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Klipsun is both a magazine and a psychoactive phenomenon, both of which you don't want to mess with. The magazine is printed on 50% recycled paper. The phenomenon defies all print forms. The magazine is staffed by students and put out twice quarterly. The phenomenon overtakes anyone it can, anytime it can. The magazine is copyrighted September 1997. The phenomenon is not. Klipsun would like to thank Collin Coyne for his efforts, Carolyn Dale for her steadfast support, and Chris Cooper for his contributions and cooperation. The phenomenon thanks no one, it only consumes.
Self Reflection
Does your rear-view mirror help you for more than just changing lanes? What are you thinking when you come up on those big mirrored windows at the bank? **Danny Hiestand** takes a hard stare at the vanity insanity behind "the look."

Lights, Camera, Access!
Television, is there anything it can’t do? **Aaron Grey** finds an alternative to challenging and brilliant network programming in the do-it-yourself world of public access.

Gene of Consciousness
Are we here for higher education, or higher marketability? **Gene Metrick** wants to know why his education has become job training for a "real world" that isn’t nearly as demanding as its training program.

Character Study
A rose by any other name would smell... to be... or not to... my kingdom for a...wherefore art thou..... all the world’s a stage, and all the people... etcetera etcetera. Handy cliche aside. **Amy Scribner** takes a fresher look at the bard’s work, performed by the Shakespearean Youth Theater.

Joining Balance
There is a force at work in the universe that you don’t have to be a Jedi Knight to tap into. **Jana Alexander** takes a deep breath and looks into the power of Iyengar Yoga.

Down in it
I went to a fight the other night and a hockey game broke out. It doesn’t have the broken teeth and lacerated parts that ice hockey sports, but **Eric North** finds that knuckle checks and pool scrapes make underwater hockey rough enough.

Cloud City
You’ve seen stogies in the mouths of Claudia Schiffer, Jenny McCarthy, and Demi Moore. Now **Jamie Lawson** chats with a man who loves cigars for the experience, instead of the magazine covers they can get him on.

Soft ‘Flesh’ and Sharp Words
Cover artist Chris Cooper has been called a myoginist, a pervert and a sexist. **Sarah Decker** picks a fight between Coop and the opposition and watches the fur fly.

Virgin Sacrifice
Cross dressing, play orgasms and general sexual inhibition. **Kristen Paulson** has some good clean fun at the Rocky Horror Picture Show.

The Meteorology Machine
Jeff said it would happen? "Steve predicted sun?" Harry promised high pressure? **Karl Horeis** traces the doppler signals back to the source to find the place putting words in the mouths of your favorite weather anchors.
So I'm sitting in the middle of Red Square letting the sunshine drain the last vestiges of what little motivation remains clinging to a slim thread of life somewhere deep within my inner being—like I need any additional help in dodging my academic responsibilities as the quarter wanes to its long-anticipated but seemingly never-arriving conclusion. I watch as all the drone-like students march with bloodshot eyes and downcast heads, stumbling along the treadmill of this giant hamster wheel we lovingly know as institutional education.

It's sometime in the afternoon; the exact time, although theoretically it should be considered extremely important to the framework of bondage comprising my daily schedule and class deadlines, is superfluous to me. At this point, I don't care why I'm not sure why I really need to meet my obligations to all of these artificial demands and constraints placed upon me in a professedly well-meaning but nonetheless futile process of molding me into a competent contributor (in other words an unquestioning worker/consumer) to the twisted commodity-based orgy masquerading as American society.

I think I'm beginning to prefer rainy weather.

The thundering noise exploding from the Haggard Hall/Wilson Library construction site invades my auditory senses, assaulting my brain like a horde of pillaging Huns approaching a settlement of undefended 16-year-old virgin girls—like I really need any kind of outside disturbance to disrupt my already unstable thought process. I could care less about being able to hear myself think, 'cause after 40-plus weeks of the information overload arising from my own misguided efforts to become "educated," I'd be happy just to know that I still possess the ability to actually form and/or deduce some type of coherent mental conclusions, much less remember what ... what I ... uh ... what ...

... what the hell was I thinking?

Oh, yeah—So the noise is violating my piece of mind, and the sun continues to sap my feeble will to accomplish anything whatsoever, and I still have to read something like 1,257 pages from my interest-challenged biology textbook in the next 45 minutes (like that has any actual chance of ever happening), and I see my friend J.J. come strolling across the red bricks—which have unbelievably managed to withstand the onslaught of infinite numbers of roller blades and skateboards over the years because you know they cause much more damage than the two-
Poised on the brink, Gene Metrick ponders the meaning of life, the necessity of academics in a consumer-driven American society and the best way to get from Red Square to College Hall in under 30 seconds.

"I think it's become simply a product for consumption like anything else," I say, hoping to project some kind of vaguely knowledgeable facial expression (in contrast to my usual look of confused indifference).

"I don't know," he says again. "Maybe I can begin to figure this shit out once I get outta this rat cage—I don't know—but I need to get to work on a 20-page paper that's due tomorrow."

"How much you got left to write?" I ask, fearing the inevitable answer.

"Oh, give or take about 18 pages—see ya."

Just as J.J. turns to leave, another of my friends ambles by, slowly but definitely heading somewhere—and appearing none too happy about her journey.

"So how's Rachel today?" I ask her, hoping beyond rational expectations to hear something good from someone today. When was the last time you can remember asking someone how they are and hearing a sincerely positive reply? "Tired" doesn't count.

"Rachel's not bad," she says to my amazement. "I actually got six hours of sleep last night instead of the usual two or three. I've even eaten today, and since I only have two classes and no work to do for the newspaper it's my day to relax."

"That's almost unbelievable—how come you get to slack like this today?"

"SLACK?! I work my ass off!" she says, a false look of hostility flashing across her seemingly permanent good-natured features.
“Ya’ know, last night on my way home, I realized that I’ve forgotten what the meaning of having a social life is.”

“What’s that?” I ask, perplexed by this alien concept. “Isn’t the power of the press more than adequate compensation for a journalist’s ravaged existence of navigating through their never-ending things-to-be-done list?”

“I don’t know—power’s cool, but I need more than that. Anyway, I gotta get to class.”

Rachel heads off to College Hall—or whatever personal hell is indeed her destination—and I continue to observe the bizarre disarray of life as evidenced by the passing of isolated souls scurrying to and fro across the square on their separate journeys of forced enlightenment—or the avoidance of it.

Picture that.

My friend Jon brushes through the expanding offensive sound waves of gloom and “progress” to collapse next to me.

“How have you managed to keep your serenity or sanity intact? I ask—OK, this is a loaded question that Jon has no prayer of answering anywhere near the affirmative. Maybe some of us just enjoy tormenting each other.

“Sanity is both overrated and relative, or maybe it’s just relatively overrated,” he says—two can play this game.

“I just saw J.J. and he looked kinda wiped out—too much on his mind and no time to sort it out—spinning his wheels in some bullshit class,” I say.

“It seems to me that a whole lot of these classes just produce mindless automatons,” he says—ah, a kin­dred soul—as he glances at the faceless swarm of humanity converging during the ten-minute between­classes free-for-all.

“Fact receptors, I like to call ‘em,” he continues. “You know—sit down, be quiet unless asked and turn in standardized work. Sound like preparation for the grind?”

He stands up before I can conceptualize a reply. Maybe this was the surging yet unthought primal idea I have been struggling with.

“You know what George Bernard Shaw said: ‘The only time my education was interrupted was when I was in school.’ Anyway, I’ll e-mail you tonight—I gotta get to the library,” he says and strolls off, leaving me to once again contemplate the fate of all of us aspiring malcontents.

