

opinion

Steve Boerner

'Get down' music becomes 'downer'

Recently I had the pleasure of meeting a budding musician. He wrote disco, and was ready to break into the popular music market. He said so, anyway. He called it the "big time".

In fact, at the time we were introduced, he was writing a new hit song. He said it would be one, anyway. I asked him to read me the lyrics. They went like this:

*Get down, get down, get down,
Get down, get down, get down,
Get up and get down,
Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey,
Get down, get down, get down.*

I was moved. The fellow was obviously an artist. His words touched the wellsprings of my heart. I could not contain myself. Through my tears I confessed I had never heard more beautiful nor truer lyrics. He was pleased.

The whole thing reminded me of another incident which I'll not relate. It is one of the darker blotches of history, no doubt, but the truth must come out. It concerns a man named Arthur Carp.

Arthur Carp's story

Arthur Carp was a music major at a small southern university. He was described by friends and neighbors as the quiet type, who spent his extra time in his room sharpening reeds for his oboe. No one, at the time, perceived Art as a threat. Least of all his girlfriend, Kathy Kumquat.

warp nine

Kathy was the first victim. No one knows what happened in those fateful final hours before Art was transformed into a deranged killer. They had been playing a duet. She was found the next morning, two slugs in the harpsichord.

Art went on a rampage. He single-handedly raided three supermarkets and shot out all of the Muzak speakers with his pistol while singing "Aria" at the top of his lungs.

Steals radios

Then he broke into four record stores and destroyed their stock of 45 rpm records. He ripped the AM radios from 32 different automobiles in used car lots.

He phoned three radio stations and personally threatened the lives of the disc jockeys and a 75-year-old receptionist. The disc jockeys reported him.

Then Art went after the downtown disco bars. In one he cleared the dance floor in five minutes, ripped out the lights, kicked in the speakers and shot the drummer.

The police finally caught up with him, just as he was pouring a pitcher of Schlitz into a jukebox in the back of a neighborhood bar.

"Get down!" shouted a policeman.
"Don't say that!" screamed Carp, and he rose, brandishing his pistol. He pulled the trigger.
Click.

It was out of bullets. Art flung it away and fell to his knees. The officers heard a low, animal groan coming from the general direction of his larynx.

Getting away from it

"You can't get away from it," sobbed Art.
"Come on, Carp," the officer said. "We're going downtown. Get away from what?"

"It's all around, around, around," he groaned.
"What is?"
"Why don't they do something about it?"
"About what?"
"Don't talk so loud. Oh, my ears!"

They hauled him into the front seat of the police car, never making any sense of his hopeless jabbering. Nobody, even his attorneys, understood what had happened to Art Carp. I think they put him away. I don't know. It was a sad case.

Thinking about all this depressed me, so when I got home I turned on the radio and tried to relax. The new hit single they were playing went like this:

Get down, get down, get down, get down . . .

Mary McGrory

Carter's men discover Americans Worried about weather, not politics

President Jimmy Carter, during the transition, appointed an anti-isolation task force. He wants to be sure he doesn't lose touch with the simple folk.

Here is a preliminary report from a pioneer member Washington not Sodom and Gomorrah. More like Stalingrad. Sidewalks covered with ice. People wearing boots, scarves, mufflers, old German army fur hats, mittens.

Natives not hostile but very distracted. Gather in large numbers at bus stops. Wonder if will slip on icy curb getting on bus. Wonder if bus will come. Near-uprising other morning at corner of Connecticut and Macomb. Twenty people waiting for bus. Bus approaches after long wait. Crowd slides forward. Bus is "not in service". Some disposition to rush bus. Ringleader slips.

Ask man at bus stop if he feels country is off to new start. Has muffler wrapped around head, can't hear too well. "two hundred buses couldn't start last Monday," he says.

Georgia warmer

Ask him how he feels about CIA. Says he is waiting for L-4. I tell him I from Georgia, hoping to attract his interest. He asks me why I didn't stay there—much warmer, he understands.

I attend cocktail party—typical Washington, civil servants, transition types, reporters. Ask attractive woman how she feels about your economic program. She says pipes in playroom had burst. Waited three days for plumber. Plumber charged \$87 for 42 minutes' work.

Ask reporter how he feels about new President. Says he has fallen in driveway, broken leg, still feeling pain.

washington winds

Try to engage distinguished-looking older man about new direction in Washington. He asks me your policy on side streets. Tells me about his street. Plows never come. No salt, no sand. Only afternoon sun. Place is like Donner Pass. His car died there last Wednesday. He called friendly neighborhood service station. Owner told him no tow trucks. Asks me your views about fair-weather friends in service stations.

Porch is skating rink

I explain your anti-isolation concept. He says his wife hasn't been out of house in week. Front porch, on north side, is skating rink. He thinking of attending Ice Capades to see Dorothy Hamill, hoping for pointers. I ask how he liked Inaugural. He says weather for Nixon's second inaugural was very clement.

Ask how he feels about your idea of power-sharing. He gets very animated. Thinks I am talking about power failure. Big topic here, many cases.

I join group in deep discussion, hoping bring up subject of reorganization. No opening. They discussing thermal underwear.

I go to McDonald's, am invited to join nice little family in booth. Wife is saying husband has not shoveled driveway. Husband says wife has not spread salt. Wife says local hardware store has run out. Husband says kitty litter as good. Wife says kitty litter smells. They want to know what White House uses. Promise to get back to them.

Getting home.

Explain your wish to keep in touch with ordinary people and their concerns. Husband says, "Right now, our concern is if we can get home. There's a patch of ice at the turn of our street."

Ask how they have enjoyed People's Inaugural. They haven't seen. Furnace broke. They spent day in local library keeping warm. Wife slipped on front step of library, broke toe. Cast for three weeks.

Drop in at house in Falls Church. Nice family, voted for you. Tell them I a member of anti-isolation team, anxious to know what they thinking about. Husband suffering from three cracked ribs. Fell down in shopping mall. Wife says husband should have worn boots. Husband says wife should mind own business. They did not attend parties, although intended to take in square dance. Wife on way home from hairdresser, walking in street because sidewalk glazed, was doused with water-slide from frozen trees. Cried all night.

Wife wants to know if they can collect medical expenses from shopping mall. I say White House hot-line will answer question. I ask how they feel about Soviet threat, they ask me if I think it will snow again, and is snow or ice worse.

Missed speech

They watched Inaugural on television. All faces looked blue, wondered if something wrong with set. Were arguing about that during your speech, so missed it.

Drop in on house in northwest Washington. I ask wife how she feels about women appointments. She says she would have applied if she had realized car and driver come with job. Tells me she gets ride to work, but her side street like, tundra, so ride leaves her off at top. She makes

way home in half-crouch, clutching car hoods. Asks me if I think she should give up job.

I inquire husband's views about Sorensen appointment and cancellation. Wrong question. Sorensen is also name of plumber. Basement pipes frozen. Wants to know if pipes ever freeze in White House. Tell him I will let him know.

Summary: People in Washington suffering from persecution complex. Unused to severe winter, feel imposed upon. Now think, talk weather all time.

Recommendation: Do something about weather. Otherwise, very difficult to get their attention.



letters

Words for which we look

"This is to what many pardon protesters object."—Editorial, Jan. 24.

The *Daily Nebraskan* is a paper at which I do not often seriously look; but I am glad that the foregoing sentence is one up which I did not pass. Prepositions are things up with which our students should not end sentences. All of us English teachers try to make sure that this is an error of which our students' writing is free. It is good to see that you realize this is a problem out with which you can help us teachers. It is a widespread bad habit out of which all our students should get.

I do believe that this sentence indicates a level of linguistic purity up with which the *Daily Nebraskan* will try to keep. And I want you to know that, whatever Winston Churchill and others of low taste may think of it, yours is the sort of writing up with which we learned people will all gladly put. One of those out of whom you must not run.

Dudley Bailey
UNL English professor

Ralph

