

## Grade inflation at U. of Kentucky Board of Trustees easier “A” than Mayer’s ENG 101 class

By Danny Mayer

On Tuesday, September 15, the *Lexington Herald Leader’s* Karla Ward informed area readers that UK CEO Lee Todd turned down a performance bonus valued at \$168,000.00.

This news has drawn a number of responses, most confidently agreeing that yes, CEO Todd correctly refused the money. In the words of the *Herald Leader*, taking the bonus this year would be an “insensitive and disrespectful” act. About the only group in disagreement with the decision are the

Board of Trustees who voted him the bonus to begin with. According to the sentiments of trustee James Stuckert, CEO Todd’s salary is, if anything, too small. Stuckert felt that a “CEO” of a “\$2.4 billion entity” should be making much, much more—not less.

Todd’s public comments have been both tactful and whiny. On the one hand, Todd has acknowledged that he is “simply not comfortable accepting the performance award at a time when every department on campus is dealing with severe budget restrictions.” On the other, he has complained about getting

harassed in the media for accepting his 2008 bonus, which of course makes his current “generosity” come off less as sincere and more as (corporate) image control. He is, after all, a CEO.

Now, before I go any further, let me here say that I don’t think CEO Todd ought to have received the extra money, mostly because I think his base salary is also greatly inflated. Todd’s salary has spiked as he and the University have ratcheted up the pressure to achieve “Top 20” status. Since I do not agree that the University of Kentucky needs to bankrupt itself and

skyrocket tuition to be recognized as a Top 20 university, I find CEO Todd’s salary *already* inflated. Forget the bonuses, I’d love to have a debate on how Todd merits his current *base* salary.

This base salary amounts to \$350,000.00, a figure which includes a \$50,000.00 paycheck for work with the UK Athletic Association. That yearly income already places him in the top 2% of wage earners in the United States. I imagine he’s in even

*continued on page 9*

## Sheehan visits Lex “We have to be as against the war as our leaders are for it.”

By Beth Connors-Manke

Unfortunately, as I followed anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan around Lexington last Saturday, I didn’t get a chance to ask her my most burning question:

How often do she and George F. Will agree?

The question was pertinent because Will, a conservative columnist for *The Washington Post*, had recently criticized American involvement in Afghanistan, titling his September 1 missive, “Time to Get Out of Afghanistan.” Painting a bleak picture of the ability of the U.S. to win the offensive in Afghanistan, Will suggested that if we continue with ground troops, we will be squandering the valor (i.e. the lives) of our soldiers.

Will proposed that “instead, forces should be substantially reduced to serve a comprehensively revised policy: America should do only what can be done from offshore, using intelligence, drones, cruise missiles, airstrikes and small, potent Special Forces units, concentrating on the porous 1,500-mile border with Pakistan, a nation that actually matters.”

That suggestion is where I’m guessing Sheehan and Will would part ways again. If audience members got one message from Sheehan on Saturday, it was that we needed to end the war in Afghanistan, not extend it by hiding behind our Predator Drones, dropping bombs from unmanned aircraft.

Sheehan, known to many as the “Peace Mom,” gained notoriety as one of the leading voices of the protest against U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan after her son Casey was killed in Iraq. Though it ranges much wider, Sheehan’s critique of the war is rooted in the intimate pain of losing a son to it.

In the spring of 2004, Sheehan’s eldest son Casey, a Specialist in the U.S. Army, died on a mission in Sadr City, Iraq. Like other families who had lost a loved one to the war, Sheehan was invited several months after Casey’s death to meet with then-president George W. Bush. The unsatisfactory meeting with Bush spurred Sheehan to direct her energies toward ending the war and holding our elected officials accountable for their illegal actions in invading Iraq and Afghanistan.

The next summer, Sheehan followed Bush on one of his many vacations to his ranch in Crawford, Texas. In a ditch nearby, Sheehan set up camp and asked to meet with the president. She wanted to know for what “noble

cause” her son had died. What ensued came to be called “Camp Casey”: for 26 days the media followed Sheehan while she demanded an audience with President Bush, who refused to meet with the Peace Mom.

### Not a just war

In the years since Camp Casey, Sheehan has continued her cross-country anti-war touring, founded the Gold Star Families for Peace, given testimony during the investigation of the Downing Street Minutes in 2005, written several books, and in 2008 challenged Nancy Pelosi for her Congressional seat.

Sheehan’s beef with Pelosi? That the Congresswoman had tabled the issue of impeaching then-President Bush.

Sheehan’s continued work in the peace movement has led her to question some Democrats’ former anti-war sentiments. Disappointed by Democrats’ willingness to follow Bush-era war policies as long as they have an Obama face on them, Sheehan believes that the “Left anti-war movement has stepped down.” In her talks given at the Unitarian Universalist Church and Transylvania University over the weekend, Sheehan mused, “Did we have an anti-Bush movement rather than an anti-war movement?”

It would seem so. It would also seem that some Obama supporters campaigned under the illusion that as president Obama would be a peace president. What we now see clearly is a White House that has been working to prepare the public and Congress for more extensive involvement in Afghanistan. On September 15, Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the nation’s top military officer, told Congress that the war in Afghanistan would need more troops and more time. While Mullen did not ask explicitly for more troops, there have been not-so-quiet murmurs recently that the request is in the pipeline.

What would that mean to Sheehan? More babies dying in our attacks, more soldiers going to war. More lives lost all around. During her talk at Transy, Sheehan asked the audience to give a show of hands. First she queried, “How many of you know someone serving in Iraq?” Hands went up. “How many of you know someone serving in Afghanistan?” More hands went up. “How many of you know someone who has been killed in the war?” Hands went up again. Sheehan



Cindy Sheehan responds cheerfully to an audience member’s question during a forum at Transylvania University.

paused, seeming to have lost the thread of her talk. “I hadn’t expected that,” she admitted. It was an honest moment showing how the reality of the war still affects the seasoned activist.

Despite how thoroughly political Sheehan’s activism is, it became clear during the course of her Lexington visit that the Peace Mom’s involvement is still a personal one. And by personal, I do not just mean grounded in the

loss of her son. Her anti-war crusade really seems to be about caring about people and a strong, unwavering moral opposition to U.S. policies that cheat people of their lives through bombs or exploitation. Noting the recently growing number of attacks from the Left because she has dared to criticize President Obama’s policies, Sheehan

*continued on page 3*

## Building a queer Lexington Queer Control Records showcase at Al’s Bar

By Jack Cofer

As a non-native Lexingtonian, I have done what many others have done over the years and settled in this small city hailing itself as the “Horse Capitol of the World.” If you would have told me ten years ago that I would end up here, I would have told you to get your head checked. However, this small city has burrowed itself into my heart with its hospitality and ever-growing progress toward positive change. It’s easy to find your people here, and from what I’ve seen, people are organizing more and more around the things they care about.

For me, I have found there is a growing population of GLBTIQQA (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Questioning and Allied) individuals and, what’s more, we’re uniting and working together on ways to improve where we live. Just three years ago our annual PRIDE event was being held on a private farm, away from the city—and away from potential discrimination. In 2008, however, Lexington made history when the GLSO (Gay and Lesbian Service Organization) not only put on their first ever PRIDE Festival downtown at Cheapside Park, but also exceeded their estimated attendance of 3,000 people.

As “out” local musicians, my partner and I were asked to play the

event—an invitation we were more than honored to accept. Between the overwhelming amount of sponsors and businesses who contributed and the overwhelming attendance, it was there that I realized the full potential of this specific community. And by bringing out all walks of GLBTIQQA people, I was reminded just how many different ways one can fit into the “alphabet soup.”

It is important to note that not all GLBTIQQA people are the same; the very length of the acronym illustrates this. Despite that reality, the heterosexual community often makes sweeping generalizations about us, overlooking the divisions of race, gender, ethnicity and especially class that are alive and well within our—and every—community. This is obvious to me whenever I go to the popular gay bars and every face I see is white, or when fundraisers for GLBTIQQA charities cost more to attend than I could ever afford, or by the fact that most of my lesbian friends have a story about some gay guy flexing his male privilege at her.

While I loved seeing the success of the PRIDE Festival, what I want to see even more is a true community of queers in this city. What I mean is that, for all intents and purposes, Lexington doesn’t have an actual “queer” community: there are a handful of people who identify as

*continued on page 5*

## Contents

### 2 — The Neighborhood

*The basil economy*  
*Strong Women opens*  
*Duncan Park celebrations*

### 4 — Culure

*Boomslang: everything*  
*you need to know*  
*Other media at Boomslang*

### 6 — Sports

*Sports and patriotism*  
*Tebow almighty*

### 8 — Comics

*Dewburger*  
*I’m Not From Here*

### 9 — Opinion

*Wall Street healthcare*

## In the next issue

*A report from the G-20*

*Mayer on music and community*

*Reid on healthcare*



# The Neighborhood

*North of Center* is a periodical, a place, and a perspective. Keep reading to find out what that means.

**Editor & Publisher**  
Danny Mayer

**Features**  
Beth Connors-Manke

**Film & Media**  
Colleen Glenn

**Culture**  
Nick Kidd

**Sports, Layout**  
Keith Halladay

**Contributors**  
Andrew Battista  
Michael Benton  
Brian Connors-Manke  
A.G. Greebs  
John P. Lackey  
Troy Lyle  
Trevor Tremaine

Please address correspondence, including advertising inquiries and letters to the editor, to:

**noceditors@yahoo.com.**

Unless otherwise noted, all material copyright © 2009 North of Center, LLC.

Send *submissions* to *Danny Mayer* or *Keith Halladay* at *noceditors@yahoo.com*.

## Building a basil economy

### Grabbing rock and stacking stone

By Danny Mayer

It's hard to reckon the precise tonnage of rock that I have gathered from the inner bluegrass region these past four years. I have no scales, so instead I tend to measure such things in minor back aches and fall fires around rock fire-pits.