Everyone’s in a hurry just to keep in place and hold their own—drowning souls treading the waters of campus life. Maybe this is the perfect preparation for life in the Americanized global economy of waste and greed—I mean a lot of us always joke that, after graduation, the real world is going to seem like a fucking vacation compared to the harried intensity of always having too much to do with too little time to do it in while surviving on bad food and too little sleep in a vain attempt to complete an unforgiving schedule that is loosely based on a philosophy of doom roughly translatable as “do it now!”

If I can find the time and possibly manage to muster the necessary mental energy, I might have to think seriously about this.

But right now, as usual, I’m late for class. ☹️
The mall patrons, in their dance routine of capitalism, carry bags and serious shopper faces. Point A to point B is the only route these grizzled Bellis Fair Mall veterans know. They are on a mission in transition, until they see something that suits their fancy.

Moving through the herd of scurrying patrons, I was on a mission of my own.

After entering the mall at around 6 p.m., I decided to take a gander around the hub-bub infested building and see where the action was. The parking lot was only half-full, so I didn’t expect a lot of commotion.

As I walked toward the “Rave” end of the mall, “DEB” caught my attention because its two entrances were both framed by a huge mirror. Customers entering and/or passing the shop couldn’t help but notice the reflective feature.

I waited by these mirror-bordered doorways no more than two minutes before I had myself a target.

He passed the “DEB” mirror, and his head swiveled toward it, even as his body lurched forward. His body was ready to continue on, but his eyes wanted to do some resting.

I really didn’t know what to say as I ran up from behind him. My goal was simple but not easy: I was going to ask him why he was looking at himself in that mirror.

“ExcUSE me?” he said after I introduced myself and my cause. “Uh, huh. Yeah, I guess I was looking at myself. I was just trying to see if I had a gut,” he said in that tone of voice that kids have after they get busted washing the piano with Ajax.

After a few moments of rattled nerves for the both of us, he regretfully declined my proposition to discuss his self-checking practice.

Walking away from the situation with a confidence I previously lacked, I knew that I could quite possibly discover the answer I hoped to find.

The next hour in front of “DEB” mirrors was an adventure in several different emotions for both the subjects and the researcher. Denial, surprise, and disgust probably headlined the list.

Subject 1: “Victor”. “Victor” approached the “DEB” mirrors, and appeared to hold only a momentary glance of himself. His posture was average, and he was wearing a gray t-shirt, black belt, a pair of jeans and some brown leather shoes. Victor was recently divorced and has lived in Bellingham for the last 12 years.

Victor: “I need to make sure I look good, you know. It’s just, you know. I guess, it’s natural, you know. I want to see what’s wrong...I feel like I looked overweight, but I feel good for my age...I am trying to look good for myself. If they (women) are gonna like me, they are gonna like me for myself.”

Subjects 2 & 5: “Rick” and “Rick Junior”. The two “Ricks” approached the mirrors and took nice long self-checks, perhaps twice as long as the subject 1 self-check.

“Rick”: “I was looking to see what I was wearing...I wanted to see how my posture was, you know...I was looking to see how I was holding my posture, you know...you know...It’s about looking good for society - that’s the way you are programmed.”

“Rick Junior”: “I was looking at the shirt to see how it looked...I just want to look good for myself.”

Subject 4: Tony Roumonada openly admitted two things without hesitation that surprised me: His full name, and the fact that he was looking at himself. Roumonada attends Western, and works at Fancy Feet in the mall.

Tony: “I looked to see if I had lost weight and how I looked today...I want to look good, but it’s for health reasons mainly...You are a lot more confident if you look good...I would feel more confident if I was thinner...Some people just like to look at themselves because they look good, while other people just want to see what they look like...I don’t think that anyone is vain for looking at themselves, but there are people who do it too much.”


Subject 5: “I was looking in the store.”

Subject 6: “What mirror?”

As I left the mall, I wasn’t sure what I should be thinking. The entire scene kind of hurled me into a restless wondering. Am I a self-checker? If I am a self-checker, do I look at myself just because I want my posture to be correct, or do I just think I am really attractive?

Outside the mall I sat in my car, taking a long look in the rear-view mirror for answers. The mirror didn’t have any answers for me, but I was relieved to see that my shave was clean and my hair was in fine shape.

—Danny Hiestand
It is at first a bit surreal to see a girl of 12, face flushed in concentration, curling yellow rings of hair around her finger as she tries to uncover the intricacies of Decio, the character she is to play in the next scene. Next to her, another blonde of about the same age struggles to master the pronunciation of the character Eroticum. Then the pre-class warm-up begins, and suddenly a pack of preteens launch into a stretching sequence that would put Gumby to shame. One kid arches his back until his face turns purple with the upside-down effort. A girl falls, wiggling wormlike on the red paisley shag rug. Inevitably the giggles start, and the instructor gently admonishes the group, "This is the time when we really want to focus. We do want to save our conversation for break time," and one remembers, finally, that these are kids. Kids tackling the prose of Shakespeare, but kids nonetheless.

This is the Shakespearean Youth Theater (SYT) of Bellingham, where students as young as 10 appear onstage in roles college English majors comprehend only with the help of "Cliff Notes." In spring, students worked on "The Menaechmi Twins" by Plautus, upon which Shakespeare based his "Comedy of Errors." The script is adapted and modernized for this group, but it still takes months of rehearsal to get the nuances of the ancient work in time for upcoming performances. But then, this is the whole reason why this theater works, says Carol Follett, an actor in, and founder and director of, SYT.

"Performing Shakespeare is a great incentive," she says, "because they're going to have to perform it, they have to read it, and they have to understand it."

This business actually fell into Follett's lap. She spent several years teaching art and drama at a private school, where she began a yearly tradition of producing a student-acted Shakespearean performance. When programs got cut at the school, the annual drama production was a casualty. "The parents really had grown to love the tradition of the play," she says in a soft voice one cannot imagine emoting to an audience. "They asked me to continue doing it on my own, and I thought, 'I don't know.' But I was really heartbroken to think of giving it up. And I thought, 'I think I should do it.' So I did."

Follett founded SYT two years ago. Since its inception, Follett's company has put on "Romeo and Juliet," "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "Much Ado About Nothing," as well as others. It is a lot of work—Follett does the costumes, the staging and the directing, as well as taking care of the business aspect of the company. The theater is supported by tuition—students pay $255 per production.
which includes 22 rehearsals and four performances. It has paid off, in her mind.

"A lot of people with a theater background look at me like I'm out of my mind," she admits, grinning. "And it's a challenge. But I love it. It's a high. It's addicting."

Follett earned a bachelor's degree from San Jose State University and a master's of fine arts at the University of California at Davis. She also holds a Washington State teaching certificate, which she got at Western. The students' credentials consist of a variety of previous experiences. "I've already read a lot of Shakespeare," says 15-year-old Rose Dunlap with a dismissive shrug. "I go through phases of reading, and I went through a lot of Shakespeare stuff in my romance stage. I love acting it out—it gives me a chance to express myself differently than just going to school."

Dunlap estimates that in her years of elementary schooling she was in seven or eight plays, making her a seasoned veteran.

Monique Reeder, the 12-year-old who was earlier worrying over character motivation, says, "I was in 'Much Ado About Nothing' at my private school, so I already know a little Shakespeare."

Precocious? Maybe a little. But no one comes across as the slightest bit pretentious. "Some students just know their stuff. "You have to know your character to get into her," says 13-year-old Michelle Bunn, a studiously quiet girl in glasses. But then, in the next minute, Follett mentions costumes for the current play, and an impromptu chant of "Toga! Toga!" breaks out in the generic echo of the hotel meeting room. The thespians become kids again.

