at it with a smile, thinking to myself how lucky I was. But in reality I was hot and sweaty secret stored away next to a three month lost dirty sock. The door creaked open and a deep voice spoke, I'm leaving to work, mom will be home around eight. Then the door closed with a muted slam. She sat there on the corner of the bed in silence. What the heck is she waiting for, I thought. I was facing the opposite direction and didn't dare move. Then I heard it. The start of her brother's engine. The rumbling sound slowly started to fade away as it cruised down the block. Follow me, she ordered. I crawled out from under the bed, leaving my stuff there to stay hidden. I

walked into the living room and there I saw a slowly shutting door, a trace of where I was suppose to go. I followed the hint into a low lit room. This is my parents room, she said with a notion that this was extremely forbidden. Come over here, she directed. So I obeyed, like a hungry puppy. I sat down next to her on the edge of the bed in which she was probably conceived. She ran her finger along the skin of my arm as if it was the surface of a pond. Do you want to kiss me?, came from her small voice. Uh, I guess, I mean, Yes, stumbled out of my mouth. Well do you or not? Of course I do, I'm a little nervous. Are you sure no one will catch us?, I said as if I was stealing from Satan himself. Don't be silly, she said. And right then she moved in for a kiss. Her mouth was half open with a serpent's tongue whipping. My mouth was closed when she impacted, so I had slobber lips, but I obeyed and Let her penetrate my teeth. She went crazy, as if a had a hyper slug in my mouth. We fell back onto the bed, still in each other's embrace. By now I have managed to get her bra off with no issues. I always find it funny now when I see some corny teen movie, when the guy has such a hard time removing the bra. It really wasn't an issue that day. She rolled over on top of me, straddling me like a jockey. Still kissing, I ran my hands over her breasts, feeling the erect nipples between my fore fingers and thumbs. I had such a hard on at this point. It was uncomfortable to have my cock smashed in my jeans, but I ignored it as good as I could. Slowly she released her grip, crawled off the bed and walked over to a bag on the vanity. She reached in and pulled out condoms, came back and sat on the edge of the bed. Pick a color, she said holding an assortment like a deal of cards. I sat up, reached out and grabbed one, not sure of the color selection. As she was laying back on the bed she told me to turn off the lights. With an uncomfortable hard on, I walked towards the light switch.

Are you ready to fuck?, soft and sincerely spoke this girl engulfed in darkness. Shaky and nervous, I walked closer to the bed, sweaty palms, not knowing if I could go through with the act. I-I-I don't think w-we should do tthis, was heard in the room. It was my voice, high pitched and crackly. It was silent for a moment. An uncomfortable silent. Are you sure you don't want to?, she snarled coldly. I think we should wait, childlike came from my mouth. She stumbled through the darkness and turned the light back on. What she saw was probably the most pathetic boy in the whole world. Standing next to the bed, still fully dress, with a hard on pants teepee and an unopened condom in his hand. I think you should leave now, she said. I didn't speak. She opened the door to the bedroom and lead me to the front door of the house. Wait, I said nervously, I almost forgot my trombone. An annoyed sigh burst from her mouth, Hurry up! I half ran to her bed room to gather my things. I couldn't believe I almost forgot my stuff. I walked back to her to say my goodbyes, but she rudely interrupted, Is that it? I-I guess so?, I mumbled. As she opened the door for me she said, I'll call you later. Then slammed it shut behind me. By this time, my hard on was gone and I was five minutes into a twenty minute walk. I remember having mixed emotions on that walk home. Happy and excited that I had a girl alone for a make-out session, yet confused at why I couldn't go through with it. And why was she so mad? We would just try again next time. When I made it home, no one was there. So the first thing I did was run to the bathroom and jerk off.

Before I flipped the switch, I looked back at her on the bed. She

was grinning with her shirt half on. The click of the light switch.

She never called me back. I quit band and never played the trombone again.—*ROBERT BARRAGAN*



I first met College Station indie rock band LUCA whilst writing up the band for their LOUDFEST 2014 appearance. My immediate reaction upon dialing up the band's Bandcamp page was shock that I was hearing something entirely out of time and space. This music sounded like it had emerged from a basement in Portland or Seattle during the late 1990s or early 2000s rather than the middle of hot, dusty Texas 15 years after bands like Pedro The Lion, Death Cab For Cutie, Carissa's Wierd and The Shins shook off the region's post-grunge malaise with their hyper-intelligent brand of guitar-based indie pop. LUCA has all those trappings, hits all those marks, plus adds a taste of 2010s indie folk to their literate indie rock. I sat down with Ross Hudgins (drums, vocals), Jeremy Pennington (bass) and Josh Willis (vocals, guitar) over a smashing bit of Asian food to talk about the band, its music and *Jurassic Park*.

KELLY.

How did you guys meet each other?

ROSS:

I've been here for awhile. I'm from Houston, but I've been here taking my time, working on my degree.

JOSH:

I also grew up in Houston. I moved to Florida and I went to school there for two years. The majority of my friends I went to high school with were all here going to school so I moved here too. I was gonna go to Sam Houston, I went there for a semester and hated it so I dropped out and now I work all the time

and bum around with these guys.

ROSS:

We all live on the same street as each other now too. *JOSH*.

Yeah, I moved down from the street from them.

JEREMY:

I did drop out of school but then I got back into school and I've been here way too long, but I like it. We all knew about each other as long as I can remember, but we never really hung out or talked. ROSS

We all went to the same summer camp with each other.

KELLY.

Like in high school?

JOSH:

Yeah, but we didn't really talk to each other then.

JEREMY:

Yeah, but later on I'm here and Josh contacts me, first time we've ever spoken to each other, and says "Hey, I'm going to be in College Station in about a year and I really want to build a Jurassic Park jeep. I said, "um, alright, let's do it." It still hasn't happened yet. *JOSH*

It will happen one day.

KELLY:

But you guys had played a bit with other people in high school? *JOSH:*

Oh yeah. I had a terrible band in high school. It was fun.

ROSS:

Yeah, and a couple of years ago I played in a cover band here with Brenton from Should've Been Cowboys.

KELLY:

So you guys got here and started a band. How'd you go about figuring out what exactly you were going to do?

JOSH: I had two songs that I'd written over the past three years. When I was in Florida I was just kinda hanging out with girls and doing whatever, not really writing music. *ROSS:*

Getting engaged...

JOSH:

Yeah, but not anymore. I wrote like two songs and when I moved here I asked these guys if they wanted to jam, hang out, maybe try out these songs for fun. So we got together...there was another guy that was in the band but he just recently left. We're all on good terms. He's my roommate actually, his name's also Josh. We just got together one night and I kinda had an idea of how I wanted the songs to go but I didn't say anything about it because I didn't want to be that guy. So we started playing together with this indie pop kind of thing. And that was the catalyst for me. I wrote six or seven more songs and I think right now we have 13 or 14 after a year. Once we kind of had a thing, we just kept it in that general theme.

KELLY:

One of the things I thought after hearing what you have on your Bandcamp page and definitely after I saw you play the first time is that it's curious to me how a band of young Texas guys sounds like a band from Seattle from 15 years ago. I don't think it's a dead-on thing, you don't sound exactly like one band. But you guys definitely have a sound that is reminiscent of a period and a place. So how do you go about being a 1999 Seattle band in 2014 Texas?

JOSH:

It's just the stuff that we grew up listening to. I listened to a lot of Death Cab For Cutie.

Pedro The Lion.



How Does a 1 Band Emerge I Profile by M



JOSH: Yeah, that's a big influence. *JEREMY:*

Uh, I like Black Sabbath! That's how I learned to pla JOSH:

I think a lot of it is mostly what I listen to. I feel like I'm not saying we're consciously doing that, but it's *KELLY*:

It seems like the retro thing runs in 20 year cycles, cian that seems to be the music you place on a ped hear other things that are great that become a part really becomes your touchstone.

JEREMY:

I would say especially when (former guitarist) Josh v listeners. Ross is super into The National... *IOSH*:

Yeah, and I'm just now getting into them. For the log JEREMY:

There's a lot of things that these guys like that I just right off the bat but it takes me awhile to come arou *JOSH:*

You are a Coheed and Cambria guy.

JEREMY:

Well, and Katy Perry too. Lots of good basslines in t

KELLY:

So I've listened to your new EP several times now ar of young bands that I see around in this town is tha people can sing along too. It seems the art of song tone, texture or maybe dynamics. But they don't w



1999 Seattle N 20**1**4 Texas? Xelly Minnis

me if they don't write songs. I like that about you. Is that something that you guys sat down to do on purpose? JOSH:

Well, I write all the songs. And I've always been scared and turned off by cookie cutter stuff. If I'm writing a song about a girl then I'm going to do it in the most metaphorical way possible because I don't want someone saying, "Hey, that reminds me of this song." Everybody and their mom writes songs about girls. That's music. I hate that crap. I wanted to do it different. There are some songs I write and I won't believe it or it won't be what I want so I scrap it, ditch it. I'm not going to say that I consciously did that with the songs or wrote them that way, I think it's more what I gravitate to, what I do.