But irrespective of the precise number, here's what that tonnage has built in Lexington: four small guerilla gardens atop drainage ditches and astride fences in places like the Rupp Arena parking lot (all of which are waiting to be re-inhabited); two separate rock walkways (approximately 40 feet in length and partially adorned in creeping thyme); a rock fire-pit surrounded by rock patio that was built into a double terraced rock flower bed (all this more or less a 120 square foot *thing* that reaches a height of 3 feet); a 40 foot section of a partially-raised-bed garden that backed up to a fence/property line; a terraced 200 square foot garden built atop what was previously an unusable steep incline of weeds behind my former house; a 30 foot long rock fence (as yet only partially completed) at my current home; and sundry other projects taken on alone and with friends.

The list could go on were I to include into my figures things built in Jessamine County, but I think you get the point. I like to collect and stack rock and do it quite frequently.

My attraction to rock is both practical and aesthetic. Moving here in 2000 for school, I have been continually struck by the power—aesthetic, historic, racial, economic—of the inner

bluegrass region's rock fences. When we first moved here, my wife and I would take long rides in the country, both by ourselves and as part of those weekend tours we gave visiting family and friends.

As I have lived here longer, my fence experiences have become more tactile. I have scraped my boots and

to transport the rock grabbed for his public sidewalk garden located on the corner of Hart and Ridgeway. Commuting to Northern Kentucky University where he has found adjunct work as a teacher of geography, Michael grabbed rock off cutouts on the sixty mile stretch of I-75 he drove twice a week. It took about fifteen minutes



*Rock firepit in winter.*

jeans hopping an eighteenth century rock fence that divided land near the Kentucky River that Daniel Boone helped survey, and more recently I have periodically helped re-stack an only slightly newer fence in Keene, KY. I have now walked enough Kentucky ground to know that my interest in rock fences lies mainly in the rock: Limestone mostly, and shitloads of it, all over the region, used in the construction of beautiful fences, terraces, mills, bridge bases, houses, garden and flower beds, retaining walls, and culverts, to name a few rock creations old and new I've come across and marveled at.

This last learned attraction, the historic multi-functionality of rock, is also practical. I first experienced the practical use of stones when trying to figure out what to do about the dirt and mud path created by our two dogs that stretched across the back yard of our former home. Grass seed did not work, discipline and (later) pleading did not work, and the pea gravel I paid to get dumped there to make a walkway was messy and stuck in my barefeet when I walked in it.

When friends in Carlisle offered us the rocks strewn across their property that had been ripped up in the making of their new home, I began gathering rocks for a walkway. By the time I finished the firepit and terraced garden, I realized that in addition to its utility as walking surface, rocks can raise garden beds, separate areas of my yard, level uneven land, provide a building beam to perch my canoe upon, and otherwise create an aesthetic "hardscape." I also learned that I didn't need to go to Carlisle to get it. As I began to look and see how much was available, gratis, at ripped up construction sites, interstate cutouts, water-main projects, and excavation sites in our own yards, I saw the economic and aesthetic practicality of choosing homegrown rock over Lowes-bought faux-rock.

As with most things, collecting and stacking rock is both infinitely easy and gloriously nuanced—an activity for both green beginners pulling a one-off project and craft tradespeople getting paid for their enhanced skills. Here's the easy version, which is restrictive to the degree that it assumes automobile access and physical ability to lift things weighing between five (5) and one thousand (1000) pounds: Get in your vehicle and locate rocks accessible to said vehicle. Load rocks. Drive home, unload product by stacking it. Repeat as necessary.

It gets more nuanced, of course. First, trucks are better vehicles to use than Cooper Minis, though I find it instructive to note that community gardener Michael Marchman, "Notable Neighbor" for the August issue of *Cherry Chaser*, used the trunk of his stepfather's Buick Park Avenue

per excursion as he selected and then moved the chosen rocks to his trunk. All in all, this took Marchman less than a semester of 15-minute respites from his car to build a garden now in its second year of harvest.

On the collection side of things, there are other nuances I've learned. Nearby rock outcroppings are easier in both the arrival and the departure. I'd suggest to stay within twenty-five miles, mostly because it's ridiculously easy to do. Sunday mornings are good times to hunt rock since most of Lexington and its police force are engaged in various religious activities. Home construction sites often result in mounds of rock upturned from the earth; rock mounds are preferable in that you can roll heavier rocks down them and into your truck bed rather than heaving them into it.

If you are collecting rock from ground torn up for active construction, stay out of the way of workers and visit when you will not be in their way. If you collect from other sites, make sure that your taking does not negatively impact the physical and cultural environment in which it sits. Thank friends and acquaintances who offer their rocks. And finally, go travel the road to Galilee: the ripped up stretch of Harrodsburg Road beginning past the great Christian megachurches and ending at the turnoff to Wilmore and Asbury Seminary. I don't know if it's legal or not, but my hunch is that rock gleaning is supported by at least some part of Christian thought.

On the stacking of stones, I'm more a practitioner than a craftsman. But I have found that wider bases seem to make more sturdy structures. So does stacking to avoid long running vertical joints. This happens when you put two ends together on one level (making a joint) and then put two ends together at the same place for the next set of rocks stacked on top. Vary the joints, and make level stacks of rock. Having level stacks gives you a much easier base to work your next layer of rocks. Use small rocks as backfill for support or as shims. Rocks want three stable points of contact to help be steady and the backfill helps keep it in place.

These are some basics of collecting and stacking, and they are from someone who has not spent much time learning the finer points of the craft. I collect and lay rock for a variety of reasons, so my things are not perfect. I am not an expert. I update, I fiddle, I repair, I move, I tend, I learn. I get a little bit better and then the simple process gets a few new fun wrinkles thrown into it.

But at its most democratic and simple, all you need to do to collect and stack rock is this: Look and think. Drive. Act. Go home. Tailor as you can and need.

## GRAY LAWN CARE

### Commercial & Residential MOWING

- Aeration
- Rototilling
- Spring Clean-up
- Shrub Trimming
- Edging
- Mulching
- Pressure Washing
- Fertilization
- Hauling & Odd Jobs
- Landscaping
- Leaf Removal
- Firewood
- Snow Removal
- Seeding

CALL ANY TIME OF YEAR **275-8004**

## Strong Women at Newman Center

By Beth Connors-Manke

Many people, I'm sure, are not aware of the notoriety of the Lexington High Security Unit for women. Opened in 1986, the HSU had a short life, closing in 1988 after inmates and human rights organizations took the institution to court for prison conditions and treatment of inmates.

Designed to hold 16 women, the Lexington HSU was built beneath an existing correctional institution. The multi-million dollar project was a prison within a prison geared toward complete surveillance and psychological control of prisoners who had been placed there because of their political activity. Clinical psychologist Dr. Richard Korn reported to the American Civil Liberties Union that the purpose of the prison was "to reduce prisoners to a state of submission essential for their ideological conversion. That failing, the next objective is to reduce them to a state of psychological incompetence sufficient to neutralize them as efficient, self-directing antagonists. That failing, the only alternative is to destroy them, preferably by making them desperate enough to destroy themselves."

Susan Rosenberg, who was there for the duration of the Lexington "experiment," described her time in the HSU as "being buried alive."

So when people claim that prison is a "free ride" for prisoners—meaning inmates get to eat free meals and watch

TV—I like to tell them, for shock value, about the Lexington HSU for women.

Another way to glimpse the real experiences of women in jail is to see *Strong Women*, a play developed from poetry by women in the Cook County Jail in Illinois. Presented October 1 at 7:30 pm at the Newman Center (320 Rose Lane), the piece is a product of the Persephone Project prison workshops run by the Still Point Theater Collective in Chicago. The Collective facilitates theatre workshops with women in three detention centers around the Chicago area, helping incarcerated women explore their lives and express their fears, failings, and hopes.

*Strong Women* is presented as part of the Newman Foundation Distinguished Speakers Series and the Franciscan Peace Center annual October FrancisFest.

Other events planned for the FrancisFest include:

*Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, a documentary, Friday, October 2, 7:00–9:00 pm  
Dances of Universal Peace, Saturday, October 3, 1:30–3:30 pm

*Francis of Assisi: Reluctant Saint*, a film, Saturday, October 3, 7:00 pm  
*Beyond Our Differences: Creating Spiritual Paths to Peace*, a PBS documentary, Sunday, October 4, 2:00–5:30 pm

For more information, visit [www.FranciscanVision.org](http://www.FranciscanVision.org), call 859.230.1986, or email [FranciscanVision@aol.com](mailto:FranciscanVision@aol.com).



Beth on Sheehan (cont.)

continued from page 1

feels that most of the country dislikes her campaign. Yet, she is still steadfast in her purpose.

“I’m here to save lives,” Sheehan said to the audience at the Unitarian Universalist Church. “We have to be as against the war as our leaders are for it.”

It’s not just this war

Sheehan’s political indictment of the War on Terror (what she calls “The War of Terror”) has grown into a broader critique of American foreign and domestic economic policies. Two of her fundamental tenets are that class is the biggest divide in the U.S. and that our political and economic problems are systemic rather than an issue of party or personality. The Peace Mom knows that young people from strapped middle and working class families are joining our “voluntary” army for economic reasons, hoping for the monetary incentives promised them by recruiters. She understands this side of soldiering well: her son Casey joined the military for the edu-



Cindy Sheehan greets lecture attendees.

cational benefits. Not purely a pacifist, Sheehan acknowledges the need for a standing army, but she sees that currently “corporate colonialism is the purpose of our army.”

When asked by an audience member, “What would make democracy work better?” Sheehan didn’t mince words. “End capitalism,” she said. According to Sheehan, our economic

system pushes the U.S. into imperialism because the nature of capitalism is to grow until it must move across borders to gain control of the resources of other nations and peoples.

*Myth America: 10 Greatest Myths of the Robber Class and the Case for Revolution*, Sheehan’s latest writing project, lays out the activist’s arguments about class in the U.S. and the means by which the powerful continue to manipulate those of us lower down the totem pole, the group she calls the “robbed class.”