Moments like these overlap with the wordy language and vigorous gestures of the scenes. Follett coaches her students with cryptic phrases like, "We always have a reason for movement," "Remember your blocking" and "Focus in character." The kids, though, seem to get it, and rearrange their bodies, voices and expressions in compliance. They analyze their characters.

"I'm a little kid, aren't I?" asks one girl. "Shouldn't I be running around?"

The performers not included in the scene whisper and giggle in scattered groups. A few seem more interested in two newly-introduced male members than in the black-bound scripts that hang forgotten in their hands. But the students say that may be the point of it all.

"This is just as much a social group as acting class," says Hilary Reid, who at 15 is one of the senior members of the group. "Carol's thing is that we be an ensemble, so that we can react to each other onstage."

Competition isn't the focus at SYT. "Students bid for the characters they want to play after an initial script read-through. If too many choose the part, a drawing is held. "I don't like auditions," says Follett. "They're distracting.""

As the break ends, and the students take their places for another scene. Their lips move in silence as they sneak a last look at their scripts. The scene opens with an outdoor soliloquy. Reid bounces around the stage as she delivers her lines in a voice much bigger than her 5-foot tall frame. A girl is required to faint into the arms of one of the new male students, causing a fresh wave of giggles as concentration breaks. Follett sighs and smiles. "I don't lose my patience," she laughs. "They're kids—and I don't forget that."
Spiritual connection is more practical than one might think, and a certain practice can bring one closer.

Paul Furlong says it leads to a drifty, floaty feeling, which slows the brainwaves and provides access to your spirit.

Ingela Abbott says it's based on belief in earth's balance represented by the sun and moon: the sun represents energy and newness, the moon symbolizes contemplation and reflection.

Its philosophy promises to bring one closer to nature—the nature of the self.

It can aid in any number of ailments: heart, stress-related digestive problems, back pain, neck tension, chronic headaches and allergic symptoms.

It makes your toes tingle.

Some of the masters claim it can suspend animation, enabling one to stop breathing for days. This allows the master to be buried alive, or maybe even observe schools of fish from underneath water without diving gear. But don't try that at home. Try yoga instead.

Abbott has been teaching yoga more than 20 years. She is interested in integrating mind, body and spirit by controlling energy, breath and thought. These integration exercises are fundamental to yoga. But if you talk about Yogis being buried alive to Abbott, her laugh will shake the wood floors and send the red and purple pillows of Yoga Northwest all aquiver.

"We're not interested in turning anyone into stereotypes," she said. "We're all uniquely different." A smile stretches across her face, and her bright blue eyes light up.

Furlong strives to achieve a state of relaxation and peacefulness developing a connection to one's spiritual nature.

Many Yogis describe a cataleptic state, induced by self-hypnosis, which can lead to a state similar to suspended animation.

In Furlong's class at Bellingham Athletic Club, students fall short of this cataleptic state. Meditating—index-finger and thumbs touching, legs crossed and chins up—the students relax minds and bodies, nearing spiritual connection.

The liberation is the final stage of yoga. Yogis take years to reach...
The divisions of mind, body and spirit realms are false divisions, writes Jean Couch in "The Runner's Yoga Book." The word "yoga" is Sanskrit for "union" or "joining," and considering the physiological changes it can cause in the body, its name is wholly accurate.

Susan Humenik, registered nurse, attends Prelle's class at Yoga Northwest. She took the class to improve flexibility. She was surprised at its strengthening aspects, and said the "added benefit I wasn't counting on was spiritual." Through yoga, that part comes naturally, Humenik said.

Moe Witschard, outdoor educator and Western student, said yoga has changed his awareness outside of class. He noticed an improved body awareness and a decrease in fear. Outdoor activities such as river kayaking and mountain biking are easier now, Witschard said. The fear and resistance his body felt before has faded since he began yoga.

Yoga also increases body awareness through flexibility. Increased flexibility improves circulation, causing a cleansing action within the body, Abbott explained. The improved circulation brings new oxygenated blood to muscles, bones, organs, glands and the brain. All organs benefit from this "breath of fresh air."

With aerobic exercises, such as running, toxins are removed from the body by the muscles massaging excreting organs such as the pancreas, intestines, liver and gall bladder, Prelle said. The massage-effect causes circulation to increase. Exhalations during yoga release carbon dioxide, and inhalations bring new oxygen. As the body exhales, circulation flushes out lactic acid.
acid, the substance that creates muscle soreness after exercise.

All of these benefits come from the awareness of proper body alignment during poses in class, Abbott said. Poses are monitored by the instructor, and are held while slowly inhaling, breathing in the positive energy, then slowly exhaling, releasing the negative energy and toxins. All the while, being reminded to focus on the pose, not on the busy thoughts that struggle for room in a clearer, and revitalized mind.

Yoga has benefits that move beyond standard aerobic exercise because it allows the body to go deeper into circulation, bringing more oxygen to the vital organs, Abbott said. "The power of yoga" is in the holding of poses, Abbott said.

She uses the analogy of a sponge to demonstrate yoga's effectiveness. "Squeezing toxins out of organs, joints and muscles" allows the body to soak up new energy, Abbott explained.

The benefits of yoga create a metaphor for the balance in life. Balance is inherent in yoga philosophy, as it is in yoga movement.

"The quad stretch and the calf stretch are important to the health of the knee," Abbott said, running her finger over the front of her thigh, or quadriceps muscle group, then along the calf, or gastronemius muscle group.

The balance of strength and flexibility decrease the likelihood of injury. Each muscle has an opposing muscle. If one flexes, the opposing one stretches. Unequal strength and flexibility can cause muscles to pull unevenly on bones, throwing the body out of alignment, and causing pain, discomfort and lack of energy.

Tight back muscles, especially those in the upper back spanning across the shoulders (trapezius muscles), are oftentimes revealed by a "collapsed chest," Abbott said. I then found myself pulling my shoulders back a little.

Yoga poses strengthen the back muscles and open up the chest by stretching the pectoralis major and minor in the chest. As muscles become more pliable, and opposing muscles balance in flexibility and strength, Abbott said, posture and alignment begin to improve outside of class.

Many people lack energy because of poor alignment, she explained. The head weighs 12 pounds, and holding it up all day takes a lot of energy. Before beginning yoga, some people have a tendency to hold their heads forward. That posture is caused by everyday actions of driving, or working at a computer. Eventually energy is drained, as the body constantly strains to hold an unnatural posture.

Improved body alignment allows the body's natural curves to return to the neck and spine. The natural alignment of the body improves circulation, and energy—"ha," Sanskrit for sun.

Sustained poses and controlled breath and thoughts lead to clearer, quieter contemplation increasing concentration—"tha," Sanskrit for moon.

"When doing yoga, we're trying to reawaken people's sense of balance and good body mechanics," Abbott said.

The connection of mind, body and spirit harmonizes naturally—with practice.
Lead pucks and miniature sticks are prerequisites in a twisted brand of hockey played in Carver Gym's pool.

**Erin North** talks to the players of this sport under the waves.

After 9 p.m. on a Thursday, the remaining stragglers on Western's campus are either reluctant students with unfinished homework, or those headed for home.

A group of people donning fins, masks and snorkels are headed toward Carver Gymnasium with shortened sticks and a heavy puck.

What are they doing? They're going to their semi-weekly underwater hockey club meeting, of course!

*Photos by Ryan Hooser*
"Twelve years ago, a friend who used to play on an underwater hockey intramural team at Western introduced my husband to the game, and three years later I joined," 43-year-old Beth Anderson said. "I've been playing underwater hockey for about nine years now. It's an addiction."

The Bellinghammers Underwater Hockey Club, a combination of students and community members (including Western alumni), practices in the Carver Gym pool on Thursday and Sunday nights.

Anderson, who produces artwork out of her home and works part-time for MB Green and the YMCA, describes underwater hockey as much more like basketball than field or ice hockey.