ROSS:

If it's not a good song it doesn't stick. If it is, we keep playing it. *JOSH:*

Yeah, we have a whiteboard that we write all of our songs on. There's a couple we don't play anymore, we put tombstones around their titles but the rest...we try to keep everything similar enough that maybe they don't sound the same but it still has the general feel

ROSS:

It still sounds like us. JOSH:



But I think of some bands, let's say Imagine Dragons, where a song comes on and I'm like "oh yeah, that's Imagine Dragons" but then the next song is like "what?" It's cool they are that versatile but I'm wondering if they are writing it because they can or... KF/I Y

Or writing it as a marketing exercise.

JOSH:

Yeah! I write some stuff that's like super folky and then I have other stuff that I recorded on my phone and that's it and it will never see the light of day again. I don't consciously do that... KFI Y

I definitely hear the folk thing, especially with "This Will Destroy Me" and "Bonnie Tyler" so you've got 2008 Seattle in there too. Those two sounds have that vibe. ROSS:

That song is almost like country music.

IOSH:

Yeah, when I wrote that song...Bonnie Tyler, she's a great pop singer, and she has that album called *It's a Heartache* and it's a great record and I have that album in my room and I was writing and I saw the album and I thought "I can tell Bonnie Tyler is a heartache" and that was it. And a lot of people, especially people our age all ask, "Who's Bonnie Tyler? What's that song about?" It's about nothing really. Some of our songs are about something but this one is about nothing. Some folk music, this is just a song about nothing. I used to listen to a lot of folk music in high school. We listen to the soundtrack to *Inside Llewyn Davis* a lot, it's kind of our go-to music when we pick up acoustic guitars. There's definitely that influence to some of that stuff.

KELLY:

So without the second Josh playing guitar, it seems that two guitars and how the guitars interact is a key part to your sound, a lot of interplay. Do you miss having that extra sound? *IOSH:*

We've only played this way a few times. There's a couple of songs we played and the first time I thought "man, these songs really suck without the other part". We've got a guy from another band that's going to fill in with us for a bit. For me, I miss having the parts there because they were really good and filled out the songs right. He was like our Ringo, he wasn't the best player in the band but he did that right thing. For me, I see this as a challenge and a learning opportunity. I don't have to just play the rhythm chords now, I can kind of switch back and forth between it and the lead parts, trying to make stuff work. Part of me wants to have another player because it would be easier but I also enjoy the challenge.

ROSS:

I think of a band like Pageantry who records a lot of parts but doesn't necessarily present the songs that way live. And I'm a firm believer that the live show should be different than the recording. //SSH:

Yeah, if that's how we presented it, with lots of full guitars and stuff but live it's different, I'm okay with that. Maybe more raw, stripped down, more rock & roll. I go both ways, it's still pretty fresh, it's only been two weeks. We definitely feel the difference.

KELLY:

Another thing I think is cool about you guys is that you build your own guitars. *JOSH:*

That's all Jeremy.

v.

that 1990s era is what's cool in music right now. pretty much what we listen to so it comes through.

I think at a certain point, 16 years old...as a musiestal as the most important music of your life. You of your lexicon, but the stuff that you had at 16

vas in the band we had a real diverse group of

ngest time I hated them but...

don't know about. I'll listen and I won't hate it ind.

here.

d something I think what sets you apart from a lot t you write songs, catchy songs with choruses that writing has been set aside these days in favor of ite songs. A band can't be successful for



<- CONTINUED

KELLY:

So when did you become interested in instrument building? JEREMY:

I think it was the summer of '09 and I bought this cheap piece of crap guitar at a pawn shop and I wound up painting it all red and painted a black panther on it. And that was kind of the bug that bit. Next summer I was at home and I thought I wanted to build something. So I gathered a bunch of scrap parts and built an electric mandolin. It sounded like crap, played like crap, it's still abandoned in my closet and should probably be destroyed. It was that summer that my brother and his friend asked me to play bass with their band and I did. That was fun, that was my first experience being out and touring in a band. It was a learning experience for sure. But my friend in that band said, hey can you build me a Jaguar? So I said sure! He gave me \$200 and it cost a bit more than that but I built it, put it together. It worked like crap, it played but not well. So I rebuilt it and now it's pretty nice. I had a bass I built that was rebuilt four times until I was happy with it but the truss rod was broken so I've sat it in the corner. I now have a Jazzmaster bass I built and it's the first guitar I've built that I was really happy with and plays great. It has a Squier neck on it, I can build my own necks but it's must easier to just get Fender parts. Sometimes you put a bunch of parts together and they always feel like a bunch of parts. KELLY:

To be fair, I've owned new guitars from Fender that felt like that too.

JOSH:

I had this First Act Telecaster that I got off Craigslist for like \$50 and I asked Jeremy to put real Tele parts on it, change out the bridge and such and it's now my favorite guitar. It weighs two pounds and it looks just off enough that people ask about it a lot. I gotta say, it's nice to have a good guitar tech in the band!

KELLY:

One of the heartbreaking things about the Bryan/College Station music scene is that we get cool folks like you come in, we don't meet you until your junior year and then you graduate and then you are all gone. What happens when you guys graduate? *ROSS*.

I guess we'll both get a job somewhere. Jeremy and I both are learning software development so I guess we'll go somewhere and work.

JOSH:

This band is kind of my baby, my child. Obviously I don't want it to die. I wanna do it as long as we can. I don't want to be famous or anything but I'd love for other people to like what we do. I'm not in school so when they graduate if things work out I'll just go where they go. I'm doing this as long as I can.

KELLY:

I think Texas A&M is so difficult to get into and then graduate from that it attracts a different kind of student that actually wants to be in school and do well as opposed to the guy that goes to school because mom and dad makes him and majors in girls and guitars.

ROSS:

People act like they love this place so much but then they take off as quick as they can.

JOSH:

I dunno. For me, I found a job really quickly here and I like it here. And I like what's going on around here musically. The fact that there is a scene here even if it fluctuates a lot, it's very appealing to me. I didn't know about the music scene when I moved here, and neither did these guys. We knew about the Stafford and that was it. But I started going to shows around and I knew that there was a community for me here so we got the band together, and here we are.

LUCA celebrated the release of their new EP Mistakes To Learn From with a live show Friday September 12th at Schotzis on Northgate with special guests Civeta Dei, Odd Folks, and The Ex-Optimists. Show starts at 10pm

PEDAL PUSHING Chicago Stompworks Fudge Scrambler

I don't really like 2-in-1 pedals much. I always feel like they unfairly straightjacket me. I either want the order the two effects are in to be reversed or I love one side but hate the other or I can't get an acceptable tone without both pedals on at the same time. It's a cool concept, two effects roughly the size of 1.5 enclosures but it's almost always a compromise for me. And so it is with the **Fudge Scrambler**, a 2-in-1 from the fine folks at **Chicago Stompworks**.



The Fudge Scrambler consists of fine hand-wired copies of a good TS-808 Tubescreamer channel and a Maestro MFZ-1 fuzz channel. The Tubescreamer side is an overdrive based entirely on the older Japanese version of the circuit, the "good" version. To me, there's no real "good" version of the Tubescreamer. I hate that circuit. It is meant to make a Fender-style soft-mids amp sound like it's a Marshall cranked. It is almost all upper mids and highs. The tone is more like a low pass filter and just attenuates highs but does nothing to address the lack of lows and the lows disappear the more gain you add. I have never jived with the Tubescreamer. The other side is based on the later '70s version of the MFZ-1 fuzz circuit. This side is what makes this pedal quite interesting. Back in the '00s Electro-Harmonix released the Double Muff, which was two "Muff" circuits cascading atop one another. I loved that pedal, but it had weird impedance issues that required it to be the first pedal in a chain (even before the tuner) which made it REAL awkward to use in a multiple pedal scenario. But I loved how it sounded. Both the Double Muff and the second side of the Fudge Scrambler are based on EHX's first effect, the Muff fuzz, which is essentially a simple germanium fuzz much like the Fuzz Face, the granddaddy of all fuzz pedals. At low fuzz settings the circuit sounds more like an angry overdrive or the lower settings of an MXR Distortion+. More distortion like rather than fuzzy. As you turn it up it garners more of a spazzy spitting germanium flavor. What I like about the Chicago Stompworks version of this circuit is that it is not as picky about what pedals it can be stacked with. So I can have my preferred overdrive in the chain too. That said, the two halves of this circuit work well together at the same time. The Tubescreamer side adds a bit of midrange honk to the scooped mids of the MFZ-1. There's also a LOT of volume on tap for either side so they can smack the front of an amp nice and hard.