In an introduction to *Myth America* on her blog “Cindy Sheehan’s Soapbox,” the Peace Mom explains: “Since this country was founded, it has been governed, or controlled by the Robber Class. Some people call our ‘Lords,’ the Ruling Class, the Oligarchy, the Kleptocracy, or Plutocracy. Some call our system Cronyism, a Democratic Tyranny, Soft-core Fascist State, or if you are a member of the Robber Class or Blinded Robbed Class, you call it a Democracy, or Republic.”

“Let me define the terms Robber Class and Robbed Class for the purposes of this Internet Booklet: The Robber Class consists of The Wealthy Ones (not all wealthy people are robbers!) of our society who have earned this wealth off the hard labor of others: not by doing an honest days work or being fair and just with their talents or employees, but by stealing the fruits of our labor through outright theft or economic or violent exploitation.”

The myths that Sheehan works to dispel begin with the American belief in its own Manifest Destiny and ends with the illusions about September 11 that we have embraced over the last eight years. As Sheehan candidly admitted at Transy, she “likes to illustrate with hyperbole.” Although her rhetoric can sometimes be flip, sneering, and satirical, there’s a sense in which the activist’s message isn’t hyperbolic. Even when Sheehan makes her first

myth “America: Greatest Nation in the Universe!” (in case you didn’t catch it, the hyperbole is the use of “universe” rather than simply “planet”), the core truth of her message is accurate. Americans *do* believe we are unsurpassable in all ways, and we *do* initiate unjust, high-cost wars with little defensible justification.

For Sheehan, the only “just war” definition she abides by is “one that

live the life of a prophet crying out in the wilderness?”

After being introduced as “prophetic” at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Sheehan responded with her characteristic humor.

“Being prophetic about politicians being crooked,” she said, “is like being prophetic about the sun coming up. It’s not prophetic, it’s observation, it’s history.”



Audience members listen during Cindy Sheehan’s lecture at Transylvania University.

you would send your children to.” It’s that simple, that honest. And when the Peace Mom says this, I don’t think she’s thinking about a war like the one George Will proposes we now stage in Afghanistan: a war by proxy, with pilots launching missiles from Predator Drones from a base in Nevada. This type of war brings us even further from the reality of the damage that we are inflicting on the people of Afghanistan—and the damage that it does, in turn, to us.

Easy Prophecy

The years of dissent have taken their toll on Sheehan. Her fight is so broad—it now includes health care (she supports a single payer system) and, among other things, a trip to the G20—that there’s no conceivable end to the work. How long can one continue to

In that way, the work of dissent is easy. But hard must be the disappointment that change is probably not on the horizon unless a reinvigorated peace movement appears and is willing to speak truth to power to President Obama.

Sheehan has met Obama, after “Camp Casey” and in the days before he took over Bush’s chair in the White House. Does she want to meet Obama again, now that he is president? At Transy, she told the audience, “I’d rather support another mother meeting Obama”—a mother who has lost her son or daughter under the new administration’s war policy. As badly as the war in Afghanistan seems to be going, that’s another thing that will be easy: finding more grieving mothers.

Additional reporting contributed by Danny Mayer.

Swells Brass Band ride into Duncan Park  
Past Friday shows have been a hit

NoC News Bureau

On Friday September 25, you are invited to a community day at Duncan Park, located off Fifth Street between North Limestone and Martin Luther King Boulevard. The event will begin at 4:00 P.M. with a performance by the Capoeira Cultural Center and then continue with performances by an area marching band and the Swells Brass Band. The evening will conclude (hopefully) with fire dancing from some members of Mecca who live in the nearby neighborhood.

The Friday night gathering will mark the last of four shows at Stage One, a new community stage tucked into a corner at Duncan Park. Stage One is a pretty simple stage structure that was constructed earlier this summer primarily through a weekend of volunteer community help. The concept for the stage is also pretty straight forward: it hopes to use music as a way to bring different groups from the community into a common space to laugh and meet or re-meet each other. In the words of North Limestone Neighborhood Association member Marty Clifford, the hope is that “the music will help create more social bonds and [act as] a glue binding our sense of community.”

Thus far the shows have been an immense success. Opening night with Tee Dee’s Band was enjoyed by nearly 500 folk who came from the Castlewood Park, the William Wells Brown, and the downtown and Gratz Park areas—all told one of the most densely packed areas of the city. The next week, the Sexual Disaster Quartet played to nearly 100 people, while two blocks away another 700 people took in the Roots and Heritage Festival. This past week, as the Gallery Hop went

down, another several hundred people showed up to listen and dance to the music of the Shade Band. Because of the park’s physical location at the top of a small rise as one moves north out of town, the sound rushes down Limestone several blocks, reaching all the way to Gratz Park on the opening night. It’s like a musical gift bestowed from up north.

This Friday’s gathering has been expanded as part of Community Day, sort of a gathering of the tribes for all Northside communities and neighborhood groups. “We see North of Main Street as a lot of different neighborhoods,”

says Clifford. “This is a way to [help] bring the diversity together.” It’s the logical endpoint to what Clifford says Stage One seeks to do.

After Community Day, Clifford hopes to meet with more members of the community to figure out opportunities for next spring. “These first four [shows] are experimental. We’re figuring out how we’re going to do it and how it’s going to work, and how it’s going to interact with the community and that sort of thing—if it was going to work at all, if the stage was going to be something the community wanted. I think we already

answered that question,” Clifford said after the second show in the series.

“Five hundred people the first show [Tee Dee’s] and the next week a hundred people right here with another six hundred at Roots and Heritage. So music is going to work in this community. And that was one of the questions we wanted to ask in doing these first four shows. Then we can use that information to do the programing for next year.”

If you would like to offer your ideas or talents to this community project, please contact Marty Clifford at 859-389-9157



Stage One at Duncan Park is a month-long series of free concerts in our neighborhood. These gatherings are a beautiful way to farewell the summer and be reminded of the power of music to bring people together.



# Boomslang music preview, day by day

## Friday, October 9

**Mission of Burma**  
*Buster's. 18+.*

At one misbegotten gig in the Reagan era South, a little girl handed the band a note: "Could you please turn it down?" The last time I saw Mission of Burma, at Pitchfork Festival '08, the crowd was flush with young'ns, hipsters in doodled sneaks and homemade Fall t-shirts, brace-faced angels and fannish boys who knew all the songs. Every dreamy screed, each battle hymn of the erotic, every cubist mosh, each dyslexic love letter—the little boogers knew them all.

So let's skip the history lesson. Besides, "seminal" is kinda disgusting once you think about it. This is not a revival act. This is a working band, with a new album in the can, the third since the '02 comeback. The boys put



Mission of Burma.

the "living" in "legend," using their laurels as scrap paper for new lyrics, new chords. The shows mix'n'match: a classic, "Red," melts into a recent romper, "Zwice," without a whisper of the years between them. "This Is Not a Photograph," this is not an exhibit in the rock & roll Hall of Fame, this is four guys doing it for the same reason you want to see it: kicks.

Roger blows up his guitar real good, Clint twists your throbbing heartstrings, Peter bashes skins and gives his tent revival beller, Bob wrangles the sound into alien shapes because it's fun. Because it rocks. Because that's the mission. That's Mission of Burma, my favorite band in the whole wide world. —Bill Widener

**Rachel Grimes**  
*Second Presbyterian Church. All ages.*  
"Sounds like: moss; open wooden box; inhale"

A succinct description on Rachel Grimes' Myspace page that encapsulates the organic beauty of this Louisville legend's solo piano work. Ethereal piano meet with field recordings that are perfectly at home in a concert hall or a wooded, lichen-covered forest.

Grimes hails from the critical acclaim of Louisville indie chamber pop group Rachel's and has woven a rich history within the local scene. She has collaborated with several Louisville-based artists, making guest appearances on releases by The Frames, Tara Jane O'Neil, and Shipping News, among others.

But September 22 will see the versatile composer step out on her own with the release of *Book of Leaves*, an album that Grimes calls "a collection of impressionist chapters woven together with chordal themes and field recordings inspired by interactions with the outdoors." The album, released on Louisville-based Karate Body Records, features 14 of Grimes' compositions that blend her unique indoor/outdoor approach to piano work. —Megan Neff

*A U.S. tour will support the album release, including a stop at the Boomslang Festival. Locals Sound/Vision will open the show, which starts at 5:30 P.M.*

**Atlas Sound**  
*Buster's. 18+.*

Atlas Sound is a one-man project from Bradford Cox that intersperses electronic pop with drifting, ambient nu gaze. Cox's unique, icy-angelic vocals command the tracks, making liberal usage of reverb and overdubbing, maximizing the sonic conditions, often burying his all too frail voice in a thick cloud of haze, evoking the genuine expression, introspection, chanting, even chatter, one might expect from a child who'd locked himself into his bedroom and started singing about whatever came to mind. Which makes sense when you learn that Cox started recording as Atlas Sound when he was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, taking the moniker from a karaoke machine he recorded his first tapes on.

Atlas Sound as we know it seems, in essence, the genuine extension of

**Lushlife**  
*Duncan Park. All ages.*

Philadelphia-based MC and producer Lushlife has been added to WRFL's Boomslang music festival, bringing hip-hop flavor to the already stacked line-up that includes nationally celebrated acts as well as local favorites.

The unique blend of sonic spectrums displayed on Lushlife's most recent endeavor, *Cassette City*, bring an air of nostalgia all while introducing new sounds to both veteran and rookie hip-hop heads. Lush's razor sharp rhymes paired with a cornucopia of soundscapes and stellar guests make *Cassette City* an aural buffet for the listener's ears to feast on. Among the guests featured on *Cassette City* are legendary New York duo Camp Lo, Detroit rhyme craftsman Elzhi of Slum Village, and Greg Saunier of Deerhoof. Lush also pairs with Ariel Pink, who you may recall played at Al's Bar in April of this year, and Ezra Koenig of Vampire Weekend who also came through town to play at what was then known as the Old Tarr Distillery, now the new site of Buster's.

