

arts and entertainment

Record quality suffers as producers' pocket profit

By Kent Warneke

Record-buyers in Lincoln and across the country are being plagued with poor quality sound recordings from major recording companies, according to Dan Geiger, manager of Team Electronics in downtown Lincoln.

"The problem started back when the record companies had the viable excuse of a lack of petroleum (the main component in producing the vinyl record) which forced them to produce lower quality records.

"The sad part of this is that after the petroleum situation had been alleviated, the record companies didn't go back to their higher quality sound recordings, but kept on with sub-par records in order to save money."

Record rush

Glenn Hild, an employee at Dirt Cheap Records, agrees with Geiger but gives another reason for the problem.

Record companies have "too much to do, with too little time to do it," he said.

Geiger said the disco boom has created a new record demand that is a strain on record companies as they try to meet production schedules.

The September 7 article in *Rolling Stone* magazine presented various theories about why American-made records are inferior and it all came down to money.

According to the report, most American record manufacturers are concerned with producing as many records as possible at the lowest price.

Press process poor

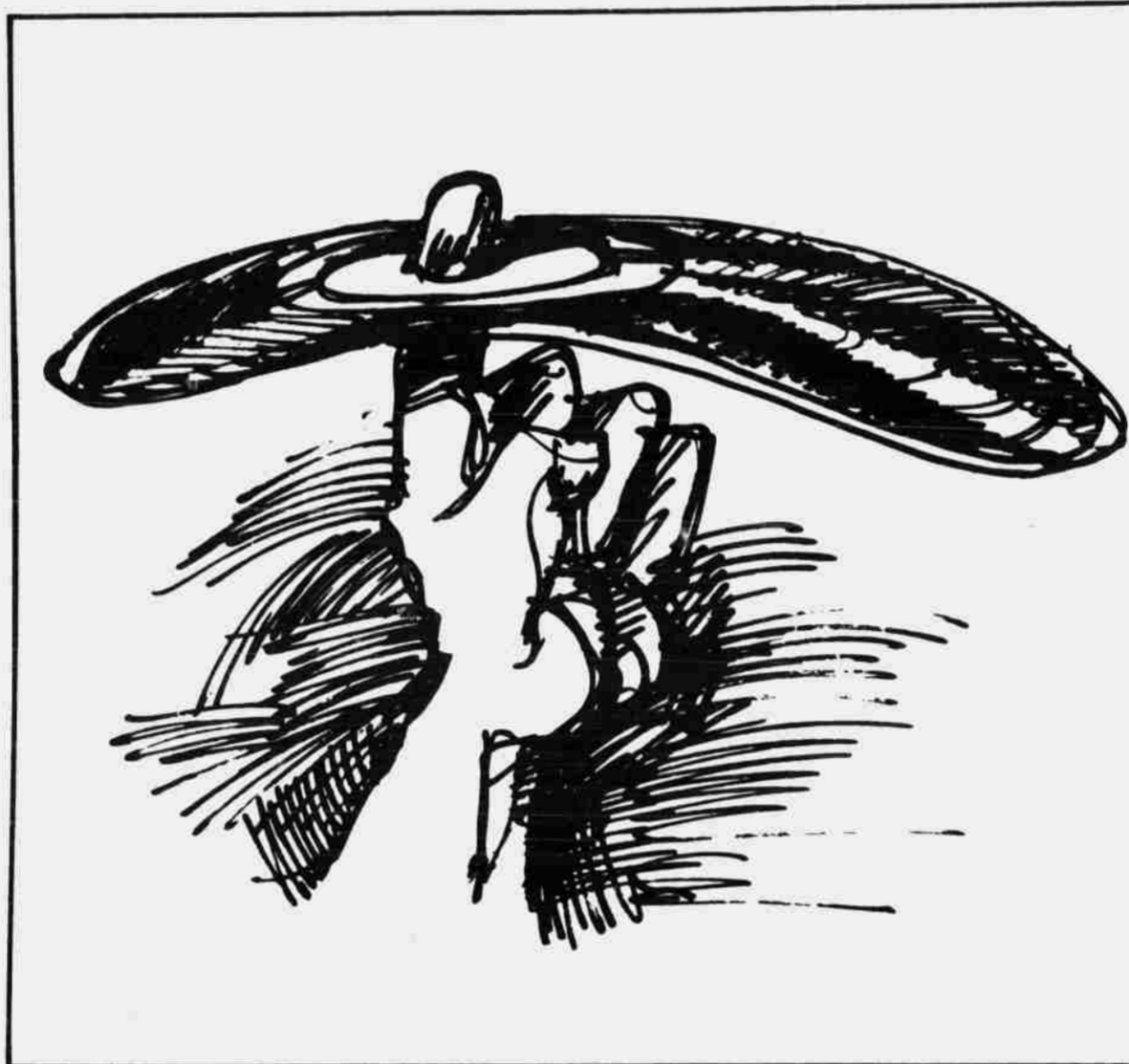
About three out of 10 records sold are returned to the place of business due to warping, surface noise and scratches, an estimation confirmed by employees at Dirt Cheap.

The quality of records are determined by the pressing process.

The pressing process is similar to making waffles in a waffle iron.

Two stampers (one for each side of the record) are fitted into a press and a piece of vinyl is positioned between them. The press heats up to 300 degrees Fahrenheit and pressure is exerted on the vinyl to mold the record.

According to *Rolling Stone's* findings, 1,000 vinyl records can be made from one set of the stampers with high quality performance, but the tendency of American recording companies is to stretch that use



to almost 3,000 copies per set of stampers.

Better stereos

Another problem is that modern electronic equipment is too advanced for today's records.

Hild said, "In the 1930s and '40s the record itself was far more advanced than the equipment it was played on, but today it is entirely the opposite case."

Hild and Geiger said American record producers could learn from foreign-made recordings.

"Stricter industry regulations and the expanding or farming out of major companies would help alleviate the situation as the great demand would be spread out more evenly and a little more pride would go into the business," Hild said.

Also, more advanced techniques such as laser beams that eliminate the turntable needle will help control surface noise problems.

Geiger said, "A better stylus and more pride can be helpful, but unless something drastic happens, like people starting to reject the low-quality records and quit buying them in protest, the situation will probably remain the same as it is now."

Rumors, remodeling haunt Temple Bldg.

By Kent Warneke

Never fear, the ghosts are not here!

It appears that, at least for the moment, the UNL campus is "safe" from everything but rumors of those haunting spirits in white.

According to campus folklore, the Temple Building located at 12th and R streets, is "the most ghost-infested building on campus."

For some unknown reason, a horde of ghosts is alleged to inhabit the interior of the 91-year-old building. The story of the Temple Building night watchman, who during his patrol, walked upon the darkened stage and all of the lights suddenly came on, may lead credence to this story.

The night watchman supposedly found that all of the doors and windows were locked and the light switches were in such a position that no single human could have turned all the lights simultaneously as it allegedly happened.

Ghosts set free

The story goes on to say that if the Temple Building is ever altered or destroyed,

the ghosts will set themselves free and cause havoc with the students and on the UNL campus.

The time for altering the Temple Building could be near as the College of Arts and Sciences is proposing a new Theatre Arts building for the campus and has already received money for the hiring of architects.

Director of Budget and Facilities for the college, Jim Van Horn said, "We have come up with a proposal that we favor, involving three phases."

The first phase would be new construction which would amount to \$2.3 million. The second phase would be remodeling the existing Temple Building, costing \$2.8 million and the third phase would be the acquisition of theatrical and sound equipment for \$669,000.

This totals approximately \$5.8 million, but does not include architect's fees, equipment and art for display, which is a requirement of the Legislature for all public buildings. This would bring the total proposed cost to \$6,332,000 Van Horn said.

"We outlined this proposal as the most appropriate at the September Board of Regents' meeting and are not asking for any action on it until the November meeting," Van Horn said.