The quality of the pedal is top-notch. The enclosure is nice, it looks pro, works dandy, etc. Chicago Stompworks aren't on the higher end of boutique pedal cloners and have only recently, like VFE, started screening art on the enclosures. That said, their prices are a LOT less than most and make it much more attractive for dudes like me to just take a chance on something. They do DOD 250's, Rats, Big Muffs and other classic pedals and take on custom work. So you could have a 2-in-1 made with your own combination in mind, and they do single pedal versions of each circuit. I might eventually go for just the MFZ-1 side. Street price on a Fudge Scrambler isn't awful at \$119, which is actually SUPER good for a 2-in-1. Might be worth checking out if you're looking for a different flavor of fuzz.—*KELLY MINVIS*

FIND 979REPRESENT ON FACEBOOK AND 979REPRESENT.COM

INTROVISIONAIRE: OL ED'S WILD RIDE PT. 1

This is the sixth chapter of a novel than began being serialized in 979Represent with the April 2014 issue and will be serialized each month.—ed.

Edward Elliot Biermann or as those closest to him affectionately referred to him "Ol' Ed", was now an interplanetary celebrity of sorts. He was now currently regarded by some in the scientific community to be a missing link of sorts, seeing as he was after all the only one to ever successfully return intact and seemingly unaffected from his interspace travels. Despite his ever elevated status within the scientific community Ed held no special distinction other then being a chagrined U.S. Citizen who once caught a fly ball at a Dodgers game while visiting his Aunt Ruth. He hadn't even tried to catch the ball because he knew how much everyone else wanted it and it was certainly a lot more then he did by simply the looks on their faces, but alas the ball had came to him with ease and no force after bouncing off the gloves of all those around him. The crowd resented him and Ol' Ed. Well, he was still young Ed and frankly he loved the controversy. As far as anyone and everyone were concerned Ed was just another face in the crowd, and for the most part they were right.

In the mid 50s a biker couple who were on the lam from the law ditched their new born bundle of biker breed on the steps of a house near a university in Southern California the couple were haphazardly passing by on their way to Mexico. The couple assumed that since it was near a university surely whoever lived there would be educated and able to raise their bundle of attitude to be more then they ever could. Little did they know that the house on which steps they left their boy belonged to an old custodian who had held tenure at the school nearby since accidentally saving the lives of four visiting students who had become stuck inside a lab closet while attempting to loot supplies (someone had unknowingly knocked a burner off the counter and the room quickly filled with poisonous gases). The custodian-Ol' Ed's dad (for all sakes & purposes) - wandered into the room to fetch some hootch he was certain he had left in the supply closest. He unlocked it, the boys half-dead pushed out, and Thomas Biermann became a certified local hero just like that. No one ever asked why the boys were in the closest or why Tom was going to the supply closest at 11pm in the evening. Everyone just seemed happy that no one was harmed and that the school was happy that a potential vicious and drawn-out legal battle had been avoided. The school in a grand gesture of appreciation of one man's noble deed gave Tom the house by the university and awarded the man tenure. This was the world in which the boy who would become Ol' Ed was born into.

As Edward grew he observed the stark contrasts of class and status and ever-steadily grew more and more indifferent to mankind's world view of how things should function and flow. Instead, he learned to trust his gut-whom when piss drunk out of his gourd he affectionately called "Gus". "Gus is never wrong" was something Ol' Ed came to mumble to himself more and more over the years. Despite his warrant of the workings of the world Ed did reasonably well in school and thanks to his adoptive father being a hero Ed was allowed entry into the University he had grown up beside via a scholarship they created specifically for him "The Thomas Biermann Generational Excellency Trust". Despite his efforts and ease of entry Ol' Ed soon found the halls of any Biergarden much more favorable then any ivory halls of academia. Ed knew nothing of his real parents, but as time progressed Ed's dormant biker blood rose to the surface and he even almost join a biker gang of his own. But once again he found out more about himself, this time right before initiation-he learned he didn't care to ever be apart of any group whether scholarly or scumily. He knew no real family, and as such came to the conclusion there, that he would never care to be apart of anyone else's.

In his twenties Ed grew more reserved and quiet. He drank booze like water and read books like he was breathing air. The more introverted Ed grew to take interest in trying to stay busy so as too not drive himself thinking about all the things he read. He enlisted in the service. As it turned out Ed was quite the soldier. One Sgt. once remarked that Biermann was from the cut of jib that the Army dreamed of and that Army would be unstoppable if only there were more Ed's. Yes it seemed that he had found his calling in life. After sometime on the front lines Ed was transferred to a special branch of the military and steadily became more and more involved in Top Secret field tests and maneuvers. It seemed the more dangerous and absurd – the calmer Ed grew. Despite his obvious impending doom in countless scenarios Ol' Ed would remain calmer then ever & then walk away. Till one day he walked away from the military in his mid 30's ready to travel – somewhere.

After a few years spent backpacking across America he came to meet a man at pub out East who went by the name Peist. The man was slightly erratic at the corner of the bar scribbling on napkins mumbling to himself about something big it seemed and he came across as someone who had just gotten caught up in something wayyyy over his head. This intrigued ol' Ed and his love for the obscure and obscene. In no time at all the two drunkenly hit it off and forged a drunken pact that whenever Peist was done tinkering and ready to test whatever it was he working on, that he would track down this Edward Elliot Biermann to assist him in the testing process. Since after all who was more qualified then Ed to test something so potentially great and dangerous? No one besides himself, felt Ed. Everyone else it seemed feared death or missing loved ones to some degree of fault he felt, but not him for whatever reason. Despite hours of drunken badgering Piest simply wouldn't let Ol' Ed in on whatever the hell it was the drunk bastard was scribbling on those napkins, other then that whatever it was that he was working on was going to revolutionize the world and possibly humanity itself. Eventually, after hours outside the hours closed bar the two finally exchanged contact information and went their separate ways. Their paths did not cross for quite sometime, though the two did secretly remember little bits here and there of their drunken conversation, neither actually expected to ever see the other again in a million vears.

Flash forward thirteen years when out of the blue one day five sharp dressed men arrived outside a now weathered cardboard hut allegedly belonging to a quiet nobody named Mr Brizby. They were looking for Mr Biermann and were guite certain that their intel was correct and that Biermann was Brizby. After agreeing to Mr. Brizby's demands: a fifth of hootch and a pack of bugler, Brizby came forward and confessed that he was in fact the one Edward Elliot Biermann and that he was sympathetic to whatever harm or grief he may have caused whoever who had sent these hired goons his way. Little did he know that these men were not there to pulverized Ol' Ed for any past misdoings, but instead had been sent there seeking the services of one "Biermann: former Professional Test Subject and Pilot for United States Government". Brizby hadn't heard that title in years and was in shock, but being one to never question fate and seeing as "Gus" was calm, he simply continued to swig his hooch and followed the goons to wherever it was their goon mobile had originated from.

As fate would have it or more importantly as his introvision would have it, Peist was now a man of great stature and influence. He was a man doing his everything to not be a one or two trick pony and was currently neck deep in his latest invention "interspace" a new form of space travel he was certain would not only blow the socks off any of the new stuff the boys over at NASA were tinkering on, but go even further to cement his status justly, Peist felt, in the halls of academia and the books of the influential greats. Peist was determined to achieve this without the aid of the introverse to prove he was indeed a smart man in his own right. He'd received from the U.S. to keep his mouth shut about the introverse and from the U.N. to disclose the existence and workings of the introvision specs, and a subsequent payout from the U.N. To once again keep his mouth shut, Piest was as you can imagine guickly becoming a rather wealthy man and as such was able to afford a more then decent education that he was now busting at the seams to put to the test and to do so he was going to need the aid of some test pilots. He remembered the name of a man he met one drunken night with a gut he called Gus. All the other "volunteer" pilots were abducted from their lives mid action, most would never return. You see, Peist wasn't the only one who wanted to see his interspace work.

