

THE Wagnerian

Staten Island, N.Y.

Wagner College

March 19, 1999

It's finally here!

The long awaited Spiro Sports Center opens its doors

By DEBBIE LAHTI
Wagnerian Editor

Thousands of students, parents, and faculty crowded into the newly finished Spiro Sports Center on February 27 to celebrate its opening.

The center opened its door just in time to host the Northeast Conference basketball championships this winter, welcoming schools from all along the East Coast.

Before the game got underway, Wagner College honored its athletes. First, all athletes that showed academic excellence by getting on the Dean's List were announced. After that, the Seahawks honored all

the seniors on the men's basketball team.

School spirit boomed as President Norman Smith came center court to begin with the first official jump shot.

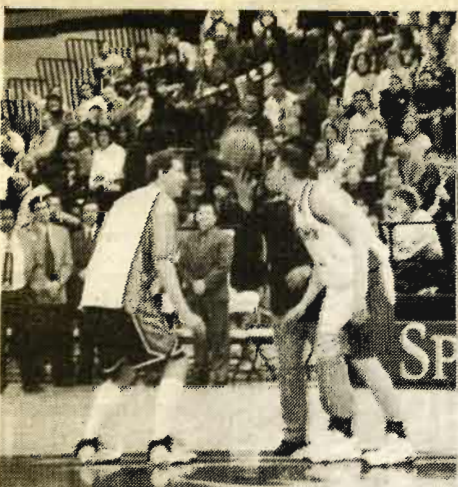
With the support of more than 2,000 spectators, the Seahawks went on to win the game 78-56.

A generous gift of Donald Spiro and other alumni, the new sports center is almost complete. The gym is currently the only section of the building being used for basketball practice.

It is expected that the new Olympic sized swimming pool and the aerobics and weight rooms will be open for students by April 15.



Men's defense working hard against FDU



President Smith at the tip off



Wagner's very own Seahawk



Wagner Athletics honor the seniors

Fox's "Party of Five" tackles domestic violence

Relationships between Ned and Julia mirror problems among teens and young adults nationwide

By MELISSA ROMAN
Wagnerian Staff Writer

Fox's hit drama, "Party of Five," airing Wednesdays at 9 p.m., recently tackled the issue of domestic violence. The show introduced viewers to the torrid relationship between Julia Salinger (played by Neve Campbell) and her boyfriend, Ned (played by newcomer Scott Bakula).

In a fit of rage prompted by his jealousy, Ned slaps Julia, and then surprisingly denies the act when she later confronts him. He subsequently admits to the violence, but prompts feelings of guilt in Julia by saying he hit her out of love for her and fear of losing her. She accepts the excuse, hides the violence from her friends and family, and remains in the relationship.

After an anniversary party in honor of the parents of Julia's former boyfriend, Justin, Ned once again strikes Julia, this time for having danced with Justin, even though he insisted she do so in front of everyone present. Again, Julia hides the violence, and denies it when suspicions arise.

Griffin, Julia's estranged husband,

is the only one who senses that something is amiss in her relationship. When Julia continuously denies that Ned is hitting her, Griffin takes matters into his own hands and beats Ned, an act that lands him in jail.

In previews for the upcoming episodes, Ned's ex-girlfriend, who might have been a victim of his abuse in the past, pays a visit to Julia's brothers, who will confront Ned despite Julia's admonitions that they leave her and Ned alone.

Relationship abuse is widespread problem

In the five seasons it has been on the air, "Party of Five" has taken on serious subjects concerning teens and young adults, including drug abuse,

pregnancy, death of parents, and mental health. The recent episodes on domestic violence are just as appropriate, especially since, according to New York City's website for family abuse, (www.ci.nyc.ny.us), relationship abuse is one of the fastest growing types of domestic abuse in our nation.

According to statistics listed in the website, as many as one-third of all high school- and college-age people experience violence in a relationship. In addition to physical violence, as many as 60 percent of teenagers have experienced some form of abuse in a dating relationship.

Please turn to Violence
Page Three

NEWS

The new Spiro Sports Center



Young fans cheer for Wagner



Women's team goes for the win



The crowd goes wild for the Seahawks



The women's team huddles to discuss plays

A letter from the SGA president

Well, the semester is already half over. I hope that everyone had an enjoyable spring break and is doing well on midterms. The "State of the School Address" presented on March 2 went well. We discussed many issues ranging from weekend food service to the technology problems in the residence halls. I would like to thank those students, faculty, staff and administration who attended to give their input on these very important issues. I assure you that action is being taken in an attempt to remedy each of your concerns.

In response to the survey in the last edition of the Wagnerian regarding the fall Learning Communities, I would like to thank all of the Freshmen who came forward and shared their insight on the new curriculum. While the reviews were extremely mixed, and represented only a small portion of the students who actually participated in the classes, the official statistics on the program were incredibly positive. Upon the start of the spring 1999 semester, the class of 2002 showed a 97% retention rate of students who returned for the second semester. This is just another small step in the right direction for Wagner College.

As April creeps up on us, I would like to offer a reminder to those students who are looking to get involved on campus. Now is the time when many leadership roles will be opening up on campus and the application processes will begin.

Interviewing for a job as a Peer Leader, the Coffeehouse manager, the yearbook editor, or as a Student Government officer can be a very fun and rewarding professional experience to make the most of your time here at Wagner (not to mention a great way to spice up your resume). If you would like more information or to pick up an application, stop by the Student Government Office in Wagner Union room 227.