"It's a non-contact sport," said Anderson. "It's a cleaner, kinder game than ice hockey, with a more free form. There's no icing and you can sub on the fly."

To 'sub on the fly' means as soon as one player leaves the water, another is allowed to enter without the use of a time-out. Teams consist of six members and are allowed up to four substitutes.

Anderson has attended two world tournaments in France and New Zealand with her husband, James Luce, also 43 years old and an employee of the Bellingham Parks Department. The sport is also played in Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Belgium, Holland, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Columbia.

"World tournaments are a whole other level of intensity," said Anderson. "The sport is unsubsidized since it's so unheard of and it requires a large commitment, both financially and time-wise. It also requires a lot of aerobic training."

Luce regularly competes in Bellingham's annual Ski-to-Sea Festival and Anderson keeps in shape...
by kayaking, hiking, swimming, running or working out with her husband.

"The better shape you're in, the more fun the game is," Anderson said.

As described by Dawn Wadleigh, who along with her husband are members of the underwater hockey club, Anderson and Luce act as activity coordinators for the players, but Anderson prefers to refer to herself and Luce as "just a couple of the steadiest members."

She says her involvement in the club is purely recreational. "It's mostly a personal choice," Anderson said of the level of commitment and involvement the sport requires.

"You can go as far as your pocketbook or desire will let you," she said.

Underwater hockey is not without its casualties, however. Rafe Wadleigh, a 23-year-old music education major, almost lost his front tooth to the three-pound puck. As it glided through the water, Rafe's jaw dropped in anticipation of the oncoming weighted projectile—just in time to catch a mouthful of puck.

The very apologetic assailant helped repair the damage with a $400 contribution to his dental fund. The rest of the team pitched in to cover the balance.

Dawn and Rafe are the two youngest players on the team. Other members range in age from 25 to 45. For the majority of people it's their main form of recreation. They spend the majority of their time practicing or going to tournaments.

The last tournament Dawn and Rafe attended was a potluck tournament in Vancouver on February 15. A potluck tournament consists of all levels of players from lots of different areas. It costs $10 in Canadian funds and the players participate in four or five games throughout the day.

"At the end of the day everyone goes out for pizza and beers," Dawn said. "The top three teams get awarded medals. The nice thing about hockey is everyone has a really relaxed attitude even though it's still pretty competitive."

"I play just to have fun," she said. "If you start getting in to the competitive side it starts to get pretty pricey with hotels and travel expenses. I like the recreational aspect and the people are really great to play with."

According to Anderson, equipment is available for those who are looking to try out the sport. Anderson and Luce usually lend the needed materials for the

and sharing gear, but you have to ask questions if you want to learn. You can't be timid," Dawn said.

The fundamentals of the game are easy to acquire with practice and dedication. The stick is used to push or flick the puck along the bottom of the pool. At each end of the pool is a goal. The object of the game is to flick the puck into the opposing team's goal.

The standard size pool is 1.5 to 2.5 meters deep, and the court area itself is 20 to 25 by 10 to 15 meters, so there's lots of room to swim about. However, Carver Gym's pool is not standardized for underwater hockey and one team is always stuck in the deep end—12 feet under.

A game is 30 minutes long with three minutes at halftime for a breather. You do not have to be particularly fit to play, nor do you have to be able to hold your breath abnormally long. As with any sport, the skills and fitness are learned and developed as you play the game.

At the start of play and after a goal has been scored, both teams line up at their goal and the puck is placed in the middle of the court. The referee, who is also in the water, hits a gong to start play. All players can move freely throughout the court. There are no off-sides or goalkeepers.

If the puck goes out of the court or a foul is committed, play is stopped and restarted with either an advantage puck or equal puck (depending on the type of offense).

The stick is held in one hand and is the only thing allowed to touch the puck.

A point is scored when the puck enters the goal. A player whose stick is touching the puck can do almost anything, but defensive players can only use their sticks to gain possession of the puck.

"It's a crazy game, but it's a lot of fun," said Anderson.

"I play because I love swimming," Wadleigh said. "I heard about it and thought it might be fun to try. Its got this addictive quality, maybe it's the adrenaline rush from holding your breath."
The run-down building stood in front of me, its cracked face concealed from the sun. I reached 2505 1st Ave. in downtown Seattle, and thought to myself, "This can't be it. I've seen Burger Kings nicer than this."

I opened the door—my wallet chain's crash against the metal entrance somehow overshadowing the sound of the moving vehicles—and entered a ballroom of darkness. I was immediately approached by a hostess in a tuxedo, but the extravagant dining room and chandeliers caught my eye. Already distinguished by my lack of attire, I was graciously pointed in the direction of my destination. After passing the dimly lit bar and taking an extreme left turn, I proceeded into the cigar room.

It was like walking into a cigar smoker's oval office. The plush carpeting laid ground for the red and green mahogany chairs and glass tables. Each table was decorated with large ash trays (for cigars only) and flowers of burgundy and magenta. The tan wallpaper was a gentle backdrop for paintings of race horses.

A blend of Mexican and classical music presented an atmosphere of unwinding static. A large wooden humidor case, which
kept the tobacco from drying out, stood erect in the near-right corner, full of boxes containing cigars ranging in price from $12 to $70 each. The cell-phone, resting on top of the case, was a reminder of the electronic age and available to all cigar smokers. The far wall consisted of 48 personal humidors locked behind a glass case. The angular windows gave light to the garden of tables, adding to the professional and relaxing atmosphere.

El Gaucho's, one of a handful of cigar-friendly restaurants in Seattle, was the meeting place for my first real cigar smoking experience. As I waited for Bobby Holstein, president of the Fuji Publishing Group, which has many cigar and wine web sites, I pondered on how I ended up in a cigar room.

I've recently yearned to become one of the hip in today's society—'The Good Book in one hand and a Cuban cigar in the other,' I thought. Since I am a newborn in the growing population of cigar smokers, I needed to learn the basics: how to hold, light, smoke and treat a cigar as though it was made of precious stones.

Lately I've been wondering, 'Where am I going to learn such mastery on how to handle myself with a cigar?' I knew no one who smoked such greatness. I had no cigar premonitions, but my luck was about to change.

Holstein, holding a briefcase humidor, and wife Heather Hope, vice president of Fuji Publishing Group, arrived just in time as my taste buds raced off my tongue from the hint of cigar smoke still present in the room. Holstein opened the humidor, and inside were about 20 cigars of various brands, patiently waiting to be the next smoke. He selected an Ebelo cigar from his collection, pressed a hole at the foot of the stogie with a silver bullet and handed it to me.

Holstein and Hope are members of the Seattle Smokers, a cigar and pipe club in the Puget Sound area. The "Smokers" meet once a month or couple of months at a cigar-friendly restaurant to enjoy the world of cigars and to discuss cigar-related topics.

Board member Holstein remembers when the Seattle Smokers were first established in 1995, the hostility towards cigars was quite high.

"There used to be only three cigar-friendly restaurants in Seattle," said the former accountant. Holstein's current profession as designer of cigar and wine-related web sites allows him to work on his love. "When your job is drinking and smoking, you enjoy your work."

The Seattle Smokers end up picking up two to three new members every time a meeting is held. Meetings vary in size from 55 people to as few as five.

"It is probably the most organized group in the country because everyone is on-line and it is available to everybody," Holstein said. "We have guys who just want to smoke and drink. Anyone can show up and there are no fees. We just find a restaurant that lets us smoke; all we need is the space."

Holstein first started smoking cigars the summer after high school graduation.

"I thought, 'what the hell, I'm going to buy a cigar,'" he said. Little did he know the consequences of that purchase. He began smoking one cigar a week, but currently smokes eight to nine per day on average. Tonight, he was on his fifth and it was only 5:30 p.m.

