

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Tuesday, February 13, 1996

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Jeff Randall

## Piggyback bill trounces free speech

Feb. 8, 1996 — a day that will live in infamy.

For those who haven't heard, that was the day President Clinton signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 into law.

Originally designed as a deregulation bill for the telecommunications and cable television industries, the Act received a small piece of piggyback legislation that has created quite the stir on the Internet.

This extra legislation, courtesy of our own Sen. James Exon and Sen. Slade Gordon, R-Va., is called the "Communications Decency Act." It effectively censors the Internet by putting a ban on providing material to minors that is considered "indecent." Violation of this law will result in up to \$250,000 in fines and two years in prison.

At first glance, this may sound like a good idea to even the most rabid civil libertarians. After all, who wants children to have full access to all sorts of "indecent" material?

There are, however, three major problems with this law.

Firstly, the bill's authors would lead its critics to believe that indecent material is not wholly banned by this bill. The bill only restricts the distribution of "indecent" material to minors, much in the same way pornographic videos and magazines are not allowed to be sold to minors.

But the Internet doesn't work the same way the average skin trade does. If some 8-year-old in Appleton, Wis., wants to get his eyes on Miss January, there is very little anyone can do about it. And that's too bad.

The information providers have to rely on good faith and trust in their clients. They really have no control over who gets what they have to offer. Maybe those parents in Appleton need to exercise some control.

Secondly, the bill's definition of "indecent" is so all-inclusive that even marginally risqué items such as "Catcher in the Rye" and Venus de Milo would fall under the ban. In addition, discussion of topics such as abortion and AIDS would be prohibited if the bill remained as it is now.

Color me reactionary, but doesn't this sound a little bit like "1984"? Actually, now that I mention it, George Orwell's "1984" also falls under the ban.

Ah, but on to the last problem.

This bill approaches the Internet as your average, everyday form of public communication, lumping it in with radio and television. The problem is, the Internet is anything but this.

By placing bans on the Internet, Congress has gut-punched free speech and, in some circles, freedom of assembly (chat rooms count, don't they?). Our government needs to take a serious look at finding a better definition of the Internet.

Definitions have been ignored, though, and now this formerly virgin territory for would-be censors has become the home of one of the hottest censorship debates this country has seen in quite awhile.

The computer junkies of the world have not taken the passage of this bill lightly, to put it mildly. Before the bill

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## Gayle to shine in Lied concert Wednesday night

By Cliff Hicks  
Staff Reporter

If you're still looking to take your sweetheart somewhere special on Valentine's Day, country musician Crystal Gayle may be just the ticket.

### Lied Center



Gayle will perform with the Lincoln Orchestra on Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at the Lied Center.

Gayle began her career while she was still in school, with her debut single, "I've Cried (The Blue Right Out of My Eyes)." The song,

written by her sister, Loretta, reached the Top 25 on national country music charts.

In 1974, "Wrong Road Again" became her first Top 10 hit. Her fourth and fifth albums, "We Must Believe In Magic" and "When I Dream," both went platinum.

Since then, she has recorded a slew of albums, as well as a soundtrack for Francis Ford Coppola's acclaimed film, "One From The Heart," with Tom Waits. She also recorded the theme song from "Another World."

Recently, she has recorded the national theme song for the Make-A-Wish foundation, as well as served as co-host of the Arthritis Foundation Telethon.

Gayle is touring for her new album, "Somebody." Her first Christian recording, the album is a blend of both original songs and traditional hymns.

She has won many awards, including Most Promising Female Vocalist in 1976 from the Academy of Country Music, as well as being named Female Vocalist of the Year twice by the

See GAYLE on 10



Photo courtesy of the Lincoln Orchestra Association  
Crystal Gayle will be the featured performer in a concert with the Lincoln Orchestra at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

