SOLVING THE MYSTERIES OF THE DEPARTED

HEALING HOME • RHAPSODY IN RUSSIAN • WHEREFORE ART THOU, WILLIAM?
Hello again, it’s your good friends at Klipsun. We’ve whipped up another tasty potluck of stories for you. Hope you’re hungry.

You will be appalled and engaged by the cover piece on Gary Goldfogel, Whatcom County’s medical examiner. Yes, folks, he dissects dead bodies to find out how they got that way. It sounds gross, but what’s so fascinating about Goldfogel is he doesn’t shut down emotionally when he’s at work. It’s his desire to provide answers for grieving families that keeps him focused.

We’ve got stories on Russians, soap opera addicts, the producer of Highlander, and much much more! Still, this issue’s strongest point is its insightful writing. Our writers each began with general topics and emerged with people-stories—stories you can almost feel breathing next to you.

Enjoy this issue—I know I will, it’s my last. At the risk of being sappy, I’ll shed a tear and tell you how hard this editorial staff has worked to make Klipsun so pretty and interesting that you would be unable to resist reading.

Do us a favor and tell us if it worked. There’s a readers’ poll floating around in here. Please fill it out and drop it in a campus mailbox. Karma will reward you.

Wendy Gross
BUFFET!
A VERY SPECIAL TREAT FROM OUR KITSCHEN TO YOURS!
FEATURING A TASTY RECIPE FOR CUSTOMIZED CARS, AN EXTRA HELPING OF BIRTH ORDER, AND TIPS ON CROSSING THE BORDER AFTER COCKTAILS!

ways&means

wild fire
Mariana Pinto educates us on the glorious hedonism of Brazil's Carnaval.

doing the time
A house on Garden Street is the happy medium between incarceration and freedom for a few who have made mistakes. Resident Mike Holderman tells Jerry Weatherhogg about the road to reform.

communist passage
When the Russian ships came in, Jake Henifin found out their passengers cared less about democracy than they did about vodka.

portrait

post mortem professional
In the dim confines of Whatcom County's morgue, Gary Goldfolgel solves the mysteries of those past. Jonathan Vann gets under his skin.

sword play
Adrian Paul isn't the only thing making Highlander immortal. Lisa Diaz meets Ken Gord, the other man behind the myth.

issues

soap junkies
You know you watch them. Lisa Lindjord is willing to admit it, why aren't you?

fakespeare?
Is a legend, by any other name, not the same? D. Eric Jones sits in on the debate over Shakespeare's identity.

test anxiety
The part where they take your blood is the least unsettling. Allison Gregg experiences the stress of waiting for the verdict on an HIV test.
Wednesday, 9 p.m., no particular date. Angela McKinney and a sardine-packed carload full of female Beta and Gamma residents make the trek along Interstate 5 and through the Lynden truck crossing to Jaboky's, a nightclub that rests about 10 minutes inside the Canadian border.

If she's decided to drink alcohol that particular evening, upon entering the club McKinney will order the special, usually a quick, cheap shot of Mudslide, China White or her favorite, Sex on the Beach.

The rest of McKinney's night is spent dancing in the dark, cramped atmosphere, illuminated only by black lights—no disco balls and no flashing lights exist in this club. But by 2 a.m., the clubs have closed. In the dead of night, a funeral procession-like line of cars carrying McKinney and friends and their nights' memories back home.

When they approach the border, they know the drill—act sober if you're not, and if you are, make sure the border guard believes it. How fast and how easy they make it through the border depends on it.

The rule of thumb is pretty simple: if you look guilty, you get pulled over. Guilt—as defined by Customs—means illegal immigration, drug smuggling or driving under the influence of alcohol or other substances.

Border guards spend 12 weeks of their training learning how to interpret behavior, perform symptom analysis within minutes and basically, act on instinct, said Ken Carr of U.S. Customs.

Speak to any border guard, any customs or immigration agent or any police officer and you'll receive the same answer. No mathematical formula is performed to pull over cars, no 'every fifth car' is chosen, and no drunk driving arrests can be made at the border.

Customs has no jurisdiction to make DUI arrests, Carr said. If a car comes back into the United States through the Peace Arch crossing in Blaine and a guard suspects the driver of driving under the influence, either because of the scent of alcohol on the breath or erratic behavior, the guard will call the Blaine Police Department.

The guard cannot detain the driver—the suspected person is now the responsibility of the Blaine PD, said police captain Mike Haslip. Still, Blaine is less than two minutes away, and police will usually arrive before the customs inspection is finished.

The police then travel to the border, interview all parties involved, including the driver and the guard who pulled them over; perform sobriety tests and then, if they find probable cause, the officer escorts the driver back to the Blaine Police Department for further tests, Haslip said. If the person is found guilty, they are cited, then released.

Still, age does not matter when it comes to patrolling and stopping cars at the border. If a person from the United States is at least 19 years old, they can legally drink in Canada and legally travel back through the United States, said Staff Sgt. Ross Fisher of the Surrey Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

"Whether you fly in from Turkey or are with the baby marines, if you're 19 you can go into any establishment," Fisher said. Policy seems especially lax concerning passengers. "Basically, if a person is 19 years old ... as long as they're acting OK, there's no reason to hold them," Carr said.

—Rachel Morrow
Some are jacked up, lowered, wildly decorated or plain-jane boring. Some are pampered while others are beaten and abused until there's nothing but a pile of nuts and bolts.

Adding features to your car, such as nicer wheels, funky paint jobs, and tinted windows is considered customizing. Some people go to extremes when lowering or jacking up the automobile. Why do they do it? Don't they need ladders to reach their trucks? Do they do it to attract attention—do they think everyone will stop and gaze enviously at their wanna-be monster truck?

"The lowered and uppered trucks would signify inadequacies that people are trying to fulfill. Freud would suggest those inadequacies are of a sexual nature," said Kelly Smedley, a graduating psychology student.

Throughout history, people of all ages and nationalities have expressed interest in personality and behavioral traits directly linked to birth order. As an issue of relevance to every human being, whether young or old, black or white, an only child or the last of 13, birth order has a lot of impact on the way people act, and react, to whether young or old, black or white, an only child or the last of 13, born or only-children. Twenty-one of the first 23 U.S. astronauts linked to birth order. As an issue of relevance to every human being, best predictor of revolutionary creativity is birth order.

And 66 percent of students in Ivy League colleges in 1980 were first-year sophomores. Frank J. Sulloway, in the fall of 1967. He said, "The sin­gle best predictor of revolutionary creativity is birth order.

"I Jacked it up for function, to be able to go off-road," Erik Lindquist stated. "It makes me feel a little bit superior to the other drivers. I don't know if superior is the right word, but yeah. Customizing says that I'm creative and unique. It sets me apart from the majority." Isaac Schmidt, the owner of a sleek new Honda Accord with glossy burgundy paint, dark windows and a slightly lowered chassis, agreed.

"I did it because it makes the car look better. I'm myself. I like my own car and I don't care what anybody else thinks," Schmidt said.

"There's always a lot of ego involved. They try to impress people, make people think they have a more expensive car than they do," said Jorissen, who is the manager of a customizing shop. "We deal a lot more in trucks. Those who have the bigger trucks have the most sensitive ego. Sometimes insecure men like to have big trucks. I don't think that cars and trucks necessarily represent their personality, but maybe the image they want to have."

According to Jorissen, the self-assured people don't feel the need to attract attention by excessive customizing. "They don't have to prove anything to anyone, they already know who they are. A lot of it (customizing) is just for fun—take a vehicle and see what you can change it into, it's fun and enjoyable to do something that others might admire."

Sulloway once stated, "Firstborns minimize the cost of having siblings by dominating them. In their relations with siblings, firstborns are more assertive, jealous and defensive than later-borns. They also tend to be more self-confident and are over-represented among Nobel Prize winners and political leaders."

More than half of the United States presidents have been first-born or only-children. Twenty-one of the first 23 U.S. astronauts and 66 percent of students in Ivy League colleges in 1980 were first-born or only-children. The birth position is over-represented among academics, doctors, doctoral candidates, top scientists and Rhodes Scholars.

Where the "typical" entrepreneur is a firstborn, second-borns are more likely to become scientists than writers, performing artists or social reformers. Last-borns are most likely to be in the artistic field and involved in unstructured professional endeavors.

Research implies that firstborn or only-children have a tendency to be better adapted to adult society than younger siblings. S.E. Paulson and Cheryl L. Sputa, of the department of educational psychology at Ball State University, found in their 1995 research that firstborn children rated parents higher on behaviors such as parental control and parental strictness than later-born children.

Paulson and Sputa also found that parents pay less attention to children as family size grows. Parents are usually so excited for the first child, it receives the greatest chunk of love and affection. Later-born children tend to have to learn to fend for themselves and become more independent.

In 1988, psychological researchers P. Taubman and J.R. Behrman concluded that the best possible situation for child development and success is in a two-child family. Yes, the second-born is less likely to receive the same amount of attention from the parents as the first child, but children tend to get the most benefit from having siblings.