Gus and Ol' Ed were cleaned, briefed—as generally as possible, and fitted for their journey completely oblivious to any potential harm that could come their way. It was with wide eyed wonder that the two entered the first fold. Everything was calm.— *WILLTAM DANIEL THOMPSON*

WELCOME TO AGGIELAND: A GUI

OK, so you made it off to college. You've got all your stuff unpacked in your tiny dorm room with the smelly roommate from parts unknown, or maybe you've got all your stuff tight in your first apartment with all your bros and ladies. You've got your books, you know (for the most part) where your classes are, but you don't really *know* Bryan/College Station yet. You've heard vaguely about Northgate and you're pretty sure you can get back to the grocery again next week by yourself but you're pretty convinced that your friends are all right. You *are* pretty fucking dumb for having chosen to go to Texas A&M or Blinn instead of Rice or U of H or UT or somewhere much cooler out of state. Well, stop feeling sorry for yourself. You have something cooking right here in your very own backyard. You see, if all you do is stay on University Dr. or Texas Ave. then you'd never know that Bryan/College Station has some awesome places to patronize that aren't located on the beaten path right in front of you. We've got lots of tiny places full of character *AND* characters.

Every town has pretty much the same chain restaurants and stores. It's the homespun unique places in a town that make you want to stick around. We've got lots of restaurants and shops and they are all practically BEGGING you to spend your parents' hard-earned money with them. This map will help you find the cool places to shop and the cool stuff to do at night without having the inconvenience of stumbling around town. That's how much we love you...we'll do you this solid gratis.

I moved here in the summer of 2006 and it took me easily a year to find out that there was actually cool stuff to do here beyond the usual Aggie and Northgate stuff. And the usual B/CS stuff isn't bad, really. I've lived in many college towns over the years and I've never attended or worked at a university more rich in tradition than Texas A&M. Going to a football game here is as big a deal as going to see the pros play. I'm proud to be an adjunct Aggie. But if sports or redneck culture is not your bag, then please refer often to the map on this page and try out some of the cool and unique stuff Bryan/ College Station has to offer. And then why don't you maybe see about offering something up yourself!! Start a band, even if you've never touched a musical instrument in your life. Paint. See a play or write and produce one. Sculpt. Make art out of trash. Hold a protest. Join the roller derby league. Make friends with someone your mama and daddy would absolutely freak out if they ever saw you with ...and then introduce them to each other at Parents Weekend!

The point here is that college really is what you make of it. It's the magic time in your life when you have adult privileges without fullon adult responsibility. Whatever you do (provided it doesn't kill you or somebody else) will pretty much be excused away as "oh, that was just my crazy college years". Enjoy it, because it will pass you by quick. Bryan/College Station is full of memories waiting to happen. To let them go to waste is worse than failing Chemistry. I guarantee.—*KELLY MINNIS*

Arsenal Tattoo & Design

http://www.arsenaltattoo.com 307 W. 26th St. Bryan (979) 485-9892 If you're looking to get inked, this is *the* place in B/CS to get quality artistry, now at their new location in downtown Bryan.

The Backyard

303 University Dr. W. College Station (979) 846-8806 Beneath the exterior of a normal bar on Northgate lies some of the best burgers in town and certainly the finest on Northgate.

Blackwater Draw

http://blackwaterbrew.com 303 Boyett St. College Station (979) 703-6170 College Station's only true brewpub, featuring fine food, various Texas beers on tap as well as their own line of beers.

Brazos Running Company

http://brazosrunning.com 1667 S. Texas Ave. College Station (979) 485-9830 The area's first store to exclusively serve runners and walkers, from beginners to marathon pros. Shoes, clothing, accessories, etc. and staffed by runners.



Brazos Running Company

http://brazosrunning.com

1667 S. Texas Ave. College Station (979) 485-9830 The area's first store to exclusively serve runners and walkers, from beginners to marathon pros. Shoes, clothing, accessories, etc. and staffed by runners.

C-Ment Skateboard & Apparel

2043 Harvey Mitchell Pkwy. S. College Station (979) 680-1000 Skater owned and operated, C-Ment's got all the rad skate supplies and apparel.

Carneys

3410 Ś. College Ave. Bryan (979) 823-1294 A bit of a local secret. Great beer selection, none of the Northgate douchiness.

Clockwork Gaming

http://clockworkgaming.com

913 Harvey Rd. College Station (979) 703-1838

A gaming shop and refuge owned and operated by longtime Aggie gamers. Purchase cards, compete in video game tourna-ments or play pickup games with friends in a comfortable environment.

FX Video Game Exchange

fxvideogameexchange.com 1500 Harvey Rd. College Station (979) 696-4263 Locally owned and operated by real gamers and not corporate managed to the point of ripping you off like some other chain game stores around here we could name. de to the cool stuff in B/CS



G. Hysmith Skatepark

- http://cstx.gov/skatepark 1600 Rock Prairie Rd. College Station
- Over 1600 square feet of bowls, walls, street courses, hips, and ollie boxes. All concrete, all rad.

Grand Station

http://grandstationent.com

2400 Earl Rudder Fwy College Station (979) 696-1100 Lazer tag, cash bar bowling, video games, etc. Like Chuckie Cheese for adults & without shitty pizza. Wait, no, they got shitty pizza too.

Grand Stafford Theater

http://grandstaffordtheater.com

106 S. Main St. Bryan The Brazos Valley's premiere live music venue, serving up rock, country, blues and other musics.

Guitar Center

http://guitarcenter.com 1003 Harvey Rd. College Station (979) 694-6982 Gots pretty much whatever you need for music making, however you make it.

Half Price Books

http://www.hpb.com

1505 University Dr. College Station (979) 696-2325 This is the closest thing to a cool record store we have...plus lots of other cool used movies, comics and books.

I Cody's

http://www.jcodys.com 3610 S. College Áve. Bryan (979) 846-2639 The best BBQ experience in town. Other places have great meat but J. Cody has a great meal.

Koppe Bridge Bar & Grill

http://www.koppebridge.com 11777 FM 2154. College Station (979) 764-2933 Local polls rate Koppe Bridge's burgers as the best in town. If it's not the best then it's definitely one of the top three.

Lippman Music Co.

http://lippmannmusic.com 112 Nagle St. College Station (979) 846-1225 The local's favorite hole in the wall iampacked with amps, guitars, and such. You can also get set-ups, repairs and gear rentals there too.

Margies

320 N. Main St. Bryan (979) 822-8422 Margie's is an old school dive bar that's friendly as hell and they pat out one of the best burgers you'll ever have by hand right before your eyes.

Mr. G's Pizzeria

http://www.gotomrgs.com 201 W. 26th St. Bryan (979) 822-6747 No college town is complete without a ripping local pizza joint, and Mr. G's is ours. We recommend the calzone.

New Republic Brewing Company

http://newrepublicbrewing.com 11405C N. Dowling Rd. College Station (713) 489-4667 Get their line of beers fresh from the brewing tuns and enjoy live music on their back lawn as well as a host of food trucks.

Proudest Monkey

108 S. Main St. (979) 361-4777 The Paddock Lane folks' Bryan bar that has stellar food as well as a cool older urban bar kind of feel to it. 979Rep staff recommends you try the chorizo burger.

Revolution Café & Bar

211 S. Main St. Bryan (979) 823-4044 The heart and soul of the local dirtbag community. It's like your favorite living room house party with a cash bar! Free wi-fi, good drinks and the best live music around.

Spoons Yogurt

http://spoonsyogurt.com 1509 S. Texas Ave. College Station (979) 446-0085; 943 William D. Fitch Pkwy. College Station (979) 690-8290 & 2305 Boonville Rd. Bryan (979) 776-5670 Self-serve yogurt & sorbet with an assortment of fresh fruit, candy,

nuts and whatever in Bryan and College Station. There are others, but Spoons does it best.

To The Point Piercing

tothepointbodypiercing.com 119 Walton St. College Station (979) 595-4153 If you love it then you should put a ring through it...and if so then you should definitely let Jave and company be the ones to do it.

Village Café

thevillagedowntown.com 210 W. 26th St. Bryan (979) 703-8514 Great fresh food, cool atmosphere and the occasional singersongwriter in the corner. Also plays host to the hottest salsa dance night in the twin cities.

Village Foods

http://www.villagefoods.com 1760 Briarcrest Dr. Bryan (979) 846-9600 The best selection of organic, free-range and gluten-free groceries in B/CS

College Station can suck it, I'm a bryan kid



Well hi! Welcome to the slightly magical city of Bryan/College Station. I'm going to be straight forward with you. Whether you're a freshman that just moved into town, or just crazy enough to be perpetually bored, you've made a mistake. Turn back now, transfer, and leave this place I beg of you. You still have a chance to be free! No? Okay then, I tried.

Now that we've gotten past the introduction, I'm going to give you somewhat of a guide on where to eat, listen to some great fucking music, and get drunk. I'm going to tell you about the "hidden gems" of this hell hole, some of these places have kept me sane for the duration of my existence/ since I've created a social life for myself.

