

# Arts and Entertainment

## Critic enlists staff for 'Trivia' review

Review by Chris Burbach  
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor

Foul! Cheaters, cheaters, cheaters! Lisa Merkin and Eric Frankel, authors of "Trivial Conquest," ought to be tied to a urinal and left in the sun to rot, to quote an old rugby chant.

The book's publishers, Avon Books, tout "Trivial Conquest" as "a cure-all for all your trivia-related anxieties," claiming it will give readers "the definitive scoop on the toughest questions at the next match!"

There's the rub. "Trivial Conquest" is not a reference book or some other type of educational tool — it's a cheating aid for that consummate cerebral board game, Trivial Pursuit. It catalogs trivia so readers can study for the board game, as well as appear to be knowledgeable. Here is Ron Frankel in the book's foreword:

"A pleasure to read on its own, this book can make you look and sound smarter, earn a wide-ranging reputation for knowledgeability — and become a master of trivia."

The problem I see with "Trivial Conquest," besides the fact that it just plain makes me sick, is it encourages cheating and phoniness. In that sense, it is a mean-spirited, purely capital-motivated venture which can only be bad for society.

Studying "Trivial Conquest" in preparation for a Trivial Pursuit game would be like practicing for a pickup football game; it misses the whole point, which is not to win, but to have fun. And reading the book to appear knowledgeable would be like sewing alligators on your polo shirts — you've got the look, but it ain't real.

Since "Trivial Conquest" could spoil fun and is merely intellectual make-up, buying the book would be a waste of money and reading it a waste of time that could be spent having fun or acquiring knowledge.

However, since Daily Nebraskan reviewers have drawn so much fire from readers this semester, I decided to poll a few staff members. I told them I would print their views on the condition that they agreed with me, then hedged in favor of journalistic principle.

Sports editor Ward W. Triplett III said, "I never read the book, but I think I understand its meaning. I don't think it's cheating at all; I think it's smart capitalism. People are always looking for short cuts. These people were just smart enough to think of it first."

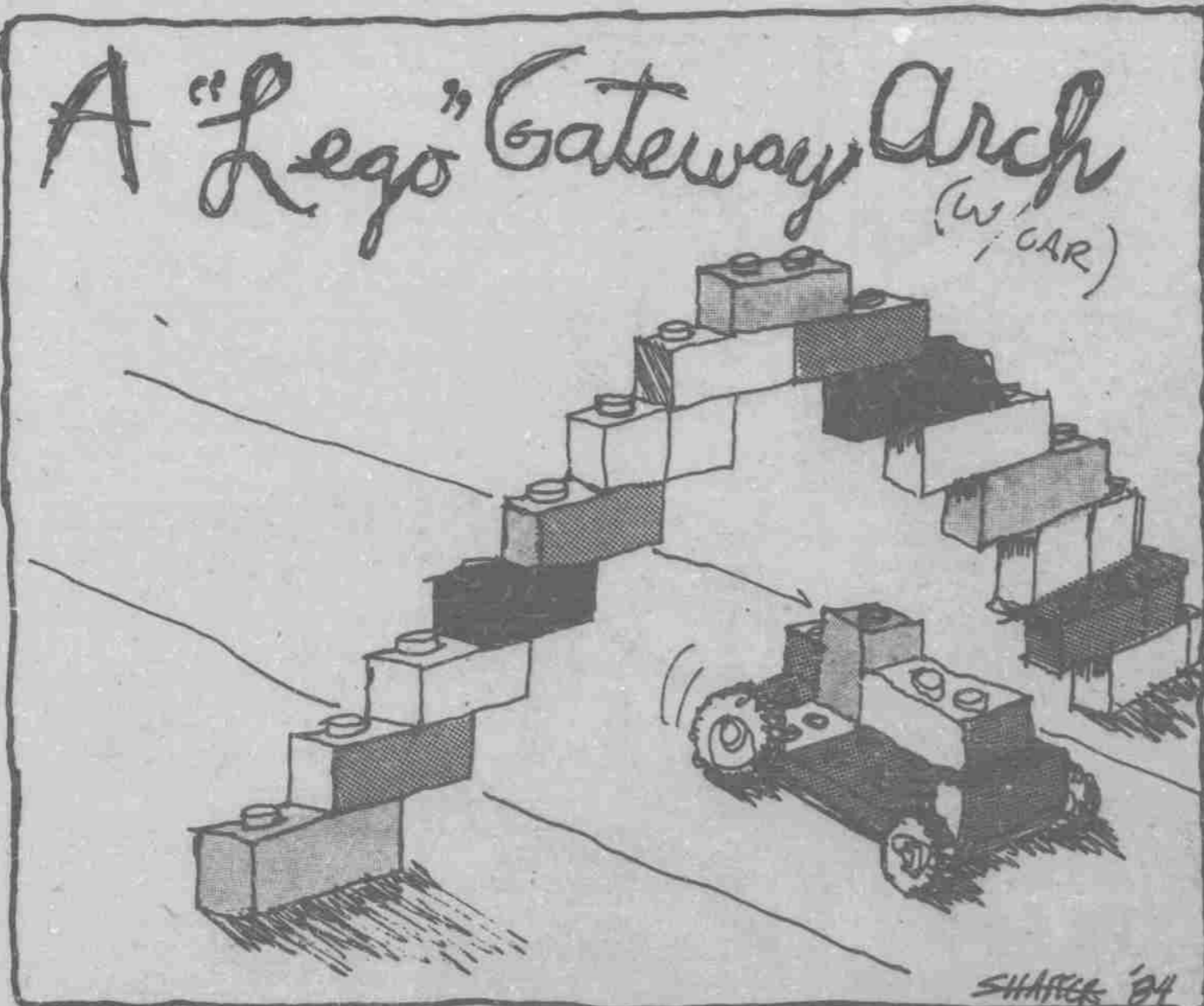
"It's blasphemy," said First Down and supplements editor Jeff Browne. "Anyone who would use that couldn't eat spaghetti with me. It's like cheating on a test — people should be expelled from Trivial Pursuit for using it."