Still, Sulloway wants people to understand that, "We all come into this world with roughly the same bag of tricks. No one is genetically destined to be a firstborn or a last-born; we merely find ourselves in that position and have to make the best of it. Then, depending in the specifics of our family, we select strategies that will help us com­pete with our siblings and find an available niche. Over time, the strategies perfected by firstborns will spawn counter strategies by later-borns, and so on — the result being something like an evolu­tionary arms race played out in the family."
On a hot and humid summer night in Brazil, dozens of musicians hold assorted drums and percussion instruments. The streets are crowded with people—black, white, brown—who all have one thing in common: the samba. Beer consumption soars as the bass drums pound out the heartbeat of Brazil. Dense polyrhythms dance and cross, reinforce and contrast with one another. By now the sound is deafening and it's impossible to talk to the person next to you. Sweat flows, your head spins with the dense sound, and the balmy night air carries more than a hint of eroticism, with all the men and women wearing so little and drinking so much. The festive atmosphere surrounds and carries you away in euphoria. Cares are tossed to the wind. There's no doubt in anyone's mind: Carnaval is what it's all about. Brazilians call the celebration "Carnaval" rather than Carnival.

Carnaval follies don't have a precise time and place. They usually happen just before Lent, the 40-day period preceding Catholic Easter. The most traditional and popular celebration of Carnaval is in Brazil. Carnaval synthesizes the country's soul.

"It's become sort of its own art form," said Margaret Willson, a Western anthropology professor. Carnaval comes from the Italian expression "carne vale," meaning meat is worth it. This means the meat fast and the introspection of Lent are worth the feast of food, music and sex that follows it. It was, and is, a time to make merry, to drink, dance and be crazy. The normal social order is turned upside down and mocked. Anything goes.

As a climax to summer, for four to six days, the country sings and dances in the streets, dance halls, clubs and beaches—wherever there are people and music. Carnaval is a hedonistic party where all that counts is pleasure and joy. During Carnaval, the devil is on the loose. Nobody belongs to anybody. The weather is hot, people become more outgoing and sensuality is in the air.

"I loved the spirit and energy of everyone, people are so positive, friendly and full of energy," said Ernest Hunter, a Western music major who lived in Brazil for more than a year.

Carnaval is an annual celebration of life. Primarily a profound human celebration that symbolizes the need for freedom of expression, it is a time where the participants regain the dreams and hopes of their childhoods and paint, with their dances and music, a succinct and dramatic portrait of the past. At the same time, Carnaval seems to project an emotional message about humanity's contradictions.

Most Brazilians face social and economic oppression, but for about a week out of the year the expressive power of Brazil's people, otherwise...
restrained, emanates from Carnaval. It becomes a collective celebration in which individuals temporarily lose or suppress their social, racial and sexual identities and simply become Brazilians.

"It gives a sense of something to look forward to," Willson explained.

As Carnaval season opens, Brazilians start to make a sort of annual balance. It's a time to forget or recall an old love affair, to celebrate a new passion or search for new romantic experiences. It's also a time to protest against corrupt politicians, to complain about the poverty and to give creative suggestions to turn the country into a fair place to live.

Brazilians purge their thoughts and cares through music. The Carnaval music is samba, the most powerful rhythm in the world. "I love to dance samba, and I love the energy. You keep dancing for a long time and it sort of fuses you," said Willson.

Samba seizes your body and tells you to shake, quiver and express yourself. As your blood pulse intensifies, you feel a hypnotizing connection with others who share the music of samba.

"It takes you out of yourself, and you become the essence of a much larger being in a sense completely beyond yourself," said Willson.

It's common for Brazilians to say, rather ironically, that everything ends up in samba. If things go wrong, samba is always there to lift people's spirits. Samba is many things: solace, celebration, escape and abandon. It mixes with philosophy, culture and tradition. It's a musical form largely created and sustained by the working classes, but the Brazilian middle class also lives by it and draws vitality from it.

The essence of Carnaval is freedom. The social castes are inverted and protected by anonymity— working classes, businessmen, judges and maids dance together.

"Here in the U.S., people go out and just listen to country, some people like rap, others rock and roll, but for Carnaval everyone listens to samba, and everybody does samba. It's very cultural," Hunter said.

The choice of daring expression is common among all participants; everyone belongs to the same cause. "The coolest thing about it is that everyone in Brazil relates to it," Hunter said.

Men roam the streets in drag, adults dress as infants, and others masquerade as extravagant European nobles. It may seem absurd to many to waste one's hard-earned money, sometimes several months' salary, to dress in a costume that will barely last the few days of Carnaval. Because of the devil-may-care attitude of Carnaval, many tourists come to enjoy the festivities.

Carnaval is a money-making machine. The festivities bring tourists from all over the world to Rio, Salvador, Recife and Olinda. During Carnaval, according to the Carnaval web site, hotel occupancy rates in Rio are around 99 percent. Carnaval heats up the domestic economy, causing a frantic search for plane tickets, hotel rooms, special clothing, confetti, ballroom rentals, beer and condoms.

During Carnaval, the devil is on the loose.

During Carnaval each year, according to Carnaval's web site, five million liters of beer, three million liters of soft drinks, two thousand tons of sandwiches and 300 tons of ice cream are consumed. Two million people and more than 600,000 tourists from both inside and outside Brazil contribute $100 million in U.S. dollars to the local economy during that week.

Carnaval comes in different shapes and sizes; all cities and towns have one, but two major events attract hundreds of thousands of participants from all over. The most famous of all Carnavals is the legendary event that takes place in Rio de Janeiro, but Bahia Carnaval is considered the largest. Bahia and Rio have been in constant rivalry in the last few years to see who will dish out the best Carnaval.

Carnaval in Salvador, in Bahia state, is an explosion of music, lights and color. The Afro-Brazilian city is greatly attuned to spiritual matters, which is expressed in numerous festivals. Carnavals in Salvador are less a show and more a participatory spectacle where everyone is invited to sing and improvise steps on the streets following the "trio electricos," mobile high-powered stages that support great music, superstar performances, and high-energy groups moving as one mass of color and vibration. Players and percussionists guarantee the ceaseless syncopated rhythm of samba, and new musical styles bloom each Carnaval season. A trio eletrico is so powerful it consumes enough electricity to power a town of 50,000 people.

Those who want to watch the trio electricos up close must buy a colorful costume called a "mortalha" (shroud), which helps finance the moving bands. A mortalha can cost from $200 to $500. If you don't have a mortalha, you will still be able to "pular" (jump) Carnaval, but you will jokingly be called "pipoca" (popcorn) if you are not dressed up. During a typical Salvador Carnaval, close to 500 shows are performed in beaches and squares all over the city, and 100 trio electricos help to enliven celebrations. To guarantee order during Carnaval, 10,000 police officers are on duty during these days.

As soon as the Carnaval parades end and the hangovers pass, people recycle their old clothes and the floats and begin to plan for the next Carnaval show. But amidst all the craziness and frivolity, Carnaval serves the important purpose for Brazilians of maintaining cultural traditions, which is encoded in the music, dance and costumes of the celebrations across the country.

"I do love Carnaval. There is no doubt about it," commented Willson.

Let the mysticism, music and motion of Carnaval sweep your spirit up and carry you to a land of enchantment and surprise. You will never be the same again.
Mike Holderman is not in jail anymore. He’s at a state-run home in Bellingham where he can work days and concentrate on his battle against drug addiction. Jerry Weatherhogg stops by to talk with him.

photos by Tim Klein
illustration by Jesse Hamilton
Wearing a gray hooded sweatshirt, time-weathered shorts and a pair of plain slippers, Mike Holderman looks comfortable as he reclines into a cushy loveseat. It doesn’t take him too long to settle himself into a nice position; the furniture here is softer than anything he’s been on for the past four years. With his steely, glassy eyes, he sizes up the curious journalist sitting across from him with a hint of distrust.

Holderman, a 46-year-old with long, flowing brown hair and a chiseled face, owns the silent presence of a grandfather. In an adjacent room, the loud cheers of several of his roommates can be heard over the Bulls-Heat basketball game on television. His whisper-soft voice is hard to interpret over the noisy ruckus of his ‘home,’ but in his soul he carries a deep will to defeat the poison he’s been feeding his body for the past 20 years.

He has a 9-to-5 job working at Trident Seafood, a fish-processing plant on the Bellingham waterfront. He is the father of four kids, and the grandfather of five more. And he is a criminal and a drug addict.

Twenty-one men and four women call the light green house on the corner of North Garden and Chestnut Streets ‘home’. A block north of The Inn in the First Presbyterian Church, the Bellingham work-release facility, housed in a 1906 four-story Victorian mansion, is a stark contrast to the prison all of its residents formerly lived in.

Bellingham’s work release facility is the only state-run facility north of Seattle. While living in the house, the residents must adhere to strict rules, midnight curfews and constant drug tests. They all work at various businesses throughout the city, mostly in the restaurant and canning industries. And for $12.50 per day in room and board, they are allowed the freedom to leave the house only for work, supervised store runs and 28 hours per week of pre-screened social outings.

A closer look throughout the house reveals several peculiarities. In the corner of the front office is a timeclock, which the residents have respectfully nicknamed ‘God’ because it keeps precise track of their every move and punishes anyone a minute late. Three payphones line the hallway. The basement laundry machine requires change. And the dining room is so large it could double as an Army mess hall.

Its residents range from the young to the old, from large to small, from black to white and most everything in between. Some are avid sports fans; others are bookworms. The majority are nicotine addicts who spend a fair share of their time on the front porch smoking their cigarettes.

Katy Montfort, a correctional officer who works at the facility, said, “They’re just human beings like everyone else, who granted, have broken the law, but they struggle with pretty much the same things that everyone else does.”

Karen Stoos, the program director of the Community Work Training Association (CWTA), said the majority of the residents are drug addicts, therefore the facility promotes a very strict, structured program. “What a lot of people need to learn when they hit the streets is some structure in their lives,” she said.

“They’re given tons of breathalizers and urine analyses,” Montfort said.

“If they can stay clean through here, it gives them a lot better shot [when they’re released],” Stoos added.

Montfort believes that the residents can be categorized very simply. “There are three kinds of people that go to work release,” she said. “People that are serious about getting their life together and probably never go back to committing crimes; the people that don’t really give a hoot, that are going to do their time, get out and probably go back to the same lifestyle; and the people that are on that edge between what direction to go.”

Holderman can be classified in the first category. He has lived in the house since November of last year, completing a four-year sentence for six counts of selling cocaine in 1992. Since his arrest, he has vowed to stay clean for the rest of his life and has dutifully stuck to his pledge.

“I’ve had my moments,” Holderman said. “If I wanted to do drugs, I could’ve done just as many drugs inside, being in the joint, as what I can get on the streets ... I don’t want to go back. ... If I wouldn’t have got busted when I got busted, I would probably be dead by now. I would probably smoke myself to death.”

Coming out of high school, Holderman seemed to have life in order. A star baseball player, he was recruited by the University of California-Santa Cruz and given a scholarship. But he quit during his senior year in 1969 to join the Army.

“When I got out [of college], I had a 3.2 grade average and couldn’t read or write. My girlfriend did all the work for me,” he recollected. “I spent all my time in the gym. I was just never there.”

Like Charlie Sheen in the movie, “Platoon,” Holderman started using marijuana while serving in Vietnam, and after he was released in the middle of 1972, he began experimenting;
with other drugs, "anything you can think of," he said.

He played a couple years of semi-pro baseball with the Tacoma Tigers. Tacoma was an affiliate of the Major League Detroit Tigers back then, but Holderman was never called up to the big club. That stint was followed by a series of menial jobs that ended nowhere. That was when one of his buddies introduced him to the profitable cocaine market.

He had been a small-time marijuana and acid seller, but wasn't making very much money. With the help of his newly-wed wife, however, he learned how to make enormous amounts of money selling 'dope', or cocaine. His credo: "Buy cheap, sell high."

When he entered the lucrative business in 1975, cocaine went for $2,800 per ounce on the streets of Longview. Through solid business connections, Holderman was able to score the powder at $400 per ounce. He'd then supplement the white stuff with a variety of additives: Nicetol (Vitamin D), baking powder or baking soda. Afterwards, he'd sell the concoction for $1,100 per ounce, a $700 profit.

Money soon flowed through the couple's pockets. They bought toys, cars, trips and a house. When Holderman was arrested in 1992, he owned a new Ford Thunderbird, a Chevrolet pickup truck, a furnished house and had $80,000 in his safe, all bankrolled with drug money. He estimated over a million dollars passed through his hands while he was in the business.

All the while, Holderman and his wife continued their drug habits, which eventually strained their relationship with each other and their four kids.

"We couldn't stand each other. Drugs will do that to you. It's really demanding in a way—you always want it," he said. "I was trying to make money and she wanted to use it, and then I got to using it ... It got to be bitter."

Holderman was able to stay in the business as long as he did because he only sold large amounts of cocaine at a time.

"It may sound stupid, but it's easier to stand in front of a cop and sell somebody dope than it is to hide around a corner and sell somebody dope. If you're hiding around a corner, people wonder what you're doing," he revealed. "I never sold less than an ounce at a time, so I only had six or seven customers at once. I didn't have the constant traffic that a lot of people have.

"A drug addict will go out, get a hit of dope, and then he'll scam somebody to get more money just so that he can go back and get another hit of dope. They'll come to your house five or six times a night. That's what attracts you. I've never allowed that to happen."

Prisoners call the moment they were arrested "falling." Holderman has a blurred recollection of the night he fell,
Mike Holderman spends some down time at the Garden Street facility. While in prison, he made the 'dream catcher,' a Native American tool for keeping bad dreams away.

due to the crack cocaine numbing his system. On Dec. 19, 1992, he and a female friend were watching television around 9 p.m., too stoned to do anything, when they heard a knock at the door.

"I looked at my jail partner and said 'That knock sound familiar?' and she said no. There's just something about that knock," he said. "So I went to the door, opened it, and there's three sheriffs standing there.

"They said, 'We have a warrant to search your house.' I didn't have any dope in the house. I said, 'Sure, come on in.'"

The sheriffs walked in, followed by a charging crowd of drug task force members. They threw Holderman on the floor, searched him, ransacked his house and arrested him.

"I don't have friends, when you do dope, especially when you sell dope, you find that your friends are your friends when you have what they want. When you don't ... they'll go find somebody else to get it from. Those are the people I was around all my life.

"I met more good people in the joint that I ever met on the streets—more solid people I can relate to."

The work-release facility also provides Holderman with a clean, safe environment. First, a strict no-drugs policy is upheld. No dope, no weed, no acid, no alcohol, which explains the popularity of cigarettes among its residents.

Drug offenders are usually immediately returned to prison, depending on the incident. In 1990, a Department of Corrections study revealed that out of the 290 residents that were returned to prison, 156 were due to drug or alcohol possession. Overall, 675 residents were judged "successful" or "moderately successful" and released.

Second, the work-release facility's staff of 16 is readily available for residents who need help.

"They're here for us when we need something, somebody to talk to," Holderman said. "They're good people here."

Third, the staff actually wants to help, and sometimes a fragile bond develops with the residents that lasts well after they're released.

"We care about them, we get attached," Stoos remarked. "It's almost like a family. If they're here for four months, and you work around them eight hours a day, you get to know them and care for them. The reality is, I think it works because people come by and tell us it works."

Holderman's challenge now is to maintain a sober, successful life after he's released. He plans on staying in the state, living with a friend in the town of Custer. He also has family in Missouri if things don't work out. But he doesn't have any ambition to get back in the drug business again.

"I'm too old to be doing that," he said. "I can't sit here and tell you that I'll never do dope or sell dope again, because I'm a drug addict and I'll always be a drug addict. But I've worked too hard these last few years to get to where I'm at."

Holderman scanned the room with those steely eyes, casting a sorrowful look at the timeclock that dictates his every move and the doors he needs permission to exit.

"This is kind of a reality check for me. I don't want to be here anymore. There are too many good things in life."
The crew members of the Kraskino ride the waves of the fall of communism into Bellingham Bay. Jacob Henifin greets them at the pier.

Photos by Jacob Henifin

Dirty hands and the smell of diesel hover around the passage of the Russian ship, Kraskino. Apprehensive faces regard me with suspicion and mild curiosity. We exchange mute nods, unable to exchange words. The awkward silence hangs heavily around the starboard gangway.

Tall, white, tubular derricks, which function much like cranes, hoist pallets of boxed frozen chickens, beef and pork from the pier, lifting them into refrigerated holds of the ship. Seagulls screech while the derricks hum and clang to the chorus of fork-lifts on the pier.

Paul Schwartz, vessel coordinator and acting translator, and Russian crew member, Konstantin Sabel'Nikov, leads us into the Kraskino; exhaust and the clamor of the pier are replaced by an institutional odor of food and people. Throughout the ship, over unseen speakers, Mike and the Mechanics sing “All I need is a miracle; all I need is you.” This disjointed surrealism seems to loosely convey the opportunities democracy and capitalism have offered Russians, while at the same time, hatching a brood of difficulties.

Sabel'Nikov's fist raps the metal around the passage. The impact resonates dully through the thick steel. An exchange in Russian permits entry as Sabel'Nikov pulls back the flower-patterned sheet hanging across the portal. A stout man with watery, tired and bothered eyes rises from behind the clutter of his worn desk to greet me. A plastic potted Dracaena plant, desk clock, telephone and various small file boxes are haphazardly taped to the desk, I assume, to prevent them from falling off in high seas.
I shake hands with Master Captain Sergei Lokotaev and am bid to take a seat on a dark sienna vinyl bench around a black ashtray on the center of a Formica table.

Capt. Lokotaev sits to my left, below three small portholes through which I can see the derricks swinging and reeling in the pallets of frozen food. Schwartz sits opposite Capt. Lokotaev, away from the table with his legs crossed.

I learn from Capt. Lokotaev’s broken English, which he occasionally uses without Schwartz’s translation, the ship and its 24 crew members come from Vladivostok which Lokotaev compares to Vancouver, Wash “with many hills, but mountains not so big.” He explains how he enjoys the feel of the land after the 12-day passage from Vladivostok to Bellingham when a knock on the door cuts him short.

An American maintenance worker in a white hard hat and burgundy jumpsuit with “Dan” embroidered on the breast informs Lokotaev the CO levels have been measured and are adequate. Lokotaev begins a rigorous line of questioning, assessing the competence of Dan and his crew. Through Schwartz, Lokotaev establishes the method by which Dan tested the system and the specifics that would only be known had the job been done correctly.