First things first, LEAVE CAMPUS. Why in the hell are you going to spend more time on school ground than you have to? Who the fuck does that? Charles Manson or fucking Jeffery Dahmer that's who! Seriously, if you now live in College Station in a dorm, or where the fuck ever, leave your habitat for three hours and explore. Now, I'm not just saying find the closest HEB or fucking Wal-Mart. What I'm saying is to venture into Bryan. And queue the horribly haunting organs of death!! Yes yes, I understand Bryan gets a bad rap for being "ghetto" or "unsafe", but honestly, fuck that. Bryan is cool as shit. I would say better than College Station. Although there is no separation of the cities, there is an obvious culture change as soon as you drive in that direction. People on this side of the maroon rainbow are less snarky, and a little more down to earth than the assholes on the darker side of the moon. I'm going to focus on Downtown Bryan, because it's the place to be if you're not a snot-nosed manchild. Plus we have better tacos. Yes! Tacos! Only in Bryan can you get some serious tacos from Casa Rodriguez. Drive your stoned hungry ass downtown and get down on some serious Mexican food. Anyway, tacos, got that covered. Okay, maybe you don't want tacos. May I suggest Margie's Bar? Burgers and beer; what's better? Not much let me tell you. How about Mr. G's pizzeria? Yea, we have a pizzeria, shit just got real. My point is, downtown Bryan has some seriously amazing grub, and not just college student approved meals, or heavily stoned/intoxicated nourishments. Downtown has some amazing culinary works going on. Take The Village for example, they have orange oat waffles. Yea. They also have raspberry chipotle mayo, I don't even know how that happened but I thank god himself every day just for that. There's also The Proudest Monkey. Burgers, tacos, Texas beer, and mixology drinks that may contain vodka, cucumbers, and some other crazy stuff. Eat it, don't ask, just do it. Downtown is kicking ass with restaurants, and I really didn't even scratch the surface because there are quite a few. So, no more panda express, or bull shit Whataburger. Venture my dear, venture.

Okay okay, you've eaten. So, here is the most important thing out of this entire page of rambling. Booze and music. Yes, where in this horribly dull city can you get a drink and listen to some crazy good bands? I'm happy I brought this up on account of it's my favorite subject. I'm not talking about restaurant booze, or lame ass acoustic coffee shop sounds. I'm talking about bars that are not on Northgate with the fucktard frat boys. I'm talking about some serious grown-up conversation with a stranger while having a double Red Bull and Vodka...because that's my favorite. I'm talking about some punk rock rage and heavy metal fun. Not your style? Cool, because there are some crazy good alternative bands, and amazingly talented artists that come to Bryan frequently just to pay a visit and melt faces. The two main places are:

#1 Revolution Café and Bar. Don't let the name fool you. This tiny little piece of heaven is my second home...don't judge me. Revs has some crazy good bands that make appearances constantly. And they make a really good New York Motherfucker (expensive, but gets you drunk properly). Bands from all around come to play at this punk rock, hippie style bar. Inside this place, mosh pits have broken out, crowd surfing has happened, and full on drunken dancing/head banging has graced the hearts and eyes of all who stand in the cozy room. Sweat on sweat, people touching people can occur, but it's beautiful and it's okay. Now, outside in the court yard is a stage, and on that stage all kinds of genres have filled silence with music. Reggae night has brought some serious tunes and some crazy new acquaintances—love reggae night. Folk bands, electro pop, alternative, metal, punk, jazz, you name it and it's stepped foot on that beautiful stage, all the while people drink and chit chat with the bar tenders and door mans, because they are that fucking cool. Here, there is no judgment, there is no flaw. Here is home.

#2 The Stafford. Now, The Stafford is super interesting. Not my favorite place, but noteworthy. Here is where the main attraction would be metal. Loud, aggressive, hauntingly beautiful metal; the kind of shit that makes your heart skip a beat, it's wonderful. The Stafford is equipped with a bar, and mighty fine bartenders...if you know what I mean; hint, hint. This place gets pretty sick. It's huge compared to Revs, and even has an upstairs loft with couches and chairs. So, when you're drunk and hot, climb the stairs and sprawl out because it's nice and cold, plus you can still hear the music. This giant concrete building is meant for the ultimate metal head, or even the disco, electro pop kids that love the mix of guitars and keyboards. It's meant for you to let go and let loose. The floor is meant to take the beating of hundreds of feet stomping and dancing, the walls were built to with-stand the vibrations of the music, and you and I as we sing and make complete fools of ourselves. Colored LED lights splatter the blacked out walls as they themselves join in our foolishness. That is how I fell in love with The Stafford. Next to the wall, painted in lights, stomping my feet as the metal ruled my motions. You need to experience this. You need this in your life, or what's the point? Go to The Stafford and be a complete idiot for a night. It's okay, all the locals do it.

Last but not least: Here's the tricky part, how do you know a good bar from a lame one. All bars are required to make the same drinks and be nice enough to get your business back, but what makes a good bar I could recommend? Comfort, bartenders, and the people, that's how you can tell a good bar. I want authentic and original. I want a real face and real emotions, not a plastic atmosphere with a college kid mentality. I want my bar tender to be cooler and wiser than I, and I want my surroundings to mirror my bar tender. I think I might want too much. Either way, I have found that in downtown, a place called Murphy's Law is meant for one on one conversation. It's a weird comfortably classy place that occasionally has acoustics upstairs. It has all the requirements for large or small groups of friends to gather and drunkenly spew their life's problems upon ears that are listening. It's fun to eavesdrop nonetheless, this place is super chill and with the right friends, a lot of fun.

Last one: Halo...shall I say more? I think I shall. Halo is the only gay bar we have in Bryan. It is considerably noteworthy. Gay or straight, get your ass out there and dance! Dance under the chaotic lights, and admire the drag queens as they put on a show Friday and Saturday nights. They put most women to shame. Those are some purtty men. Sassy and delightful, you really can't help but love them and their fake boobs. Also, the bar tenders don't wear shirts and that's always a plus, that's a BIG plus.

So, I've given you, the reader, my secrets on how I've been able to bear in this city. It's because of the small places I love the most. I've meet some incredible people in these places, I've met some crazy awesome bands, and made even crazier awesome friends. You live here now; you have to call this city home until you have the balls to leave, so why not make the best of it while you can. There is a world beyond the text books and Wal-Mart around the corner. There is something better than a drunken one night stand caused my Northgate. There is Bryan, and inside Bryan there is life hidden. Come and see, come and make new friends, come and at least try the beer.—*IESSICA LITTLE*

FIND 979REPRESENT ON FACEBOOK AND http://979Represent.com





The wife and I moved to Bryan seven years ago by way of Kansas City, where we had been for five

years. Immediately, I found humor in friends' complaints about driving "all the way" to College Station, which spans the distance of about two and a half radio pop songs. In Kansas City I worked two jobs, and I easily had a 30-40 minute commute between each of those, not to mention the half hour or more drive required to meet friends who lived across town. We spent a lot of time in our cars in KC, and we listened to a lot of audiobooks and bad alternative radio. The drive into College Station from Bryan was a welcomed reprieve.

All that to say, Bryan-College Station is a small community, both in land mass and non-student population. Drive two hours (give or take some) in three different directions and you'll be in an honest to goodness Big City. However, even though BCS is a small community, I've never found anything about this town boring. The access to larger cities helps with that, but BCS itself is never boring.

I suppose BCS could be boring, sure, if you let it be. If you're content to live the next four years tanked up in Northgate or sauced alone in your sad dingy apartment then, yes, your memories of BCS will be a dull blur. But if you look just a little bit you'll find pockets of interesting people all over town. I'm surprised often by the people I meet in this town. Artists. Academics. Activists. Natives. Foreigners. Young people with big eved dreams. Older people making massive changes to their own lives or even the lives of others. And I meet these people in random places. Yes, many I meet in downtown Bryan or at Blinn College, where I work, but I also meet strange and wonderful people in coffee shops or at Grub Burger Bar, where the wife and I play backgammon several times a week, or even at one of the local theaters where I run into the same film geeks often. And some of these people I've held onto for nearly seven years, while others slip in and out of my life as easily as semesters rolling off the calendar.

Small towns, particularly in the southern states, have a reputation for being overly conservative and stuffy and afraid of change. They also are known for breeding hard-necked homogeneity, usually in the disguise of "tradition". And, sure, I won't lie, you can definitely find that here. (Hell, you can find those attitudes anywhere if you really want to, and you can waste a ridiculous amount of energy focusing on those attitudes and pretending to be oppressed by those attitudes if you really want to, as well.) But what I've also found in BCS, and this is certainly one of things I love about living here, is that loads of people in this town are living drastically intentional lives to war against homogeneity. I see people intentionally creating not only art but also artistic communities. I see people intentionally pushing forward not only new ideas but also think-tank places for people to meet and discuss those ideas. I see people intentionally unshackling themselves from boredom and repetition and tired traditions in many ways. Are homogeneity and conservatism and locked "tradition" present in BCS? Yes, and thank God they are. Without those things many folks in this town would not have a reason to live so intentionally.

I suppose my challenge for anyone moving to BCS—or even for myself as a seven year native-is two fold. One, I challenge you to find your people. Maybe they're here in the pages of this paper or at the shows we're promoting in downtown Bryan, but, then again, maybe they're not. Maybe they're in your classes or in your apartment complex or somehow magically always at the same coffee shop where you magically find yourself going everyday. This is a small town, but when school's in session this is a packed town. Find your people. Find the people who will help you accept my second challenge, which is this: avoid the ruts. Avoid the homogeneity, the easy repetitions and rhythms that are negatively associated with life in a small town. Find a way to be intentional about creating the art or the expanding the ideas or seeking the path that means something to you. Hit several coffee shops and bars and dives and cafes. Go to every event you can find on a calendar, especially if it's free and certainly if it sounds foreign or

lame to you. Walk in and out of various churches and temples and parks and meetings and AA confession circles. Do something to intentionally produce the thing you want most in this town. Just don't, for God's sake, spend years moaning that somebody else is not making available to you the thing you want most.

Last night I stood in a friend's kitchen and listened to people I greatly respect talk about the unique community of musicians and artists and enthusiasts in this town. They talked about the saturation of great minds and creativity that are even more potent here than in the larger cities where they've lived before. And they praised the weirdness of this town for making people hungry for great music and art and creativity. It's no surprise that the people I listened to were musicians and artists themselves. And I was reminded again, listening to them talk, that the only way to become bored in a town like this is to become boring yourself. God forbid.

Every year some great council in Bryan-College Station takes votes from the community to determine the BEST OF THE BRAZOS. Receiving this honor can be great for a small business. So, for what it's worth, I've compiled a list of the BEST places in BCS to obtain or experience some of my favorite (and least favorite) things:

GRILLED CHEESE: The Proudest Monkey PATIO LOUNGING: Ozona's Bar and Grill TEXAS BEER TAPS: Harvey Washbangers BURGERS / MILKSHAKES / DR. PEPPER BASED BBQ SAUCE / HAPPY HOUR SPECIALS: Grub Burger Bar UNNECESSARILY AWKWARD INTERACTIONS WITH A BARTENDER: Carnev's BBQ: Atarimatt's hella good ribs BIG ASS BOWL OF RAMEN WITH A SIDE PINT OF KIRIN ICHIBAN: Naked Fish SALMONELLA: Fuego's Tortilla Grill INSTANT DIARRHEA: Rosie Pho's KIMCHI PANCAKES: Choi's Korean Restaurant INSANELY LONG WAIT FOR NO REASON EXCEPT SHEER LACK OF PROFESSIONALISM OR PUBLIC AWARENESS: Starbucks at Texas Avenue and Villa Maria MARGARITAS: Ninfa's Mexican Restaurant MARGARITA PRICES: Los Cucos GREEN APPLE MIMOSAS: The Village Cafe (my wife craves them suckers) MANHATTAN: The Republic (they call it an Upper East Side, and it's so good they can call it whatever the crap they want) FAKE MANHATTAN THAT'S STILL HELLA GOOD: Napa Flats BLOODY MARY: La Bodega (Oosh, but be careful with the habanero infused vodka! Burns coming out.) USED BOOKSTORE THAT ALLOWS DOGS ON LEASHES: Half-Price Books **RECORD STORE:** the internet BLACK EYED PEA HUMMUS: Blackwater Draw SMOKED SALMON AND CREAM CHEESE BAGELS: Blue Baker CHICKEN TENDERS / CHICKEN FRIED STEAK / SWEET TEA SERVED IN

MASON JARS (III): Sodalak's Beefmasters BREAKFAST TACOS: I don't do breakfast tacos. COFFEE: mine

CUPCAKES SO BIG YOU NEED A FRIEND OR A RECENT BREAK-UP TO FINISH: The Chocolate Gallery

CUT THROUGH BETWEEN 29th STREET AND TEXAS AVENUE: Rosemary

MARSHMALLOW ICE CREAM: Madden's Casual Gourmet (not on the menu!)

FANCY PLACE TOTAL RIP OFF: Christopher's World Grille SPOT TO GET HIT ON BY COUGARS IF YOU'RE WEARING PATCH-OULI: Krogers / HEB / Village Foods / Wal-Mart / Big Lots /

PetSmart / Hastings / Target

FRIED PICKLES: Chicken Oil Company DOUGHNUTS AND OLD MAN FARTS: Shipley's

— KEVIN STILL



Robin Williams' finest on-screen performance was more than just acting. The scene that won him an Oscar, heck, the four words that won him an Oscar, endure because they're more than a page of a script. When Williams' character Sean Maguire tells Will Hunting "It's not your fault" a total of ten times in a minute and a half, he does something remarkable and generationally important. He tells Will—shoot, he tells a whole generation of us—that all of the things we suffered at the hands of our fathers are valid, important, and most assuredly not our faults. He does a thing that men don't do. He becomes a father to the fatherless. And to drive the point home, he even calls Will "son."

I watched three movies in the past week and (completely unintentionally on my part) they all turned out to be strikingly similar. The three films were Boyhood, The Kings of Summer, and Mud. All three were fantastic for different reasons. All three make great cultural points about coming of age and what manhood looks like in this world. And all three shared two important characteristics. The first was this: they had father figures who were absent, impotent, or just downright bad. In fact, each of the movies had an almost identical scene-the scene in which the son comes home late and encounters his father waiting up for him on the porch. In Mud, it's a disappointed father with news no young man should have to hear: in Boyhood it's a mostly drunk stepdad who's at his breaking point; and in Kings, it's a dad that's so fed up with his own sadness that he verbally abuses anyone within earshot. That's the first thing: dads who have no idea the damage they're causing, or they don't care. The second thing all of these have in common? Robin Williams wasn't in any of them.

I've thought much about Robin Williams over the last week, specifically about why I hold him in such high esteem. So then, why bring up three movies that nothing to do with him? Art imitates life and it's an undeniable truth that our culture these days struggles mightily with a lack of quality fathers and father figures—these three films illustrate this perfectly. I'm a father of three—15, 11, and 7. My dad is completely out of the picture, so I look where I can for models. They can be hard to find.

As I look back over Robin Williams' career, the thing that comes shining through to me is that his characters (at least my favorites) were brave and they were loving and they were noble and they were a safe place for others to land. They were never perfect; in fact, they're all deeply flawed. And it's also worth noting that he didn't always play this sort of part-films like Insomnia and One Hour Photo, while great, don't fit this. But for me, in the most memorable ones-Dead Poets Society, Good Will Hunting, Mrs. Doubtfire, Patch Adams, Awakenings, The Fisher King, Good Morning Vietnam, heck, even the underrated Toys-Williams plays a man who works to embody qualities that I look toward as I try to be a better father. In Dead Poets Society, John Keating pilots his boys through troubled waters to help them find the beacon of truth and beauty. In Patch Adams, he thrives on being a sustainer of life. In Mrs. Doubtfire, his sole desire is to be the best father he can be for his kids. In Toys, he, in the absence of his father, becomes fatherly in innocence and uses play to enact justice. In The Fisher King, Parry seeks nobility and justice. These are all people that I want to be. They're all my heroes.

Did Williams choose roles based on this sort of criteria? I don't know. I haven't read anything that suggests that. What I do know is that I can't divorce my worldview and stage in life from my moviegoing. And as I looked back at Williams' canon, the thoughts that kept coming to me were, "I can't wait for Sam to see *Dead Poets Society*," or "Laney needs to see what the dedication and humor of *Patch Adams* looks like," or "Man, my kids haven't seen *Mrs. Doubtfire*?" Of course, Robin Williams' family films like *Flubber* and *RV* have their place, but in an age where fatherhood is largely absent, Williams' filmography is water in the desert for those of us that are thirsty from the absence of our own fathers and the desire to not be something better for our kids. Williams was always the funniest man in the room, but as I've grown older, and my perspective has changed, I've realized that he was the



smartest, too. He always knew how we'd see him.

