

JAY CRUSE

Some pop icons lack immortality

So Nancy Kerrigan is in first place going into today's figure skating competition, and Tonya Harding is in 10th.

This Skategate spectacle will, for all practical purposes, end tonight and for some people, it is none too soon. Nonetheless, CBS will enjoy a ratings bonanza.

The women's figure skating long program is always the most-watched event of the Winter Olympics, in the United States at least. The good girl/bad girl conflict has added dimensions — and viewers — to tonight's drama. Even those people sick to death of the whole affair will tune in or at least seek out the results.

Tonight's competition has been elevated to the level of a pop culture phenomenon, another example of how television and other entertainment media are able to manufacture reference points in individuals' memories. People will tune in to build a mnemonic device foundation upon which to build memories of where they were in February 1994.

Am I losing you, faithful reader? Travel back through time with me. Who shot J.R.? We found out in November 1980. I remember it was my friend Toby's birthday, and he invited a bunch of guys over that night to build Lego castles.

The day the space program faced a fatal setback? This was January 1986. I was heading upstairs to my junior high locker before third period when the people in front of me were talking about it.

Many shared memories can be discussed when someone of Generation X mentions specific "Little House On The Prairie" or "The Dukes Of Hazard" episodes. (Okay, the General Lee always got away. Bad example.) "Reality Bites," yet another supposed defining movie of this generation, makes references to "Planet Of The Apes" and "Frampton Live," and bonding ensues. Winona Ryder and Janeane



I don't see songs like "Nuthin' but a G Thang" and "I'd Do Anything for Love" being claimed as the soundtrack to anyone's adolescence.

Garofalo dance to "My Sharona" at the Kwik E Mart.

Which brings me to music — the other bonding basis of this, and every other, generation. Tuesday night on VH-1, I was taken back to "Mickey" by Toni Basil, "Come On Eileen" by Dexy's Midnight Runners, and "Venus" by Bananarama. All hail the 1980s when pop music was pop music.

Watch the commercials tonight for what CBS promises will be the Next World Event, the 1994 Grammys. Sorry CBS, you drew me in the last two weeks, but we cut ties after tonight. I won't be watching the Grammys. Pop music has died. We've entered a vacuum of memorable music similar to the early 1970s.

Michael Jackson is now perceived as Chester the Molester. Madonna has passed the threshold of listenability of even her most ardent fans. Whitney Houston, Eric Clapton, and Metallica just don't cut it. Pop music needs some new freaks of nature, or at least music that just cheers people up. I don't see songs like "Nuthin' but a G Thang" and "I'd Do Anything for Love" being claimed as the soundtrack to anyone's adolescence.

My favorite hot, trashy reading, Entertainment Weekly, says pop music is in search of its Next Big Thing, someone to take the music industry into the next century. OK, OK, if no one else wants to, I'll volunteer.

September 1995 will bring the release of "Ran Off to Join the Circus," the debut of J. Forget first names, the

new trend will be just first letters. Rolling Stone gives the album five stars: "J combines gangsta rap, country swing and calliope music to create a melodic, eclectic masterpiece".

Performing in clownface, my world tour will feature a troupe of elephant and trained seal backup dancers, with large protests staged outside by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

In an effort to appease PETA and recognize my roots, I'll change my stage name to Jaybird for my second release in April 1997, "Naked as a Jaybird." With a well-placed, recently-legislated parental warning sticker from newly elected President Tipper Gore, sales will go through the roof. Rolling Stone, however, gives the release two and a half stars: "Jaybird succumbs to the common elements of nudity and explicit lyrics to sell a few records. What a shame."

July 1998 will mark the pinnacle of my career with a week of sold-out concerts in Memorial Stadium. Head Coach Kevin Rameakers will give the artificial turf-wrecking shows two and a half thumbs up.

After a lip-synching scandal that makes Milli Vanilli look like Mother Teresa, literally, Jaybird hangs up his oversized red shoes.