During this translated dialogue, a plate of sliced sausage and processed cheese is brought in by one of the three women crew members. It rests on the table, the sausage pallid and speckled with fat and the accompanying cheese flat and elastine.

Lokotaev’s tone is as inanimate as the food as he reluctantly answers questions about the changes in Russia after the fall of communism.

“Of course there are changes, and in general—noticeable. As for my family, it stays the same. I should say for the condition of my family—no change,” Lokotaev explains.

During the reign of the Soviet Union and communism, everyone had a set wage and knew what to expect. A great disparity between income and expenses has burdened the people since the Bear became capitalist.

“You need to hustle to get by, that is the best translation,” offers Schwartz in response to a detailed answer that escapes Lokotaev’s English and runs into Russian.

Lokotaev is optimistic and sees the current disorder as a transition period that will eventually reach stability and subsequent prosperity. “Any change requires time,” he mutters.
In the moist wind, on the green, steel deck, this optimism is not shared by Rustam Kudashev, a Vladivostok resident and liaison between the Kraskino and the Americans at Bellingham Cold Storage. "Everything has changed—everything... came more freedom and more difficulty," he says discouraged.

When asked about difficulties such as increased crime, Kudashev replied dismissively, "Let's no say about that," before walking down the aluminum gangway and off the ship.

"It is too depressing," explains Leonid Hmelevsky, who works with Kudashev to ensure an accomplished English speaker is on board at all times. Hmelevsky, who now lives in Seattle, was also not interested in talking about that specific failure of freedom.

In Russia, it seems that the new freedom of press has not resulted in rigorous public discourse and serious public dialogue, but something less noble.

"The press is very free," Hmelevsky explains, "but a lot of it is junk. It is a poor quality press. Standards have not developed what is and what is not news."

"The serious press," he continues, "lobbied heavily for Yelstin and was not very objective for whatever reason."

Objectivity is not present in the pride of crew member Jene Pincur. "Number one on ship—no problem," he says in broken English as he points to the badge on his right shoulder of his camouflage field jacket. Pincur maintains the deck mechanisms, such as the cable drums on the derricks, the winches that open and close the refrigerated holds, down to the gangway he will be securing the next day. He whistles and motions toward the boat, "no problem," he reiterates.

His gold molars glitter dully behind his thick, well-trimmed mustache while he talks animatedly to me through Hmelevsky. He says how he has a wife and child he loves very much, but sees rarely. With arms outstretched as if to cradle the Kraskino he apprehensively says it is because of the ship.

"Katrina," he bemoans with mischief in his eyes and hands clasped against his breast, "I love you."

Our conversation is cut short when Lokotaev approaches from shore in a rust-splotched gray late-model Ford Fairmont. We shake hands; he nods his head wearily and takes Pincur to the trunk to gather a bundle of large white bags and a few from Value Village.

*After enduring the 12-day trip from Vladivostok, Konstantin Sabel'Nikov has no time to catch his land legs.*
They both disappear into the ship.

The driver of the Fairmont slowly shuffles across the wet concrete toward me with a long-ashed cigarette hanging from his lips. His thin gray hair is neatly brushed back and his collar is turned up on his wrinkled neck against the cold.

"These people work their butts off," he says of the crew in perfect English dipped with Russian accent, "and get paid $100 a month. That is what you need to show—unless you get your head chopped," he said as the crew returned to the familiar confines of the Kraskino.

The 7-year-old Kraskino, built in Japan, is nearly 400 feet long with a maximum draft of about 25 feet which means that if the boat is fully loaded in 24 feet of water, it is no longer floating, but grounded.

The thick, chipped coats of bone-white paint are betrayed by rust stains. Some oxidation seeps from scratches like blood from a wound. In other places it washes from the deck down the freeboard leaving traces like tears.

The gulls cry and turn on wings in the wind above Bellingham Cold Storage's loading dock. Box pallets reach for the sky, but only rise about 40 feet.

The wind pushes up whitecaps in the bay while the sun glares welcome from its position in the sky, but only rise about 40 feet.

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One man is responsible for the handling of all unexpected deaths in this area.

Whatcom County Medical Examiner Gary Goldfogel tells Johnathan Vann about his days at the morgue.

photos by Justin Covne

A slow hum of the ventilation system echoes throughout the room. Operating lights dangle from the ceiling and an X-ray machine is folded up in the corner. Other than the four silver, waist-high refrigerators, this room could be mistaken for any normal hospital operating room. But while operating rooms are used for saving lives, this room only houses the dead.

This room is the morgue, where the medical examiner works. The medical examiner’s job is to determine, through science, how a person has died. They must try to get the body to tell the story, when it can no longer speak.

Whatcom County Medical Examiner Dr. Gary Goldfogel is a forensic-trained pathologist and medical doctor with extensive training in death investigation. His responsibility is to investigate all unnatural deaths, which include all homicides, suicides, accidental deaths, all deaths in which the manner is unclear, and those natural deaths that are either unexpected or without a physician in attendance.

“The story of how a person dies begins from the scene,” Goldfogel said. “There’s a tremendous amount of information that you can learn from the scene where the body was found that you can’t get any other way.”

When someone in Whatcom County dies, no one is to touch the body before Goldfogel arrives and investigates. He observes as much as possible and starts to gather information to determine the cause and manner of death. He protects any evidence, like hair or fibers, that might be found on the body to help in the investigation.

Bellingham Police Evidence Identification Supervisor Richard Nolte has worked with Goldfogel at many crime scenes.

“He’s a very professional individual,” Nolte said. “He likes to be personally involved at the beginning of each incident he’s going to have jurisdiction over.”

Lt. Ron Peterson of the Whatcom County Sheriff’s office also values Goldfogel’s involvement.
"We do the autopsy in such a way that the body can be put back together again after we're done and can be viewed as if we've never been there."

"We work together," Peterson explained. "I supervise the scene and he normally comes to the scene to makes a preliminary report."

Goldfogel said the relationship between police and the medical examiner's office is critical.

"We, in this community, enjoy a more positive relationship than you'll probably find anywhere on the West Coast," Goldfogel said. "I respect those people as much as any colleague I've ever worked with. I defer and respect their position at the scene in relationship to the law enforcement activities, and they respect mine at the autopsy."

"We rely primarily on him for the actual cause of the death," Nolte explained. "We're capable of determining the manner of death like a gunshot wound, stabbing or hanging. But we need him for what caused the death, like an underlying medical problem."

"We all obviously work for a common goal of trying to solve how someone dies," Peterson said.

After they're done at the scene, the body is put into a plain black zip-up bag and taken to the morgue. At the morgue the body is photographed and X-rayed. Goldfogel and his staff then take off the clothes and clean up any dirt or blood on the body. This enables them to get a clear picture of the body and its injuries.

"About 80 percent of the autopsy is done involving looking at the body from the outside—from clothing, jewelry, tattoos and injuries," Goldfogel said.

The core body temperature is sometimes taken to determine the time of death, found by making an incision over the liver and inserting a thermometer. The liver is commonly used because it's a solid organ that cools off slowly, but Goldfogel said the process is not exact.

The body is then opened up, and all the inside organs are taken out and weighed. He takes tissue samples from the organs and looks at them for signs of natural disease or injuries.

Body fluids like blood, urine and even fluid from the eye are collected for toxicology studies that aid in the investigation.

"We do the autopsy in such a way that the body can be put back together again after we're done and can be viewed as if we've never been there," Goldfogel said.

The bodies are then taken to funeral homes where the families can have them prepared for proper burial. Unlike on TV, family members never go to the morgue to identify the body. Instead, Goldfogel meets with them in his office, using X-rays, fingerprints, pictures, tattoos, or surgical scars to identify the bodies, which saves family members from the added trauma of going to the morgue.

Goldfogel said these meetings can be tough, but at times, very rewarding.
Most families appreciate information even when it's hard to hear.

This process can bother Goldfogel as well as the families he talks to. He remembers the Mandy Stavik case as an example.

Stavik was a student at Central Washington University who drowned while she was home on vacation. Goldfogel classified the case as a murder, and it is still unsolved.

"We still don't really know what took place, but that case bothered the hell out of us," Goldfogel recounted. "It bothered us while we were doing it. We had nightmares afterwards. I think to this day that if you ask me for a case that has taken me years to get over, it would be that one. I still don't think I'm over it."

Children and women who have been abused, particularly sexually, affect Goldfogel greatly. "I haven't figured out any way to not have nightmares and to not be bothered by it," Goldfogel said. "Teaching is probably my way of dealing with the ugliness. I just go into lecture mode."

Certain types of deaths are also hard for Goldfogel to comprehend. "I think of all the kinds of deaths, the ones that are the most difficult to understand are suicides," he said. "Suicide is such a cowardly way to die, and yet people who want to kill themselves have such a strong drive to do it that it seems like sometimes nothing would stop them."

Goldfogel said about 50 percent of suicide victims don't leave notes and don't tell anyone. But they're the cases that are the most dangerous for misclassification.

"You might call something a suicide that was really a homicide, a suicide that was really an accident, or a homicide that was really a suicide."

