THE TATTOO

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Without Hillary's forgiveness, forget it

By JONATHAN THERIAULT
The Tattoo

Opinion

Hillary must be ripping.

On Sept 14, Hillary opened the paper to something that none of us can even imagine. USA Today ran a special section on the president's relationship with Ms. Lewinsky and even went as far to include a labeled diagram of where and when Mr. Clinton met up with his mistress.

The only way that I personally will forgive the president is if Hillary does. Otherwise he should step down.

I envision her forgiving the president something like this: they both step out of the chopper onto the White House lawn. Hillary has her hand wrapped in ice and Bill is attempting to comfort his black eye with his hand. Hillary coolly steps up to the podium and says, "He's forgiven."

After, she proceeds into the White House, closing the door behind her so that Bill can have some privacy while he answers another barrage of questions from the anxious assembled media.

If Hillary forgives him, without any sort of serious reprimand, she will be the biggest loser on the face of the earth. She has been stepped on repeatedly.

As it appears now they will get a divorce as soon as Mr. Clinton's term in office is up, she will look like she is a fool twice over. Being a lawyer, Hillary has had her battles in courts, and I say she goes for the win with this one.

If she doesn't, let Socks, the president's cat, take office. There's at least one thing we're sure of — he's fixed.

Paying lip service to presidential politics

By JOE WILBUR
The Tattoo

Opinion

Okay, so it seems painfully obvious to me that our President is a bad husband, comically irresponsible, an inconsiderate lover and terrible misogynist (to say nothing of this apparent obscene fascination with cigars).

This doesn't exactly paint the portrait of a guy you'd want your daughter out with past midnight, but impeachment?

I'd hate to misrepresent my generation as hedonistic and without regard for sexual morality, and, I must admit, if I were the First Lady I'd feel betrayed and ashamed, but as an American citizen I hardly feel gypped.

Is it wrong to have an affair outside marriage? Sure. Does it make you evil or incapable of running the country? I'm not so sure.

Kenneth Starr spends tens of millions of dollars to catch Clinton in something, anything, releases an X-rated report and demands impeachment. Every Republican worth his salt jumps on the bandwagon and suddenly the man is Hitler reincarnated. It seems to me (though I'm young yet) that this is, essentially, a ridiculous situation.

At first I was sure that I had no interest in the President's sex life. Quite frankly, I'd tell anyone who wanted to listen, I was tired of hearing about it ... and then I realized I was lying. The man lied about a consensual affair. It's not as though he lied about something of grave importance, like, gee, I dunno ... arming the contras illegally with money gained from selling weapons to the Iranians.

Still, he lied. That's enough. Can we trust him?

What it all comes down to (as far as the American people are concerned) is not at all trust. I refuse to believe that there are many Americans (Republican or Democrat) who feel that they are entitled to know what was done to whom, how many times and whether they enjoyed it. If we can get the information, however, we'll take it.

I think that we like sex and need an excuse to read about it. We like to peruse official reports that read like dime store porn novels for bored housewives and to read about the President being "naughty" with a woman half his age while on the phone with a congressman about the environment.

