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PERSPECTIVES

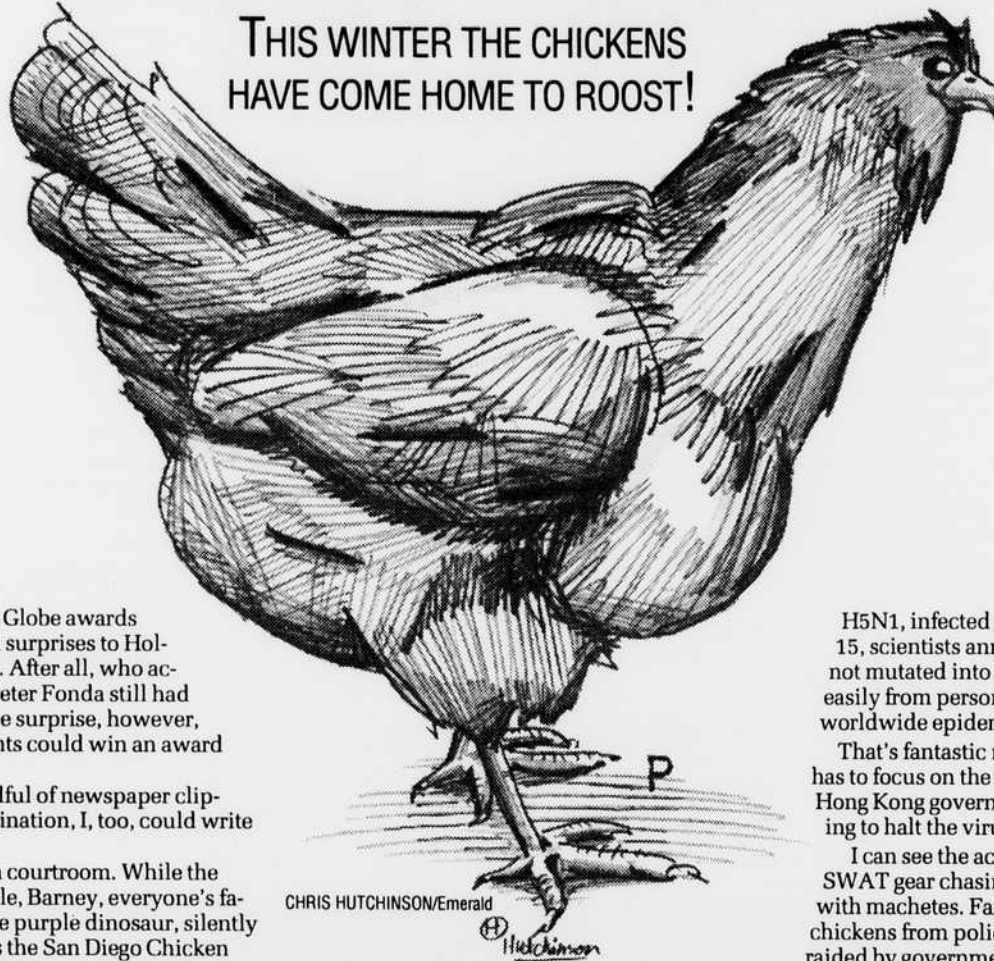
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FOWL PLAY!



THIS WINTER THE CHICKENS
HAVE COME HOME TO ROOST!



CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

Sunday's Golden Globe awards revealed several surprises to Hollywood bigwigs. After all, who actually thought Peter Fonda still had it? The most impressive surprise, however, was that college students could win an award for best screenplay.

I figured with a handful of newspaper clippings and a vivid imagination, I, too, could write a powerful drama.

Our story begins in a courtroom. While the judge holds back a smile, Barney, everyone's favorite purple dinosaur, silently gives the San Diego Chicken the finger.



OPINION

Jonas Allen

The Famous Chicken, as the mascot is formally called, listens to the charge drawn against him — a copyright and trademark infringement for assaulting and mocking a Barney-like character during performances at sporting events.

Barney is seeking \$100,000 for each time the Chicken performed his skit.

The scene fades out and goes to a quiet farm in Hong Kong. As the farmer tends to his morning duties, five members of the Hong Kong police swarm around a chicken coop and cut the chickens' throats. The officers then throw the dead chickens into trash bags and haul them off to a county landfill.

Flying over the countryside, the cameras find their way into a Nebraska office where scientists are inspecting a sample of cough medicine. These researchers warn that a key ingredient in cough syrups and tablets has caused severe defects in chicken embryos. Because of these defects, the scientists advise pregnant women to

avoid such medicines.