Goldfogel's classification of death is often questioned in court. The medical examiner is supposed to be an impartial observer, but in the courtroom, he's on the prosecution's side.

"I consider testifying a real art," he described. "The courtroom is a dance and I enjoy the dance."

Dave McEachran, Whatcom County Prosecuting Attorney, spends quite a bit of time working with Goldfogel on cases.

"We work as a team," McEachran said. "It really is important that happen. I think that maximizes the resources we have and brings the best we can to the public to solve the case."

McEachran needs Goldfogel to tell him the cause of death and what he saw at the crime scene. Then if the case goes to court, Goldfogel must relay that information to the jury.

"Gary's a very good teacher and often that is really what we're trying to do," McEachran explained. "Some of the things he is looking at, and that we're trying to explain, may be very complex."

"It's a mark of a good witness who can break those things down in terms that are understandable by people who are not in that line of work," McEachran said.

Goldfogel, board certified in both surgical pathology and laboratory medicine, originally trained as an eye doctor. As a pathologist he still deals with living people more often.

Goldfogel said he could leave the medical examiner part of his job tomorrow and not really miss the work. "The parts of the job I could just leave and never look back on are dealing with dead people, grieving families, the ugliness of violence and violent death and seeing society at its worst," Goldfogel said.

The biggest challenge in Goldfogel's job is being able to detach himself enough to be objective while being able to do his job in the face of someone who is dead.

"If I ever reach the point where it's just a piece of meat, that would be the last day I work."
Lisa Diaz talks to the man who keeps his head behind the scenes of 'Highlander'

Photos and Illustrations by Jesse Hamilton

I am Duncan Macleod born 400 years ago in the Highlands of Scotland. I am immortal, and I am not alone. For centuries we have waited for the time of The Gathering when the stroke of a sword and the fall of a head will release the power of The Quickening. In the end, there can be only one.

Immortality is not a walk in the park. It requires stamina, courage, a good sword arm and ... a good producer.

Toronto native Ken Gord is the quiet champion of production for the epic life-tale of an immortal Scotsman. Duncan Macleod (Adrian Paul), must fight to protect himself and those he loves from vengeful, evil immortals who wish to kill him by the only means possible—decapitation. In Gord's case, heads need not roll while he is in charge of the Canadian/French co-production.

"One of the reasons why I'm a really good producer—and I say that factually, OK? I'm not bragging—is because I can be behind the scenes and I don't care if I'm getting attention or that kind of thing," he said. "As long as everyone's doing their job, I'm the happiest guy in the world. I don't interfere too much."

And what exactly does Gord do? Well, producers in the television industry are as common as gaffers, but Gord actually has a necessary role. He explains that if all the show's producers were generals in a war, the executive producers would be at headquarters while he commands on the battlefield. However, he does more than fight the powers that be.

"I'm a creative producer," Gord said, relaxing in a stuffed chair. The large window behind him reveals Vancouver's towering buildings against a gray sky. "I'm responsible for casting, locations, signing off on everything (set design, actor placement, clothing and color combinations) ... the budget and scheduling."

"Our strength is that it's a thinking person's action show, and that's what people like about it," he said with a serious expression. "And our weakness is that it's a thinking person's action show. You can't just tune in [for the first time] and say [for example], 'Oooh, I know what Hercules is doing now.' I'm not knocking those shows ('Hercules' and "Xena"). I like them, but it's a different mentality." Gord also believes another popular show filmed in Vancouver is missing a certain something.

"I'm not impressed by 'The X-Files,' and it has nothing to do with our show. It is just that every time I've watched it I've been really drawn in and I always find that they don't pay off," he said. "They always just kinda titillate you and they don't deliver, and they really irritated me. Whereas we on the other hand—I didn't want to compare—we have Quickenings," he said with a big smile. "We pay off. We have completion." Gord also said that in the last show of this season, something really unexpected will blow every viewer away.

"It's a two-parter. I know that's mean ... So, the second part will be continued next season. But, it's OK because the shock is there [in the first part]. It's a biggy," he said mysteriously.

Gord said he believes "Highlander" is a superior show even compared to the last two "Highlander" movies. He thinks, like most fans, that the first "Highlander" movie with Christopher Lambert and Sean Connery was the best, but the last two went a little wacky with the original story.
“Our strength is that it’s a thinking person’s action show, and that’s what people like about it. And our weakness is that it’s a thinking person’s action show.”

—Ken Gord
‘Highlander’ producer
Soap Junkies

It is Tuesday afternoon, 1:48 p.m. to be exact, the teacher is trying to wrap up the in-depth discussion on a subject that only he finds important, and I sit there, legs bouncing in place, as I anticipate the signal of dismissal that is usually given with a head nod and a "good afternoon." My backpack is all ready to go and I become more anxious because the clock is ticking. The time is slipping away and it is now 1:50 p.m. Class is over and the professor is still talking. I contemplate leaving and hop up in my seat, but fall back down as quickly as gravity will pull me, remembering my manners that have been thoroughly implanted and reluctantly stay with me. Resentment is starting to boil. My legs have gone from a nervous jiggle to a complete jig as they dance in place. They propel me forward when my ears hear the sweet words, "I'll see you tomorrow."

I am now three minutes behind schedule. I can't be late. Knowing this, I pick up my already frantic pace. Just short of a jog, I am brushing the shoulders and backpacks of other fleeing students as I pass on the outside. The gravel is crackling like Rice Krispies beneath my feet. Quick checks to my watch let me know I have two minutes left.

The door is in sight. In quick, swift motion, I maneuver my way toward the destination, while digging for my keys in the front pocket of my 1992 Eddie Bauer backpack. Hearing the clanking of the keys, I dig harder, becoming frustrated because I am unable to find them. I feel the rigid cool metal of my room key and yank it out of the pocket, holding the keys into the sunlight.

Grunting out loud after seeing that it is now 1:58 p.m., I glide the key into the lock while turning the handle simultaneously. The door thrusts open and my backpack falls to the floor. Immediately my eyes zone in on the remote control, which rests on the window sill. Grabbing it, I press the power button to turn on General Hospital and turn off my mind.

To many, I may seem a crazed individual. In reality, I am like many college students who have turned to daytime and nighttime soap operas in order to temporarily escape from the everyday demands of college life.

After four hours of lecture, I sit on my bed, chin in hand, reviewing over and over again a mental list of all the things I need to get done before the day ends. With a dramatized sigh, I stress about how quickly tomorrow has become today. I stare at the various scattered papers that cover my taupe carpet and the pile of clean laundry that, a week later, still waits to be folded. Remembering my grandma's advice, I convince myself to take things one at a time. So I take my first step toward completing the many things that have taken precedence on my list of "must dos"—I turn on General Hospital (GH).

From All My Children to Melrose Place, the style may vary from soap to soap, but the content is the same in all of them. Each drama takes life's complications, struggles, worries and glories and sensationalizes them. The unimaginable happens and the impossible becomes reality.

Reaching for the last turquoise towel, I finish folding three loads of laundry. Brenda stares into Sonny's eyes with a weak, faint expression. Sonny whispers, "Do you want me to say it?" Brenda bats her eyes as if she might faint at the words. Now, his hands cupping her chin and supporting her face, Sonny forcefully whispers, "I LOVE YOU." Brenda falls back with the sound of those three words.

After 55 minutes of complete mush, I make myself turn off the television and grab my books. I head for Wilson Library, where I can't be tempted to turn the TV on again. I make myself a promise that I will study until dinner.

Later on in the cafeteria, I nibble on my egg salad sandwich, listening with growing anxiety to the endless complaints about deadlines and other school stress. Finally, someone breaks the monotony of the conversation with a request for an update on Days of Our Lives (Days). Always excited to know of a fellow soap opera junky, I inform the inquisitor that Marlena is possessed by the devil and that Stefano, the person responsible for Marlena's possession and a man who has died and come back to life more times than Dennis Rodman has changed his hair color, has still not been discovered by the people of Salem.

Katie Morasch, a business major, has been watching soap operas on and off since seventh grade. "My sister, Carrie, got me hooked on Days of Our Lives, she says. "Now I watch General Hospital because it is more realistic."

"I study all day long. It's enjoyable to watch someone else's shit for an hour," says Katie. "Their lives are always worse than mine." Katie, who doesn't consider herself a soap addict, watches GH every chance that time will allow, especially if a good storyline is in play. She doesn't stress out if she misses a day or two, but has been known to record GH.

New to the whole soap opera scene, John Tennant, a business student, turns a vibrant shade of cherry red and giggles nervously about his fascination with Days. "Do you want to know what happened today?" he asks in a manner that reveals his excitement and embarrassment at the same time.

"About seven months ago, I started watching Days," says John. When he was flipping through the channels, John's attention was grabbed by the beautiful character Jennifer. "I was curious. I thought, 'Whoa, who's that'? Now I have been sucked in." John's favorite characters are Jennifer, Hope and Billie.

Having a break in his classes from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. allows John to keep updated on his trio of beauty.
Assuring that he isn’t addicted, John explains he doesn’t plan anything during that hour, but also doesn’t give up anything, like eating lunch, if the opportunity is presented.

If he should happen to miss an episode, John can always tune in to KOMO 4 at 3 p.m. and Cindi will fill him in on what he missed.