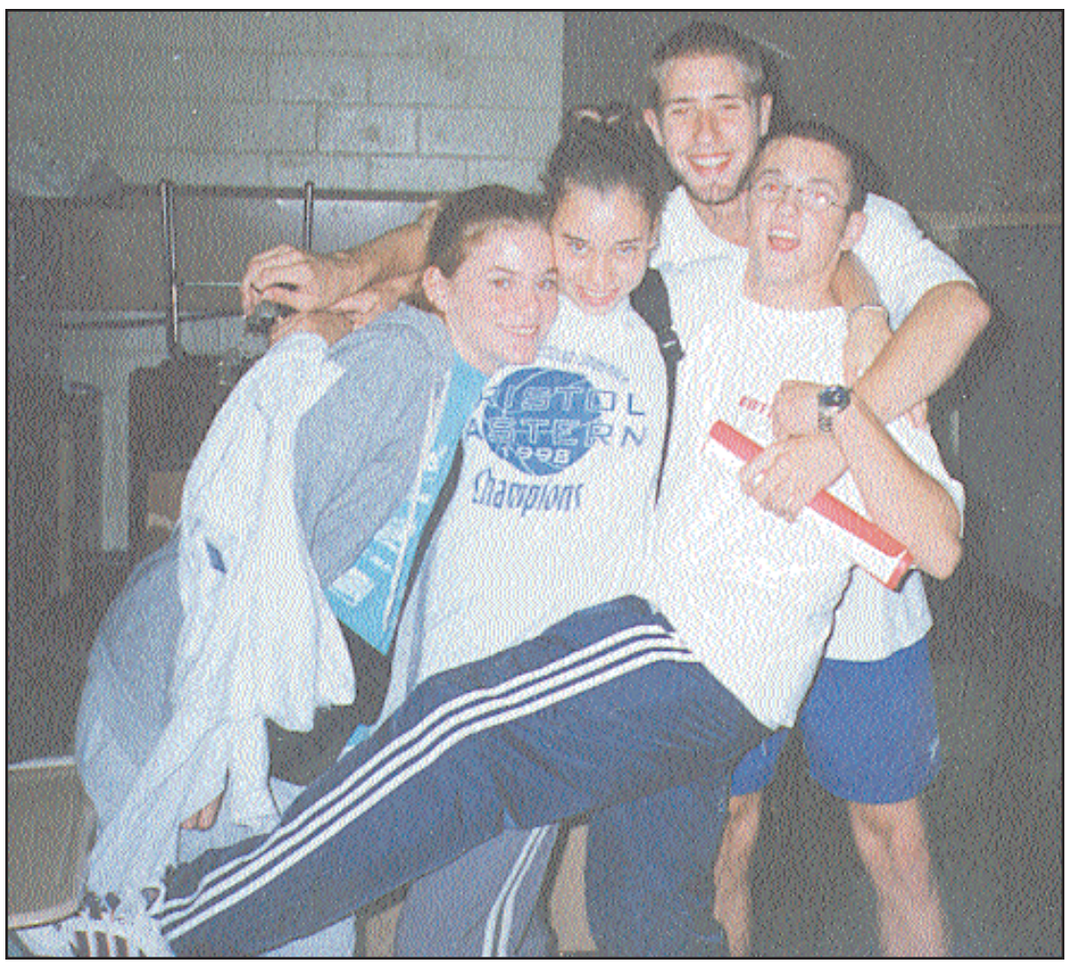
We want validation for our morbid fascination with the president's penis and its whereabouts. Maybe it's time we accepted our fascination with perversion in high places and moved on. I have.

Questions? Comments?

The Tattoo is published occasional Mondays in *The Bristol Press*. It is produced by a group of area high school students working under the direction of advisors Steve Collins and Jackie Majerus, both veteran *Bristol Press* reporters. We welcome your suggestions, comments and questions about this page or about *The Tattoo*. To reach us, phone Collins or Majerus at 589-5316 or e-mail us at SteveJackie@prodigy.net

Sex and laughs in Eastern play

By JOE WILBUR
The Tattoo



MERISSA MASTROPIERO / The Tattoo

Cast members from "Lend Me a Tenor," the fall play at Bristol Eastern High School, ham it up during a recent rehearsal. From left: Kristal Messier, Carol Stella, Troy Schinkel, and Scott Costa.

"There were no other Neil Simon plays left," joked Al Jones, director of Bristol Eastern High School's drama group, Thespians. But the choice to make Simon's saucy "Lend Me a Tenor" the school's fall production was a little more inspired than that.

"I saw it on Broadway and thought that it was one of the funniest farces I'd seen in years," Jones said. "It's very difficult to do farce well."

The play centers around the zany characters at the Cleveland Grand Opera Company, a modest operation that finds itself thrust into the limelight when world famous Italian Opera singer Tito Morelli (Mike Santoro) visits to perform.

"I love to be wacky on stage," said Santoro, "and it's a great character. I get to do the accent, and a lot of crazy things like try to stab myself to death with a fork."

The company's frantic general manager, Mr. Saunders (Troy Schinkel), hassles his staff, including the ambitious young go-for, Max (Scott Costa), who has his eye on a singing career.

The plot thickens when Morelli arrives with Mrs. Morelli (Molly Scannell) in tow. The singer is under a great deal of stress and not feeling well, to say nothing of his marital problems. "She's traveling with him and very jealous of all the girls that want him" said Scannell of her character, "and I love the fake accent."

The version that audiences will see on Dec. 4 and 5 won't be quite the same as the raunchy, sex-laden comedy that Simon penned a decade ago.

For example, during one of the play's racier scenes, Scannell's character begs her husband for sex, promising that it will "make everything feel better."