Finally, the new Barnes and Noble Bookstore is just about near competition. The well-needed face-lift makes the bookstore more professional looking and consumer friendly. Drop me a note in Union 227 to let me know what you think!

Sincerely,
Dan Rice

NEWS

Expect the world from New York Times on the web

By KARA LAURENO
Wagnerian Staff Writer

The New York Times on the web (www.nytimes.com) provides academics, professionals, and the intellectually curious alike with cutting-edge journalism in a cutting-edge format.

Full of the same thought-provoking articles that grace its newsprint pages, www.nytimes.com offers a plethora of free information, guaranteed to please even the staunchest critics of the Internet. From the critically acclaimed Arts/Living section to the notable Book Review, the web site, not surprisingly, is as comprehensive as the paper itself. Viewers should note, however, that certain graphics that appear in the paper might not be included on the web site.

In addition to offering a complete gratis version of the daily paper, a 365-day archive is available where registered users of the site are encouraged to purchase out-of-date articles for a minimal fee. For \$2.50, charged to your major credit card, any article can be downloaded and used at your discretion. As an added impetus, your first 10 articles are free upon registration.

The site is updated every 10 minutes, an especially liked feature for Wall Street watchers, political soap opera junkies, and sports

fanatics who just need to know the score.

For those navigating novices, help is available for almost every service the web site offers. The site tour is especially useful for first-time users; it provides a complete introduction to the many components of the expansive web site. A site index provides an effective way to hasten your search for a particular section.

Aesthetically, www.nytimes.com is a relative masterpiece. Photographs, charts and maps are strategically placed to and emphasize certain

subject matter. The format is clear-cut and concise, free of much of the advertising clutter so prevalent on other web sites. In addition, varied fonts, font sizes and information boxes contribute to the visual appeal.

A unique aspect of the web site is a section called "New York Today." Chock-full of events and happenings for the day, the city guide highlights film releases, theatrical events, dance concerts and much more, even providing directions and a map, if necessary.

The web site also features a noteworthy learning network. Serving as an online-resource for students, teachers and parents, it targets sixth graders to high school seniors. Students can read news summaries and take daily news quizzes, teachers can obtain daily lesson plans and read about educational news, and parents are provided with discussion topics, ideas about learning at home, and educational product reviews.

The New York Times on the web is nothing short of magnificent. It is a polished, professional, and provocative online resource that truly embodies excellence in journalism.



The New York Times on the web can be reached at: www.nytimes.com

EASE OF NAVIGATION: ****

COVERAGE: *****

AESTHETICS: ****

TIMELINESS: *****

Ratings: * Poor
** Average
*** Good
**** Very Good
***** Excellent

Violence from Page One

Statistics particular to New York City are equally alarming. Of all reported domestic violence victims treated at New York City public hospitals, 10% are under the age of 20, and teenagers comprise approximately 8% of the total number of women killed in intimate partner homicides in New York City. The city's domestic violence hotline receives over 300 calls a month from teenagers involved in abusive relationships.

Domestic violence is not something that happens just once, or a problem

that will simply go away on its own. Victims of continuous abuse tend to believe they deserve being hit, and those feelings of guilt often stem from low self-esteem. The abuser goes from one extreme to the next, as Ned does, one minute being very kind and loving and the next verbally and physically injurious. This polarity can confuse the victim, making the abuse seem less serious than what it really is.

Help available to those in need

Aside from the website and an abuse hotline, the Commission of New York City has partnered with

public and private organizations to develop a comprehensive campaign to stop relationship abuse at a young age. The Teen Relationship Abuse Public Education Campaign includes a citywide public education initiative, the training of service providers who work with young people, and services for teenagers involved in abusive relationships. For more information, visit the city's website for domestic violence, www.ci.nyc.ny.us/html.

For anyone requiring immediate assistance, New York City has a domestic abuse hotline. Call 1-800-621-HOPE (1-800-621-4673) at any

time for help. Trained counselors are available 24 hours a day. They can provide immediate assistance, referrals to counseling and other domestic violence services in your neighborhood, information on domestic violence shelters, and answers to any questions you may have. If you or anyone you know is in immediate danger, call 911.

Relationship abuse is not a dead-end situation. There is help out there for those in need. If an abuser has hit once, it can happen again, and the next time the results might not be just a broken arm or leg . . . it might cost someone their life.

NYC DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS

- In one year, New York City's Domestic Violence Hotline received over 84,000 calls, averaging over 7,000 each month. (*Victim Services, Inc., New York, NY.*)
- Over 4,000 of the annual calls to the city's Domestic Violence Hotline were from teenagers. (*Victim Services, Inc., New York, NY.*)
- 10% of the identified domestic violence victims treated at New York City Public Hospitals are under the age of 20. (*New York City Department of Health, "1996 Domestic Violence Data Summary."*)
- 49% of all female homicide victims in New York City are killed in intimate partner or family homicides. Of these intimate partner homicides, teenagers comprise approximately 8% of the total victims. (*Wilt, Susan, Susan Illman and Maia Brodyfield, "Female Homicide Victims in New York City, 1990-1994," New York City Department of Health, 1996.*)
- It is estimated that as many as one-fourth of all women visiting hospital emergency rooms do so as a result of domestic violence, accounting for approximately \$77.5 million in emergency room costs annually in New York City. (*"The Cost of Domestic Violence," fact sheet produced by Victim Services, Inc., New York, NY.*)

If You Need Help... Call the Toll-Free Hotline 1-800-621-HOPE

Trained counselors are available 24 hours a day and can provide:

- Immediate assistance
- referrals to counseling and other domestic violence services in your neighborhood
- information on domestic violence shelters
- answers to any questions you may have

If you or anyone you know is in immediate danger, call 911.