Cindi Rinehart, co-host of Seattle’s own talk show Northwest Afternoon, keeps viewers up to date on the latest happenings in daytime and nighttime dramas through her 15 to 20 minute report, “Scope on the Soaps.” Since 1984, Cindi has provided soap fanatics with scoops, briefings and opportunities to share their personal views on storylines in their favorite soap operas. Answering e-mails and phone calls from her viewers is something she tries to fit into her day when she can.

After 13 years, Cindi has earned her title as “The Queen of Soaps.” “I’m like the sportscaster for soaps,” she says.

She tries to explain the soap addiction so many people have.

“It’s escapism. People forget their own problems for the time being,” Cindi says. “A lot of people who lack love, family, or whatever can find what they need in a soap opera. There’s nothing unhealthy about that.

“Soap operas are entertainment, an electronic novel,” says Cindi. “They allow people to still go about their daily routines.”

All day long Cindi sits in her office with three television screens and three computer screens running continually, as she studies and takes notes on the various storylines in nine different soaps.

“It takes a lot of work to do what I do. By the time our show airs [live] at 3 p.m., I have usually put in my eight hours,” she says. An Emmy nominee for “Outstanding Talent” for 11 consecutive years, Cindi has proven her career isn’t a couch potato’s dream job.

“I love what I do and I do what I love,” says Cindi. “If everyone could do what they love for a living, then this world would be a lot happier.”

After spending 20 minutes discussing people’s passion for soaps, Cindi and I say goodbye. Initially calling with anxiety, I leave the conversation feeling like I have found a new friend. I remain seated in the straight-back wood chair, pondering the happiness Cindi radiates to her fans. Even though I am still not totally convinced that I don’t have a serious problem, I manage to find a slight sense of comfort knowing Cindi understands.

Nestled into my perfectly propped pillows, I close my eyes and listen to the theme song of GH as it accompanies the credits. I wipe the single tear that is creeping down my cheek with one hand and massage my throat with the other. I am frustrated I have to wait an entire weekend before I will find out if Sonny and Brenda will be together. I peer at my calendar on my desk to see what next week’s schedule entails. Perfect, only six papers and two tests! I should have plenty of time to watch General Hospital.
That is the question D. Eric Jones attempts to answer. Two sides of the argument surrounding the Bard's authentic identity state their cases.

If it's true that most men lead lives of quiet desperation, then the desperate life of Edward de Vere has been quiet for nearly four centuries.

De Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, was born in 1550 northeast of London at Castle Headingham. After losing both of his parents before he was 12, he was placed under the care of William Cecil, Lord of Burghley and chief minister to Queen Elizabeth I.

After graduating from Cambridge University at 14 and receiving his master's degree at 16, De Vere went on to lead a troubled life. At 17 he was nearly charged with murder when a cook "ran upon his sword." It was called self-defense. Later in life, he was both a loved and loathed member of Good Queen Bess' court and, upon marrying Burghley's daughter, Anne, he became the son-in-law of the most powerful man in England.

He lived as a frustrated writer and endured an unhappy marriage—even suspecting his first son was not his at all. After his mistress, Anne Vavasor, bore him an illegitimate child, he was locked in the tower of London and became estranged from his wife.

A tragic life such as de Vere's is ripe material for fiction. Today, thousands have come to believe de Vere was more than just a trouble-plagued nobleman. Conventional history attributes the finest literature in the English language to an actor from Stratford-Upon-Avon who spelled his surname "Shakspere." But some biographers of de Vere believe that the Earl, and not Shakspere, was the true author of the works bearing the name "William Shakspere."

A History of the Dispute

Oxfordianism, as de Vere's devotees call their theory, was first proposed in 1920 by J. Thomas Looney. He died in obscurity in 1944, but his theory gathered momentum with the 1964 publication of The Mysterious William Shakspere by Charlton Ogburn, Jr.

For the past 200 years, critics of the traditional, or Stratfordian, belief have claimed more than 80 people could have been the author "that was not of an age, but for all time."

While traditionalists insist that the volume of cases make the entire authorship question quite absurd, Oxfordians claim the sheer number of possible candidates make pinpointing "Shakspere's" real identity all the more crucial. These literary dissidents
insist that among history's greatest writers, such an authorship dispute revolves only around Shakespeare.

After hearing a Shakspere vs. de Vere dispute on National Public Radio in 1995, Western philosophy professor Frances Howard-Snyder began to investigate "literature's greatest whodunit."

"I think (most people) have just sort of taken it for granted," Howard-Snyder, an Oxfordian, said. "Same name, they say. But, when you look at the evidence—you look at the connections—between 'Shakespeare' and Shakspere, there's really very little."

In recent years de Vere has risen as the leading antithesis to the Stratfordian view. In the past decade, Oxfordian articles have appeared in National Review and in a 36-page Atlantic Monthly cover story. The PBS program Frontline gathered several international Shakespeare experts for a program titled The Shakspear Mystery to dispute the top contenders. In the 1989 program, respected Shakespeare historian Samuel Schoenbaum addressed the authorship question.

"I suppose that if one is drawn to conspiracy theories one will come up with a conspiracy and find one that answers certain issues and so on. I'm not myself given to conspiratorial thinking. I don't find any 'grassy knoll' in Shakespeare," he said.

Howard-Snyder, however, believes many traditionalists are missing the literary forest of Elizabethan London for the trees on the banks of the Avon river.

"You've got this guy who did this great thing," she said. "I had some sort of obligation to figure out who exactly it was and to give credit where credit is due."

The Ongoing Question of Biography

Howard-Snyder believes if de Vere was the genuine Bard, the biographical puzzle pieces would fall into place. One Oxfordian argument suggests Polonius, the advisor to the Danish king in Hamlet, was largely based on de Vere's father-in-law—the most powerful man in Elizabethan England.

"Here are a couple of slightly silly examples," Howard-Snyder explains.

"If you remember in Hamlet when Polonius comes in and says 'Do you know me my lord?' and Hamlet responds by saying, 'Excellent well you're a fishmonger.'

"Suppose you know that Burghley was the basis for this and you know that Burghley was sometimes given the name 'fishmonger.' You know how Catholics only eat fish on Friday. He had this rule he was trying to pass that people could only eat fish on Wednesday as well," she said.

"Another thing, when Hamlet has killed Polonius, (the king asks) 'Where is he?'. Hamlet answers 'He is at supper. Not where he eats but where he is eaten.' He gives this line something about worms and diet. Turns out that Burghley was born on the same day as... (Martin) Luther's famous Diet of Worms (a Reformation-era council in Worms, Germany). He used to boast of that," she said. "There's a suggestion that Shakespeare is making fun of this. Here's this guy who was born on the Diet of Worms and now he is a diet for worms."

Western Theater Arts associate professor Maureen O'Reilly has directed four Shakespearean dramas and has studied the Oxfordian thesis. She was impressed with "the scholarship that has gone into tracing the life Edward de Vere and how it parallels the particular events in some of the plays," she said. "I don't mean to be elitist and say that Shakspere, since he was a lower class, couldn't conceivably have been smart enough to write the plays. That's not the point. It's just that the life of Edward de Vere seems to parallel so much what happens in some of the plays," said O'Reilly, who is hosting a "Shakespeare in Stratford" tour in England this summer.

Assistant professor Mary J. Metzger, of Western's English department, opposes examining an author's life because it can lead to "a lot of mistakes."

"I don't base my reading of literature in biography. If you do, you risk confusing the artist with the art," Metzger said. "(Oxfordians) simply didn't want to believe that a person of Shakspere's origins is capable of such things."

Howard-Snyder, however, sees Oxfordians as pragmatists, not intellectual snobs. She asserts that Shakspere of Stratford-upon-Avon simply did not fit the criteria to write the legendary works.

"If you look at Shakspere's life you get this certain set of values coming out. This guy was a business man, sort of a matter-of-fact, down-to-earth kind of bloke. People have sort of interpreted the plays somewhat in that light," she said.

"There are times in Shakespeare's work where he indicates this complete contempt for money. If you have this image of Shakspere as this sort of artisan out to make a buck—not really concerned about his plays, he just writes them and sends them off—then you'll ignore that aspect," she elaborated. "But maybe there's something valuable that you end up missing."

Professor Daniel Wright, chair of the English department at Concordia University in Portland, Ore., agrees with Howard-Snyder. Though he wrote his doctoral dissertation on the Bard—believing the author was the middle-class actor—he has since changed his mind. "Awareness of a writer always enhances one's understanding and appreciation of a work of literary art," Wright wrote in an e-mail interview.

"Wouldn't we be in a state of relative loss if we didn't know that much of the appeal of Mark Twain's work is substantially attributable to his ability to impart with authority the sensibilities of a man of the world of which he writes (as a Mississippi riverboat captain?)" he finished.
The Dissenters to Tradition


One of the society’s major contributors and an Oxfordian since 1993, Mark K. Anderson has written several articles examining the Oxfordian thesis and is co-authoring a book on de Vere.

Anderson described the dangers of a middle-class man like Shakspere criticizing the aristocracy in the manner Shakespeare’s plays do.

“(A citizen’s) means for preserving or saying things, (were limited to) the theater and...books. And guess who controlled both,” he said.