With the exception of Barney flipping the bird, all these scenes come directly from your local newspaper.

And all in all, it hasn't been a good year for chickens.

Our screenplay has to start this way because it's the order in which the events happened. More important, however, is the need for a good court scene in every blockbuster drama.

The Famous Chicken case seemed trivial when it first hit the news. The case seemed more like something to laugh about more than take seriously. But it really started the snowball rolling for a bad year in all of Chickendom.

The farm scene is vital to this movie's success. Not only will it appeal to the ever-important Iowa movie market, but the topic is still in the news.

In mid-1997, a three year old contracted a disease that primarily infects birds. Since then, six people have been killed by the "bird flu," and at least 12 more have been infected. (Can anyone see a connection between our fact-based screenplay and "Outbreak"?)

Scientists can't figure out how a bird virus,

H5N1, infected humans. Fortunately, on Jan. 15, scientists announced that the virus had not mutated into something that "could spread easily from person to person and cause a worldwide epidemic."

That's fantastic news. But the screenplay still has to focus on the 1.4 million chickens the Hong Kong government slaughtered while trying to halt the virus.

I can see the action sequences now: Police in SWAT gear chasing the villainous chickens with machetes. Farmers actually hiding their chickens from police, only to have their farms raided by government officers. Dogs and pigs rummaging through mishandled trash bags in search of slaughtered poultry.

Between sequences, the movie flashes to a dark, smoky room where government officials reveal their plot to kill, disinfect and bury every chicken in Hong Kong. But when they realize their 24-hour operation has turned into a three-day, fowl ordeal, those same officials are forced to apologize.

Remember, all of these events actually happened in the last few months.

Like every good drama, the screenplay has to get emotional at the end. We see hundreds of poultry workers so upset about losing their jobs that they fill the streets of Hong Kong in protest.

Now to a hospital room, where those infected by the "bird flu" lie helpless against a disease, progressing rapidly into critical conditions. Panning up from the victims, the camera shows the Nebraska scientists' cough syrup announcement on hospital television.

The screenplay ends with the Famous Chicken fighting for his right to entertain.

This is sure to be a blockbuster.

Okay, maybe not.

JONAS ALLEN IS A COLUMNIST FOR THE EMERALD. HIS WORK APPEARS ON ALTERNATE FRIDAYS. HIS VIEWS DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THOSE OF THE NEWSPAPER.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Uphold conduct code

Editor's note: The following is an open letter to University President Dave Frohnmayer.

We are writing in response to the recent decision by the Appeals Committee to maintain the hearings officer's decision that Danta Graham-Preston was in violation of the Student Conduct Code. We feel that it is crucial to both the safety of all students on campus and to the validity of our conduct code to comply with the findings of the board. By

denying a decision that has essentially been made four times, we feel the conduct code that students have advocated for will be ultimately weakened.

As a staff, we acknowledge that women are not safe against sexual violence, not only on the University campus, but also in the society we live in. We also understand that everyone involved, men and women, need to be educated about sexual violence and the rape culture. Because of this, it is a necessity that

the process currently underway be supported by your endorsement of the final decision by the committee. Sexual violence will only end when the entire community not only stands by the judicial process we have created but also takes responsibility in advocating and supporting those who are affected by sexual violence. You now have the power to do this, and we ask that you take into consideration what the students on this campus are asking of you.

ASUO Women's Center staff

Seeking Oregon info

Our fourth grade class from Gifford Grade School is studying the United States. We would like your help.

We would like your readers to send us letters and postcards telling us about your state. Thank you for your help. Please send them to: Mrs. McClain's Fourth Grade Gifford Grade School #188 406 S. Main Gifford, IL 61847

Alison Duden Gifford, IL

Thumbs



TO THE WHITE HOUSE:

Officials announced they will put an end to road building in most federal forests. While the move is only a step toward eliminating the economically and environmentally harmful subsidies that have propped up the timber industry, it is an admirable proposal.

TO PRINCETON:

The Ivy League symbol of elite education has taken steps to make private college more affordable for the middle class by altering the way financial aid is calculated. Plans include shifting many packages from loans to grants and not counting homes as an asset for middle-class families. All this because private schools are finally realizing they're losing intelligent working-class students because families simply cannot afford \$30,000 a year.



TO HIGH LIABILITY COSTS FOR EXCHANGE PROGRAMS:

The Associated Press reported that the risk of lawsuits against exchange programs that travel into "dangerous" areas may make the cost of such trips impossibly high. Not only is this troubling because of the value of exchanges, but it is also alarming because it risks forcing schools into potentially racist choices about what constitutes a "safe" nation to visit.