

Happy birthday, Adolf

Genocidal mass murder's legacy lives at Colorado high school



TIM SULLIVAN is a third-year law student and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

The Trenchcoat Mafia. Why?

As most everyone is aware by now, on Tuesday of this week the nation watched in horror as live coverage of a deadly rampage was beamed into our schools, homes and workplaces.

Two Littleton, Colo., high-school students – Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris – executed 12 of their Columbine High School classmates and one teacher and wounded numerous others before taking their own lives.

The deadly duo fancied themselves part of a group dubbed the "Trenchcoat Mafia." They earned the moniker by way of wearing long black trenchcoats, regardless of the weather, and sporting berets with Teutonic crosses, which

bear the same symbolism of the modern-day swastika.

They were featured in their high school yearbook last year. Everyone there knew about them.

They were known to be admirers of Adolf Hitler – the man who will (hopefully) be forever known as the most prolific genocidal mass murderer in human history.

Klebold and Harris played war games, bragged to other students about their guns and often spoke German to each other.

They also made numerous references to "4-20," Adolf Hitler's birthday.

Then, on April 20, 1999 – Hitler's birthday – they avenged themselves against the people they hated – athletes, whom they referred to as "jocks," Jews, African-Americans and Hispanics.

When they took Columbine High School under siege, they commanded students from those groups to stand up, yelling "We're going to kill every one of you."

Again, the question is *why*.

A lot of people are struggling to find the answer to that question. The media are inundated with interviews of experts of the social sciences who try to answer that question.

Listening to the pundits and the experts over the last couple of days, I

kept thinking about my own childhood and teen-age years.

I moved around a lot, because I was a military brat. I went to four different high schools and countless grade and junior high schools.

I know what it's like to feel like an outcast.

Although I was what I would consider a good athlete, I found myself ineligible to participate in a lot of sports because of residency eligibility requirements. Typically, the rules for different sports require that you reside in the city you want to play in for six months prior to the season's beginning – a requirement I almost never could meet.

I know athletes were viewed by some as being at the "top of the pecking order," as one pundit surmised. But, I never viewed myself as inferior. I found other avenues of expression – I participated heavily in newspaper and yearbook production, mainly as a photographer and sometimes a writer.

I found my niche, despite the obstacles set in my path by virtue of my life situation.

Klebold and Harris found their niche in the so-called Trenchcoat Mafia. Absent finding a niche in a non-violent, useful, productive activity, they allowed their hatred and jealousy to overwhelm them – to consume them, if

you will.

I don't know how many students attend Columbine High School, but it appeared from the footage to be fairly large. I suspect that no one took them seriously.

Not the teachers, the other students, or perhaps more importantly, the guidance and counseling staff at the school.

Had school officials tried to intervene, perhaps the nation would not be mourning the dead and trying to answer this difficult question.

I just find it unfathomable that no one there was able to recognize the Trenchcoat Mafia's preoccupation with hate and take steps to intervene.

Harris made a video *at school* about his guns. Harris and Klebold both were arrested last year for stealing a car. They showed up once – albeit two hours late and in the wrong place – to fight the "jocks," bearing swords and brass knuckles.

And what of the parents of these kids? Didn't they know they were raising gun-toting, hatred-spewing little Hitler worshipers?

What the hell is wrong with a society that ignores – no, *accepts* – this type of behavior in our youth?

I don't know the answer. But I think it may be found somewhere in the morals and values of the boomer gener-

ation (of which I belong) – the ones raising our Generation X.

I think the attitude of the boomers in the '80s has spread to – no, infested – the hearts and minds of the younger generation. I think the Boomers let themselves succumb to Reaganomics and the self-centered materialism and disregard for the welfare of others that the evil Republican party line espouses.

They just don't care about anyone but themselves.

Neither did Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris.

Conservative values and beliefs – incorporating materialism and self-reliance – are tearing at the moral fiber of our country. Its unyielding, unforgiving rigidity shocks the conscience.

Perhaps Generation X will raise its children to accept diversity and respect the rights of others. Perhaps they'll be more liberal and tolerant of differences.

If we can't agree on the answer as to why this happened, then perhaps we can all agree on one thing – we have to practice and teach acceptance of diversity – political correctness, if you must call it that.

Only through accepting diversity in our culture can we hope for a violence-free society.

Remember – *Hitler* was intolerant of diversity

Just say no to Tae-Bo

Billy, the Tae-Bo god, leads your body through a course of pain



JAY GISH is a senior broadcasting major and Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Tae-Bo: one of the most dangerous phrases in the English language ... er, the Korean language ... OK, I don't know where the phrase comes from, but trust me, it's bad news.

