

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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## Grandpa not just another roommate

By Joel Strauch  
Film Critic

As bad as your roommate may seem to be, at least he's not your 107-year-old grandfather.

TV's "Columbo" (Peter Falk) returns as a cynical and often annoying old man in "Roommates," an entertaining film inspired by a true story.

Michael Holeczek (D.B. Sweeney) was left an orphan and would have been put in a home if not for the intervention of his fiery grandfather Rocky (Falk).

Rocky raises his grandson and continues to guide him into manhood when the two become roommates during Michael's college years as a pre-med.

Rocky is kicked out of his condemned building and moves in with Michael, who lives in a typical college house with five other roomies — students from China to whom Michael is giving English lessons.

Michael has difficulties adjusting to his grandfather's domineering attitude, but quickly rediscovers the special bond that has grown between them.

When romance blossoms in Michael's life, Rocky points out the horrors of living in sin, and the two must span the huge generation gap that threatens to cost Michael both his new-found love and his grandfather.

The two resolve their tremendous differences, and Rocky serves as Michael's mentor as he gets married, becomes a doctor and raises a family.

Rocky tenaciously clings to life to ensure that Michael can learn all of life's lessons from him.

The film is enjoyable and often hilarious, due to Rocky's biting wit and the situations in which the roommates find themselves stuck.

But it provides traumatic ups and downs, making the audience laugh one minute and burst into tears the next.

### The Facts

**Film:** "Roommates"

**Director:** Peter Yates

**Stars:** Peter Falk, D.B. Sweeney

**Rating:** PG

**Grade:** B

**Five Words:** Roomies' generation gap creates humor.

There seems to be a Hollywood fascination with death, and the movie world won't seem to let up.

This is another film that requires a box of Kleenex for those who couldn't make it through "Old Yeller" without drowning the people in the row in front of them.

The acting in the film is solid, providing a believability that might otherwise have been difficult to attain with the often far-fetched plot.

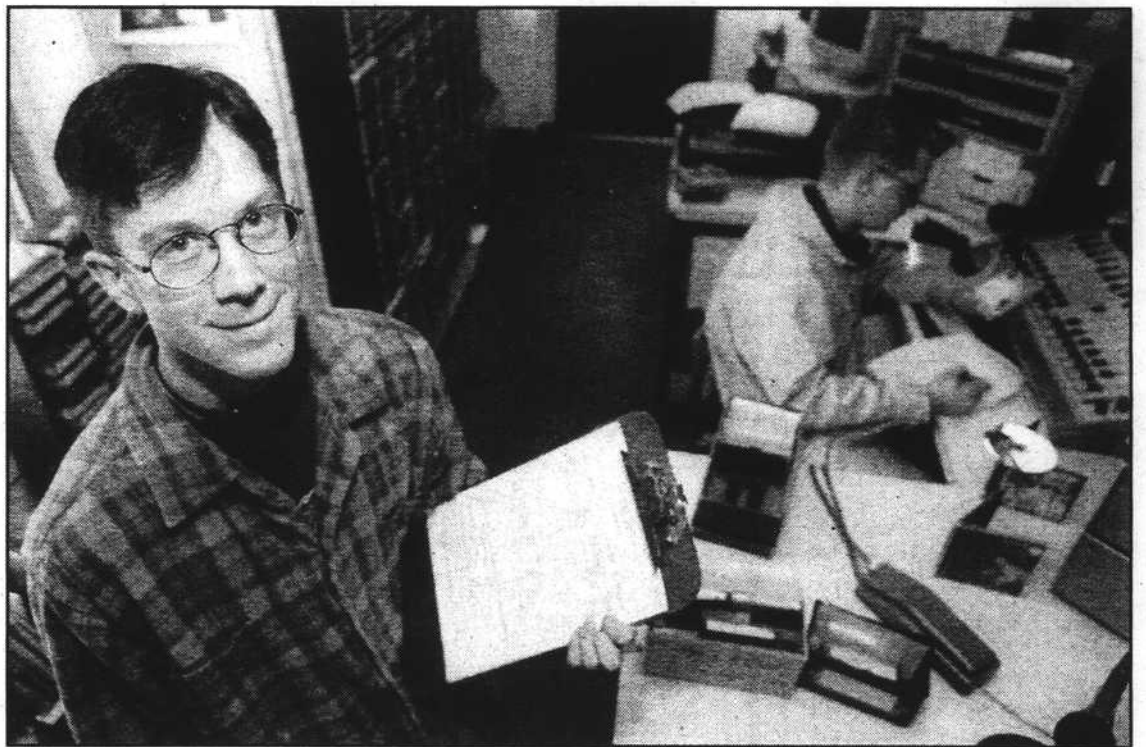
Falk is fantastic. His portrayal of an elderly man who refuses to let himself grow old gives hope to those of us who are just realizing our mortality and those who are already coasting down the hill.

D.B. Sweeney is equally good as the grandson who wants his grandfather to admit that he is an adult and let him make uninfluenced decisions.

The audience at the film would have fit in quite well at a bingo hall, and it was refreshing to see a film without boisterous teenagers babbling about their petty problems.

The crowd was completely captivated by the story and the only sounds were the laughs and sobs that the emotional roller coaster of the movie dictated.

"Roommates" is no Oscar shoe-in for next year, but it is a pleasurable way to spend an evening and it's clean enough to bring the whole family.



Gerik Parmele/DN

Kevin Gregorius, a sophomore broadcasting major and KRNU music director, stands in the KRNU studios Tuesday afternoon as disc jockey James Hruska, a sophomore broadcasting major, gets music ready to play over the air.