Lushlife will help kick off the Boomslang festival at 5pm on Friday, October 9 at Duncan Park, which is located on the corner of North Limestone and East 5<sup>th</sup> St. Also performing will be Lexington natives, Kuntry Noiz and Just Me, while Miss Cass and Fidel Hasflow provide optical stimulus with a live graffiti exhibit. For more information go to [www.boomslangfest.com](http://www.boomslangfest.com). —Landon Antonetti

**Peaking Lights**  
*Buster's. 18+.*

Peaking Lights is composed of husband-wife duo Indra Dunis (of Numbers/Rah Dunes) and Aaron Coyes (also of Rah Dunes) from Madison, Wisconsin. Together they create beautiful, pulsing, hypnotic music. At once delicate, tranquil, and soothing, the songs are also dissonant, cacophonous, and generally all over the place.

"Ambient noise" or "noise pop" are the genres typically applied to this kind of music, but those appellations are too narrow to encompass what Peaking Lights really sounds like.

The harmony gently envelops and confuses you as you attempt to decipher, "What instrument is that and how is it making that sound?" There's the psyched-out guitar work; the ambient keys; the soft, murmuring vocals



Atlas Sound.



Lushlife.

that are almost imperceptible *a la* My Bloody Valentine; the meandering but driving beats. It's like walking on a beach that you've never been on before. And it's night. And maybe you're on some type of inebriant. Before you know it you find yourself in a swarm of lustrous noises and sounds, some identifiable, some a mystery. Dreamy, droney, and dripping in fuzzes, wuzzes, and buzzes that sound like they don't want to be anywhere else. Like Beach House if they took acid and became groovier. —Jaime Lazich

**Caboladies**  
*Buster's. 18+.*

It is possible to smear Caboladies releases all over one's mind to alleviate a sense of stress. It is also in the realm of reality to find oneself down in a deep, dark hole within seconds of digesting a Caboladies effort. Most around Lexington receive waves of spirit, blood and light at Caboladies outings while others can't seem to grasp such time-altering synthesizer-based sound.

Utilizing an array of keys, pedals, and effected vocals, Caboladies create a full bed of sound without driving the masses to sleep. Aesthetically somewhere between Black Dice, Tangerine Dream and numerous players in the contemporary/classic electronic avant garde underground, many twists and turns are expected at any given Caboladies gig. Equal parts melody and discordance take place within the elongated pieces, bringing to mind moody 70's Krautrock, creating a futuristic soundtrack for the post noise/drone/techno youth of today.

While the group spent many a moon gracing Lexington and Louisville with their brand of soundtrack/LSD/dream crack, Eric Lanham and Chris Bush are now kicking around Chicago rubbing elbows with sharp wind and wider pastures. Too many releases to mention and too many shades to count in one sitting, Caboladies will be laying down analog cum digital mastery for the out-there heads this year at Boomslang. —Ma Turner

## Saturday, Oct. 10

**The Black Angels**  
*Buster's. 18+.*

Musically, The Black Angels (Austin, TX) are like a bastardized amalgamation of the Velvet Underground ("Black Angel's Death Song" provided the band with their name), The Doors, and Spacemen 3. Their two albums and one EP are full-on dark, droney, sinister, psychedelic rock in the same vein as Brian Jonestown Massacre, Black Mountain, Black Rebel Motorcycle Club, and probably a couple more of those "black" bands.

While bearing some semblance to all these bands, The Black Angels continue to remain in a category all their own. Viscerally, the experience is something like suffering a panic attack or having an agoraphobic episode in the middle of the desert and feeling totally ok about it. Because you're on peyote. (No, really, look at their art work). Live, you can feel

*continued on page 7*



Queer showcase (cont.)

*continued from page 1*

queer, but it isn't very cohesive. With that said, it's important to understand what I mean by the term queer.

I, (as well as many others) use the term to describe a sexual orientation and/or gender identity or gender that does not conform to heteronormative society. Put plainly, we don't fit in. We're not interested in a house in the 'burbs with two kids, a dog and a picket fence. We don't necessarily want to get married as many of us find the institution to be outdated and unnecessary. And for many of us, the personal is political. Our refusal to assimilate is a revolutionary act.

You'll normally find us among the punks, the activists, the anarchists, and the hipsters. It's tough because there are so few of us queer identified folk in this town that we integrate into these subcultures. And still, for some of us, despite our socio-political leanings, we're still afraid we'll never find "our people." For example, I have recently met a group of trans identified males who claimed they didn't go out a lot because they didn't know where they fit in. They expressed the difficulty of just hanging out at a bar and feeling comfortable among "regular" people. Thanks to places like the GLSO, a space was created for my new friends and now that we're finding each other, we're creating additional spaces amongst "regular" people. The object is not to segregate ourselves, but also to not totally blend in. It's most important for us to simply be, and to occupy a space greater than just a safe one.

With all that said, there isn't necessarily anything wrong with wanting that big old gay wedding, even if it's not for me. And the only way for you to get it is if we set aside our differences and work together to keep ourselves honest about our differences

within the queer community and work to make all of us more visible. There was once a time where you had to really *look* find people like yourself. Now, with the internet and social networking sites like Myspace and Facebook, my fellow queers are only a click away. Just recently a blog was created specifically for Lexingtonians called *Gendered Lexington*. blog calls to all walks of gender to submit their stories regarding their connections between their city and their identity.

Personally, I have used my passion for music to bridge the gaps between my queer lifestyle and the culture I am surrounded by. First, I groomed myself into a strong singer songwriter playing weekly house shows and expressing my own very personal feelings of intimacy and relationships, careful to never cloak the songs in heterosexual situations or hiding the gender of the person I was singing about. Through that I began making connections with other queer youth and gained opportunities to be a quasi-poster child for local "lesbian" music. From opening for Bitch + The Exciting Conclusion at The Dame to performing at PRIDE, I learned new ways to network deeper.

Since then, I have reached out to bands of all walks within the GLBTIQQA community in other cities, bringing them to Lexington to play to small groups of highly enthused music lovers. This has led me to realize I can create something bigger than just a house show. But not just bigger, rather something greater—an event that will benefit my small community as well as the very city that nurtures it.

My interest in bringing my two great loves together (independent music and queer activism) has blossomed to the point where I feel invincible. I know I can bring something great to Lexington that will continue to make us more visible to the heterosexual


community, and hopefully unite the GLBTIQQA community more.

So, I contacted a queer, not for profit record label in San Francisco who manages two of my favorite bands and asked if they would start sending these groups to Lexington, since none of them had ever played Kentucky. I received an e-mail the very next day from the founder of Queer Control Records, Marlene Melendez, who basically told me "If you build it, we will come." So that's exactly what I did. I raised \$2,000 to fly the bands in. Then I thought, You know what would make this even better? Let's collect all

building stronger relationships on a much larger scale. Lexington has so much to offer in the way of progress.

There are amazing groups in town doing incredible work. Organizations such as AVOL, KFTC (Kentuckians for the Commonwealth) and Kentucky Fairness are just the tip of the iceberg. What I want to create is a safe space among Lexingtonians for queer youth who come from all types of backgrounds. What I want is to do my part for the city I have come to love.

That being said, I am pleased to announce the Queer Control Records



**CD CENTRAL**  
lexington's great independent music store  
New & used CDs, DVDs, Vinyl • Posters!  
377 S. Limestone • 233-DISC  
www.cdcentralmusic.com

of the money from the door and give it to AVOL (Aids Volunteers , Inc.). At \$5 a pop, the cost is much more accessible than a \$50 plate at a fancy gala.

And that's just the point, isn't it? I could sit around and complain that Mia's isn't what it used to be, or that the only gay activities in this town cater to the older, white, male population. I could turn a blind eye to the "isms" that separate me from the popular majority of "out" individuals, or I could buckle down and bridge the gap between my city and what I believe my city can be. By connecting with queer communities in other places (not just the more progressive ones), we are

Showcase taking place at Al's Bar on October 3rd. It will include three bands from the label, local queer fronted band Spooky Qs, and an opening act of live local DJs and the Bluegrass Fire Dancers. All of this for only \$5 and 100% of the door is going to the Aids Volunteers of Lexington (AVOL). It was a labor of love to bring this event together and raise the money for the flight costs, but giving something back to my community makes it worth it, and just to see an act like this happen in Lexington is enough to convince me to stay here and continue building. Maybe one day we won't just be known as the "Horse Capitol of the World."

SEPT 23 THE SOUNDS



SEPT 24 KOFFIN KATS



SEPT 25 BLUES TRAVELER



**BUSTER'S**  
BILLARDS & BACKROOM  
899 MANCHESTER ST.  
LEXINGTON, KY 40508  
BUSTERSBB.COM  
ALL SHOWS 18+ 



SEPT 26 TODAY THE MOON, TOMORROW THE SUN



SEPT 28 THE SILVER SUN PICKUPS  
MANCHESTER ORCHESTRA  
CAGE THE ELEPHANT







# The bond between sports and patriotism

By Andrew Battista

Two weeks ago I went north to watch the “Rumble in the River,” an anticlimactic, preseason-esque football game in which the University of Kentucky pummeled Miami (OH) 42-0 at Cincinnati’s Paul Brown Stadium. The game itself was not memorable, but what happened to me before kick-off has lingered a while longer than the euphoria of UK’s convincing victory that afternoon.

Like always, I remained seated during the performance of “The Star Spangled Banner.” Rather than participating in uncritical patriotism, which in this case meant comingling zeal for sport and state, I chose to use the minute or so that passes during the anthem-singing for private spiritual reflection. I cannot stand with thousands of fanatics and endorse our nation’s paean to victory achieved through violence. Instead, the anthems that preface the sporting events I attend so frequently and love so much are times for me to consider political and moral questions that inform how I practice my religious faith. What is our nation’s current relationship to violence? What attitude toward the U.S. Empire should I espouse as a Christian and member of God’s Empire? And, most importantly, why are organized sports so often exploited as a vehicle of forced patriotism?