"It is something I enjoy, not like an addiction—it is fun," he said as he sipped a kamikaze, one of the usual drinks he has with a cigar.

Hope entered the cigar world after meeting Holstein but doesn't keep the same smoke routine. She sometimes goes a couple days without one.

Cigar treatment

Lighting the cigar: I was overwhelmed with the articulate caress required in lighting such a beast. First, I had to "toast" the cigar's foot (kind of like putting your hand to a gas stove—it is tricky and scary at the same time). Doing this ignites the outer layers of the tobacco (the binder and wrapper). If I would have just lit the whole damn thing, only the filler would have been lit and the cigar would burn unevenly. I would have showed signs of my cigar virginity.

Now came the time to light this baby. I was given a lighter that resembled a mini jet engine. I placed the cigar between my

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The image contains a photograph of a cigar room with a glass case, a cell-phone, and a wall of personal humidors. The room is brightly lit by angular windows and filled with cigar boxes.

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Note: The text above is a continuation of the story, discussing the author's experiences at a cigar-friendly restaurant and their introduction to cigar smoking. It includes details about the Seattle Smokers, a local cigar club, and the author's learning process regarding cigar care.

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The image also includes a photograph of a cigar room, featuring a glass case, a cell-phone, and a wall of personal humidors. The room is well-lit by angular windows and filled with cigar boxes.
lips, felt my heart in my stomach, then placed the fire in front of the cigar and rotated the brownish beauty as I drew the air in. The first puff was behind me. I panned the room and felt the slowness of the smoke inhibit my thinking. I was floating in the heaven of a newfound religion.

I had just lost my cigar virginity. After I began my experience, Holstein focused his eyes on mine and said, "Tbu should never light another man's or woman's cigar. Tm not sure about a woman lighting another woman's cigar though."

Holding a cigar: I had heard that the rugged cigar should be held in-between the second and third fingers. Holstein followed this rule, so I did the same, but Hope held it between her index finger and thumb. I figured the way one holds a cigar didn't really matter.

To keep a stable and lengthy ash means you can enjoy the cigar for a longer period. The ash should be approximately three-quarters of an inch long before flicking it. Holstein said the ash helps to reduce the temperature of the burning tobacco and cools the smoke, which in turn slows the burning of the cigar.

Just in case the cigar goes out (a no-no if you want to look like you know what you're doing), relight it slowly. Knock the ash off and blow through the larger-than-life cigarette to release the stale smoke. Hold the lighter or match for a couple seconds at the foot of the cigar before bringing the beast back to life.

The Seattle cigar scene
Washington State has the highest tobacco tax in the United States at 75 percent—this is the last thing I wanted to hear after acquiring a taste for cigars!

Greg Beams, cigar lover and author of the web site Seattle Cigar Scene, doesn't believe the rise in cigar popularity in Seattle matches the rate in the rest of the United States, particularly because of the high tobacco tax.

"We in Seattle pay almost $9 for a $5 cigar in states with no tobacco tax," he said. "That price is only if the Seattle cigar retailers accept the same mark-up as their counterparts in other states. Seattle doesn't generally cater to the cigar smoker, although I believe there has been a certain shift in attitudes over the past year. There are a few more bars allowing cigar smoking, but at the same time, some of the places that used to allow cigar smoking (Queen City Grill, for example) have had to eliminate it because of the complaints from their non-smoking patrons."

Ten Seattle-area restaurants cater to the cigar smoker. Some allow cigar smoking only in the bar or in the entire restaurant, while others allow cigar smoking only on certain nights.

Some restaurants will conduct cigar dinners, where they cater to the cigar smoker with a couple of fine cigars before dinner and a couple for dessert. These dinners can be rather expensive, ranging from $40 to $100 per head depending on the location.

"Restaurants that are cigar-friendly I look forward to going to," Holstein said, but also added how he avoids some restaurants that only cater to cigar smokers on special occasions.

"If they are cigar-hostile and won't let you smoke anytime except for special occasions once a month ... I tell people not to go to those dinners," he said.

The availability of cigars is good in Seattle, with six established smoke shops.

"We really don't have a cigar shortage like you'll find in many other cities," Beams said. "If you're willing to pay the higher prices, you can pretty much find whatever the cigar you may be searching for."
The cigar goes mainstream ... sort of

Sometimes when Holstein is the only cigar smoker he gets some dirty looks.

"There is a backlash from those who say, 'You can't have a good time in life' crowd," he said. "A certain faction of society exists if they see people having a good time."

Even though Holstein sometimes encounters "cigar hostility," the cigar has become more popular in Hollywood and with the average smoker.

"Now you're seeing a more mainstream focus," he said. "It is a symbol of society. At the turn of the century, everyone was smoking cigars. Every political candidate had a cigar brand—hell, even prohibitionists had one.

"Cigars have been on the rise the past five years. If you look at Los Angeles or New York, cigars have always been popular, especially in the Florida area with the Cuban tradition."

No one predicted the growth of the cigar, and manufacturers were caught completely off guard, Beams said.

"The cigar industry has been on a tirade ... as cigars have gained in popularity, new players have entered the market," said Yearns, who realized that if he was going to be able to afford these little treasures, he would have to find a cost-effective way to job is drinking and smoking, you enjoy your work."

Some of his usual cigar handicappers are iced tea, scotch, port and wine.

Beams likes to enjoy the taste of the cigar outside by himself, watching the world go by.

"The mix of spice, sweetness, smoke and the varying degrees of each in the different cigars is always an exploration in taste buds," he said. "I enjoy the lighting ritual that I generally go through when putting my favorite lighter to a premium hand-rolled cigar. I've enjoyed cigars in the morning, afternoon and evening."

"I enjoy big, fat ones," Nitke said. "I like full-bodied cigars with red wine or a single malt scotch, depending on the time of day."

Am I hooked?

I've smoked a couple cigarettes in my lifetime and never really enjoyed them except for the slight lightheadedness that occurred. But the cigar is a different creature from a strange planet of tobacco madness. I found myself treating my cigar as though it was worth gold and smoked it for the taste—I admit the slight buzz that followed every puff was as virtuous as a piece of pumpkin pie after a Thanksgiving dinner. It took me about an hour to smoke my first cigar, but I found myself a proud citizen of the cloud city. I soon lit my second, a La Gianna, to satisfy my craving.

The selection I have to choose from is up to 2 billion cigars a year in the United States, Nitke figured.

So will I light a stogie again? Yes, once a week. But, then again, Holstein started out with one a week and now smokes about 55 a week, drawing from a personal collection of more than 15,000 cigars.

The relaxation of the cigar along with ...
Some people blush like adolescents, while many see beauty. Be what it may, Sarah Decker purveys impressions of art by a man known as Coop.

"Excuse me," I asked, brow raised hesitantly. An awkward teen slowly rose from behind a long, smudged, ebony counter.

"Can I get the Lords of Acid CD, Voodoo-U?" I asked, wondering why the sign read it was behind the counter.

Finally, after what seemed like a millennium, he handed me the CD. I snatched my wallet, and scanned the cover's fluorescent array of devil women, succubi, engaging in graphic explicit lesbian sex.

"Whoa," I thought as the CD was bagged, "that's some interesting shit!"

I had just run into the art of Chris Cooper, also known as Coop, the independent rock artist. Censorship, values, pornography, women's issues and homosexual acts surround Coop's world. But for him it's a joke.

"It's supposed to be a gag," Coop said. "It's pleasing to the eye, it makes you laugh a little bit and it looks good up on the wall."

dimension & perspective
Coop draws similar types of women in all his works, very voluptuous, busty and, by some social standards, a little overweight. Bill Ward, a cartoonist for adult men’s magazines, has influenced Coop a great deal.