LIFESTYLES

Graphic new book is not for the squeamish

Controversial author examines the practice of midwifery

By KRISTEN BARTELL
Wagnerian Staff Writer

"I used the word *vulva* as a child the way some kids said butt... or puke."

This first sentence of Chris Bohjalian's "Midwives" (included as part of Oprah's "esteemed" Book Club) exemplifies most of the material that lies in the following 373 pages. The narrator of the story, Connie Danforth, recounts the events of mother Sybil Danforth's trial as the midwife who was unlucky enough to lose a patient, yet save her fetus, in childbirth.

What the author has given life to here is a novel that offers explicit accounts of birthing and scattered mention of acid trips, pot smoking, and an almost one-sided argument promoting the unstable and even dangerous practice of midwifery.

From the start of the novel, the author clearly depicts the events of childbirth and human reproduction as beautiful and natural, messy and complicated. It takes a bit of time to get used to the blunt language Bohjalian uses to describe Sybil Danforth's experiences as a midwife, but the more that anatomically-queasy phrases are thrust in the face of the reader, the more he begins to sympathize with Sybil's "life calling."

Connie herself recalls her mother's insistence that she witness the act of childbirth at the young age of eight; Bohjalian seems to be asserting that if an eight-year-old can deal with the birthing process, the reader can follow suit.

The mess itself begins when Sybil is called to help patient Charlotte Fugett Bedford give birth to her second child in her home. The telling of this event in the novel is graphic to say the least, what with references to "blood spilling" and the female reproductive system likened to "damp pastry dough." But because Charlotte's death is referred to in the first pages of the book, Bohjalian prepares the reader for the gory account of child bearing gone wrong, and by the time the tragedy is shared (page 70 or so), the shock of it all has been scaled down a bit.

The remainder of the novel deals with the actions that are taken against Sybil following Charlotte Fugett Bedford's death, and her subsequent trial. This might have been dealt with a bit more smoothly by Bohjalian; it is unclear whether or not Connie herself is offering her account of the trial as the fourteen-year-old that she has been through its duration, or the thirty-something woman she is at present.

The presence of Sybil's fellow midwives that gather in court to support her is almost silly--mentions of breast feeding pop up every few pages, and eventually they get a bit fatuous.

Then there is the constant reminder of Sybil's odd person-- in the diary entries of Sybil that Bohjalian offers the reader at the beginning of every chapter, references to tripping on acid, war protesting and anything else deemed hippie-esque sum up her character. Perhaps Bohjalian tried to go for the peace and love approach to describe this "gentle" woman, but instead Sybil comes off as more of a naive child whose love for the "natural" interferes with her common sense.

And just when one might think the gruesome talk of bodies and organs begins to simmer down (this due to

the space devoted to trial preparation), once again, the reader is up to his own reproductive organs in "blood spurting" and "uterine tearing."

Aside from the squeamish factor, the novel pretty much does its job--if that job is to familiarize the reader with the process of childbirth, midwifery, and the dangerous consequences that come with both. But something truly important is missing here, perhaps due to the feminist slant that lingers throughout the pages, and that is the role of men.

Men play a totally supporting (and even that title is generous) role in the novel. They are responsible for making the babies and supporting the families, but there is no place for them in the book's essential patchwork.

Rand Danforth, husband and father, is loving but awkward; Connie recalls feeling as a young girl that her father "surely considered aborting" her. Steve Hasting, the "sexy" defense lawyer for the Danforths, brings home the "right" verdict, but isn't explored as deeply as he might be.

The most oddly-handled male figure here is Asa Bedford, husband of the deceased, minister, and now single father of two young boys. Why Bohjalian would not further explore Asa's point of view, or even write in a few pages of impromptu dialogue with Sybil or even young Connie is questionable.

By the same token, Bohjalian focuses so much on the Danforths that he seems to forget a trial is going on. He repeatedly fails to make an argument for the other side of the case, a side that may strike the cords of interest and sympathy due to the risks of midwifery and the somewhat "air-headish" description of the defendant. This is unfortunate for the

sake of the book's balance and flow.

What Bohjalian is quite on the mark with, and this may redeem the weaknesses of the novel, is his tendency to correlate Connie's budding womanhood and refusal to share her sexual explorations with Charlotte's death. Connie seems fast on her way to approaching love and physical experimentation until the accident; it is as if her mother's failure to sustain not only Charlotte's ability to produce life, but her womanhood, affects Connie's ability to grow in her own. Connie is more willing to share the details of her knowledge of Rand and Sybil's sexual relations than hers.

Basically, Connie's narration lacks a certain luster that one might expect from a book about baby-making and C-sections, but given the situation, this is understandable and entirely appropriate.

The fact that Sybil is acquitted is relieving, due to the amount of time the reader spends on her ordeal. But Bohjalian does not portray her as the hero; when the judge calls for introduction of Sybil's private diaries as evidence, an evasive Connie removes the pages inside that she feels might be incriminating.

One entry in particular is referred to quite a bit, and on the last page of the novel is finally shared. This is an incredibly odd tactic--it leaves the reader uneasy about Sybil's "innocence" and unsure of Bohjalian's motivation in the first place.

Perhaps Bohjalian wanted to expose the taboos that have always shrouded childbirth, and perhaps he wanted to share the story of a decent woman whose love for "catching babies" gave her a place in a world full of male dominance. Whatever the purpose, "Midwives" is unsteady and complicated, but entertaining--however, pregnant readers, beware.