This is neither an original connection nor a unique form of protest. The linguist Noam Chomsky has argued that spectator sports elicit a fervor that governments can easily co-opt for the sake of encouraging national allegiance. According to Chomsky, professional sports “occupies the population, and keeps them from trying to get involved with things that really matter.” He suggests that sports franchises foster “a sense of irrational loyalty to a meaningless community [which, like Big Blue Nation] is training for subordination to power, and for chauvinism.” Following sports instills passivity, and when parlayed with patriotic rituals, that passivity cripples people’s

ability to critically evaluate the policies of their nation state.

Back to Paul Brown Stadium. As I sat, one fan standing several rows above yelled at me—I’m presuming at me because I was the only person sitting in my section—and said, “Hey hippie, why don’t you stand up? Do you love our country, or are you anti-American?” I share this story not to cast myself as a victim. Instead, it’s a way to say that United States iconography, forced patriotism, and nationalistic zeal have crept into our sporting venues and events in ways that are damaging to all parties involved.

What happened to me—getting yelled at by a fan—is insignificant when compared to other recent instances of forced patriotism at sporting events. At the old Yankee Stadium a year ago, a man was harassed and eventually ejected from the stadium for attempting to leave his seat and use the restroom during the seventh inning stretch singing of “God Bless America.” For the man, this treatment constituted religious and political discrimination. Yankee Stadium had been extreme for Major League Baseball venues in that its ushers chained off aisles to prevent people from leaving their seats during the song. However, since that lawsuit, which was settled when the city of New York agreed to pay \$10,000 to the aggrieved party, the Yankees have refrained from chaining aisles. (For the record, it’s still unclear why New York City taxpayers had to foot the bill to rectify something harmful done by the New York Yankees). A year later, in its new stadium, the franchise continues to play “God Bless America” during every game, and even beyond the Yankees, forced patriotism in United States’ sports has not gone away.

Late last fall, conservative talk radio host Mike Gallagher cast the Mennonite Goshen College as a national pariah because the school refrained from playing the Star Spangled Banner at its home athletics events. The incensed Gallagher insisted that neither Goshen nor the students who attend it should receive financial assistance from the federal government

in any form because of their “un-American” stance.

Again, this past weekend, another incident has emerged. The sports blog Field of Schemes reports that a minor league baseball owner forcibly removed three teens from a stadium this summer for refusing to stand during the rendition of “God Bless America.” According to a write-up by the local New Jersey paper, Thomas Cetnar, a disgraced police officer and part owner of the Newark Bears, noticed the teens sitting during the seventh inning ritual, approached them furiously, and

Or, alternately, how do we respect the experience of those who enjoy sports and athletics, but believe that God and nation should not be confused? People, like myself, who balk at singing patriotic anthems at sporting events, do so because of deep convictions about the way God operates in earth and the way that God’s followers should posture themselves as they live amidst and within earthly power structures.

People such as myself also like baseball, basketball, and football, but it’s becoming increasingly apparent to me that the imperial nature of sports



instructed security guards to escort them out of the park. “Nobody sits during the singing of ‘God Bless America’ in my stadium,” Cetnar yelled. “Now get the (expletive) out of here.”

Field of Schemes astutely points out that Cetnar has nerve calling the Bears’ park “my stadium” when it in fact was purchased with tax dollars. And, to add an additional layer of irony, Cetnar’s appeal to American loyalty is especially problematic given his prior improprieties as a defender of United States citizens (he embezzled drug money).

To some, standing during the national anthem and “God Bless America” is a “matter of etiquette,” as the *Star-Ledger*’s Sharon Aldaro phrased it when relaying this story. But what if one doesn’t believe that God exists?

and nation cannot be separated easily, despite my wishes. Of course, I don’t expect everyone to hold my Anabaptist precepts about war, God, nation, and peaceful protest, but I do hope that these recent stadium incidents and the subsequent lawsuits will open a new national conversation about that it means to be a citizen and a sports fan in the United States. We’ll have plenty of opportunities to think about what ideology is being peddled with sports during football season this fall, basketball season this winter, and baseball season this spring. Already, national media outlets, like Dave Zirin’s Edge of Sports Radio and Neil deMause’s Field of Schemes, are working in territory where sports and politics merge.

But we need more people to join them.

Al's Bar

*proudly sponsors*

Lexington Bike Polo

*2nd place at Cleveland Bike Polo Tournament*

*4th and 8th places at Midwest Bike Polo Championships*

Wednesdays & Sundays

Coolavin Park

*Post-game shenanigans at Al's*



THE VOID SKATESHOP

518 EAST HIGH STREET (859) 231-8643

LEXINGTON, KY 40502

WWW.MYSPACE.COM/THEVOIDSKATESHOP

# Florida quarterback: cultural imperialist

By Keith Halladay

Of course I’m talking about Tim Tebow, that foreskin-snipping, promise-making, virginity-saving, generally fantastic guy. You can’t miss him. You can’t even avoid him, thanks to the sports media’s elevation of ol’ number 15 to a celestial place seated at the right hand of Christ himself, just down the line from the Lord Almighty, and in fact one full slot in the divine pecking order above the Holy Ghost, who runs a 4.54 and reads defenses but tends to disappear in big games.

Our savior first came to my attention as a wide-eyed freshman in Urban Meyer’s new Gator administration, when he parlayed his brilliant smile and hard-nosed attitude into credit for Chris Leak’s 2006-07 BCS National Championship. Yes, Leak. Remember him? You may not, since the Worldwide Leader has already explained to you that Tebow has always been at Florida, always will be at Florida, and exists on

this plane only to make us understand that we’re not nearly as righteous, caring, or as effective in the red zone as he is, and to help us common folk by giving us something to shoot for.

We believe all of this because of a sequence of well-reported miracles:

1. Tim Tebow saved brown people through the miracle of circumcision. Super-miraculous is the fact that he does not need to learn how to do circumcisions prior to performing them, thus conclusively proving his extraworldliness. Still more miraculous is the fact that nobody seems to have much of a problem with the imposition of Western supernatural belief systems as barter for preventive medicine among the impoverished. He is truly sent from Heaven.

2. Tim Tebow is a virgin. Yes he is. This is a miracle, because Tebow’s athletic prowess and boyish face (or, as one sports fan put it, “generic frat-boy teen-movie-villain looks”) attract teen sucubi like flies to...excrement. (Tebow

teaches us not to cuss.) The temptations are of the sort that no *earthly* man could resist them, yet our strong-armed, strong-willed leader manages to do just that. This, kind souls, could be accomplished only by one who walks *among* us but not *with* us. Need further proof, Thomas? Google “tebow girlfriend” and kneel before Tim’s greatness, as this fair lass undoubtedly has.

3. “The Promise.” The stuff of legend. There is a plaque—a shrine. Make the pilgrimage to Gainesville.

4. Tim Tebow will, next year, redeem Gomorrah, lately known as Jacksonville, Florida, by preventing the demise or departure of its sole redeeming attribute, the NFL Jacksonville Jaguars. So sayeth Wayne Weaver, Jaguars *jefe*, noting that “the game is such an important part of this community, and Tebow is such an iconic figure that people would legitimately think, ‘Wouldn’t it be great if he was a Jaguar?’” It would; it would be even greater if he became a Lion, but that’s

been done already. Nay, he shall be a Jaguar, despite Weaver’s warning against “false hope.” And she shall start four games into his rookie season. And he shall win out. And he shall single-handedly defeat the vile NFL blackout rule. And on the second day he shall watch film.

Regional pride and dark forces engulfed me one day, several months ago, and I contemplated approaching, on the down low, a few of the UK defensive lineman to offer, I ashamed to say, a *bounty* on Tebow. Just small numbers, kid stuff, really: for every clean hit, I thought, a tenner. Sacks \$50. Unnecessary roughness...I can’t recall, but I didn’t go through with it. Because you know what?

I wondered to myself, *what would Tim Tebow do?* Saved again.

How, then, do the UK Wildcats emerge as victors on the plains of C.M. Newton this Saturday?

*I have a vision...just came to me...glowing letters...I think they read...FREE WILL.*



# Not just music: Boomslang embraces different types of media

We admit, music is pretty much front and center at WRFL. But this festival also pays tribute to some of the facets of culture and creativity that have not only nurtured WRFL all these years, but that have kept many Lexingtonians afloat and hanging on as well.

**Thursday, October 8**  
**Stars with Accents**, presented by Accents Radio Hour and Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning *Carnegie Center. 7 P.M. Free.*

From 2-3 P.M. each Friday, WRFL broadcasts Accents: A Show for Literature, Art and Culture, recently voted one of the Best Radio Shows in Town by *ACEWeekly* readers. During the

show, host Katerina Stoykova, an editor for international multimedia art journal *Public Republic*, interviews a national or international guest; discusses local literature and culture events; announces a writing prompt and reads submissions from the previous week’s writing prompt. Accents will help kick off Boomslang a night early with a poetry and prose reading at The Carnegie Center on Thursday, October 8. The event will feature open-mic performances as well as a stellar lineup of former guests of Accents. Readers include Ed McClanahan, famed Kentucky author who once rode the bus with the Merry Pranksters and whose works include *The Natural Man*, *Famous People*

*I Have Known* and *Spit in the Ocean* #7: *All About Ken Kesey*. Other readers include Jan Isenhour, (Executive Director of the Carnegie Center), Rebecca Gayle Howell, Colin Watkins, Eric Sutherland, Donna Ison, Sherry Chandler, Jim Lally, Letha Kendrick, David Musella, Katerina Stoykova and James Vincent.

**Art Show at Hop Hop reception**  
*Hop Hop. 7 P.M.*

Laura Glen Holt and Allison Crowe, former UK art students who master-minded the Hide and Seek Art Show at the Miller House this past summer, along with Hannah LeGris, co-producer of the Lexington Film League, are curating a local multi-media Boomslang art show at North Limestone mixed-use haven Hop Hop. The show features a collection of emerging artists and embraces an engaging variety of media, including two-dimensional work, video and installation pieces. Art will be displayed through the weekend at Hop Hop.