“He depicts situations with themes of scantily clothed, beautiful women and some stupid, slobbering, bug-eyed guy. The woman is exerting some kind of sexual or social power over him,” Coop explained.

“Men are obsessed with women. I think a lot of what I do reflects my perception of society. We’re told the world is run by men, but all it takes is one beautiful woman, and they turn into twelve year olds. I think that’s an amusing thing, and it enters my work.”

Coop has worked locally, creating promotional posters for Estrus Records and the 3-B Tavern. Three years ago, Dave Crider from Estrus talked to Coop about doing an album cover. They soon collaborated on the Garage Shock posters for the ’93 and ’94 shows. The posters are scarce and now go for $200-300 a piece.

La Luz De Jesus, a big Los Angeles underground art gallery held a showing of his work in June of ’96. Next year, he’ll be displaying his work from San Francisco to New York “and wherever the hell anyone else wants” him.

Coop’s art is more than just naked women. He got his start drawing hot rods. Both are on several record covers for companies such as Bomp! and American Records. He is also cranking out CD covers for Magnified Plaid, Mono Men, L7 and Lords of Acid, along with several promo posters for Green Day, Gashuffer, Ministry and other bands.

Call it misogyny, call it vulgarity, call it what you will, but he and several others call it art.

“Art is not a crime. It exists to provoke thought and controversy. Coop’s art is designed to inspire the wrath of those ignorant on the right or left. Conservatives have long demonized powerful women (“Devil Girl with a Whip”), intelligent women (“An Apple for
Professor Priapus"), and perhaps the greatest threat of all: women who don't need men ("Six Sixty-Nine"), or so says a recent feature on an Internet site.

"This is not saying women are intelligent," said Colleen McArdle, from the Women's Center at Western, in regard to An Apple for Professor Priapus. "This is saying she has an A+ because she has big tits." The piece depicts a large-breasted women straddling a rather large apple, wearing only a graduation cap and an "excited" professor speeding on a hot 'rod' after her.

Reacting to "Devil Girl with a Whip," McArdle said, "It's not the woman with the whip in control. It is fully the man who is sitting on the chair. He, the voyeur, is in control." In this painting, the succubus has on a tight cat suit with whip in hand, the man dressed in women's lingerie is tied to a chair.

"An Apple For Professor Priapus is saying 'she has an A+ because she has big tits.'"

'Six Sixty Nine is the ultimate male fantasy. It's not about women, It's about his warped sense of women and of sex.'

"McArdle frustratingly called "Six Sixty-Nine," a painting of two devil women performing oral sex "the ultimate male fantasy. It's not about the women. It's about his warped sense of women, and of sex," said McArdle. "He is placing women in completely subordinate, oppressive positions with his skewed, artistic eye. He's telling his viewers it's OK to look at your women with just your libido and it's fine to maintain patriarchal systems of power that are oppressing," McArdle said.

"I've had people say my work is sexist. The only way it could be is showing women are naturally superior to men. I don't consider myself a misogynist. I'm pretty much obsessed with women," Coop said.

Psychology professor Dr. Barbara Collamer teaches the sex-roles class at Western and although she does not like looking at this type of art, she said some people do, and she wouldn't promote censoring it. She did, however, say Coop's work "stems from adolescent mentality, and doesn't necessarily cause, but promotes negative views of women and date-rape situations."

"I think any kind of rape is a completely fucking horrible act, and I'm personally offended somebody would say my art work represents that," exploded Coop. "She doesn't know me or what my work is about, and I think that's ridiculous. I think her work promotes the continued division of a generation of people along sex, gender and race lines. She's doing more to make this world an unhappy place than I ever could hope to."

dimension & perspective
Coop explained the reason the female figure has been a part of art since the early days. “It's probably the single most recognized and most common object of beauty across all different cultures and periods of history.”

Coop started drawing naked pictures of “cheesecake girlie art” because he was “really good at it.” He's never had any formal training.

Coop's art isn't necessarily explicit, in his opinion. It does, however, have some sex appeal to it, and even a bit of prurience.

A few years ago, a college student from the University of Minnesota produced a web sight on the Geo Cities server and they pulled it. Once Wired magazine covered the story, millions of people left messages after viewing the new sight. Some messages stated, “I'm all for freedom of speech, except for this.”

For Coop that's the typical liberal talking. "You can't make exceptions. Either you're for freedom of speech or you're against it. There's no in the middle. Liberalism is a group of people that think they know better. I'm an intelligent adult and if I see something that offends me then I just don't look at it. If somebody else wants to look at it that's fine and dandy; I don't give a shit. That seems to me the basic logical rule in the world and people can't get that.”

"He has missed the point," McArdle groans. "It doesn't mean you can't be controversial. He is depicting a Barbie doll and should accept credit for depicting women in this way."

The only censorship Coop has experienced was with the Lords of Acid CD. The problem was with the record label, Antler Subway, and did not involve him directly. Because of his small audience, he believes it won't happen for awhile.

"Recently, I did a poster for the Church of Satan and no one said anything. If I was bigger that might have happened."

The most intolerant, judgmental group Coop has come across are “typical, upper-middle class, college educated, liberal, white people. Though they espouse a platform of equality, they invariably think that everyone is beneath them and I think that's kind of pathetic.”

"They have a little book of rules. They call you names and those names tend to stick in modern society. Whether the names have a basis in fact or not. There was a very similar event in history in Germany about 50 years ago and we called it Fascism. Although I don't see any liberals rounding up people and throwing them into ovens, if they had their chance, I'm sure they would. I'm not trying to upset anyone by showing death and dismemberment; if someone gets upset over drawings of naked women, I think they have some issues they need to talk over with their therapist. People don't react with what they're seeing they react with what's in their head."

"He is a transparent fool," McArdle remarks. "I can see how people with a limited scope in life would agree with that. Equality is seeing that everyone has potential for being equal and given an opportunity."

"As long as I am making myself happy," Coop reflects, "and the small group of people that like my work happy, that's good enough for me."
For 20 years, dedicated fans have let go of their inhibitions every weekend at the "Rocky Horror Picture Show." Kristen Paulson pulls on her fishnets and delves into a cult classic.

Photos by Ryan Hooser and Stuart Martin
I was in a see-through pink bustier with black silk shorts, garters and fishnet stockings hanging out of the bottom.

“ANTICIPATION”

Waiting outside the auditorium, I looked at the assorted freaks surrounding me. A short, stocky woman walked by, dressed in a tuxedo with a nicely-done fake mustache hanging off her upper lip. She wore two tall, leggy “women” on each arm like fine bracelets. The “women” looked realistic, until you saw the masses of curly black hair beneath their pantyhose. A woman in a long black dress walked up to me and asked me if I had ever seen the show before. I said I hadn’t, and she marked a large “V” on my forehead with blood-red lipstick. I looked at my boyfriend, unsure of what was next.

“It’s OK,” he said, patting me gently on the shoulder. “You have a while before the sacrifice.”

“Sacrifice?” I thought. What the hell had I gotten myself into? Doug had told me that we were going to see a movie, not a freak show. Sacrifice? Well, it couldn’t be too bad; conservative Whitman College wouldn’t allow anything too raunchy.

If only I had known better.

Many more people arrived outside the entryway, greeting each other and laughing at each other’s makeup. Men were dressed as women, vampires and freaks in ‘70s funk attire, “men dressed as men,” “domestics” and sluts. I felt totally out of place in my standard-issue jeans and a T-shirt, but as my forehead plainly told, I was a virgin, as far as the “Rocky Horror Picture Show” was concerned.