The "Roadhouse" is the place for relaxation

By MATTHEW BISHOP
Wagnerian Staff Writer

At first glance you may not wander into the casual battered looking little restaurant called The Roadhouse, located on 1400 Clove Road, but that would be a loss. There is nothing fancy about the place and no frills come from the ambience, but that is part of what feels so relaxing.

The Roadhouse is dimly lit, walled with wood paneling and false bricks exposing the roughness that gives way to rustic comfort.

The main dining room holds a maximum of 60 people, the adjoining bar, the same. The small size of the restaurant helps to make you feel as

if you are away from the normal chaos of your day. Though the place was busy, our orders were taken within ten minutes.

The food came rather quickly, considering the amount of people that could be seen ordering before us.

The house red wine (\$3.50) was surprisingly good. I almost expected that the house wine from a place that looks so dank from the outside would taste too dry and almost turn to vinegar.

The appetizers were appealing. The complimentary breadbasket came with soft, hot, Italian bread to enjoy. Not one piece was stale or cold.

The tossed salad (\$3.75) had crisp, fresh iceberg lettuce, and the Italian dressing tasted like it was from a bottle, but it was a top brand name, for sure.

The entrees were excellent. A small

cheese pizza (\$7.50) was served steaming hot, with a crust, which was crispy and light and not burned at all. I generally do not eat my pizza crust, because most fast food pizzas have chewy crusts. I ate the Roadhouse pizza, crust and all.

The stuffed shells (\$8.00) were served with a rich filling of ricotta and Italian spices, and the red sauce was lush with fresh vegetables, like mushrooms and peppers.

A companion who has told many mouth-watering stories about her mother's homemade Italian meals even said about the shells, "That's really good! Even I'd get that."

A hamburger (\$3.25) came with macaroni salad, and dill pickles. It was a bit of a disappointment that steak fries (\$2.50) came separately. The burger was juicy and though it

was ordered medium, it was cooked well, with not too much pink on the inside. The fries left a lot to be desired, being very mushy in the center and having little taste and such a thick skin.

Desert was coffee and a Neapolitan ice cream slice (\$1.75). The coffee was from the bottom of a burnt pot, but the ice cream helped hide the taste of the bitter coffee. Even though the coffee was bad, we stayed to finish it up. The Roadhouse has an I-could-stay-here-all-night warmth to it.

Having such reasonable prices and such a close proximity to Wagner, the Roadhouse is an ideal place for students who are in need of a relaxing off-campus meal, or for a family who wants to go out for dinner, but does not want to go far from home.

OPINION

Going nowhere fast

A look at the MTA M60 bus route

By ERIC COHEN
Wagnerian Staff Writer

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority frequently brags on the radio that it's "going your way." In the case of the S60 bus, however, it's not going anywhere.

Anyone who commutes to Wagner College even occasionally knows the feeling. You're driving up Howard Avenue in a rush to get to your class, and crawling along in front of you is the *U.S.S. Constitution* with an MTA logo and a number on the back. Your speedometer indicates a fast-enough-to-burn-pavement-off-the-road seven miles an hour and evil thoughts are entering your mind. A half hour later, you arrive at Wagner, ready to raise hell with anyone.

If you've ever seen this bus pass by, you'll notice it never has more than one passenger on it—*ever*. Have you ever wondered where it goes? One

day, I found out the answer.

It goes nowhere.

The S60 was designed to be a "shuttle" between the College of Staten Island, Wagner College, and St. John's up the road. There's only one problem with this: CSI moved a few years ago, but the bus route didn't. The S60 takes you down to Clove Road, turns, goes to Victory Boulevard, then swings back around to a college that no longer exists. What use does this serve us, or anyone else for that matter? None. About the only way the S60 is useful is if you want to go down to Miggy's at the bottom of the hill, and don't particularly want to walk. But you'd better shop fast, or else you'll miss the bus coming back and you'll have to walk anyway. Unless, of course, you like waiting forty minutes for a bus.

But the infrequent service of the S60 during the day and the non-existent service at night and on weekends doesn't matter anyway to those who actually want to go farther than Victory Boulevard. Very few people I know ever have a need to go to St. John's for anything, and *nobody* needs to go to a retired college campus. If the MTA wants people to ride the bus—the route was in danger of being eliminated at least



twice this decade—then it darn well should go somewhere people want to go.

How about the ferry? Wagner students go into the city all the time and at all hours. Instead of turning up Arlo Road and circling back for more non-existent passengers, the bus could very easily be extended to travel to the St. George ferry terminal—especially if it means more fares for the MTA. Even people who have cars rarely drive to the ferry if it can be avoided; there's no parking there at all, even on weekends and off-hours. Right now, getting a bus to the ferry requires a fifteen-minute walk down Howard

Avenue and across Highland Street to the S61, S62 or S66 on Victory. The walk down there isn't too bad, but the walk back up is a test of your endurance. What if you have a bad leg?

Then you're stuck getting a S60 on Clove Road—if it ever comes. By the time it gets up that hill, you might as well hoof it. Of course, Wagner could always extend the hours of the shuttle bus into the morning and afternoon to accommodate people such as myself, who have classes four nights a week. But until that happens, we're stuck with a bus that goes in a perpetual circle to nowhere.

THE WAGNERIAN

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- ✧ Shape Your Campus Community
- ✧ Impact the Future of Your School
- ✧ Meet New People

As a Student Ambassador, you will represent Wagner to prospective students, giving tours, hosting, and being a student guide at Campus Visit Days.

Contact Victoria Hopwood or Vincent Sadowski in the Admissions Office, 390-3411. Please feel free to drop by Admissions to pick up an application.

