

# Ode to poets, presidents and gravy boats



Jim Hanna

On the outside, I'm a husky brute of a man. My hairy chest, my calloused hands and my chiseled biceps are but three testaments to my all-consuming masculinity.

The problem is that my manliness belies the sensitive nature of the soul that resides in my sturdy frame. Deep inside, struggling to get out, is a blossoming flower of sweetness and light — and I want to prove it.

I've never been much of a poetry fan. I don't really like to read it and I certainly have never been able to write it. Today, however, I ask you to indulge me and allow me to share a few samples of the verse that clatters around in my delicate heart.

For the first time in print anywhere, I weepingly present a tribute to the tender man living inside me. I give you the poetry of Jim Hanna...

**Ode to a Disturbed Artist**  
The Coffee Shop is closed, and I could be no more sad.

Life is so cruel and I like it that way, but soft,  
I search through my closet, are all of my black clothes dirty?

Woe! Woe! Woe!  
I need the shirt with long sleeves to cover the scars on my wrists.

My life is so hard, so so so so so so so hard,  
Why go on living in this abysmally indifferent pile of a cosmos,

Where's my sketch pad? I'll slash my throat with a paper cut.

**Ode to the President of a Major Land-Grant Institution in the Capital of Nebraska**  
Hmmm...

What should I do now?  
I've got a car, I've got a house, I've got a huge salary, I've got a spending allowance, I've got a parking space, I've got decorators, I've got just about everything I could possibly want.

So what do I do now?  
What?  
Go to work? Take charge of the university? Come up with bold new initiatives that will lead us into the 21st century?  
Earn my salary?  
Now that's an interesting idea...

**Ode to a Theater Major**  
I have more problems than you do, my friend

You're an alcoholic? Ha! I have a low self-esteem brought about by a destructive relationship with an abusive mother.

You're a manic depressive? Ha-ha! I have a profound inability to commit to a romantic relationship.  
Let's not quibble. Let's just admit

that I have it worse off than you do and express our misery through a play by O'Neill.  
Then, we'll talk behind one another's back about how bad the other was and e'er be cordial face-to-face.  
Then we'll bitch some more...

**Ode to a Gravy Boat**  
Why don't people ever write poems about gravy boats?

Huh?  
We've all seen them, most have used them.

Yet, their attributes go unversed.  
Pity the gravy boat—it holds a syrup of fat, milk and cornstarch and still goes unloved.

Alas,  
Few kitchen items can compare to the courage, valor, commitment and pride of the lowly gravy boat.

You can put your gravy in a normal bowl but it won't taste as good—and you know it.  
Why is it called a boat anyway?

Take the time to tell your gravy boat how much you appreciate it.

**Ode to a Pissy Teen With an Attitude**

What do you want?  
Just leave me alone.  
You don't understand me.

Get out of my room, quit treating me like a baby.  
Hillary is my best friend ever, Hillary is a back-stabbing witch.

I think I love Janie, I never want to see Janie again.  
You never let me do anything, you can't tell me what to do, I wish you were dead, I wish I was dead.

You suck, this sucks, that sucks, my parents suck, everything sucks, sucks, sucks, sucks!  
Can I have my allowance?

**Ode to a Brooding Poet**  
Darkness, Darkness, Darkness...

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Shaun Sartin/Daily Nebraskan

## Rockin' good time

Because of bad weather, attendance was low at the 11th annual Cornstock. However, Joel Valsnik, 5, of Lincoln enjoys the music of Fast Movin' Train, one of four groups that played.

## 'Toy Soldiers' held hostage by moments of poor writing

By James Finley  
Staff Reporter

After the little gulf war, one would think that America had had its patriotic ego fed enough for awhile.

The makers of "Toy Soldiers" must not have thought so. This teen-oriented film attempts to make America feel secure about its future by having five funny, handsome, smart teens save the day against the evil, stupid South American adult.

Unfortunately, the most exciting part of this cinematic experience is the preview for Terminator 2.

"Toy Soldiers" opens with Luis Cali (Andrew Divoff), son of a drug lord, taking over a Colombian courthouse just after his father has been extradited to the United States. In stereotypical fashion, this Latin American hothead responds by pushing a judge out of a helicopter. From there, Luis decides to kidnap the American judge's son from the Regis School, a prep school for kids who have gotten booted from every other prep school.

Shock! The smarter, quicker American government has already managed to get "Phil" Donoghue into protective custody. Frustrated once again by the obviously superior American intellect, Cali decides to just take the whole school hostage instead.

Unfortunately, Cali hadn't counted on having five prankish rejects not easily accept their captive state. The five, led by Billy Tepper and Joey Trotta (Sean Astin and Wil Wheaton), pay attention, gather information, plan an escape and miraculously get their plan to the military set up outside the school. What good American ingenuity and bravery!

At first the military rejects the plan, but when negotiations break down, they give the go-ahead for the students to try. Here is where



"Toy Soldiers" Starring Louis Gossett, Jr., Sean Astin

Rated: R  
Rating: 3

the action portion of this teen-action film comes into play. Here is also the most predictable portion of the movie. Just take a wild, wild guess on how this turned out.

Louis Gossett, Jr., as the principal of the school, turns in a credible performance as a hard-ass teacher who still cares. Astin and Wheaton both do decent jobs, but both are just a bit too famous to remain sufficiently anonymous in what is mostly an ensemble piece.

The great irony of the film is that both the best and worst things about the film are found in the writing.

One of the things that keeps this from being totally bad is the few plot twists that Daniel Petrie, Jr. and David Koepf threw in. A major character dies in the film, and someone else gets unexpectedly murdered. There was some nice writing here.

Also on the good side, this is one of the few movies that treats teen-agers realistically. They swear, they do stupid stuff and they can act responsible. They don't fall into the stereotypes of either modern Beaver Cleavers or

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## Stewart's 'Vagabond Heart' wanders through unoriginal music and lyrics

By Julie Naughton  
Senior Editor

Rod Stewart's 18th album, "Vagabond Heart," starts off strong with a catchy song. Unfortunately, the rest of the album dies quickly, mired in mediocrity.

The album's first song, "Rhythm of My Heart," is heading quickly up the Top-40 charts, and not without reason. Stewart's scratchy, pleading voice harmonizes nicely with Kevin Savigar and Richard Cottle's keyboards and John Robinson's drums. Kevin Weed's bagpipes give the upbeat song a Scottish touch, reflecting Stewart's Scottish background.

While the lyrics aren't particularly profound, the infectious melody pulls the listener along on a bouncy, cheery ride.



Rod Stewart  
"Vagabond Heart"  
Warner Bros.  
Rating: 2 1/2

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

However, most of the rest of the album drags. The majority of the lyrics have a sameness to them, along with recycled pop instrumentals that Stewart has used on nearly everything he's done to date.

"Rebel Heart" follows quickly on

the heels of "Rhythm of My Heart," and immediately disappoints. The song consists of Stewart screaming "rebel heart" with a few other words interwoven. The guitars, drums and sax could have come from any one of a number of Stewart songs; nothing makes their sound distinctive here. The predominant feeling for this song is "so what?"

Ditto for "Broken Arrow," "It Takes Two," "When A Man's In Love," and the other five cuts that make up this compilation.

Stewart seems to fall into the monotony trap on nearly all of his albums. He will have one — sometimes two — strong cuts (on his last, "Forever Young" and "Downtown Train") while the rest of the album

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Courtesy of Warner Bros.