The reception includes a viewing of the beautifully-crafted film cycle *Rotating Mirror* (approximately 8 P.M.). Award-winning filmmaker Greg King (member of the acclaimed Louisville cult-avant-chamber group Rachel’s) carried a Super 8 video camera around every day for a year, never planning what he would shoot in advance but capturing footage in Louisville and New York City every day over that span of time. The result is a visually—and audibly—stunning montage of sound and image, featuring a soundtrack by Rachel’s (including unreleased tracks), solo music by Jason Noble (of Rachel’s and also of Shipping News, who were scheduled to play Boomslang but had to cancel due to an unexpected and serious health issue with Noble), as well as solo music by Rachel Grimes (also of Rachel’s). According to King, who also contributed music, the film intends to cause the audience to “consider the meaning of time and place on both cosmic and intimate scales...as well as the grid of contemporary life through a weave of urban and natural settings.”

**Saturday, October 10**  
**A Sonic Radio Experiment, with Everyone Lives Everyone Wins**  
*Hop Hop Garage. 5 P.M.*

*Lexington drone cult, Everyone Lives Everyone Wins, extend their multi-layered sonic crawl through space and time beyond the reach of their amplifiers. An experimental ritual will be held in the studios of 88.1 WRFL. The public service will be held concurrently at the Hop Hop.*

*An altar, constructed specifically for worship via radio waves, has been erected in honor of the Great Cosmic Nothing. The converted and the curious are invited to partake in the sensory-enveloping sonic evocation, experiencing a display of the group’s practice of drone magic unlike any before. Those who cannot attend are encouraged to worship at home by gathering as many receivers as available and placing them in every corner of his or her home altar.*

*Be assured that every individual experience will be unique from all others, and the fullness thereof lies in the hands of the listener.*

*All are welcome. None are chosen.*  
*EVERYONE lives. EVERYONE wins.*

Such was the event description provided by local lords of the positive drone, Everyone Lives Everyone Wins. ELEW is converting the garage in the Hop Hop parking lot (formerly used for car repairs) into a sensory station. Two band members will perform live at the WRFL studio; a third will be on hand at the garage to manipulate the sonic experience with a number of radio installations, each tuned to the frequencies surrounding 88.1. Live instrumentation, video and light manipulation will complete the sensory experience, which will be unlike anything you have likely experienced before.

**Sunday, October 11**  
**Mark Hosler presents “Adventures in Illegal Art”**  
*Natasha’s Bistro. 4 P.M.*

Mark Hosler is a founding member of Negativland, the infamous Bay-area

media-manipulators who have been challenging the traditional sense of sound and art since 1980, by incorporating original music and materials with found media transmissions, images, clips and sound bites to create albums, videos, “fine art,” books and radio performances.

The band, which took it’s own name from a song by kraut-rock legends Neu!, has been met with a number of challenges along their exploration of what it means to be an independent artist in corporate America, including being sued twice for copyright infringement, most famously by U2. Their experience has ultimately shed light on a number of questions, inconsistencies and satirical observations surrounding artists’ rights and intellectual property, many of which will be addressed in Hosler’s 90-minute film/lecture “Adventures in Illegal Art.”

According to Hosler, the presentation “*illustrates the many creative projects, hoaxes, pranks and ‘culture jamming’ that Negativland has been doing since 1980. The presentation covers issues of media-literacy, creative and humorous anti-corporate art/activism, the role of advertising and corporate power in our lives, intellectual property issues, and the evolution of art, law and resistance in a media saturated multinational world...*

*“Even if you’ve never heard of Negativland, if you are interested in these issues you are sure to find this fun and inspiring presentation worth your time and attention. None of the short films shown will ever be seen on TV and much of it is visually in the same legal grey area that Negativland has explored with sound for the last 28 years.”*

In an age where corporate media and popular music alike are saturated with found samples, the issues Negativland has confronted for almost 30 years remain relevant today. Hosler will be on hand following the presentation to respond to audience questions about any of the topics covered.

Opening for Hosler will be off-the-sky (the one-man “hypnotic and immersive” sound & video presentation by Lexingtonian turned Denverite Jason Corder). Using layered guitar, composed effects, and contact mics to trigger various sounds, Corder will be creating a soundtrack to experimental wide format video projected on two screens.

**Saturday & Sunday, Oct. 10-11**  
**Boomslang Carnival**  
Buster’s parking lot  
Noonish – night. Free.

The freaks are coming out of the woodwork, in masses. Boomslang Carnival will feature a full sideshow tent, a circus-themed fashion show, a local art bazaar, live music, free lessons, fun games, medieval puppet theatre, surprise performances, searing fire and gorgeous dancing ladies.

**Saturday, Noon ‘til dusk:** The Backyard Bazaar, featuring locally made products by local artists for your viewing and purchasing pleasure! This is not an art show, per se, but an art fair (hint: bring your wallet and support local talent!). **Afternoon Events:** Free lessons and workshops, Lo-Fi Peoples Theatre presents: DUCK WALK (surrealist short play), various and sundry minor amusements (psychic chess, curios display). **Evening Events:** Circus fashion show featuring live music by the Ford Theatre Reunion and Klime, and locally designed fashions by Sarah Estes, Soreyda Begley, Jordan Cox, Lamin Swann, Betsy Hamilton, Sequoria Dobbins. Also, the Punch and Judy show (medieval puppet theatre). **Night Events:** Passionfire (fire-troupe), Girlie Girl Burlesque (old-timey burlesque show), The Burning House Sideshow (several performances throughout the night, including contact juggling, mentalism, glass-walking, bed-of-nails stunts, fire eating, blockhead-ing, burlesque, rocket boy, and more!)

**Sunday:** Sunday carnival-related events will include more live music (Hair Police, Teeth Mountain, Bill Nace, Fuma and more!); March Madness Marching Band, Rakadu Gypsy Dancers; Passionhoop dancers; and more. —*Saraya Brewer*

## Boomslang music preview (cont.)

*continued from page 4*

every drumbeat, every lyric, every guitar lick as if each element was residing in your own person. The immense loudness of their live performance consumes every part of you, pulsing through you, making you feel infinitesimal because you surrendered your body to the psychedelia-saturated sounds of The Black Angels. Don’t miss it. —*JL*

## Sunday, Oct. 11

**Hair Police**  
**Buster’s Secondary Stage. All ages.**

A festival celebrating musical diversity happening in Lexington wouldn’t be worth two licks without the presence of powerhouse Hair Police. A group since 2001, the three members met while DJ’ing at University of Kentucky’s WRFL 88.1 fm. Practically introducing over a hundred kids to the noise underground in Lexington throughout the years, these mongers of darkness and cold introspect have gone on to provide total noise chaos to people all over the world.

Touring numerous times throughout the past eight years, Trevor Tremaine, Robert Beatty and Mike Connelly have shared the stage with acts such as Sonic Youth, Prurient, Kites, Pere Ubu and more. Culling from influences such as power elec-

treads the psych-infested waters of folk pop, but mangles genres in its experimental leanings. *Constant Hitmaker*, released in 2008 on the Gulcher label, paired Vile’s earlier lo-fi home recordings with later work, but didn’t quite reach that pinnacle of “critical acclaim” until its reissue by Woodsist in 2009.

Come spring and the addition of The Violators to the Vile moniker, and the well-used bedroom (such an invaluable metaphor) is left behind in favor of the arena. This is a smoldering, reverb-heavy approach to classic rock that somehow functions as a logical, seemingly natural outgrowth from Vile’s previous spaced-out meanderings.

The group released *The Hunchback* EP earlier in the year, but with the season’s turning comes a new full-length from Mr. Vile, this time on the Matador imprint. *Childish Prodigy*, up for release in early October, will be supported by a fall tour, the most important date of which is Sunday night at a Boomslang after-show at Al’s Bar. Bedtime and Tight Leather will open the show, which is set to begin around midnight. Start your fall off right. Don’t miss it. —*MN*

**Os Mutantes**  
*Buster’s. 18+.*

To describe the spirit of mysterious metamorphosis sung into the world on the sounds of Os Mutantes



*Os Mutantes.*

tronics, free jazz, black metal, art punk, library music, hardcore and more, Hair Police transcend anything that they hear on their stereos, creating instead something entirely new and untouched.

Boasting over 40 releases in their almost decade long existence, the three members are also deeply involved in other projects such as Wolf Eyes, Three Legged Race, ATTEMPT and more. Be sure to get there early for the HP boys on Sunday, because it isn’t unheard of for them to fill the place up within minutes. Highly recommended for those who demand human emotion/over the top energy in its rawest form. —*MT*

**Kurt Vile and The Violators**  
*Al’s Bar. All ages.*

I remember exactly the first time I heard Kurt Vile. It was fall of last year and I had the radio on, tuned (conveniently enough) to WRFL. The simple yet perfect guitar refrain of the acoustic version of “Freeway” began, cut in with a somewhat bored-sounding tenor that seemed to be made for singing melancholy folk songs. And so it happened that fall of 2008 came to be distilled and perfectly held within that song.