Williams' characters are never simple. They never make easy choices. They aren't caricatures of heroism. There isn't an action hero in the bunch. But these men that he becomes are models of what it means to shine a light in a dark world; to persevere in an age of injustice; to care about the hearts and souls of others. These are the kinds of people we need to see in our moviegoing. He was never a Gregory Peck-type leading man. He was always just one of us. And for a man like me, struggling to make good decisions, Robin Williams made the hard situations bearable, because I always knew he struggled too. And isn't that one of the most important things about fatherhood? A good father doesn't pretend to have it all together. He says, "I know you're struggling and hurting and troubled and it's ok. I've been there too and I'll walk ith you out of it." Robin Williams did that for all of us. He certainly





wdid it for me. In a time where fathers are few, we lost a great one. He will be missed.—*JOHN BARBER*

I first discovered Robin Williams on the small screen in 1978 on the television show *Mork and Mindy*, but it was away from TV that I really came to appreciate him—he could make you laugh like no else. I never got to see him live, but my jaws used to hurt from laughing at his comedy album (yes, one of those vinyl things) and his countless appearances on talk shows and live concert broad-casts. However, he was more than just a comedian—although that is a worthy calling. Robin Williams could act too.

I saw many of his early movies in the theater in those days before VHS, DVDs, and streaming replaced the big screen: *The World According to Garp, Popeye, Moscow on the Hudson, Good Morning Vietnam* (my pick for his best: humor, music, and drama), *Dead*

Poets Society, The Fisher King, and on and on. I recall seeing Aladdin for the first time in a full theater where people were snorting with laughter and shushing each other at the same time because they're afraid they'd miss something. I remember tearing up in *Good Will Hunting* as Williams' character talked about his wife.

That Williams' chronic depression led him to take his life is of course sad, but I think someone who spent so much of his life bringing laughter and happiness to others would not want us to continue to mourn. Keep watching his movies, his comedy routines, his interviews. And, keep looking out for others like he did; maybe there's one who you can help—that may be his best legacy. —*MIKE L. DOWNEY*

When I was in college I played in a band with a guy that was ten years older than I. Dan had a snapshot that he kept prominent in his apartment of Robin Williams during his bearded *Moscow On the Hudson* phase some time in the mid '80s that Dan had taken during some cocaine-fueled afterparty in Nashville. Robin had been on the road doing stand-up between films and his wont was to party down with the other comedians on the bill as well as some of the audience somewhere after the show. Dan just happened to be at one of these soirees. I was always drawn to this photo because you could tell that Robin was having a real fucking blast. His eyes were all scrunched up because his smile was so large that it completely took over his face. Dan would say, "He is just like you'd think he would be from TV and the movies. He is one funny motherfucker." That is a pretty tight synopsis of Robin Williams the entertainer.

I can't speak much to depression or suicide but I can speak to Parkinsons Disease. Robin was diagnosed with it shortly before he took his own life. My father-in-law suffered bravely for a good 15 years through the debilitation and pride-smashing effects of Parkinson before he too succumbed to it. He talked frankly about how he would take himself out before Parkinsons turned his body into a complete prison, that he would climb into the Cascades in wintertime and die from hyperthermia. What a peaceful way to go, grow too cold, fall asleep and die. He never had the courage or perhaps the cowardice to make that happen. The lack of dopamine fucks with your brain and causes the same chemical effects as depression does. I cannot go to where Robin went that last period of his life and I certainly choose to celebrate his life. I think of that photo on Dan's TV stand, the joie de vivre, the flushed red face conveying more mirth than the human shell can entirely contain.-KELLY MINNIS

It was always *Mrs. Doubtire* for me. As much as I loved the teenage profundity of *Dead Poet's Society* and the blistering fast improvisations of *Good Morning, Vietnam* and the whinsical lazyeyed pipe drag of *Popeye*, it was *Mrs. Doubtire* that most won me over to Robin Williams. Here's the story of a dad going to great lengths just to be with his kids. That was powerful to me at the time. And even as funny as it is, there are moments when, I believe, Williams' own sadness and parental regrets shine through in his performance. I do not for a moment believe *Mrs. Doubtire* was Williams' best movie or that Daniel Hillard was his best character; in fact, I've seen far too few of Williams' films (still haven't seen *The Fisher King*) to make a judgment call about his "best" work. But *Mrs. Doubtire* seems emblematic of what made Williams such

a great comedian: he showed us how to laugh in tough times and how to find the humor in our own tragedy. The fact that he did this so readily and repeatedly for so many people does not resolve the fact that he could not do the same for himself, but it's a hell of a legacy to leave behind. I've not seen such a phenomenal outpouring of grief and funny stories and connection points—both from Hollywood and the nation at large—after any other celebrity death in recent years. Making people laugh is a great thing. Making people laugh through their pain is even greater. May God bless Robin Williams' people. From what I've seen after his death, there's millions of them.—*KEVIN STILL*





The Derangers The Legend of Daphne Blue

Besides having one of the best names in rock, The Derangers have been plying what they call their "westernmental sound" since 1990. "Daphne Blue" is the 1961 Stratocaster that guitarist-songwriterproducer Drew Townson plays on every cut of this instrumental compilation album.

The 13-song retrospective covers 1990 to 2013 with only three covers: a superb remake of the "Hang 'Em High" soundtrack title cut (retitled as "Twang 'Em High"), a mournful "Wichita Lineman," and of course a sprightly version of "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugy," The best of the originals and it's tough narrowing down the top tunes—is "Rio Sangre". It mixes deep guitar lines, a plucked acoustic, and an ethereal female chorus that sprints to a satisfying close. "Tears of the Seneca" is the opposite end of the spaghetti Western soundtrack mode with its languid pace. "Magdalena, N.M." bounces along quite nicely as Townson's playing, accented with horns and keyboards, evokes the barren yet beautiful countryside. Only "Ether Cockail" is either too long as an instrumental, or it's not long enough.

The Legend of Daphne Blue is out on Austin's Deep Eddy Records.—*MIKE L.* DOWNEY



Jenny Lewis The Voyager

Jenny Lewis has finally released her newest solo album (unless you count Jenny and Johnny, which I don't), and she still knows how to write a pop song with wit. Whereas Rabbit Fur Coat leaned toward indie folk and Acid Tongue toward Americana, Lewis' newest release. The Voyager, is pretty much a Fleetwood Mac record (see the track "Late Bloomer" for a prime example). The production on the album is notably lush, and yet the songs retain a live energy to them. "Head Underwater" sets the tone for the album with reverbed piano and layered electric guitars and vocals (including a notable appearance from The Watson Twins), showing the listener not to expect the country tinges of her previous work. "You Can't Outrun 'Em" is probably the most similar song on the album to something that could've been on *Acid* Tongue, but then instrumentation is so different that it wouldn't belong if it wanted to. Songs like "She's Not Me", "Slippery Slopes", and "Love U Forever" have forward rhythmic stomp to them with huge choruses overhead. I didn't particularly enjoy "Just One of the Guys" when I first heard it re-leased as a single, but in the context of the album it works particularly well, sounding like a lament of sexism but in actuality being triumphant about overcoming it. "Aloha & The Three Johns" is pretty skipable, but overall this group of songs is strong work from Jenny. The Voyager doesn't strike a nerve with me like the rawness of *Rabbit Fur Coat* will time and time again, but it's a tightly written album that plays well even after repeated listens.-TODD HANSEN



Spoon They Want My Soul

Spoon is an interesting band. They started out as an aggressive guitarbased indie rock band that somehow transcended the balls-out angular rock approach and in the process helped to invent the '00s modus of indie rock: interesting textures and smart songs. The hard part for Spoon is that they kind of lost their own plot. By 2008's *Transference* Spoon placed more emphasis on the texture and less on the song. *They Want My Soul* is a halfway return to form.

Right from the opening of "The Rent I Pay" it sounds like the familiar older Spoon. In fact, the song sounds so much like "The Way We Get By" from *Kill the Moonlight* that it's uncanny. It and ensuing cut "Inside Out" and its reliance on textural shifts, synthesizers, drum machines and such set the tone for the rest of the record. One rocker with a great hook-laden pop song like the single "Do You" or the title track you also get a song like "Knock Knock Knock with a programmed beat, a linear song structure and cool little noises to help pull the song along.

They Want My Soul is only a halfway return to form, enough to keep me interested, to have me excited by some great new songs but at the same time also halfway disappointed because the more experimental stuff isn't exactly Britt Daniels and company's strong suit. Spoon writes and performs great pop melodies with interesting textures framed around that basis. The frame itself is not as interesting on its own without the painting in the middle. So will Spoon get that and keep moving back toward the song? Or move back toward the texture? Or continue to pull maddeningly from both sides? I guess we can enjoy *They Want My Soul* until the question is answered.—*KELLY MINNUS*



Red Fang Scion EP Tour EP

I like what Wonko says about Red Fang's videos: Red Fang uses their videos to get cool stuff. "For this video, can we get more beer than four guys can drink so we can make suits of armor out of the empties?" Check. "For this video, can we outfit our car with all our musical equipment to make a concert on wheels?" Check. "For this video, can we reinforce another car so we can just drive through walls of exploding shit?" Check. "For this video can we get Fred Armisen and a butt-load of zombies and a PBR van?" Check. Wonko's right: these guys have figured out a Check. Wonko's beautiful acquisition system. And all us nerds who want the exact same things relish every video Red Fang releases.