OPINION

Religion: The motivation behind belief

Where does one search to find God?

By ANDREW HEPKINS
Wagnerian Staff Writer

Recently, I watched students and faculty walk around with ashy black crosses on their foreheads. As I observed these people, a few thoughts came to my mind. First, that it was Ash Wednesday. Secondly, that I was born on Ash Wednesday roughly two decades ago. And then—profound thoughts of religion slowly entered by mind.

As I continued to watch these marked people come and go, I couldn't help but imagine millions of people in every nation caught up in various different religious institutions. I started to assess my own spirituality. I finally considered myself to be a spiritual person with a strong belief in a Divine Creator, but I am in no way a religious person for many reasons. In fact, to put it very concisely—I don't like religion.

As a child, I always believed in God, perhaps primarily because I came from a very religious Christian (Baptist) family.

As I grew however, my faith in God dwindled significantly. As I matured

both physically and intellectually, the notion of God seemed more and more fantastic and absurd. Simultaneously, my life flew rapidly toward attractive earthly pleasures and new, different dimensions of thought.

But inwardly, I hungered for spiritual truth and knowledge. I yearned for erudition, wisdom, and enlightenment the way wild animals yearn for sustenance. Somehow, I always knew that there was more to life than what I saw with my eyes. I knew that there had to be a purpose for man's existence. I wanted to know if there was in fact—a God. And sure enough, certain personal experiences rekindled my belief in a Divine Creator.

But where does one continue his or her search for God? There are so many religions that preach slightly different messages in the name of "God". "Who's right and who's wrong?" I wondered, "...Should I simply choose a religion or denomination and adhere to its doctrine and practice?" No, I wouldn't allow myself to conform to another convocation of men.

Instead, I tried to erase everything I've been taught and start over with a child's sentience, but with an adult intellect. And so, I studied the teachings of several religions and their histories. In my studies, I found many similarities in the dogma of several religions, but what intrigued me were the differences. I asked myself, "Why were a number of religions so alike in principle, but very

different in many other ways?" Further studies have led me to believe what I do now.

I believe in the one God who made himself known to various people throughout world history. I feel that he continues to make himself known to people who search for him earnestly, but probably remains fictitious and mythical to those who do not.

I also believe that the Jews, Christians and Muslims worship and adhere to the doctrine of the same God. These three religions hold a lot of the same history and foundations in common. Allah and Yahweh are not different Gods with slightly different messages, they are different earthly names for the same God who inspired and appointed men like Abraham and Moses, Muhammad, and John the Baptist.

So if we agree for argument sake, that there is one real God, where did all the discrepancies come from? Well, they came from us. We must realize that God did not create religion—we did. Man's varying interpretations of divine messages created religions, sects and denominations. And so, because religion is man made, they are only partly good because of the spiritual doctrine entailed, but organized religion is also responsible for a world of bad.

Like race, gender and class, religion has been another form of separation among people throughout history. Religion has also been the cause of war and many other terrible occurrences.

People have used religion or religious authority to do the most nefarious things. It has been written that even Satan quoted scripture when necessary.

When people cling to a religion, some people get lost in the traditions, and institutions. When this happens things are no longer done with spiritual conviction, but through religious obligation.

I remember in grade school, I was able to recite the entire Mass (of the Catholic Church) by heart. I used to like to say what the priest was going to say before he said it, until one of my teachers dealt with me. In retrospect, I realize that I wasn't alone in my irreverence; the minds of most of the children and the adults were somewhere else. It was almost comparable to jury duty; out of obligation people did their time and left.

I feel that churches of all religions should be more universal. Also, they should focus more on studying the holy doctrine and open discussions. Spirituality gets lost in repetition and institutions. We need to realize the negative consequences and dangers of organized religions. Religion and politics go hand and hand very often, especially in the Middle East and Africa.

So I guess if I had to categorize myself, I'd be an Islamic Protestant Christian with no denomination. And maybe I'll get ashes next year, bread on Passover, or make a pilgrimage to Mecca one day. I guess the important thing would be my reasons or motives behind it.

Examining the lure of the Jerry Springer Show

By GAVIN FERGUSON
Wagnerian Staff Writer

Well, Valentine's Day passed... again. I'm sure that the romantic juices are already starting to flow, but, now a day, where does one turn to romance in this world of organized chaos? Well, I'll tell you one thing, you won't find it on the *Jerry Springer Show*.

If you haven't seen this show, it's like the basic television version of *Ultimate Fighting*. Everyday, Jerry Springer digs up the most disgusting, uncouth, foulmouthed, ignorant people and puts them on his panel.

This may just be me, but I can't understand a filthy word those degenerates on that show are saying. It's not just that show, but others as well. They use words like "phat" and the word "yo" as a noun, pronoun and object of the preposition. I don't think I could even do that. They also speak in some sort of "beep" language.

Since swear words appear to be the majority of what the guests speak, half of what is said is those beeps. You can't understand what the argument is about unless you read the caption under their names. On a normal show that would be annoying, but not on a show like this one. The most important thing is the fighting, and I mean that FIGHT!

The best part is that Jerry does it on purpose. He had one guest who was around 35, and he cheated on his wife with a fifteen-year-old girl, who is now pregnant. Now Jerry talks to them and makes them verbally relive everything

that happened in their relationship, in all it's Anne Rice-sex novel glory. While doing this, they mic the soundproof closet where the wife is waiting, so she can hear every word being said. They also stick a camera down her throat so America can see every reaction and try to guess what swear words she's saying to herself.