## Medley of movies up for rent

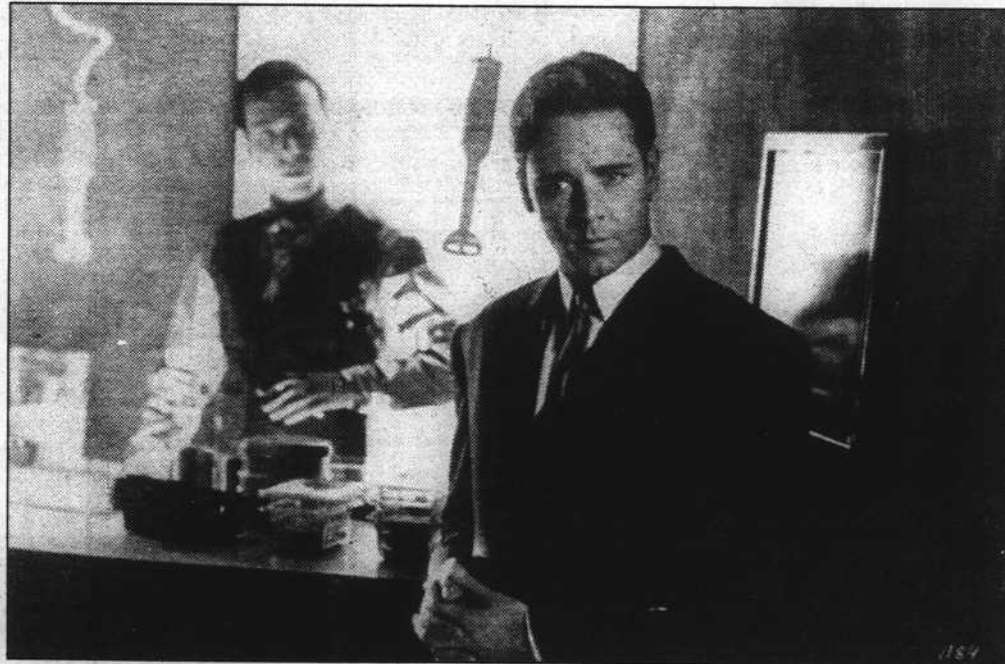


Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures releases.  
Russell Crowe stars as Sid 6.7 in "Virtuosity," one of this week's new video releases.

By Gerry Beltz  
Film Critic

There is quite a bevy of new releases this week, dominated by heartfelt drama and computers-gone-awry flicks. Also, in celebration of Valentine's Day, the NewVid love doctor will offer some romantic flicks to enjoy while munching on overpriced chocolates.

### New Video Release



against a classroom of tough, inner-city kids. And

by the end of the movie, everyone has grown.

No, this isn't a movie of the week. The film is handled in an intelligent, and sometimes brutally realistic, way. Pfeiffer's performance is top-notch, as usual, and the group of newcomers who make up her class also shows great promise.

"Jeffrey" (R) — This one never made it to Lincoln, so it's probably pretty good.

Jeffrey (Steven Weber of "Wings") is a gay man who, concerned about the AIDS virus, decides to give up sex, despite the fact that he previously has lived for it.

When an interior designer friend (Patrick Stewart) sets Jeffrey up with another man, Jeffrey's fears keep him at bay.

"Jeffrey" is often surreal (where did Mother Theresa come from?), and received a great

See NEWVID on 10

## New Deal art captures era, historian's eye

By Patrick Hambrecht  
Senior Reporter

Thousands of 50-year-old murals, easel paintings and other art pieces sit forgotten in post offices and federal warehouses around the country.

But Francine Carraro, a visiting associate professor from Southwest Texas State University, hasn't forgotten them. Carraro will talk about these ignored artifacts in her lecture, "An Art Historian Reassesses the New Deal Murals," on Wednesday.

A deluge of federal- and state-sponsored art flooded the United States when Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal projects employed thousands of artists in the 1930s, Carraro said. At least 1 percent of the budget for every new or renovated public building was required to be set aside for artwork, she said.

While some quality artists did emerge from this new patronage, no true masterpieces ever really did, Carraro said.

"None of the artists I'm going to be talking about have really big names now," she said.

Because all funded art projects were strained through the sifters of both bureaucracy and public taste, it was hard for artists to create truly great work within the confines of the system, she said.

But many positive things came out of the federal art system. By circumventing the New York art scene, new and regionally-influenced styles were allowed to emerge.

Also, because the artists were rendered anonymous for the competition, female creators were allowed to escape prejudices and win competitions.

Carraro will speak at 3 p.m. in Love Library's Great Plains Art Collection room. On Thursday, Carol Ahlgren will give a noon talk about Nebraska New Deal art murals at the Museum of Nebraska History, 15th and P streets.