Dealership affected

Van Horn added that this proposal would probably affect the Mid-City Toyota car dealership, located next to Temple Building, because the university owns the land.

ASUN President, Ken Marienau, a non-voting member of the Board of Regents, said, "The proposed Theatre Arts building is not high on the Regents' priority list for construction and in all honesty, probably will not receive funds for the 1979 budget year.

"Some of the members of the Board of Regents are concerned that millions will be spent on a facility that will serve only a limited number of students," Marienau said.

"The Board has put in a request for additional planning on the project and will likely place it on a waiting list for a year for more detailed discussion," he said.

'Dead Father' toys with intuition, builds confusion

By David Wood

The Dead Father by Donald Barthelme Quokka, \$2.25

First off, the Dead Father isn't dead or else, possibly, he is dead, and just walks, talks, and is moody, as if he's alive. You can never be sure with Donald Barthelme, and that's the only certainty in *The Dead Father*.

The twenty-odd people, who tow the Dead Father along by a cable down highways and through kingdoms, say he's dead and it is usually accepted by those told in polite conversation. Who's to disagree with a Dead Father who's robed, regally selfish, sword-toting, has a mechanical leg, and is 3,000 cubits tall?

"How do you get him around bends in the road?"

"He is articulated."

"No rigor mortis?"

"None."

"Then he is not properly dead."

"In a sense."

"Has it both ways does he?"

"In this as in everything."

Inadequate non-answers

The foreman of the towers, Thomas,

explained the paradox that way to a stranger, innocently assuming his non-answers were adequate. Faced with such a ponderous unreality, where could the amicable stranger start to question the implausibilities?

book review

A reader encountering *The Dead Father* has the same problem as the stranger meeting the Dead Father. The book demands and succeeds in suspending our rational faculties; it requires a tolerance for unfinished paradoxes, parodies, puns, ambiguities, anachronisms and articulation.

Barthelme conjures his fairy-world by distracting and confusing readers through re-associations, syntactic mischief, humor, by not answering questions, by teasing expectations only to frustrate them, and by misleading attention. Like the Dead Father ignores rigor mortis, so does the style avoid the conventions of proper fiction: plot, realism, motivation, mean-

ing, proportion, and grammar. We're left without our devices for interpretation.

"I asked him about organization."

"What did he tell you?"

"Destroy it in order to let the water flow freely."

Elusive integrity

Through the author's pesky mucking a dim feeling of artistic integrity lingers; an elusive connection survives through all of Barthelme's discontinuities. What it might be, though, is kept ambiguous, at best. It is no more than obscure aspects in slight array. How the reader assigns them is not apparently a function of the book.

"Young men never understand the larger picture."

"I don't suggest I understand it now. I do understand the frame. The limits."

"Of course the frame is easier to understand."

Some of the incidences in the book clearly do have experimental equivalent, such as dancing and trying to make talk with the dumb apes who have crashed a party and provoke jealousy among the humans — we know what Barthelme means. Or when the Dead Father, after

"attempting to insert hand (left) between the waistband of Julie's skirt and Julie" gets rebuffed, then with his sword mutilates a valley full of musicians — we can imagine that to be a parable easily enough.

Unanswered questions

But other understandings are not as accessible. For instance, who is the Dead Father? Why is it that Thomas employs nameless workers on his journey with Julie across the country? Is the Dead Father Thomas's past, maybe, or an inherited superego, or society, or maleness? Or, perhaps, the relationship is more pertinent than what it relates.

"We sit with tears in our eyes wanting the Dead Father to be dead — meanwhile doing amazing things with our hands."

Donald Barthelme, 47, has been critically noticed, and has won a National Book Award, yet, his books have never sold well.

That probably is because his prose are sometimes untractable, his ambiguities so open they appear frivolous and his usage is such a derived dialect that it is self-indulgent. His surreal brevity and his perforated conventions leave us feeling yipped, and many don't like their reader's intuition toyed with.