When the time is right, they let the wife out of her pen and let her go, charging onto the stage. She gallops on stage and goes right over to the husband, who is sitting calmly and starts to beat on his prepubescent, yet pregnant, Jerry Lee Lewis girlfriend, who, keep in mind, is PREGNANT! This was not a sissy, girlie fight either. It was nothing short of a whirlwind, hair-pulling, slapping, biting, beeping and kicking. It was one of the most horrible things I've ever seen...and I LOVED IT!

That's what's great about this show. You don't have to know what it's about at all. You can turn it on in the middle of the program and see two disheveled souls savagely beating on each other and still feel entertained. Beyond entertained, you feel complete. Beyond complete, you feel the need to call your friends and tell them to watch it!

I don't know if any of you saw the episode with the couple who weighed a combined 1200-lb or not, but if you didn't it was disgusting. It was an interview with a woman who weighed 400-lb that was married to a man that weighed 800-lbs. This had to be the most disgusting thing I've ever seen. The man, who is now bedridden, was lying in bed with NO CLOTHES ON!

I must have gotten about five calls that day from friends and relatives saying, "Gavin, are you watching this?" What other show has that effect on people?

You'll never see a guy call another guy and say, "Dude, turn on Oprah, it's an excellent special on Leonardo DiCaprio and his battle with being a skinny, crappy actor."

So, needless to say, I turned it on and it was just as they showed clips of his wife rolling him over in the bed to change the sheets then give him a sponge bath. That was the point when I realized that this show is like the nature channel. It's hypnotic. You watch it and you can't figure out why.

Another reason I watch it is for the comedic affect of the people in the audience. They're dumber than the people on the panel Jerry always has a segment where the audience members can stand up and ask grammatically correct and polite questions to the panel. Who are you kidding? They scream, swear and sometimes even pick fights with them as well. Great idea there, Jerry. What the hell were you thinking?

However, just like the guests, the audience members don't make much sense either. There was an episode titled "I have a Secret" that was about people telling their loved ones secrets about themselves that I don't think anyone should know about.

During the audience participation a man stood up and said, "Ah...to you on the end (pointing to the closet transvestite cheating on his brother with another sibling)...all I have to say...is...yo! And you (pointing to the gothic, KKK member, stay-at-home-mom that's running a brothel) you're...you're just messed...woah!"

It was like watching a monkey try to put a square peg in a round hole. It was frustrating because it looked like he was trying so hard to make sense and speak...um...English...yo. Most of the time,

what they say isn't important anyway, just as long as it sparks a second round of hardcore violence.

But to show you that Jerry isn't all trash, he has the funniest part of the show at the end. It's called "Springer's Final Thought". This is Jerry trying to take whatever the arguing was about that day and talks about it a calm fashion, like a counselor. I call this the "Oh no, we still have two more minutes of airtime to fill" speech.

The reason why this is so funny though is because Jerry talks like this show actually has some redeemable quality to it. Basically it's a form of self-help. If you're ever feeling down, just watch this show and realize how bad your life ISN'T

You may have been asking yourself, "Gavin, what does this have to do with Valentine's Day?" My response to this is absolutely nothing. So, here's "Ferguson's Final Thought."

In times like these when we can see a man get hit in the crotch with a bat and think it's family programming, and our president is teaching our younger siblings about sex, it's good to know that we still have media saviors like Jerry Springer to lead us out of the trash that has turned into television and into the light of morality and spiritual leadership.

Who am I kidding? *The Jerry Springer Show* is full of nothing but sex and violence and we all love to watch it. So while you're waiting for the episode where the bisexual Eskimo confronts his long lost alcoholic father that ran off with brother's marmoset (which might be next week's topic), curl up with your loved one next Valentine's Day and watch the romantic film "Too Hot for TV: Uncensored Jerry Springer Shows." What more could you want of a "beep"ing show?

ENTERTAINMENT

Indie Band offers a lot of flavorful music

"The Samples"
give a variety of
sounds for every
body's taste

By MARIAN FUSCO
Wagnerian Staff Writer

With influences like "The Police" and Neil Young, along with combining reggae, jazz and ska, "The Samples," deliver a melodic potpourri of sounds on their newest album, "Here and Somewhere Else."

These veteran touring junkies, first came together when Sean Kelly (guitar, vocals) and Andy Sheldon (bass, vocals), the band's founding fathers, played guitar together in Burlington, Vermont.

After moving to Boulder, Colorado, "The Samples," whose name was created during the time the band was living off of free food samples, played their first gig on Easter Sunday in 1987.

Their recent release, "Here and Somewhere Else," is a beautiful blending of words and instrumentals that are almost poetic.

The first track on the disc, "We All Move On," is a suitable opener with all the band has been through over



The Samples

the last decade.

After working under two major labels, Arista and MCA, the band decided to return to their Indie origins with W.A.R. (What Are Records?), which "better suited their needs."

Kelly's upbeat, positive attitude shines through in the very first line,

"I believe in a better land," which shows his and the band's perseverance throughout their career.

The entire album is filled with ear-candy, but "Anymore," offering introspective to relationships and "Little People," a lullaby about childhood and innocence, are among my top picks.

Don't be swayed by this band's non-mainstream status, because often bigger isn't always better.

"The Samples" combine various sounds suited to anyone's tastes and they don't skimp on quality either. They love what they do and it shows. And that should be reason enough to give them a try.

Bad guys just can't look good in "Payback"

By CHAITRA SANDERS
Wagnerian Staff Writer

Explosions. Car wrecks. Gun fights. Even the action can't make the bad guys look good in "Payback."