So until my 15 minutes begin, I'll be enjoying Tonya Harding's last few seconds, especially if she skates her routine to "We Got the Beat" by the Go-Go's. Which reminds me of the time ...

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JUSTIN FIRESTONE

Intelligent idiots threaten nation

It has come to my attention recently that many people think our country is creating great problems for future generations. It is our responsibility to fix these problems before they become too large to solve.

The ever-increasing national debt is often blamed for ruining our economy. Violent crimes are said to be on the increase, along with alcohol and drug abuse. It seems like everyone thinks our health care system needs restructuring.

I, however, have seen through all of these problems and found their one true source: idiots.

Yes, the greatest threat to our country is the enormous population of idiots within its borders who cause problems for everyone else. These aren't just any idiots, though. These idiots are intelligent and must be stopped at any cost.

For instance, the idiots know when I'm in a hurry on campus. I don't want to spend any more time on campus than I have to, but idiots always impede my progress. They band together, walking slowly in a huge group in front of me. I can't get around them, and I can't go through them, so I become part of the group.

Once inside the group, I have a chance to hear what they talk about.

"Gee, this weather sucks."

"Yeah, it's cold out."

"Look, snow!"

This prompts me to enter the conversation with: "You know, it is winter, and it's usually cold this time of year."

They stare at me because they know I don't belong in their group. I said something that wasn't idiotic, and I am obviously not an idiot. Idiots also like to congregate in the middle of a hallway or on a flight of stairs.

Other idiots you might encounter on campus seem to be attracted to the Nebraska Union. Usually they want you to take some coupons from them



The scariest idiots are the "vidiots." These are the idiots who are still trying to find the "Minus World" in Super Mario Bros.

or read propaganda about saving the planet.

I vividly recall hundreds of environmental pamphlets strewn about campus. Not only were these a waste of paper, but they were littering an otherwise spotless campus.

The most interesting idiot, of course, is "Brother Jed," the man whose goal in life is to yell at college students walking by Broyhill Fountain. At least he only visits yearly.

Idiots, of course, can be found on the town and at home, too. They seem to be attracted to the movie theaters and performance halls.

I attended "Porgy and Bess" Saturday night and was completely surrounded by idiots. A young lady behind me was ever-so observant when she noticed that the detective was a white man.

"That's a white man. That's a white man!" she whispered to her date. Yes indeed, she had the amazing ability to deduce the detective's race from a distance. Like I said, these are smart idiots.

She talked throughout the performance, paying no attention, and for some reason, she had to ask her date what was happening plotwise.

In front of me, a group of three people insisted on laughing throughout the show. There were funny parts, but I'm not sure Gershwin wanted the audience to react with laughter when someone was murdered. It took great constraint and effort on my part to avoid smacking them upside the head

repeatedly with my program.

At the movies, it always seems like I sit near someone who asks my friends and me if we're going to talk through the whole movie. They usually ask this during the opening trailers and credits. Then as we watch the actual movie quietly, they grunt a lot and say "oh, good" whenever anything happens.

These are no doubt the same idiots who keep the "Star Trek Hour" on the home shopping networks in business. No normal person would want a plaque of Scotty with James Doohan's signature or the "Star Trek" chess set with hand-carved pewter figurines. I'm pretty sure these are the same people responsible for the amazing success of the Ray Stevens and Victor Borge videos.

The scariest idiots are the "vidiots." These are the idiots who are still trying to find the "Minus World" in Super Mario Bros. Maybe you'll see them in the Union trying to perform Shang Tsung's Sub-Zero fatality on Mortal Kombat II. Vidiots buy brand-new \$1,000 computers simply to run the latest video games on them.

Idiots may be everywhere, but with time and proper training, we can teach them to be normal. We can convince them that "Star Wars" is much better than "Star Trek," and maybe we can convince them to let us play their neat computer games sometime.

Firestone is a sophomore economics major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

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