Not everyone finds the Oxfordian theory compelling, or even plausible. W. Thomas Moore, a Western honors professor, is one such skeptic.

“I don’t know that anybody could ever prove it. Everybody’s always looking for hidden anagrams in Shakespeare’s play, (but) nobody’ll ever know for sure.”

That skepticism is exactly what Oxfordians want to address.

“To me, the response ‘what does it matter?’ is part of the problem,” Anderson said in a phone interview. “We’re talking about the greatest writer in the English language and fundamentally different interpretations of who he was and what his writings were about.” Wright, who hosted an Oxfordian conference in Portland from April 4-6, said it was Shakspere’s incomplete life story that led him to Oxfordianism.

“I could not reconcile the biography of the Stratford man with the plays and poems attributed to him. Every writer, after all, for all of his or her genius, imaginative power and literary skill, can ever write but that of which he or she knows,” he wrote.

“I could not imagine how a lowly, ill-educated glover’s son of almost total anonymity, bourgeois preoccupation, and an utter lack of distinction and reputation during his lifetime could have conceived of or written so knowledgeablely about the particular circumstances of the plays.”

Why Should Shakespeare Fans Care?

When asked why an average Shakespeare fan should care about the authorship dilemma, Anderson is blunt.

“These are the greatest works in the language. If we don’t care about these, then which author’s life should we care about?” he said. “If you take that question and insert some other author’s name, I think you’ll see how absurd it really is.”

“If you want to look at it purely selfishly, ‘just what does the controversy) mean to me?” Anderson said. “It opens up entirely new vistas on the works.”

Testing Anderson’s position, Cleveland State University English Professor David A. Richardson has introduced the authorship
"I think (most people) have just sort of taken it for granted. Same name, they say. But, when you look at the evidence—you look at the connections—between Shakespeare and Shakspere, there's really very little."

issue to his classes, from freshman English to graduate courses, to teach critical thinking and research methods.

"The issue is typically of little or no interest when courses begin, because the students don't care who wrote the works," wrote Richardson via e-mail.

"By the middle of a course, however, there's a perceptible rise in ambient adrenaline, and by the end, there are vigorous, challenging, and fruitful exchanges during in-class instigations and debates," wrote Richardson, who describes himself as "a curious agnostic" on the authorship question.

A Mounting Case for de Vere

Anderson, a staff writer at the Valley Advocate newspaper in Hatfield, Mass, came upon the controversy looking for fresh story ideas.

An Oxfordian since 1993, Anderson is convinced "if you look at the convergence of evidence, it all seems to point to Oxford."

"You really have to go back 400 years ago and look at what caused the issue to begin. Why did Oxford take a pseudonym and why was it maintained? We don't have a complete answer, but one answer is political," he explained.

"Look at Hamlet. (Shakespeare) wasn't commenting on some long-dead king, he was commenting on his contemporaries. The writings were intensely political."

O'Reilly agrees. "I think there's very strong reasons Edward de Vere would have to hide the fact he was the playwright," O'Reilly said. "In order to get along in court and get past his father-in-law, who was a mean S.O.B."

Richard Desper, an independent researcher with a Ph.D. from the University of Massachusetts who has contributed articles to The Elizabethan Review and The Newsletter of the Shakespeare Oxford Society, wrote via e-mail, "Since 1920, numerous items of evidence have been added to the Oxford list of arguments."

"(There is an) absence of a significant body of works for Edward de Vere, despite profuse compliments to his writing ability by others," he wrote.

"The Winter's Tale (a Shakespearean 'tragicomedy') is a pun in French ("Le Conte d'Hiver") on "le conte de Vere" and "le comte de Vere," (which translates as) "the de Vere story," and "the...Earl de Vere," he continued.

"The plot of the play is, indeed, the de Vere story, i.e. an account containing many elements of the lives of Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, and his wife, Anne Cecil de Vere," he concluded.

Shakespeare's Final Tragedy?

"The Earl of Oxford died of the plague in 1604. De Vere was buried...at Hackney Cemetery in North London. But his tomb has disappeared," read The Shakespeare Mystery narrator.

De Vere doesn't even have a final marker for those who mourn his loss. If de Vere is truly the Bard, then Shakespeare's most bitter tragedy is that his legacy lives on, but his true identity is nearly forgotten.
Allison Gregg faces her uncertainty about getting tested for HIV

Ever since I had unprotected sex three years ago, Uncertainty has been my closest companion. He has accompanied me to class, on road trips and breathed into my ear when I tried to convince myself that everything really was fine. His unending, uninvited presence turned my consciousness into a tortured entity. In the dark of night and on the sunniest of days, Uncertainty would stare squarely into my eyes and terrify me to the core of my soul. His job: regularly remind me that I might be HIV positive.

In the middle of bench aerobics class, in the middle of a right-lead turn step, I noticed an ugly yellowish-brown blob on my white, unshaven right shin. It effortlessly smiled back at me from the reflection in the mirror.

Bruises with unknown origins are regular visitors to my hands, arms and legs. Scanning my short-term memory, no incident of hitting or falling came to mind. "That's it, you klutz," Uncertainty stated in his sandpaper voice. "You've got too many unexplained signs. Go get tested."

After three years of listening to his nagging, I decided it was time to take control and kick him out of my life. The only way to do that was to get tested for HIV. As scary as it sounded, I knew it was the only way. I was tired of not knowing. It was time.

On television Rosie O'Donnell was playing The Who's "Tommy, can you hear me?" as I sat on my ugly but comfortable plaid sofa with my feet propped up against the coffee table. I leaned against my thighs and poked the bruise, now numb to the touch but about three inches in diameter. It had grown.

After several deep breaths and trips around the kitchen, I thought, "You'll feel better inside. Just do it. It's time to know." All the clichés in the world couldn't stop me. I picked up the phone and dialed the Student Health and Immunization Center (SHAIC). The abrupt, feminine voice on the phone asked me if I minded getting my pre-test counseling from a male. "This is a way out!" Uncertainty yelled, "We don't have to go through this. Just hang up. Hang up!" He knew this would be the beginning of his final days taunting me.

"Sure. Fine," I replied in a fragile, slightly shaky voice. The lady on the phone told me to come in and say I had a meeting with Matt. I imagined this was a secret code language for: "I might be HIV positive. Let's just be hush-hush about this."

The nurse would draw my blood and then I would go talk with Matt. "It'll take about 45 minutes." She didn't ask for my last name, student status or phone number.

"It is just a medical procedure and you'll feel better once
you know," Reality reminded me. My hand trembled as I threw the phone back onto the receiver. I was to be tested for HIV on the following Monday. What a way to start the week.

I decided to get tested at SHAIC because it was close, it easily fit into my schedule and best yet, it was free. One at-home kit would have set me back at least $35. I didn't have it.

Ever since my one encounter, I have closely watched the media hop on the HIV/AIDS-education bandwagon. I've seen beautiful women on Leeza talk about their one sexual experience that left them with HIV thus changing their entire lives. I watched Tom Hanks fade away to skin and bones in Philadelphia and Stone slip into death on General Hospital.

"That could be you," Uncertainty said as he shot an arrow at my heart and scored a direct hit. The constant attention the media gives this virus motivated me, just like Uncertainty. Without them, I doubt the idea of a positive HIV test would have occupied my thoughts so regularly.

The test day arrived with little stress. I was confident in the morning, but as 3:30 p.m. drew closer, my heart rate increased and I began to fiddle and twitch all over. I stared nervously at a monitor in the College Hall computer lab, trying to pass time and keep my sweaty palms off the keyboard. I was eager to talk to anybody to calm myself down, but unfamiliar faces and the sound of clicking keys filled the sterile room. I watched the minutes tick away on the clock in the upper-right corner of the computer screen.

When I threw open the door to SHAIC, I was greeted by Catherine Vader, R.N. Instead of using my code words, "I have a meeting with Matt," I blurted out something like "Teah, like, Tm here to, um, get an, um, HIV test with, um, Matt or Mark or Mike. No wait, yeah. Matt. Am I in the right place?" She retrieved a well-used yellow piece of paper and told me to sit down, read it and place it in my lap when I was ready. This was how Matt would know it was me (as if my darting eyes, tapping feet and twitching fingers didn't give me away.)

According to Vader, SHAIC gives about 180 HIV tests to students each fall, winter and spring quarter. The HIV counselors are Lifestyle Advisors who are trained in this specific area. Although Western does have HIV positive students on campus, none of them have tested positive through SHAIC. The SHAIC samples are sent to a lab in Seattle where they are tested. Every HIV test SHAIC has administered has been negative.

I skimmed over the yellow sheet quickly, put it down next to me and waited. It said something about HIV tests—that anxiety and nervousness were normal. "I'm not nervous, but I am brave," Esteem stated. I was ready...
A young gentleman invited me into an office with a desk and a round table covered with pamphlets and an imitation penis. Condom posters adorned the walls. I sat perpendicular to him in a low-to-the-ground orange chair.

“What if it is positive?”

He turned out to be Matt. He was a real person, sitting right there, smiling at me while I babbled about surface topics like the weather and school.

Matt handed me a clipboard and the dreaded questionnaire that prodded into the dimensions of my sex life: who I’d been with, who they’d been with, how many there had been and how often it had been. "This is all a bit ridiculous," Esteem yelled from the back of my head. "I'm not like that," said Esteem, quick on the defense.