Set in a world of professional thieves, crooked cops, prostitutes, Chinese gangsters and criminal organizations, "Payback" tries to make a hero out of the bad guy, who is charming enough to love.

Mel Gibson portrays Porter, a professional thief betrayed by his wife, Lynn (Deborah Kara Unger), and his sleazy partner, Val Resnick (Gregg Henry), who steal his share of a heist from some Chinese gangsters, shoot him, and leave him for dead. Porter, though, recovers quickly and sets out to obtain his share of the money with vengeance on his mind.

What starts out as a revenge plot against Val turns into a head-on collision with the Outfit, a crime organization Val used the heist money to join. Two bad cops, played by Bill Duke and Jack Conley, a drug dealer and another Chinese gang are thrown into the mix to make Porter's

job a little bit harder.

With all these people on his tail, it's hard to believe that all he's chasing down is a measly \$70,000, which constantly gets mistaken for more as a running joke on how little the amount is.

Brian Helgeland, writer of the critically acclaimed "L.A. Confidential," takes on the role of director in this plotless adaptation of "The Hunter," a novel by Richard Stark, aka Donald Westlake, which had been remade into a movie called "Point Blank." Helgeland relies on the likable characteristics of Gibson, with whom he's worked before on "Conspiracy Theory," to keep Porter on the favorable side of the audience, since the movie lacks the traditional good guy most action films depend upon.

Whether he's ripping the nosering from the face of his drug-addicted wife's delivery guy, stopping at nothing to protect the prostitute he loves, or just carrying around a gun-wounded pup, Porter's tough-as-nails exterior lets some of Gibson's usual good-guy persona seep through.

With quick one-liners and witty, foul-mouthed remarks, most of "Payback" is saved by comic relief. Henry's Val can hardly speak a



Mel Gibson as Porter in "Payback"

sentence without using some vulgar language. But after awhile, he runs out of vocabulary. While the gumshoe-like narrative is unnecessary, it contains most of the punchlines, making sense only when they tie into the scene taking place.

A good joke might be funny once, maybe even twice. But after you start using it over and over, the joke gets kind of old. The first time Val gets beat up by Pearl the dominatrix, played by Lucy Alexis Liu of "Ally McBeal," it's hilarious. The second time, Porter lets her take over the beating he's giving Val and it's still

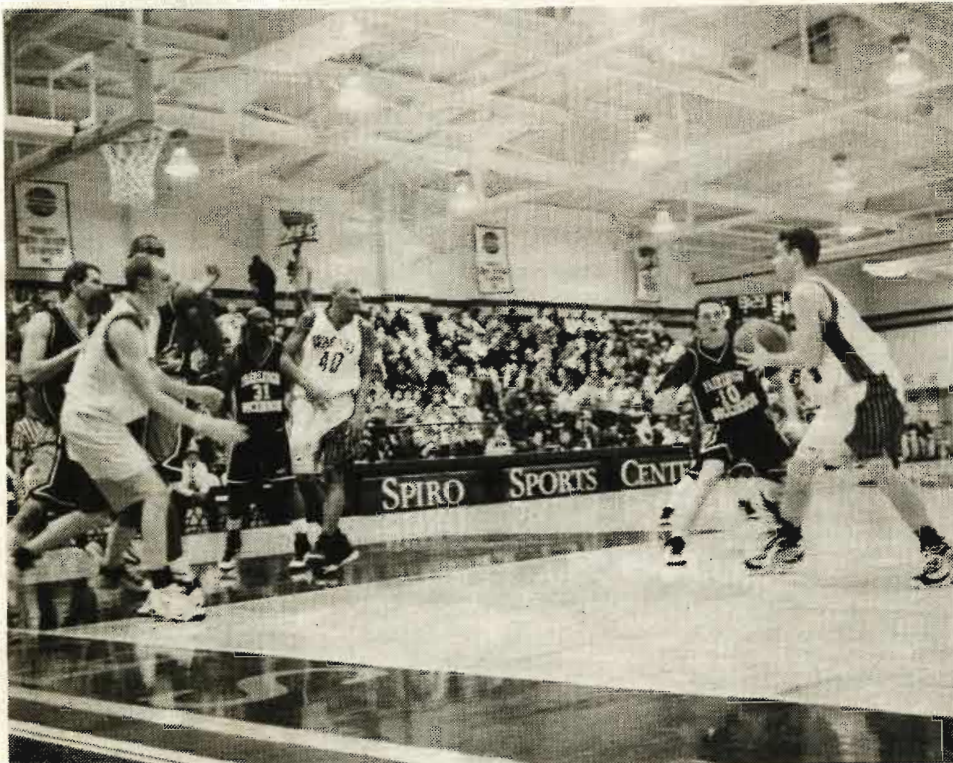
funny. But then she just keeps sadistically pulverizing men and the laughs are gone.

With too many characters, a pointless plot and an unbelievable bad guy, "Payback" should pay back everyone who shells out eight dollars to see this movie filled with one-minute half-packed action thrills.

<p>Payback Mel Gibson, Gregg Henry Paramount Rated R 107 minutes At Theaters Everywhere</p>

SPORTS

Wagner beats Fairleigh Dickinson for chance at NEC



DeBlasi goes for a pass to a teammate

By JASON BOCK
Wagnerian Staff Writer

February 20th wasn't only the first game at the new Spiro Sports and Recreation Center, but the most important game of the year for Wagner College.

The Seahawks Men basketball team needed a win coupled with a St. Francis loss to join the top teams of the conference in the Northeast Conference Tournament.