And the same can be said of Red Fang's newest video "The Meadows" from their FREE (III) Scion AV EP. "For this video, could we get swanky ass suits and a buffet of seafood, steaks, and piza?" Check. Ive labeled it the sexiest music video in the history of music videos: four dudes in slow motion consumption and mastication of oysters and fish heads. Yesl Red Fang's living the dream! The Scion AV EP features two tracks: "The Meadows" and "The Shadows", which both sound like crunchy B-sides from Murder the Mountains. You can find the Free Scion AVEP by Googling "Red Fang Scion".

I'm not sure why Red Fang labeled this other EP "acoustic" when it's clearly not acoustic. Stripped down, maybe. But not acoustic. What we have here are six tracks: three tracks recorded "stripped down" and live, and then the same three tracks repeated in their studio album versions. It's a neat idea. Give a new interpretation of the track alongside the traditional version. But don't call it acoustic when it's really just a grunty, growly live version.

Three great things about this EP: First, it's FREE! What's with Red Fang and all this FREE music these days? I don't know, but I'm loving it. Google "Red Fang Acoustic" and you'll find the Bandcamp page with the FREE download. Second great thing, Red Fang chose non-single album tracks for this EP. Even though I would have enjoyed hearing "Wires" or "Prehistoric Dog" in an acoustic, stripped down performance, big kudos to Red Fang for spot-lighting lesser known tracks. The album starts with "Failure" from *Whales* and *Leeches* (which was my least favorite song on that record, so I'm welcomed the challenge to re-hear it, even though I still don't love it). Then it moves into two tracks from Murder The Mountains: "Human Herd" and the album opener "Malverde". These, of course, are great tracks (Murder the Mountains is fucking beautiful cover to cover) and they still sound solid in "acoustic" performance. Third great thing, did I mention that the acoustic EP is FREE? Well, it is.— KEVIN STILL

RYAN ADAMS



Ryan Adams 1984

Rvan Adams may be the king of adult pop these days but he's never strayed far from his indie rock roots. He's released nearly as many limited edition vinyl only albums on his own Pax Am imprint as he has major label albums. This, *1984*, is the latest of his private releases. 1000 copies on 7" and it's almost instantly out-of-print. Luckily, the internets will save you and you can hear Ryan making like an Midwestern . obscure sub-Replacements sort of band over 10 songs that last not much more than a minute a piece. While a minute is usually more than enough for some-one like Robert Pollard to turn into a fully fledged masterpiece, Ryan does not have the ability to turn a hook on a dime quite like Bobby Pop does.

These 10 songs kind of blaze by at you too fast. Ryan rarely has a chance to sing you anything memorable. Halfway through "Broken Eyes" gives you a chorus to hang onto but for the most part these songs just kinda come on like a bunch of early Soul Asylum or pre-major label Goo Goo Dolls outtakes. It has its own charm for a big time fan like me but even I'm a little let down. To say Ryan Adams is prolific is an understatement, but the sub-minute song isn't a format he comfortable in.—KELLY sounds MINNIS





<u>9/3</u>—Friendly Savages, Remnants @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

9/4-Balmorhea, Jess Williamson, Taraz @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

<u>9/5</u>—Quiet Company, Featherface, Gaitlin Elms, The Lonely Hunter, Stella & The North, The Feeble Contenders, Lindsay Harris @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 7pm 9/5—ANON Magazine Release Party feat. The Ex-Optimists, King & Nation, Eerily Similar Beings, Mic Check @ Urban Garden, Bryan. 8pm 9/5—Aquaglow @ Gatsbys, College Station. 10pm

<u>9/6</u>—Rock 103.9 Homebrew presents Hindsight, Seldom, Black 13, Dawn Over Zero @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

9/11—Velcro Pygmies @ Daisy Dukes, College Station. 9pm

9/12—Sol Cat, The Docs, Should've Been Cowboys @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm 9/12—LUCA (CD release party), Civeta Dei, Odd Folks, The Ex-Optimists @ Schotzis, College Station. 10pm

STH ANNUAL TEXAS REDS FESTIVAL COMING UP THIS MONTH

The 8th annual Texas Reds Steak & Grape Festival is returning to historic downtown Bryan September 27th and 28th, a Saturday and Sunday. The festival debuted in 2007 and has since grown to include a music festival, a steak cook-off, and an impressive array of wineries. Like last year, this year's admission will be completely free and attendees will need to purchase tickets/ wristbands to participate in the wine tasting, beer tasting, and Kids Zone.

Over 30 Texas wineries have signed up to display their wares and this year, the festival will include a selection of Texas Craft Beers. The shops and restaurants will be open for business as usual during the festival, and a number of Texas artists and craftspeople will have streetside booths. Additionally, the Steak Cook Off competition will have an appetizer category, so there is sure to be something to please any palate.

Several local and regional bands are slated to appear on multiple music stages throughout the festival on both Saturday and Sunday. Grammy nominated Ruthie Foster leads the lineup with soulful blues and folk music. Foster's career has taken her all over the world, but her Texas roots shine through in her music. Joining her is up and coming country music singer Katye Hamlin, who was born and raised right here in Bryan/College Station. Among the bands expected to perform are Latin fusion groups Del Castillo and Este Vato, both of whom are sure to get the whole crowd dancing.

For more information about the Texas Reds Steak & Grape Festival, or to purchase tickets, visit tr.blog.bryantx.gov-**IENNIFER LOGAN**

A NOTE OF GRATITUDE TO MY ELDEST PUG

Thank you, my friend, On this hot, hot day, For dropping your poo load In a cool patch of shade. - KEVIN STILL

9/13—Rock the Mic with Critical Misfire, Empty Hollow, A Deathbed Promise, The Almighty Sippington, Einstigator, The Graduate\$ @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

9/18-The Harms, LUCA, The Ex-Optimists @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

9/19—Jess & The Echoes, Votary, King & Nation @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

9/19—Heather's Punk Rock Birthday with T.S.S., ASS, Sniper 66, Girlband @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

<u>9/20</u>—The Feeble Contenders, Ottoman Turks, Catamaran @ New Republic Brewing Company, College Station. 8pm

9/21—Brazos Valley Derby Girls open bout @ VFW, Bryan. 5pm

9/21-Signals, Avindale @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

9/27-28—Texas Reds Festival featuring Ruthie Foster, Del Castillo, Band of Heathens, Jonathan Tyler & The Northern Lights, Hazy Ray, Soul Track Mind, The Apache Relay, Leopold & His Fiction @ downtown Bryan.

Join the melving army

In the several last decades, we have had an eclectic variety of music, from classic rock, to disco, to hair metal, then grunge and electronic. However, since 1983, there has been one band that started as a punk band and has traveled through time, until today without no end in sight, and has amazed people all over this world. This

band goes by Melvins. The With the original Buzz member Osbourne, (King Buzzo), and soon friend drummer, Dale Crover (God of Thunder), they have had countless bassists, as well as musical variety to astound you. The



Melvins started off on C/Z Records, their first album appropriately named Ten Songs, with there being just ten songs on the record. Today, they have over 30 records, countless singles, and have collaborated with tons of other musicians, like Tool, Hank the III, Henry Bogdan, (old drummer from Helmet), Godzik Pink, 2 albums with Jello Biafra, and since 1999 they started their own record label with Mike Patton called Ipecac. The important albums to have by the Melvins are Houdini and Stoner Witch, but I'd like to throw in The Maggot and Honky for some more great tunes. They are sludgy, dirty, grungy, and very very smart. I have personally seen them 34 times, so after reading this, do not give up hope that you won't catch a show! They tour frequently, so just keep your ears open! I remember many years ago when King Buzzo had his full grown afro out colored black, it is now completely grey, so jump on a ticket if you see em coming to Texas, (oh, and tickets prices generally start around \$17!) Anyway, the Melvins being my idols, and tons of other underground music listeners, I suggest to quickly go on youtube or whatever and check this born from Aberdeen sludgy metal band out. The live show will blow your hair back, with heavy loud distorted guitar, at times, and one of the most powerful drummers I've ever heard, do yourself a favor and join the Melvins Army.-THE CHEXICAN