## KRNU stays on the edge

By Jeff Randall  
Staff Reporter

Somebody stole the music. That's how Andy Fairbairn, one of KRNU's four music directors, feels about college music's recent shift toward the mainstream.

"It's good to see that some really talented bands are getting the recognition they deserve," Fairbairn said. "But at the same time, it's a little disconcerting. It's like they've been taken away from us in a sense."

"We used to be able to say 'This is something different, not many people listen to this.' Now everybody listens to it."

It all started a few years ago, when bands like Nirvana, formerly shunned by Top-40 radio, suddenly became the Next Big Things. Ever since then, Fairbairn said, things have changed dramatically in the world of music. And those changes have affected KRNU, the station staffed and directed by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

broadcasting department.

Fairbairn said college music — often labeled as alternative — is becoming more popular because of an aging audience.

"Basically, the people that grew up listening to this type of music, either in college or in high school, have grown up," he said. "They have entered the professional world and their disposable incomes are being used to support new music."

Now more than ever, the categories and labels attached to music are becoming increasingly blurred, Fairbairn said. But one label in particular makes Fairbairn cringe.

"The word 'alternative' just sucks," he said. "I mean, what is alternative supposed to mean?"

"It used to mean anything that wasn't played on Top-40 radio and wasn't seen on MTV. But now a lot of those bands aren't alternative at all if you use that definition."

"Indie," is also used to describe this type of music. The word came

into use to describe artists who were on independent record labels.

"But that doesn't fit either," Fairbairn said. "I tend to think of music as either good or bad, and that's where it ends."

In the past two years, KRNU has seen its near-monopoly on new music in Lincoln disappear. KYNN (101.9, The Edge) has recently switched from country to alternative music. And KKNB (104.1, The Planet) has been offering alternative rock in the Lincoln market for almost two years.

Although these stations may have infringed on KRNU's formerly exclusive position, Fairbairn said KKNB and KYNN pose no threat to KRNU's success or failure.

"I don't really see it as competition at all," he said. "They play the same songs over and over again. We try to give our listeners some variety."

See KRNU on 10

## Films descend on Lincoln

By Gerry Beltz  
Senior Reporter

This weekend should be busy for local movie theaters.

"Roommates" opens today at the Stuart and Edgewood 3 Theaters, and stars D.B. Sweeney and Peter Falk. A 107-year-old man (Falk) is taken in by his grandson (Sweeney) much in the same way that the reverse was done years before when the child's parents died.

Although he will die soon, the grandfather is determined to teach his grandson about life. This one looks like a two-hankie flick.

For the horror buffs, "The Mangler" creeps into the Douglas 3 Theater today.

Based on a short story by Stephen King about a piece of dry-cleaning equipment that suffers from demonic possession, "The Mangler" is directed by Tobe Hooper ("Poltergeist"), and stars Robert Englund.

No, this is not a joke.

In another flick, after being clinically dead for over an hour, Hatch Harrison (Jeff Goldblum) can see through the eyes of a killer — who can see through Hatch's eyes

— in "Hideaway," starting today at the Lincoln 3 Theater.

Co-starring Christine Lahti and Alicia Silverstone, "Hideaway" will be one for the psychological-thriller crowd.

For the kids, Chevy Chase makes another attempt at pulling his career out of the toilet with "Man of the House," opening today at the Plaza 4 and East Park 3 Theaters.

Jonathan Taylor Thomas ("Home Improvement") is Ben, a kid who doesn't want Mom (Farrah Fawcett) to marry Jack (Chase), so he spawns several schemes to drive him away.

"Pulp Fiction" makes its long-awaited return to the capital city, dropping into the Cinema Twin.

Among its seven Oscar nominations include Best Picture, Actor (John Travolta), Director (Quentin Tarantino) and Supporting Actress (Uma Thurman).

Students who are either near-broke or "Trekkies," can beam down to the StarShip 9, where "Star Trek: Generations" starts today.

Kirk and Picard, two legendary captains, may not share a bridge, but they share a cabin.

## Live entertainment abounds

By Dawn Brunke  
Staff Reporter

Pushin' Skinny will bring their unusual sound to Knickerbockers, 901 O St., on Saturday.

There are two things that make this band so original. The first is how the band formed. All four members belong to Sigma Nu Fraternity, and they began playing around with the idea of forming a band about a year ago, said bassist Ryan Anderson.

The second and more important part of Pushin' Skinny's originality is its sound. It is primarily a punk band. But instead of focusing on the speed, Anderson said, this band focuses on the melodies within the music.

This unique sound has brought Pushin' Skinny offers to record a compact disc in Omaha with a sound engineer who is attempting to get recognition from a national label, Anderson said.

"He is also trying to hook us up with a national distributor," Anderson said.

The band will start recording in May after classes are out. Anderson said Pushin' Skinny was hoping this recording would draw attention from a label.

The band has spent most of its time playing in Lincoln and Omaha.

"We've talked to record companies about playing out of state, but with all of us being in school, we can't make that happen right now," he said.

Pushin' Skinny will open for Echoing Green Saturday.

Also at Knickerbockers, Minneapolis' 60 Cycle Hum and the Return will take over the stage tonight.

At the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St., Chicago bluesman Matt "Guitar" Murphy will play both tonight and Saturday night.

Looker will play at the Royal Grove, 340 W. Cornhusker Highway, tonight and Saturday night.

Canvas Back and Cathy McCarty will play tonight at Le Cafe Shakes, 1418 O St. Saturday night, the Queens, the Breakups and XXY will take the stage.

On Sunday night, Clark County Blue Up will take over Duffy's Tavern, 1412 O St.

And at the Hurricane, 1118 O St., Fat Tuesday will play tonight and the Murrms will play Saturday night.