Joel Sartore/Daily Nebraskan

Rip it up and throw it out — "It's blasphemy!"

## Lego promotion builds Happy Meal appeal



Careful followers of the toy industry might find this interesting. For the last four weeks, anyone who bought a Happy Meal at McDonalds also became the proud new owner of a Lego set. A mere \$1.78 and the guts to

blocks, and it is equalled only by Week #3. Complete with moving wheels and windows, this car/truck can be made to the specifications of a thousand different designs, and is quite possibly the most versatile set of the four.

### Mark Holt

boldly step forth in line and say "Give me a Happy Meal, please," were all that was necessary for a person to take advantage of this unique offer. Interested parties didn't need to walk on their knees, order in a falsetto, or pretend to be 11 to qualify.

McDonalds made a wise choice in selecting Legos to represent them. A Barbie camper would be too big. A Mr. T action figure might be bad for the sunny image of the Happy Meal, ("Eat them fries, fool, or I'll squash your head like a grape.") And other major toys, like G.I. Joe or Hotwheel cars, would be too costly. Legos are ideal. Colorful, compact and cheap. Let's take a closer look at each week's set.

Week #1: A brisk pace is set with this first assortment of

Week #2: Things seemed to have run over budget during Week #1 so this set suffers accordingly. Supposedly a barge, this uninteresting collection of plain old blocks is definitely drab.

The beauty of the Lego has always been its versatility, but containing no specialty parts, the barge falls sadly short of its potential.

Week #3: My favorite. This is the product at its best. I enjoyed the helicopter so much I bought two Happy Meals just to get more propellers.

Week #4: The airplane has no propeller, but it does have wheels and that gives this set its appeal. It's not much for the advanced builder, but when used in conjunction with the other three, life can get exciting.

If anybody missed out on this deluxe four-part offer there is still hope. Each McDonalds restaurant in town is raffling a huge Lego model of Ronald McDonald. I entered twice.

## Program will feature students' compositions

The UNL Collegium Musicum will present a free program of Italian and English music from the Renaissance and Baroque periods 8 p.m. Friday at Wesley House, 640 N. 16th St.

Recent compositions by UNL music students Anna Baker, Kathy Lococo and Lorraine Oosting also will be featured.

Guest soloist Sarah Stimatze, a soprano from Union College in

Lincoln, will sing two consort songs by William Byrd, accompanied by the viol consort.

The Wesley House organ, played by Jeff Stickney, will combine with recorder, viol and violin ensembles. A new and unusual consort of rebec, krumphorns and dulcians will perform Renaissance dance music.

Directors of the Collegium are Sandy Rhein and Priscilla Parson.

### BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed

