

Character's lives explored
'thirtysomething' scripts hit the bookstore shelves

By Julie Naughton
Senior Editor

thirtysomething stories
By the writers of thirtysomething
Pocket Books

About four years ago, producers Marshall Herskovitz and Edward Zwick created a show about seven angst-ridden yuppies and their lives in and out of suburban Philadelphia.

The show was immediately a hit. In its first year, "thirtysomething" won an audience of 22 million and an Emmy Award for Best Dramatic Series. In its following seasons, it grew and matured.

"thirtysomething stories" allows loyal viewers to experience new facets of that growth.

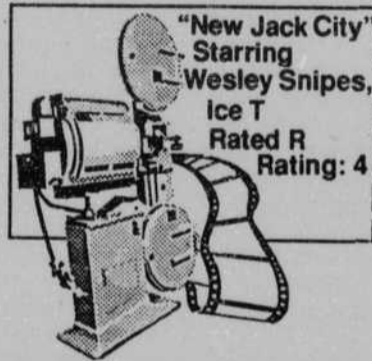
The characters of the show have become like family to a huge audi-

ence of 20-to-49 year olds; their problems, heartaches and joys are real. Die-hard "thirtysomething" fans will be in a delirious stupor, as they have the opportunity to see their favorite yuppies in this book, a collection of nine scripts from the show's first three seasons.

The scripts explore the lives of Michael Steadman (Ken Olin), an ad exec, and his wife, Hope (Mel Harris); Michael's friend Elliot Weston (Timothy Busfield), also an adman, and his writer/artist wife, Nancy (Patricia Wettig); Michael's cousin, Melissa Steadman (Melanie Mayron), a photographer; college professor Gary Shepherd (Peter Horton) and his wife, activist Susannah Hart (Patricia Kalember); and activist Ellyn Warren (Polly Draper).

See **thirtysomething** on 10

'City' proves Peebles' ability, but abuses anti-drug message



By Jim Hanna
Senior Reporter

Some people may remember Mario Van Peebles as the annoying character actor who starred in the equally annoying TV show "Sonny Spoon."

Now Van Peebles makes a leap

to the big screen by directing and acting in "New Jack City," yet another story about contemporary gangsters operating in the lucrative crack markets of New York.

His acting is still annoying — but his directing is superb.

This excellent movie consciously emulates other gangster movies with the rise and fall of a power-hungry gang leader. In this case, the leader is Nino Brown (Wesley Snipes), who masterminds the overrun of an apartment complex in a ghetto region of New York.

Brown creates a mini-city within the complex where he manufactures and sells crack. He creates a million-dollar-a-day empire and everything seems hunky-dory.

Ahh, but here come the cops. Scott Appleton (Ice T) is a streetwise, dreadlocked guy who desperately

wants to save his old neighborhood from the ravages of crack and crime. He sets his sights on Brown and is assigned a partner that he hates, Nick Piretti (Judd Nelson).

They manage to infiltrate Brown's network with a recovered crack addict, Pookie (Chris Rock), who gets hired to work in Brown's manufacturing labs.

When that goes bad, Appleton decides to infiltrate the system himself. He quickly befriends Brown and the stage is set for a final confrontation whereby he busts Brown and a whole bunch of people get shot.

The major problem with the movie (besides Van Peebles' feeble performance as Appleton's boss) is the oh-so-heavy message puked

See **CITY** on 10

LP explores experiences of culture, life

By Connie L. Sheehan
Senior Editor



"Fish Out Of Water"
Wayne Toups and Zydecajun
Mercury
Rating: 3 1/2

Ratings are 1 (bad) to 5 (excellent).

Ideally, one's first Zydeco experience should come on a sweltering summer night while shuffling to a cajun beat that won't let anyone's feet rest even though the night's humidity trickles down the backbone.

But if one can't experience Zydeco in a true Southern style, then the next best thing is to celebrate with one of the masters, Wayne Toups, whose skill takes up any slack for our existence north of the Mason-Dixon line.

Luckily, my first experience took place on that hot summer night three years ago at the Flatwater Jazz Festival where Toups made his festival debut.

And while ethnic music, like jazz, seems to have more zip when viewed live, Toups' recordings echo the same vigor as his stage show.

With that experience in mind, I immediately sought out Toups album, "Blast From The Bayou." Now, Toups and his backup crew, Zydecajun, have released yet another Southern stomper, "Fish Out of Water."

Zydeco, an accordion-based waltz and two-step music, has migrated northward over the last 10 years, up from Louisiana and the Acadian culture of its birth.

This Acadian culture jumbles the traditions of the fleeing French who traveled southward after Britain's victory in Canada with the pre-existing Southern culture awaiting them on their arrival in Louisiana.

With traditional Zydeco's ever-increasing popularity has come additions of blues, rock and country influence to the music, not only demonstrating the ease at which Zydeco can hop charts but, in the process, increasing its mass audience appeal still further.

Sung in pidgin French and English, heavily based in exotic accordion and harmonica instrumentation — the short, staccato tones contain the same capability as jazz to reflect an entire cultural history in music.

Zydeco music, whose ancestral originators were outcasts from traditional Southern society, speaks with enthusiasm of that uniqueness and persecution.

See **ZYD** on 10



Gerardo

Courtesy of Interscope

'Mo' Ritmo'— no instruments, no good Album is awful

By Jim Hanna
Senior Reporter



Gerardo
"Mo' Ritmo"
Interscope Records
Rating: 1 1/2

Ratings are 1 (bad) to 5 (excellent).

Any album whose credits list the music programmers and no real musicians is bound to be a disappointment for most fans of real music.

Accordingly, most people will dislike the debut album from Gerardo, "Mo' Ritmo," which was produced without any actual instruments.

Fans of synthetic dance music, however, will probably enjoy the album.

Gerardo is a somewhat interesting performer. In effect, he is a Latin rapper who uses both English and Spanish lyrics. Spanish is surprisingly effective as a rap language and his alternating use of both languages, forming a hybrid he calls Spanglish, is kind of cool.

Gerardo's music is also good for dancing. He describes it as a combination of styles: hip-hop with a Latin beat, funk 'n' salsa, a New Jack Thang.

The music might be tolerable, but the words he sings with the music are extremely pitiful. The aggressive, sexist lyrics reveal Gerardo as quite the pig. By the words he sings, you would think anybody who doesn't want to sleep with him is a prude or a slut he doesn't want anyway.

For instance: "I don't love you but I need you, would you rather have me lie, take a piece of your pie and say bye or be honest and rub your thighs?" or the exceptionally tender "My only addiction has to do with the female species, I eat 'em raw like sushi," — real sensitive

See **GERARDO** on 10

Muses' album merits praise

By Michael Stock
Staff Reporter



The Throwing Muses
"The Real Ramona"
4AD/Sire
Rating: 5

Ratings are 1 (bad) to 5 (excellent).

The Throwing Muses have taken their greatest step in the natural evolution of their sound. "The Real Ramona" showcases the real Throwing Muses, including pieces from all of the band's past albums and incarnations and featuring a much more mature band.

4AD, the premier innovative British recording label responsible for the successes of the Cocteau Twins, Lush and the Pixies, finds its first two releases of 1991 both featuring the finest work of the Throwing Muses to date. With the release of their "Counting Backwards" EP in the U.K. a short month ago, British critics have exclaimed great praise for the EP and clamored with great curiosity for the LP.

Here comes more praise. "The Real Ramona" finds Kristin Hersh, vocals and guitar, Tanya Donnelly, guitar and vocals and David Narcizo, drums have recently recruited bassist Fred Abong. Abong, a high school friend of the band members, was enlisted in October of 1989 for the Throwing Muses' tour with R.E.M.

The Throwing Muses only recently found their audience in the U.S. with the release of "The Fat Skier" EP in 1987 and "House Tornado" in early 1988. Following a short international tour, the band returned to the studio with their producer Gary Smith for the recording of "Hunkapapa," and the catchy "Dizzy" single from the album, both receiving international acclaim.

"The Real Ramona" looks to receive more of the same.

"Counting Backwards," the first track on "Ramona" and the first single is a volatile piece of pop, combustible with thicker full-bodied vocals from Hersh than on some of the earlier Muses' releases.

"Hook In Her Head" features the dark twanging voice of vocal and guitar of earlier Muses. Even the lyrics reflect the earlier, darker moods of Hersh's songwriting.

"When you die it's a shame, but your whole life's just the same . . . I'm so tired . . ."

The descending thump of the toms and percussion beat while the primal scream of guitars power the song. "Hook's" guitars echo the intensity of Lush's debut "Scar" EP from

See **MUSES** on 10