"There's no more sexuality than you'd see on TV or at the movies," Jones said. But "because of the age of the cast, we are making some changes in the language, the delivery."

Jones said the revisions won't hurt the play, but that "it's the art of the director to interpret the piece and to alter actions and deliveries in such a way as to bring out the best in his cast. That's what I've done."

Though rumors arose that school administrators cracked down on the play, Principal V. Everett Lyons said he "left any editing decisions to Mr. Jones" and "trusts his judgment."

The student actors say they are excited about the opportunity to get on stage.

Costa called acting "a great way to express emotion. Life is a stage, and it's fun to play someone else sometimes." He added, "It's also nice to be working with a smaller cast [than in the musicals], and I really feel that everyone is equal."

Schinkel agreed, joking, "Everyone IS equal...except for Scott." Schinkel, a veteran of three fall dramas, is known for his comedic ability.

"I've always been interested in theater," he said." It's really good to get involved early, in high school, and it's great experience for the future."

Junior Lindsey Watson serves as stage manager, making sure that lighting and sound are set, that everyone knows their lines and that "everything goes smoothly."

Life under construction at Bristol's two city high schools

Swampy floors, noisy, dusty halls

Tuesday, Sept. 1, 1998

Ahh, my first day of high school. As I walk through the halls looking for the gym I look around and notice how disgusting this school is compared to Chippens Hill. The gym floor looks ancient and the floor was so bumpy. The gym teacher informed us that because of the swamp underneath Bristol Eastern it is pushing the floor boards up. He also informs us that the floor will be redone and I definitely think it is in need of it. The gym floor seems inadequate for P.E. students and basketball players to be using. Hopefully next time I have gym it will be in the gym not in the bottom of a swamp.

— Bethany Raffanello
Freshman, Bristol Eastern

Monday, Sept. 14, 1998

It's the start of a new day and I'm on my way to Mr. McMahon's English class. Up the stairs and around a corner, I find myself in the midst of a cave-like hallway with no floor or ceiling. The concrete is gritty under my new Steve Maddens and I'm deathly afraid that a strange, unknown substance is going to fall from the ceiling and ruin my hair. I push through the mass of students when I spot the room and step inside. I take my seat and reach into my bag for my text book. Half an hour later, I am rudely interrupted from reading about Walter Mitty's secret life with a loud, ear-piercing BBBBBBBRRRRRRRRU-UUUUUPPPPPPP! I look up, startled, and realize that it's just the construction and go back to reading about the great Waterbury trial.

— Liz Tinker,
Freshman, Bristol Eastern

Wednesday, Sept. 16, 1998

A few days ago, my entire gym class had to run a few laps on the outdoor track. While some people breezed through it, I'm not athletically inclined and I huffed and puffed the whole way. When I finally finished that fourth lap, I collapsed on the grass. A loud rumble stirred me from my rest and I sat up a little to see what it was all about. I saw that a few workers had attached what appeared to be a giant slide to one of the windows. Huge chunks of plaster were being deposited into the chute in a flurry of chalky white dust, and the rubble was emptied into a giant dumpster.

It was an interesting distraction to the boring gym class!

— Natalie Minor
Freshman, Bristol Eastern

Are you living your life under construction? We invite our readers who are students, teachers or staff to send entries describing your own trials, tribulations and occasional funny moments. Keep it short and legible. Include your name and phone number for verification.

If you have one to share, give yours to a Tattoo staff member, mail them to us at: The Tattoo, c/o Staff writers Jackie Majerus and Steve Collins, The Bristol Press, 99 Main St., Bristol, CT 06010, or, best of all, e-mail them to us at:

SteveJackie@prodigy.net

Miss Mum: Much ado about nothing A worthwhile event

- Opinion -
Miss Mum pageant
Pro & Con

By AMANDA LEHMERT and JOE WILBUR
The Tattoo

"It's not about beauty," explains Chantelle Garzone, 1997's Miss Chrysanthemum.

"So they have a talent competition?" we ask.

"No," she says, a bit flustered. "It's not about beauty and it's not about talent...it's about..."

"Nothing!" we think simultaneously.

It's Bristol's Miss Mum pageant, and, like a lot of things in Bristol, it seems to be largely without substance.

We're in the balcony of the Memorial Boulevard auditorium Friday, looking down at 15 beaming, slightly twitchy Miss Mum hopefuls. We're marking our cards. It's like a horse race.

"Twenty bucks says a blonde wins it," one of us says to the other. "With large breasts," the other adds. "Has to be a blonde with large breasts."

We've come to observe the ritual, the premiere event in Bristol's annual Chrysanthemum Festival. And boy are we excited. We're going over the program for the evening and noting that the theme is "There's No Place Like Home". Oz references are clumsily woven into the festivities. A tune from the '70s adaptation *The Wiz* is featured. We note silently that there are no black contestants. We guess the rights to *The Wizard of Oz* are perhaps a bit pricey for the Mum budget. On with the show....

It opens with Garzone singing. It's obvious they put this at the top of the evening so that people wouldn't immediately flee the hall. The singing, however, was eclipsed by 15 girls, at least 5 completely without rhythm, bounding about on stage behind her, smiling as though it's their last night with teeth.

The introductions begin. Someone got out of Bristol. Someone went somewhere and did something. Her name is Amy Vanderoef, they say, and she's the voice of Ms. Frizzle on PBS's 'The Magic School Bus.' She's young and blonde. She's saying something. No one's listening. We sit like Linus Van Pelt and Sally Brown, hearing nothing more than strange, warped trumpets.

In order not to damage the reputation of our fine mayor, we'll refer to him as Groucho Marx. Groucho likes Bristol. Groucho likes Bristol a lot. He yells a lot about it into the microphone. Groucho says that these contestants represent "the finest city in the country." 'Nuff said.

Remember giving an oral report in the fifth grade, the one about *Treasure Island*? Then you'll understand how easy it is to forget the little things ... like your name, your age, and where you go to school. Bristol's finest, the girls you hated for having straight teeth and bouncy hair, bumbled over the simple details of their own identities. And yet somehow one really can't enjoy it. There's a sense of embarrassment. Not for the fact that you're there on a Friday night and paying attention, but embarrassment for them, displaced anxiety floating about, infecting you, an inner cringing for them.

They ask the girls some questions. It's impromptu. "Why do you like to be a girl?" Ms. Frizzle asks Amanda Warzocha. "Because we get to dress up and shop a lot." Warzocha answers. Groucho smiles, we're sure. We want to laugh because we think we'll cry.

Fast forward. More music. More smiling. Dancing. Fumbling. A lineup is made of young beauty queens: Ms. and Little Ms. Soap Box Derby, Ms., Junior Ms. and Little Ms. Bristol, Ms. and Little Ms. Twirl, and Ms. Junior Sweetheart. Just in case you'd like to expose your daughter to this stuff.

A blonde won. We knew she would. Really, they were all excellent candidates. They have to be because they represent the Mum. "You just have to be a good person," says Garzone. It's not about beauty or about talent. It's not about anything. Remember?

By HILA YOSAFI
The Tattoo

Most little girls dream about being crowned Miss America when they grow up. Some girls even participate in beauty pageants from the time they're in diapers.

I have always watched Miss America on television.

It's an entertaining three hours a year where I get to learn from women who are meant to be role models for teenage girls like me.

I like to learn the various majors of these college girls. And I can hear them sing or watch them dance.

However, I do not see the point in the swimsuit and evening gown competitions.

It's sad now that we're reaching the new millennium that this ridiculous part of the contest where women flaunt their assets is a deciding factor in choosing a young woman to represent the nation.

Am I supposed to look up to a beautiful, skinny woman who can pick out great clothes?

The question and answer portion, along with contestants' platforms, are the most important categories.

That's where you can discover a person's beauty on the inside. The latter is where you can see their cause, and what they can do for America.

I wanted to find out for myself what it was actually like competing in a pageant so I participated in the 1998 Miss Chrysanthemum Pageant recently. This pageant is open to any Bristol area girl ages 14 to 16.

My mom saw the application in the *Press* and told me to sign up.No way, I thought. I like to watch pageants but I'm not the kind of person to compete in them.

Then I read that there were no swimsuit, evening gown or talent competitions. I thought, great, I guess I'll try it. Friends had told me it was a lot of fun. Rehearsals were few.

It was a great experience. Through this pageant I met some nice people and I got to have fun without spending any money.

Although I didn't win a title, I can't say I didn't try.

If the Miss Mum pageant doesn't have a swimsuit, evening gown or talent competition, I wonder, why isn't there a Mr. Chrysanthemum pageant?