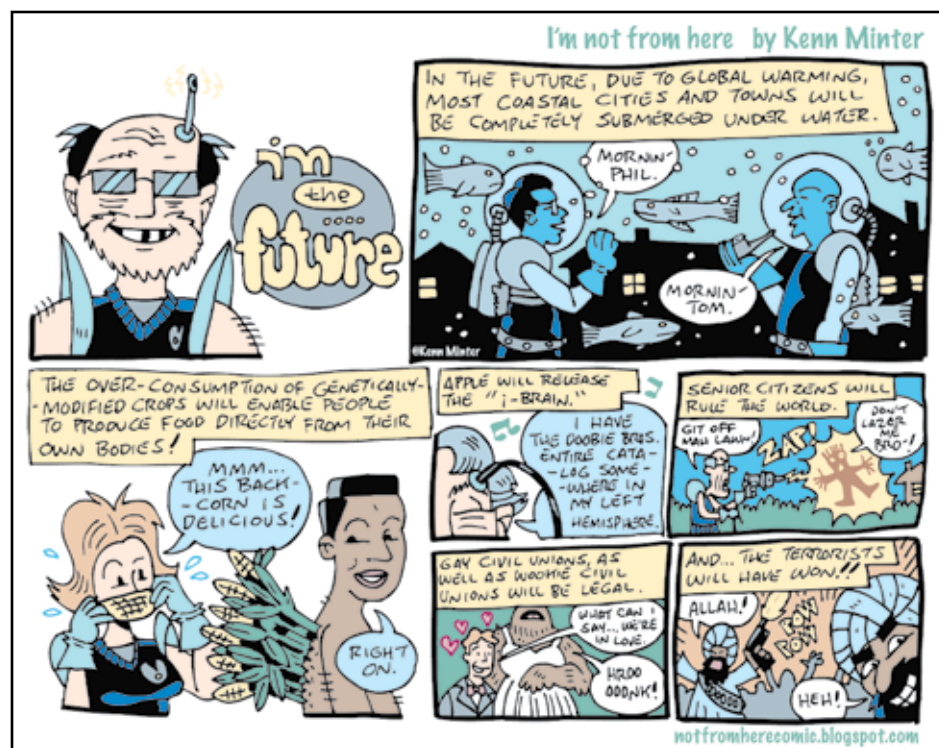
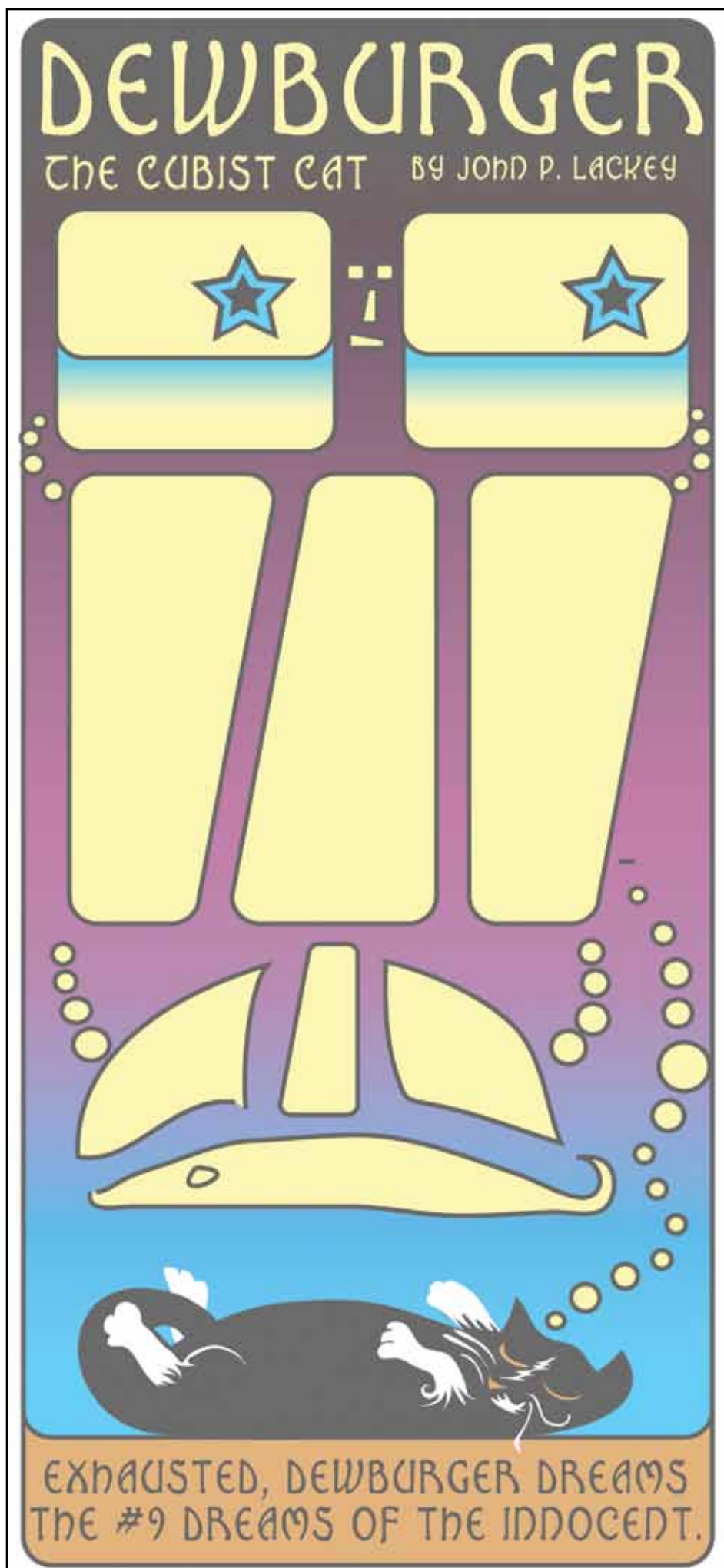
As a solo artist, Kurt Vile’s work

carries the same elusiveness as catching a snake in the twisting limbs of the foggy green jungle canopy. As soon as you’ve grasped this or that sound or sight of it, the creature has slithered off to find higher realms, enchanting your search all the more.

Much like the sneaky jungle viper—the Boomslang—Os Mutantes sprung in and out and all around the energetic revolution and voracious cultural cannibalism of the Tropicalia movement. OM gobbled up the visual art, theatre, poetry, film and music styles of ALL cultures—from the ancient, indigenous and folk to the wild flares of psychedelic rock—in its homeland of Brazil. The band and its music provided a fearlessly colorful opposition to the violently dark regimes of traditional authority, not only in Brazil but around the world.

With its multi-dimensional approach to sound, from fashion shows and visual art happenings to endless music all weekend, the Boomslang Festival quite strikingly resembles the very same vibrant environment of 1960s Rio and the movement it spawned in the Tropicalia world of Os Mutantes. So, if you’re into all of that, don’t miss the Boomslang festival and don’t miss Os Mutantes. —*Ben Allen*





THE  
HIVE

A SALON & ART HAUS

FEATURING 100% VEGAN  
PUREOLOGY PRODUCTS

•ZERO SULFATES •ESSENTIAL OILS, NO PERFUMES  
AMMONIA FREE COLOR - NO BAD ODOR!  
GENTLE ON HAIR

*Men, Women, Children Welcome*

156 Deweese Street • Lexington, KY 40508  
859.243.8545

oooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

Above/at The Hive  
*Deep Tissue Pain Management & Alleviation,  
Wellness Massage, Digeridoo Sound Sessions*

Phil Robinson, LMT  
*Therapeutic Body Work*

699-6441  
*by appointment*

*If you're interested in advertising in North of Center, please contact Danny Mayer at [noceditors@yahoo.com](mailto:noceditors@yahoo.com).*



*Roots and Heritage parade, 2009. Corner of Fourth and Elm Tree. 3:00 P.M. Photo by Geoff Maddock.*



# Opinion

## A Wall Street solution to healthcare

### Securitize life insurance policies

Investment traders, perhaps encouraged by the direction of health-care reform talks by our political leaders, are starting to make bets against our health. Literally.

A September 6 *New York Times* article by Jenny Anderson, a shortened version of which appeared in the *Lexington Herald Leader*, noted that securitized “life settlements” are the hot new “product” Wall Street fatcats have concocted since their last product, securitized mortgages, went belly up a little more than a year ago.

To better understand “securitized life settlements” requires breaking the term into two parts. First, “life settlements” refer mostly to life insurance policies. Bottomfeeders known as “life settlement brokers” hit the pavement in search of people—primarily the severely ill and elderly—willing to sell their life insurance policies. You might have a one million dollar policy, for example, and sell it to a broker for four hundred thousand dollars to pay for your outsized healthcare bills. When you die, the broker collects your payment. In effect, the broker is banking on you dying soon enough so that they may collect the money from your (unfortunate) death. The longer you live, the less money brokers make.

Life settlements have existed for years as a niche market. Financial gurus reportedly lost bundles in the 80s when they bet against the increased life expectancy of AIDS patients, who unfortunately for Wall Street began living longer as AIDS medications improved.

The second part of the term “securitized life settlements” refers to the way in which Wall Street investors package the life settlements together. Here’s a simple way it might work. The life settlement broker may have a good day and swindle eight policies from

sick and poor former life insurance holders. He can take those policies and bundle them together so that he can sell them as one “product” to investors on Wall Streets. These investors then come to “own” the policies on those lives. Now imagine this scenario playing out many times over—hundreds of life settlement brokers, hundreds of policies bundled together, hundreds of people buying and selling those policies. This process is known as securitizing, and the product they create are called securities.

Thus, a securitized life settlement is a “product” that one buys and sells on the “free market.” It consists of hundreds of people’s life insurance policies bundled together into a “security.” Investors make money when policyholders die. If policyholders exercise, eat right, get access to regular doctor’s visits, can afford their healthcare, and somehow stay alive and outlive their policy, then Wall Street investors lose. Put differently, we may at some point be put in the position of having to support unhealthy lifestyle policies (Eat McDonalds! Don’t walk!) because doing otherwise may hurt our financial investments—401 Ks, IRAs, municipal bonds, etc.—that need poor fat slob to die, and quickly.

Anderson reported that, unsurprisingly, many investment brokers see life settlement securitization as a worthy replacement to mortgage securitization, in which mortgages got packaged together and sold on the stock market. (Mortgage securitization was a key ignition point for our current great recession.)

Unlike the housing market, the market for death is, potentially, enormous. Anderson reported that there is currently a \$6 trillion dollar market for life insurance policies. The securities racket for these policies could

reach \$500 billion dollars on the stock market, or about half the amount of money in mortgage securities at its peak.

Rich financiers hope that securitizing life insurance will help solve the economic inefficiency exposed during the collapse of the AIDS death market. By using “securitized life settlements,” the new emphasis is on spreading out risk by mixing, say, leukemia patients with AIDS and emphysema patients. The thinking is that, even *if* a single group lives beyond what financial analysts deem is the economically precise time that they should kick the bucket, enough of the other groups will die off earlier and leave them reaping a profit.