For those who are Amish and don't know, Tae-Bo is the latest fitness video craze. Women all over the nation are purchasing the video, which features a big, mean dude named Billy (also known as Son of the Terminator) who teaches them how to kickbox the air.

I recently acquired a copy of the Tae-Bo workout. I won't say *how* I acquired it, but let it be clear I didn't pay \$49.95 for it. (Broadcasting majors do learn something useful.)

Well, after weeks of letting the video sit unwatched, I finally sacked up and fed Tae-Bo to my roommate's VCR the other day. For those of you who don't have the money, means or desire to live the Tae-Bo experience, let me describe mine for you.

Minute One. I am introduced to Billy, the Tae-Bo god. It's immediately clear that Billy has been hitting more than just the air in front of him – like possibly the steroid bar at the local weight room. He's also perfected a camera-friendly snarl.

Surrounding our fearsome leader are about ten very attractive, very fit, women and apparently no men. *Ha, Ha, even Billy figures he needs window dressing to keep my attention.*

Billy tells me to start "walking it out." My response is delayed because I must first stop my knees from wobbling in fear.

Minute Three. Billy starts us out with a couple of short jabs to the front. Good. This is pretty simple. He counts them in two groups of eight: eight up, eight down. Eight up, eight down.

The problem comes when I discover Billy has selective amnesia, neglect-



ing to count up or down at sporadic intervals. *Billy, my body likes very much to know how many times it's going to have to do each little movement. It doesn't like swinging any limb when it doesn't have to.*

Yes, that's right, I found myself addressing my Tae-Bo host directly in my mind. Cut me some slack; I was a prisoner of war.

Minute Five. Billy moves into kicks. The first kick he asks for appears to be about a black-belt level maneuver. I can't figure out whether the power is supposed to come from my thigh or butt muscle. The result is an unfortunate in-between. Tae-Bo has introduced me to searing hip pain.

Minute Six. Billy either gets embarrassed about his irregular counting method, or he's lazier than he looks. About every other move, he stops

counting, apparently in expectation his harem will do it for him.

He has begun the habit of abandoning a move entirely and wandering back into the crowd of women. At one point, he screams at one of them to count. *Geez, Billy, they're there to help your video. Shouldn't you be nice to them?*

Minute Ten. Jump kicks. *Oh my God.* I remember an interview I saw with a woman in kickboxing class, in which she said, "Oh, I love it that I'm learning real kicking techniques that I could use."

Yeah, right, lady. If anyone less than Billy tries to use one of these jump kicks in a real situation, it won't be your foot cracking a mugger's jaw. It will be the pavement cracking your tailbone.

After I do each move the required sixteen to forty-eight times, Billy com-

don the workout and drift into the background.

Minute Fifteen. The video now requires long combinations of punches and kicks. *I've got to keep up with the double times. Can't let Billy down.*

Yes, I was thinking that. Tae-Bo is an early form of mind control.

Minute Sixteen. Billy tells me I can go get a drink of water and take a break, if I need to. *Yeah, right, Billy. The second I do that, you reach out of the screen and strangle me for being a weakling.*

Billy has increased the harassment of his co-Tae-Bo fighters. I am shocked when he actually GRABS a woman's ankle in mid-kick. The look on her face tells me that it was not rehearsed. *I bet they add another grand to her contract to make up for that.*

Minute Eighteen. Billy implores me to squeeze my abs when I kick. *Gotta do it. Can't disappoint Billy.*

Minute Twenty. *What am I thinking? Screw Billy. He's not the boss of me.* I look at the clock to mark exactly when thirty minutes will be up. Tae-Bo may be infinite, but I have my limits.

I watch as Billy becomes more and more a caricature of the high school track coach from hell. He departs from the typical aerobic instructor habit of encouragement, instead barking out, "Get those knees up! Work it harder!"

No, not Coach O'Brien! I suppose next we'll be doing down-ups in the mud. I want my mom.

Minute Thirty. No more kicks, no more walking it out, dammit. I'm done. I grab some iced tea from the fridge.

Minutes Thirty-one through Fifty. I'm watching "The Simpsons" while Billy the Banshee stays stuck on the VHS tape. I conclude that he and his entourage can't be real people, but must actually be lifelike marionettes controlled by a crackhead.

Minute Sixty. I resolve to tell the world about my torturous Tae-Bo experience. I must spare everyone else the pain.

Don't thank me. Knowing you won't make the same mistake I did makes me happy enough.

M.A.A.
MATT HANEY/DN