The 2,224 in attendance erupted late in the second half. Wagner was adding to its already comfortable lead when it was announced that St. Francis had fallen to Robert Morris. The guarantee of a trip to the NEC Tournament was mere minutes away.

The Seahawks went on to win the game 78-56. Wagner had led by as many as 29 at two different points in the second half.

Franz Pierre Louis set the tone for the game on the first position with

one of his game high 8 steals. On the ensuing fast break he slammed home two of his game high 20 points. His three blocks and eight rebounds also led the way.

Another big scorer for the Seahawks was Frank DeBlasi with 19. DeBlasi was three for three from 3-point range and eight for eight from the foul line. He ended the season at 95 percent from the charity stripe. This near perfect efficiency was the highest among all players in Division I basketball this year.

Wagner's 49 percent field goal shooting greatly contributed to the team's big win.

After the game now former coach Tim Capstraw commented on how the "crowd made a big difference...they wouldn't let you hang." As for FDU, Wagner "did what other teams couldn't do; take them out of their stuff."

Wagner entered the NEC Tournament with high hopes.

Intramurals Update: 5 on 5 basketball

A Wagnerian Special Report

In game six, Team Thumpa defeated Sospechosos Habituales 43-35. Rich Stoner lead team Thumpa with 13 points, while Matt Pascarelli led Sospechosos Habituales with 13 points. Team Thumpa improved to 5-1, while Sospechosos Habituales falls to 4-2.

Staff Infection defeated Chocolate Starfish 63-29. Tom Marchese led Staff Infection with 18 points, while Jason Bardol led Chocolate Starfish with 6 points. Staff Infection improved to 4-1, while Chocolate Starfish falls to 0-4.

Affirmative Action forfeited a win to Sexexecutioners. Affirmative Action falls to 2-4, while Sexexecutioners improved to 4-1.

D.M.K. defeated Dream Team 71-29. Jason Roberts led D.M.K. with 24 points, while Anthony Russo led Dream Team with 9 points. D.M.K. improved to 4-2, while Dream Team falls to 0-6.

Staff Infection defeated Chocolate Starfish 70-27. Matt Coats led Staff Infection with 17 points, while Matt Powers led Chocolate Starfish with 10 points. Staff Infection improved to 5-1, while Chocolate Starfish falls to 0-5.

Chocolate Starfish forfeited a win to Sexexecutioners. Sexexecutioners improve to 5-1, while Chocolate Starfish falls to 0-6.

Wagner team places in top six in Schick Super Hoops

By JASON SCHOLZ
Special to the Wagnerian

An all-star squad consisting of Bobby Hopson, Aaron Smith, Matt Pascarelli and Jason LaBar placed in the top six at the Schick Super Hoops Regional Tournament at the University of Maryland on February 20-21.

52 teams from the mid-Atlantic region squared off in a pool play tournament to determine the top 16 teams who would advance to the single elimination tournament.

Wagner opened up against the University of Maryland - Baltimore County (UMBC) and got out to a 28-0 halftime lead. After the half it was smooth sailing as Wagner went to win 52-12.

In the second game, Wagner faced a tough C.W. Post team who was much bigger, but played tight to a 14-10 halftime deficit. The game was marked by controversy, however, as the official scorer gave C.W. Post two of Wagner's points to put Post ahead by four, instead of two at the half.

The second half was marked by great play on both sides, but Post prevailed by two points as Wagner's tying shot, with five seconds left, was off the mark.

In the third game, to close out pool play, Wagner came out strong against N.C. State and won by 12 points to finish 2-1, and have a spot

in the single elimination tournament. This game was marked by great team play as N.C. State was much bigger, but couldn't contain our players.

In the opening round of the single elimination tournament, Wagner played East Carolina University (ECU), a tough opponent, who mirrored Wagner's makeup, but outlasted them and won by seven points to advance to the quarter finals against Towson State University. The game was marked by great team defenses, as Wagner shut down E.C.U in the final minutes.

In the quarterfinals Wagner came out flat, going down 12-2, but rallied late in the half to a four-point deficit at the half. The second half was marked by streaks, first a cold one, as Wagner went down by 10 points again. Then a hot streak, as Wagner rallied to a two-point deficit, then a cold streak as the game ended with Wagner losing by seven points and eliminating them from the tournament.

Looking back on the weekend, it was a great experience and a lot of fun for the team. One regret, however, is that the tournament wasn't played with three pointers, Wagner's strength. If there were a three-point line, Wagner would have had a chance at winning it all, since the size difference wouldn't have mattered as much. Between Bobby Hopson and Matt Pascarelli, Wagner had two of the top long distance shooters in the tournament.

March Madness comes to Wagner

By JASON BOCK
Wagnerian Staff Writer

March Madness hit Staten Island in a big way when the Northeast Conference Tournament came to the Spiro Sports and Recreation Center.

Wagner opened its doors to March Madness when the Seahawks welcomed Fairleigh Dickinson University. All that was at stake, was a trip to the most intense and coveted tournament in college basketball.

With their win in the home opener Wagner secured their spot in the tournament and a shot at top-ranked UMBC. Earlier in the season Wagner came within 4 points of the NEC's top team in Baltimore.

Wagner could never gain control of UMBC. They fell in the first round of the tournament to the top seed.

The tournament did see an upset of the first seed though. The fifth seed, Mount St. Mary's, emerged from the tournament as the NEC champion.

They went on to lose in the first round of the NCAA Tournament to the top seed in the Midwest, Michigan State.

The NEC has the longest current losing streak in the NCAA Tournament. It is presently at 15 in a row.