“The first time I went to ‘Rocky,’ I was doing the lights for the show,” said Jeff Spencer, a senior at Whitman College. “I had a friend who had gone in high school several times, and she told me of the rituals performed on first-time viewers, unless they were part of the production.”

“So, I decided to wimp out,” he said laughingly. Although he didn’t dress as a character for his first show, he did dress up in acid-washed bell-bottomed jeans, a funky polyester top and a short black curly wig. He decided that, rather than go through the embarrassment of the virgin sacrifice, he would be one of the light people. Spencer’s job was to chase the performers with a flashlight as they acted out the movie in front of the screen.
“I Wanna Go ... OH, OH, OH OH OH”  
We stepped inside and found our seats. Before long, the auditorium was filled and the virgins were separated from the experienced. They pulled us all out of the crowd, and divided us into guys and girls. The girls had to go grab a guy and fake an orgasm, while the men had to stand there and see how much they could blush. Standing in front of several hundred people, each girl had to shriek her heart out in an attempt to win the grand prize.

After most of the girls had gone, it finally came to me. I grabbed my partner, a Herculean hunk of football player, and hopped up onto the stage. I wrapped my legs around his waist, and “acted” for all I was worth. After a few minutes of thrusting against this big block of manhood while passionately clawing his back, I let out the final climactic howl. Meg Ryan had nothing on me, if you were only counting tastelessness and volume. I won, and walked back to my chair carrying my prize, a gross of condoms.

The movie opens benignly enough with a wedding. Brad (Barry Bostwick) and Janet (Susan Sarandon) go to the wedding, and Brad proposes to Janet. They drive to see the professor (who caused them to meet), and get a flat tire along the way. After walking through the rain to a spooky old castle, they are let inside. Then, strange things happen.

By the end when gender-bending, aliens, a “three-pronged dildo” and a floor show become involved and every character finds his or her legs in fishnet stockings, nothing is shocking.

The most important thing to remember about “Rocky” is that it’s okay to talk back to the screen. Actually, it’s encouraged. Such lines as, “Reach out, reach out and fuck someone” have become commonplace over the years. Every time Janet steps into a new scene, the audience yells “SLUT”; Brad gets similar treatment, only he’s an “ASSHOLE.” An alien ray-gun becomes a “three-pronged dildo.” The best is when the audience blends their words with the movie lines: the crowd says “Riff, which way do you finger your sister?” On the screen, Riff waggles his fingers and says, “This way.” Another classic is when Riff says to Brad and Janet, “I think you’d better come inside,” and the audience screams, “I don’t care where you cum as long as you clean it up.”

Audience participation is not limited to words, however. People watching the show throw rice during the wedding at the opening of the show, and run to the aisles to dance for the “Time Warp,” when they follow the dancing on the screen, doing “the pelvic thrust, until it drives you INSANE.”

Different showings have developed different lines over the years. At one “Rocky” showing I went to, audience members actually grabbed each other during the “Time Warp,” and then the women yelled, “Get your hands off my tits.”

One thing to remember, though, is that not everyone has to participate. Those with a little more modesty can go to just watch the freaks, but they are missing part of the show. The movie is meant to lower your sexual inhibitions, so prudes should probably stay home.

“Rocky” is a wonderful experience,” Spencer said. “It’s a chance to dress like a freak and have fun yelling at a screen.”

Over the years, Rocky has developed an almost rabid following. Many people in larger cities attend weekly showings, like those at the Varsity Theater in Seattle. It’s not as if these “Rocky” fans dress like freaks every day of the year—“Rocky” is just a release from the boredom of everyday life and sexuality.

“The Back Row - OW - OW”

The second time I went to “Rocky,” I was ready. Some girlfriends of mine and I went together, all dressed as the trashiest of sluts. I was in a see-through pink bustier with black silk shorts (pinned up to crotch level) with garters and fishnet stockings hanging out of the bottom. Fishnets are a must for any “Rocky” costume, since all of the characters (even the

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**Dimension & Perspective**
professor in a wheelchair) find themselves netted at one time or another in the film. My heels were high, my makeup thick and pasty. I wasn't a virgin anymore.

"The next time I went to 'Rocky,' I was wearing a fabulous costume," Spencer said, smiling at the delicious nastiness of the memory. "I had on black silk bikini briefs and black leather chaps with a black leather motorcycle jacket. I was wearing female makeup on my face, the whole bit ... eyes, lashes, blush and lipstick.

"I couldn't believe how much I got hit on that night ... by anyone!"

"OH, BRA-AD ... AWWW, SHIT ..."

Spencer has been involved in many sides of "Rocky" throughout college, from being a virgin hiding as a stage-hand to playing one of the main parts of the show.

"There were auditions," he said. "I didn't show up and still got the part. Basically, they were desperate for people."

At Whitman College, the rehearsals consisted of watching the movie a lot and acting like an absolute idiot. Then, they had to get up in front of 300 people and act like fools in front of them.

"When I was Brad, I was wearing his costumes, asshole gear (slacks and white dress shirt) and his floor shirt costume, black silk bikini briefs, fishnet stalkings, buster, and a feather boa. For the floor show, I wore full white face pancake makeup with eyes and lips.

"It was great! I got to stand half-naked in front of 250 of my close personal friends," Spencer said. "At least they are now."

"RIFF CAN'T HOLD HIS LIQUOR"

The most fun of "Rocky," however, would have to be the cast parties. People show up in their costumes and party from when the movie gets out (usually about 5 a.m.) until sunlight. After the second "Rocky" I went to, we celebrated until the following afternoon. Everyone stumbled home in daylight, their makeup streaked and their fishnets torn.

I've been hooked on "Rocky" for a while, and I go every time I get a chance. It's become more than a movie, though. Going to see "Rocky" is one of life's few chances to truly let go, to become someone you didn't know you could be. "Rocky" started as a gender-bending cult film 20 years ago, but has continued because it encourages people to let go of their sexual insecurities. Or, at least, they have a good time laughing at freaks like us."
Have you ever done it? I know you have. Everyone has, for one reason or another, channel surfed upon this phenomenon. It's not your fault. There's a limit to how many times someone can watch Ricki Lake, Baywatch or 90210. So you continue flipping stations. Channels of useless babble fly by in droves, but you're determined, and you press on. Hell, you have 57 channels. There has to be one oasis of substance amongst all this garbage. Where is the quality programming? Finally, as you begin to give up hope for a better world, you happen to turn it here, to channel 10.

Here in Bellingham, channel 10 is the Public Access Channel (PAC). It may not be the most watched station in Bellingham, Lynden, or Whatcom County, but it does give viewers a different kind of programming. And best of all, it's free.

Established in 1983 by TCI Cable, the PAC is set up to give the community open access to the airwaves, according to Russ Nelson, Studio Operations Manager at TCI Cable. "The equipment is here for them to use for free. All they have to do is pass a free four-day course on using video equipment, then they can start producing their show," Nelson said. Or if they have their own equipment they can send in their videos.

Nelson said PAC's around the country are the most blocked stations by households because of their flexible standards. In Seattle flexibility comes in the form of a nude talk show. In New York people call in their sexual questions on a live talk show. And in Portland late-night viewers are entertained by "Shag," an informal talk show where the host repeatedly pulls down his pants to solicit questions. Don't run to your TV just yet, though. PAC flexibility isn't universal. Each program is held up to standards of its own community.

"The funny thing about our PAC is that you have a diverse community viewing it," Nelson said. "On one hand you have the community standards of Lynden, and on the other you have the community standards of students and people in Bellingham. Something that may be considered offensive in Lynden may not be considered such at Western."

The PAC is "a community soapbox," Nelson said. It's a way for the people to get their voices out. With this freedom also comes controversy.