The hardheaded financial gamble could even do more than just make someone else rich off your premature death. Some journalists and academics have noted how the new product will lead to an increase in life insurance costs.

“The most common defense of securitization you hear from finance apologists,” journalist Mark Ames notes in an *Alternet* article on the subject, “is that securitization lowers the price of borrowing—without securitization, home mortgages would have

been much more expensive, they say (ignoring of course how securitizing subprime loans destroyed the entire real estate market for millions upon millions of Americans). But in the case of securitizing life insurance payouts, the effect right away will be higher premiums on new life insurance policies... meaning securitization won’t even pretend to lower premiums, but rather will put life insurance out of more Americans’ reach before destroying the entire industry.”

In effect, the innovative product brings together two proud American traditions: fictitious money making and sick, malicious intent. It is, in other words, the greatest show of support for our current healthcare industry that Wall Street could ever hope to make. As Ames put it in his *Alternet* article, “Yep, this is what we spent trillions of dollars bailing out Wall Street for: so that they can kill us for profit.”

*North of Center is always looking for writers and photographers. Please email Danny Mayer at [noceditors@yahoo.com](mailto:noceditors@yahoo.com) if you're interested in contributing.*



## Grade inflation (cont.)

*continued from page 1*

rarer company here in Kentucky, a state where median household income, as Todd often points out himself, is significantly lower. And the bonus? This six figure number, \$168,000.00, equates to a bit over 400 percent of median income for Kentuckians. In other words, Todd’s *bonus* amounted to the median income of four Kentucky families. Nationally, just receiving the bonus itself would propel someone to the wealthiest top 10% of U.S. citizens—with about \$65,000.00 to spare.

But irrespective of whether I agree in principal that such a thing as Todd’s bonus might have merit, there is still the question of how Todd scored that high on his “test.” The UK CEO was eligible to receive the \$168,000.00 bonus because the UK Board of Trustees scored his performance a 96 percent. In other words, the Trustees gave Todd an “A” for the past school year. This wasn’t a case of Todd cramming for the finals in hopes of squeaking things out with a good grade; the 96 represented a strong “A,” four points from perfect. What’s more, Todd’s score directly impacted the amount of his bonus. Todd’s 96 sanctioned him receiving 96% of his total possible bonus purse of \$175,000.00. Had the Regents scored him at above average, average, or (perish the thought) somewhere below average, Todd’s bonus check would have shrunk considerably.

The question I want to ponder is whether this grade constitutes grade inflation on the part of the Board of Trustees—a group that for the most part has no experience working at a university.

Grade inflation occurs in the classroom when students receive grades that are higher than the level at which their work merits—B work getting scored an A; C students earning B’s; and such. The resulting grades thus “inflate” the value of less-valuable work. It is often viewed as an easing or lessening of

academic standards, and therefore as a quality control issue that needs to be watched. When I was a graduate student in English at UK, grade inflation was viewed as a vicious act that needed to be rooted out, violently if necessary—the teacherly equivalent of student plagiarism. We spent time every year helping to ensure that we did not inflate grades: I recall debating different strategies of grading emphasis and collectively reading and scoring identical essays so that we could “calibrate” our grades. I learned that an A should be reserved for truly “excellent” work. Not merely for “above average”—a B—and certainly not for some average schmuck who was a hard worker (a C, C+ maybe). An “A” signified “excellent.”

Keeping in mind the University’s inherent need to combat grade inflation, it seems right to ask whether CEO Todd’s grade has been inflated. I don’t want to quibble about whether he should have refused the money, I want to ask whether he deserved it in the first place, or whether his score is the product of an inflated value given to him by the Board.

It seems only fair to judge Todd on his progress achieving Top 20 status for the University of Kentucky. Though I personally do not agree with this University goal, Todd has embraced the challenge and gone so far as to draft a business plan that has benchmarking systems in place. These benchmarks were made to provide tangible evidence of UK’s achievement; they should be able to provide similar evidence for the architect of that plan. After all, while his performance is not the sole factor in UK’s national ranking, Todd’s CEO status should leave no question as to where the buck stops in terms of accountability. As CEO he was hired to fundraise and lobby and strategically plan for the university’s future. He’s been here going on eight years now, and he gets paid more

money than nearly all Kentuckians to do that, so any failures to account for long-term viability of UK operation should fall mostly at his feet. You don’t get to be CEO during pay weeks and a President on test days.

Here’s the story the evidence tells. Since 2001, the last full school year before Todd’s arrival, tuition has more than doubled, from \$3400 to \$7700 for 2008. First-year retention rates have remained flat. So have ACT scores (24.26 in 2000 to 24.40 in 2008) and new student High School GPAs (3.49 to 3.52). Student/faculty ratios increased from September 2005 to September 2007, from 17:1 to 18:1. When it comes to staff concerns, a Work Study survey found that “fewer than half of all staff respondents indicated satisfaction” with their salaries. Fewer than half felt that they had a “shared mission” with the university; fewer than half felt that their “advancement opportunities” were any good. Are these evidence of “excellence”? Might the numbers necessitate a downgrade to “above average”—even, all things considered, just plain average?

When compared to UK’s benchmarks, Todd’s “success” is even more questionable. The most recent Top 20 update found on the school’s website, released the year after the unveiling of the Top 20 Business Plan, benchmarks even less success. While UK trustees suggested inflating Todd’s salary to reflect UK’s Top 20 goals—the rationale being that we must pay for a Top 20 CEO—a glance at the updated plan show why Todd is paid relatively less than his peers: by its own measures, UK is ranked below every single one of its benchmark universities. The data in the report note *no* movement in the school’s academic rank. It remained in the coveted thirty-fifth position. When it came to undergraduate education, the school lost ground, retreating from 49<sup>th</sup> to 54<sup>th</sup>. Its faculty rank slipped from 37<sup>th</sup> to 39<sup>th</sup> position.

The numbers show little evidence of change for many of the categories Todd’s Top 20 assault is supposed to change.

Based on these numbers, CEO Todd’s performance—however nice a guy he may be—might merit something closer to “average” than “excellent.” Under his watch, UK has become less affordable and given its students a comparatively worse education, while at the same time it has created a staff that increasingly feels disconnected from the university’s mission.

This is no small issue. At the tail end of a FAQ page, the UK Writing Program defines the value of fair and tough grading for its students—that is, the value of resisting grade inflation. It reads, “If you are graded leniently, your instructor is doing you a disservice because he/she is neither giving you an accurate assessment of your work nor encouraging you to improve. By holding you to high expectations, your instructor is showing that he/she is not willing to let you get by with unsatisfactory work. Your instructor is demonstrating that he/she cares about providing the education that you have come to the university to receive.” What they mean by this is that going easy on someone does nobody any good in the long run. To be fair in grading ultimately requires strong standards. Losing these to appease the student does not help that student learn.

What’s good for the student should be good for the school CEO. We need a fair accounting of Todd’s value. What is the value of that 96 rating? This is important because unlike any grade inflation that takes place in my first-year writing classes, Todd grade value transmits itself into cold hard cash—nearly \$170,000.00 dollars cash this year and who knows how much next year—and it reinforces public perceptions about what’s working, educationally speaking, in our state.



WRFL 88.1FM PRESENTS

OCTOBER 9-11, 2009

BOOMSLANG





A 3-DAY MULTI-VENUE CELEBRATION OF SOUND AND ART IN BEAUTIFUL LEXINGTON, KY

FAUST • OS MUTANTES • THE BLACK ANGELS  
MISSION OF BURMA • ATLAS SOUND  
PAPA M • BARDO POND • RACHEL GRIMES [ RACHEL'S ]  
PARLOUR • MARK HOSLER [NEGATIVLAND] • KURT VILE & THE VIOLATORS  
HAIR POLICE • PSYCHEDELIC HORSESHIT • BURNING STAR CORE • PEAKING LIGHTS  
CASINO VERSUS JAPAN • BILL NACE • TEETH MOUNTAIN • DISAPPEARS • LUSH LIFE • ZAK RILES  
SAPAT • GA'AN • PEZHEAD • OFFTHESKY • STRANGERS FAMILY BAND • BIG FRESH  
THESE UNITED STATES • INVADERS • SOUND/VISION • TINY FIGHTS • EVERYONE LIVES EVERYONE WINS  
CABOLADIES • FORD THEATRE REUNION • WRETCHED WORST • TIGHT LEATHER • CROSS • THE BUTCHERS • BEDTIME • SOFT PAIN • LATIN HEAT

LATE SHOWS EVERY NIGHT\* • BOOMSLANG CARNIVAL (FEATURING SIDESHOW ACTS & A CIRCUS-THEMED FASHION SHOW!) • DORKBOT DIY ELECTRONIC MUSIC WORKSHOP  
AND SHOWCASE MULTI-MEDIA ART SHOW • ACCENTS LITERARY EVENT • ALLEY CAT BIKE RACE • LOCAL ART BAZAAR • MARCH MADNESS MARCHING BAND AND MORE!



\*SEPARATELY TICKETED

PRIMARY VENUE

BUSTER'S BILLIARDS AND BACKROOM

899 MANCHESTER ST. OTHER VENUES, TICKETS AND MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT

WWW.BOOMSLANGFEST.COM

WWW.WRFL.FM

WWW.BUSTERSBB.COM

MANY THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FRIENDS OF BOOMSLANG:

Alltech Fortnight Festival ([alltechfortnightfestival.com](http://alltechfortnightfestival.com)) • Buster's Billiards and Backroom ([bustersbb.com](http://bustersbb.com)) • CD Central • Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning • LexMark • Natasha's Bistro and Bar • Al's Bar • Hop Hop • North of Center • Gumbo Ya Ya • Bourbon 'n' Toulouse • Puccini's Smiling Teeth • Smiley Pete Publishing • Highbridge Spring Water • Barrel House Distillery