The truth is, I'm not like that. I had unprotected sex one time, with a guy I knew pretty well, so I thought. I've never left a bar or had sex with anybody I didn't know very well. My risk level was pretty low, but I was paranoid, not to mention tired of uncertainty.

I filled out the sheet honestly. The one thing soap operas have taught me is that lying gets you nowhere.

I smiled and handed the form over to Matt. "What are you doing here?" Fear began to ask. "I've got other things to do." I was still twitching.

"So," Matt started, "tell me what you know about HIV."

A recent article in The National Times stated that 20 million people are infected with HIV worldwide and the number is growing quickly.

The World Health Organization estimates that 100 million people could possibly be infected by the year 2000. The Centers for Disease Control reported that from the early '80s to June '96, 548,102 Americans have contracted AIDS. Somewhere between 650,000 and 900,000 more people are currently infected with HIV.

It's also important to know HIV tests don't determine if you have AIDS. You get tested to see if you have produced HIV antibodies to fight the viral infection of HIV. If the test finds the antibodies, you are HIV positive. If it doesn't, you are HIV negative. Being HIV positive means that you have the viral infection that can lead to AIDS.

You should wait at least six months after potential infection to be tested. The longer the waiting period, the more accurate the results will be. It takes everybody a different amount of time for their immune system to react. If you are tested less than six months after a potential infection, it is recommended that you be retested six months later and retested again six months later. Because I hesitated for three long years, my results were going to be nearly 100 percent accurate.

He continued, "What will you do if the test is positive?"

Deep breath in. "Probably stay in school?" Exhale. He nodded. Was this what I was supposed to say? Was I supposed to be brave and lie? The truth was, for three years, I had thought about this so often. But not once had words of fear and emotion formed in my vocal cords and met with the ears of another.

"Cry," I offered, as I shook my head and shrugged my shoulders in disbelief. "I'd cry."

He pulled his right leg up on to his left knee. His head fell to the right and he smiled. I felt fear move her powerful and controlling self into my once-naive heart, teaming up with uncertainty to kick out happiness.

After my confessions, Catherine took me into an exam room. Yearly exams at the gynecologist and a physical before I transferred to Western familiarized me with the process of medical professionals taking blood. As a child, I lived overseas and required several shots. Needles penetrated my right arm frequently. I can point out every mark, every scar. Ten rest among the folds of the bend inside my right arm. Each serves as a reminder of past illness, tests and three blood donations.

As I lay on the stiff table covered with noisy medical paper, I examined the "Please Donate Blood" sign above me to avoid looking at her eyes. I was still searching for a way out.

As she tied a band tightly around my upper right arm, she said the essential part of being tested is the peer counseling and risk assessment that comes along with it.

"But I'm not at risk," Esteem said. "Not anymore." "But you were once," Reality piped up. Reality is hard to deal with. She reminds you of all the things you thought you had forgotten, or tried to forget.

As the needle pierced my skin, I curled my toes and pumped my hand as instructed. My blood looked like liquid velvet as it swished around in the tinted vial.
How long have you read Klipsun?

When did you first see/hear about Klipsun?

Where did you first see/hear about Klipsun?

Where have you picked up Klipsun in the past? (mark all that apply)

- On campus
- From a friend
- Off campus
- Other

How much interest would you have in the following stories:

- A profile on a student athlete
- An exploration of ethnic communities in Vancouver, BC
- A how-to article on moving out of the dorms
- A commentary on human cloning

Do you read any of the following magazines? (check any that apply)

- Rolling Stone
- Newsweek
- Entertainment Weekly
- Sports Illustrated
- Outside
- Esquire
- GQ
- Vanity Fair
- Cosmopolitan
- Vogue
- Details
- People
- Spin
- Time
- M"o.
- GQ
- Other

What do you like or dislike about Klipsun? (you may use the back, if you'd like)

Any comments, suggestions, recipes, feelings you'd like to share?

- Male
- Female

Age ______

- Student
- Non-student
- Freshman
- Junior
- Sophomore
- Senior

First 3 digits of your student number ______

Thank you for playing! This is gonna make everything swell. Isn't that what you'd call 8,000 happy readers?
“If you lose this, I’ll have to re-draw your blood,” Catherine said as she handed me an appointment card with the code number on the back and my name misspelled on the front. She made my follow-up appointment as I stood in shock, longing for the results.

I left SHAIC with a bandage across the inside of my elbow and headed toward the bus stop. I gazed into the eyes of other passengers thinking, “You have no clue what I just did. My whole life could change. Just like that.”

In two-and-a-half weeks, I would find out how dramatic the change would really be. I rested my sweaty head on the wet glass and headed toward the bus stop. I gazed into the eyes of other passengers thinking, “You have no clue what I just did. My whole life could change. Just like that.”

For the next two weeks, I busied myself with the gym, homework, and bars. I couldn’t sweat out Anxiety, so I tried to drown her. I found myself at the bottom of many beer bottles. That yellow paper was right. Anxiety was a result of the test. And for three nights, beer was the cure.

On nights free of alcohol, I became familiar with the ticks and tocks of the bathroom clock, and how they contradict the clock in the dining room; familiar with the cycle of the refrigerator and the hum it produces as it cools my milk and delicate edibles; familiar with the sounds of cars rushing up and down Lakeway Drive at all hours of the night. I became familiar with questions; not so familiar with answers, solutions, or sleep. With the silence and cozy flannel sheets surrounding me, I began to ponder the big questions. What if it is positive? How would I tell people? What would my family say? Would I stay in school?

I speculated over the potential losses one night could create. My self-respect, ambition and future would all fade away. What would I do with myself? Dedicate my life to alcohol? The sooner you answer would change how I chose to carry out the remainder of my life. That one night, along with Uncertainty, had turned me into a tired, repressed, wanna-be alcoholic.

HIV can attack fun-loving, bar-hopping college students—it doesn’t care about your GPA or ambitions. It takes one time, then boom, this tiny virus starts to attack your immune system. Your body can’t defend itself.

You start to notice bruises. Reality reminds you that a person can go a long time without showing any signs of HIV. You tire of Uncertainty and his qualities: fear, insecurity, the unknown, and how he controls you so you can’t make any serious decisions or long-term plans.

As the time to receive my results arrived, I could hear and feel the thumping of my heart growing louder. The night before, I had ripped the appointment card off the calendar on the refrigerator and tucked it in my blue backpack. Throughout the day, I would reach in the pocket to make sure it was still there.

With shaky hands, I would unfold it to recheck the date and time. My name was still misspelled. I was ready.

This time, I had an appointment with Zoe. I used the proper code words and Zoe appeared and led me back to the same office. It seemed smaller; the chair was hot pink, not orange like I initially remembered. The walls were whiter. The imitation penis wasn’t on the table.

I sat down, handed her my card and she examined the contents of a manila folder. “Yes,” I sighed. Zoe’s words blended together as she used a pencil to point at NEGATIVE and 99.9%.


For the first time in three years, my heart was jubilant and unfettered.

“Do you want a copy of this?” she inquired as my feelings returned to the room.

“No, I don’t have any empty frames right now,” I said as I smiled at Zoe.

Uncertainty quickly climbed out of my heart. “Thank you,” I whispered. “Thank you for being here and pushing me.” As my inner voice elevated, he disappeared, having fulfilled his mission. “I’m free of your control. Free!”

The CDC estimates that about 35 percent of the population is probably unaware they are infected with HIV. It could be anyone. It takes one time. That’s all it took the women on Leesa. Nobody is immune to this.

Getting tested was a personal choice that I made after a three-year battle with Uncertainty. I pride myself on being a relatively private person. However, some experiences need to be shared.

The experience itself is confidential. I was promised complete privacy when I was tested and given my results. When you are ready and really want to know, you can be assured that the test is easy.

Having the blood taken really is painless. You won’t even miss it. You barely know it’s happening. Just a prick.

Now that I am free of Uncertainty, I can relax with my newest companion, Truth.

I can fully concentrate on other things, like graduating, with a clear mind and accept that maybe I am just a klutz.
THERE'S A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF INFORMATION THAT YOU CAN LEARN FROM THE SCENE WHERE THE BODY WAS FOUND. THAT YOU CAN'T GET ANY OTHER WAY."

"IF I WOULDN'T HAVE GOT BUSTED WHEN I GOT BUSTED, I WOULD PROBABLY BE DEAD BY NOW."

"I DON'T FIND ANY 'CRASSY KNOLL' IN SHAKESPEARE."

"EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED. EVERYTHING. CAME MORE FREEDOM AND MORE DIFFICULTY."

"I INFORM THE INQUISITOR THAT MARLENA IS STILL POSSESSED BY THE DEVIL AND THAT STEFANO... HAS STILL NOT BEEN DISCOVERED BY THE PEOPLE OF SALEM."

"I IMAGINED THIS WAS A SECRET CODE LANGUAGE FOR... I MIGHT BE HIV POSITIVE. LET'S JUST BE HUSH-HUSH ABOUT THIS."

"CARNIVAL IS A HEDONISTIC PARTY WHERE YOU FIND OUT WHAT COUNTS AS PLEASURE."

AND..."