Nelson answers phone calls about shows he airs from those by militia groups to those about the health of our education system. Many of the callers are irate. The most calls Nelson ever received was from a show called "The Truth About Homosexuality" made by a conservative Christian group. "We don't get a lot of the middle-of-the-road people. We get mainly the extremists from both sides."

"I've played some shows I'd prefer not to play, but they met within the rules. As long as the show passes the guidelines under our community standards policy, I can't block a show. It doesn't matter if the show is about the Nazi party, they all have the First Amendment freedom of free speech."

Nelson said that in the future TCI is looking to set up a Cable Advisory Board to review programs submitted for broadcast. This board will make content decisions and see if programs pass all the guidelines under the community standards policy.

The biggest problem with some new programs wanting to air on the PAC is that they are actually disguised advertisements for companies. "It may look like a documentary or a 'how to' show, but through careful investigation it becomes clear that it's actually an advertisement," Nelson said.

So if you're interested in seeing something different on television other than the normal cookie-cutter, watered down, run-of-the-mill, thoughtless programming, turn it to channel 10. It may not change your life or enlighten you about deep philosophical questions, but hell, it's just television.

—Aaron Grey
Karl Horeis braves the electrical elements of Seattle's National Weather Service station, the modern day version of Grandpa's bones.

"Tonight we're expecting some low stuff in the strait, but nothing too far inland. If it does make it all the way in, somebody's gonna have to change this forecast!" Kirsten Willman smiles and hits the enter key at the aviation forecast terminal, sending the daily forecast package predictions to the radar, which beams the news to airports for hundreds of miles.

She finishes her package and scoots on her wheeled chair to a different terminal in the central operations area of the National Weather Service in Seattle. The operations area is a giant ring of computer terminals, radar, telephones, printers and other equipment. To one side is a wall-size window looking over Lake Washington, letting in the light of clear blue skies. "These are the old Ford Filcoe Aay-Saws, late '70s technology." She points to huge twin monitors made of shiny black plastic; working relics still used daily to predict the moody weather of the great Northwest.

Willman scoots from station to station, pointing out surface pressure maps, fog and stratus products, visible and infrared screens, the Doppler radar and the wind and temperature profilers. "Harry Wappler and Steve Pool both use this," Willman smiles again, pointing to the radar. "You've probably seen it on TV. It shows basic reflectivity and also gives wind direction and speed estimates."

The National Weather Service supplies weather predictions to most television and radio news stations, newspapers and airports. Funneled through the ring of 20 or so computers in the central operations area is a wealth of the most current news anywhere. Here one can watch the weather unfold as it happens, witness breaking news hours before newsmen hear it.

An aviation forecaster and two-year meteorology intern with the service, Willman prepares and sends weather predictions to area airports. She took time out of her afternoon shift to show how the service predicts the unpredictable, day after day, 365 days a year.
Willman explained the station’s use of computerized weather models constructed from trends over the years. Daily weather patterns are constructed and compared to these models and educated guesses are made as to how the weather will turn out. “We usually second-guess the models and do a fairly good job,” Willman said. The models provide a base prediction which can be modified as new data comes in from a wide range of monitoring equipment. Some of these sources are satellite photos, wind profilers, airports, ships at sea and radar devices. Radar like the Doppler are very sensitive. “The Doppler shows reflections of particles in the air, be they bugs, dust, songbirds or precipitation,” Willman said.

The Seattle station monitors all of Washington and some parts of surrounding states. They monitor offshore for 25 nautical miles, sharing the forecast for inland waters with Canada.

Meteorologists with the service have at least a degree in meteorology, often topped with a master’s or doctorate. “Extensive training continues after arrival,” Willman said. Her own internship, still unfinished after two years, delineates just how thorough that training is.

The station runs 24 hours a day, rotating workers regularly. “There are three overlapping ten-hour shifts,” Willman explained. “When I’m not here someone else uses my cubicle.” She described a terrible odor coming from her desk one afternoon when she came to work. “I found his tattered slippers under the desk and was just about to throw them out, but that’s when I found the jar of roasted garlic!”

The atmosphere is pretty laid-back at the weather service. “Yeah, the biggest problem we have here is the refrigerator—no one wants to clean it!” chuckled Craig, a forecaster on his dinner break, as he held a steaming bite of microwaved lasagna on his fork.

Willman was happy to introduce all of her colleagues. There was Doug the hydrologist, doing river forecasts and maintaining gauges. There was Dana from Portland, working fog and stratus products. The Science Operations Officer was Brad, a huge Sonics fan who organized season tickets for the crew to divide up. “Larry writes the public forecast,” Willman said, pointing at a man answering the telephone. The public forecast is sent to news and radio meteorologists who sometimes change what they receive. “They might have a degree in meteorology or have taken a class, that’s why the forecast varies so much from station to station,” she said.

In order to maintain their sanity during 24-hour days, workers at the weather service keep the mood humorous. Willman told the story of how she and Bob, a lead forecaster, passed a grape back and forth for over two years, starting with an ill-aimed shot at a garbage can in the cubicles. “His shot hit me right in the head. I ended up sending it to him in a jewelry box from Tucson, and he gave it back in the bowl of a potty-trainer at my baby shower this year,” she laughed out loud.
Willman walked down the alley of cubicles, each one decorated and equipped to its owner's own style for top performance during storms or other busy times at the weather station. There were Mariners posters and Ken Griffey Jr. screen savers, coffee makers on desks and awesome photos of electrical storms. One or two cubicles even had sleeping pads ready to be set up under the desk for crunch times that wouldn't allow for sleep at home. Across from the cubicles, the operations area computers, set low in the floor like the bridge of the USS Enterprise, worked silently away, a single red light with a note under it glaring on the back wall.

"There are only four or five of us here now, but sometimes there are more than 20 of us running around," Willman said. "Like during this year's winter snowstorm, this place was a madhouse!" She explained how the Doppler radar, used only in severe storms, showed reflections of precipitation moving quickly into Northwest Washington. "Then the calls went out to other workers that a major system was on its way," she said. "Soon we were racing to get packages out to airports across the state and monitoring river levels, trying to get the snow reports out to local stations." As the storm continued, more workers were called in. "Once the snow started coming down, it wasn't easy to get out of here. Some people spent several days in the office," she recalled, looking at a wild group picture hung by the door. "A lot more snow ended up coming down around here than we had predicted, but we continue to learn about prediction with each new storm or system."

When there is no raging storm to stay on top of, weather service workers keep busy doing write-ups on radar products, turning out newsletters, doing software training and updating, even maintaining a web page at www.seainfo.noaa.gov. The site offers beautiful color radar images and a sneak preview of coming weather systems.

As the sun began to sink low over Lake Washington, leaving most of the lake shimmering gold, Willman prepared to take her position again at the aviation forecast terminal. The giant ring of computer technology hummed and whizzed away, water vapor images and stratus products appeared and disappeared across screens, lights flashed and infrared photos faded in and out repeatedly, and that single red light shone like a beacon on the back wall. Outside, surrounded by shining amber grasses, the wind profiler sent silent pulses into the atmosphere. Technology ticked along as it had done without fail every hour of every day for years.

Willman called out from her terminal as I folded my notes and headed for the door, "It should be a little windier tonight. There are northerly winds... maybe a few degrees cooler." I headed down the hall past the burning red light and finally had a chance to read the sign, which was hand written with a smiley face on it. "If the red light shines, evacuate the building immediately!!!"
In all test subjects regular exposure had to be forcefully discontinued. Among the manifestations of the KLIPSUN Phenomenon seems to be the secretion of an addictive hormone in response to visual stimuli. If regular exposure is allowed to go unchecked, KLIPSUN-level stimulation soon overtakes the whole body, imbalancing bodily humors and sending the subject into a perpetual state of hyper-awareness.