

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Wednesday, January 17, 1996

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the glassy eye



Jeff Randall

Reality has rough appeal

If there were one truly discernible trend in America's television viewing habits in the last few years, an insatiable hunger for reality-based programming was it.

From "Cops" to the O.J. Simpson trial to Charles Perez, reality, or whatever passes for it, has been the weapon of choice for an increasing number of broadcasters.

The problem with most "reality" television is the inevitable sanitized gloss that appears whenever the real world is interrupted by commercial breaks, pigeonhole formats and the incessant bleep that thinly disguises any verbal obscenities.

That's not reality. In reality, people spit, cuss, vomit and do a host of other things that aren't allowed on television.

But, lo and behold, Home Box Office has come to the rescue. This isn't just television, kids, this is pay cable. And "Taxicab Confessions 2" isn't just reality television, it is reality.

Devoid of commercials, chock full of filth, and built around absolutely brutal depictions of life on the streets of New York, "Taxicab Confessions 2" may turn out to be the most disturbing viewing pleasure in which you ever indulge.

In the show, miniature cameras and microphones are hidden in taxicabs to record the spontaneous "confessions" of the vehicles' passengers. At the end of each ride, the passengers are told they are on candid camera — so to speak — and asked permission to broadcast their confessions nationwide.

Surprisingly enough, a large number of these people say "yes."

Then again, the majority of the passengers who appear on "Taxicab Confessions 2" are rather twisted, deranged and otherwise abnormal individuals who tell their stories with conversational abandon.

The cab drivers, of course, egg them on in their confessions with a series of prying questions that one might expect to be dismissed with a simple "none of your business" or "take off, eh."

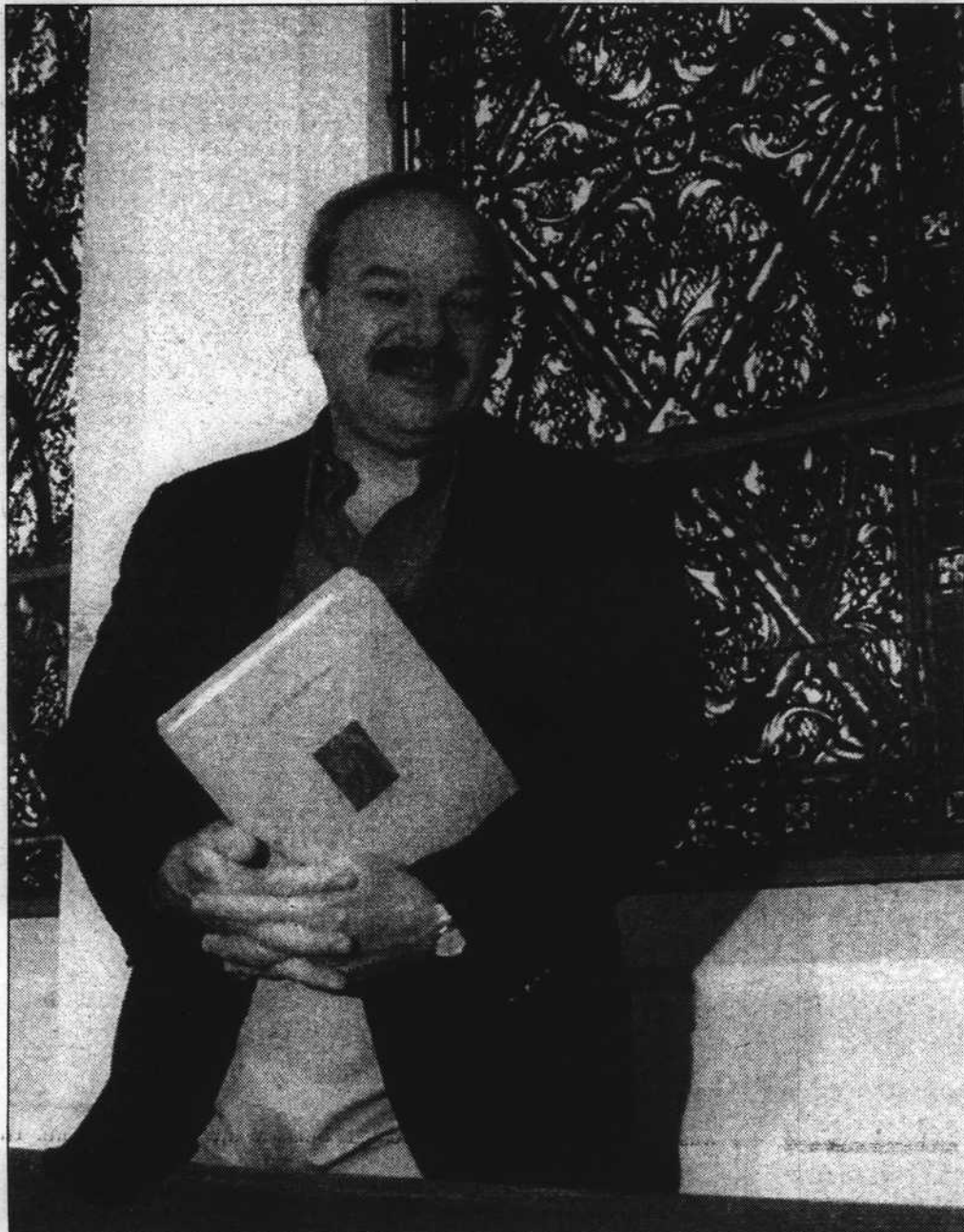
And while some of these characters, such as transsexual prostitutes and senile, pigeon-loving old men, might be expected to carry at least a modicum of good manners, the rapid flow of dialogue here is rare, to say the least.

Their discussions of sex, violence and more sex are intriguing (in a depressing way) and, although blunt, contain elements of naked honesty and street-life poetry that border on irresistible.

The question of exploitation does arise on some occasions, such as in one episode when an AIDS patient discussed his medical condition, his sex life and his family's reactions to both.

But, for the most part, these "confessions" are as simple and roughly appealing as anything on television — although finding motivation to wake up the next morning might prove difficult.

Randall is a sophomore news-editorial major and the Daily Nebraskan arts and entertainment editor.



Tanna Kinnaman/DN

Thomas Schmid, author of "Dawn in the Afternoon," hopes to improve people's praying habits with his new book.

Prayer recipes made to satisfy spiritual hunger

By Mark Baldridge
Staff Reporter

Cooking up a little supplication? How about a side of intercession?

Don't forget a helping of adoration and for desert you can have some pardon — if you eat all your confession.

It's all about Thomas Schmid's cookbook for prayer, "Dawn in the Afternoon," an idea that's spent a long time in the oven.

After 25 years as a pastor, the 52-year-old Schmid said he thought "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep" prayers are the cold leftovers of devotion. People need something warmer.

"This is a book for people who want to give some serious attention to prayer. They've been working out of their hip pocket for a while," said Schmid, a pastor at First Presbyterian Church, 840 S. 17th St.

"When you get to be older and you're still praying 'God is great, God is good,' well, that's arrested development."

Hence the cookbook.

Arranged into handy sections with titles like "Adoration" and "Civic Prayers," the prayer workbook offers prayers composed by the author, his friends and members of First Presbyterian Church. Some of the texts come directly from the Psalms, some from hymns and all straight from the need that inspired those who first wrote them down.

Prayers intended to be offered at times of baptism and death are included, as well as table graces and "seasonal" prayers.

Inspired by the cookbook format, Schmid intends that the "recipes" be improved on or personalized by the reader; a part of each section is devoted to space for the reader to compose his or her own personal prayers.

But why all this emphasis on "written" or composed prayers?

See PRAYERS on 10

Band's sounds, lyrics provide originality

By Cliff Hicks
Music Critic

Tonight, Mudslide Slims, 1418 O St., will play host to a most unusual band.

Concert Preview



Their album is named "Spork." Spork? Yep, it's named after one of those funky things that's a combination between a spoon and a fork. You know, you've seen them somewhere — haven't you?

The band is Bungalow Trailer Park, which again follows suit; the album has a weird

name and, of course, the band had to.

Hailing from Saint Joseph, Mo., Bungalow Trailer Park has been on the music scene in a variety of ways over the past 13 years.

Their sound is definitely not that of a typical band. It's sort of Uncle Tupelo meets Inspiral Carpets (I know, I had trouble imagining it myself.)

The album breaks in and out of loud guitar roars, mixing them with heavy organ interludes.

If anything is a detraction from these guys, it's the singer. While the lyrics are usually quite well written, especially the song "This Box Is My Home," the lead voice is kind of squelchy, as if it were coming through a bad CB radio.

Maybe the band should get another singer. All three of the guys in the band are listed on vocals,

but there's no one definitive voice that captures the ear, and that hurts the band.

The frontman is one of the most important parts of a band and without one, a band suffers slightly in status. Almost all bands that achieve recognition have one person who stands out in front. That's what Bungalow Trailer Park needs.

When it comes to the sound, however, Bungalow Trailer Park has something not many bands do anymore: originality. By combining two sounds that have almost nothing in common, and getting them to mesh successfully, they at least get a point for creativity.

Tonight's concert starts at 10:30 with opening act Jeff and Me. Cover is \$3.

Orangutan seeking home after movie flop

By Patrick Hambrecht
Film Critic

There was a cramped, claustrophobic feeling between the seven of us in the roomy downtown movie theater: myself, one dad, two boys, two moms and a horrible, numbing movie called "Dunston Checks In."

Movie Review



I sat staring at both my watch and the exit door as this movie, which featured an orangutan who lumbers and spits his way through a hotel, only added to my agony.

Any movie featuring an actor with no ability to communicate, like the Volkswagen in "The Love Bug" or Steven Seagal in "Under Siege 2," is under a severe handicap. But

even so, "Dunston Checks In" is still one sorry spectacle.

In "Dunston," a whiny, obsequious father (Jason Alexander) tries to raise two annoying chil-

See DUNSTON on 10



Jason Alexander wigs out with Sam the orangutan in the new film "Dunston Checks In."

Photo courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox