

Pulse Editor:  
Jacquelyn Lewis  
jacquelynlewis@dailyemerald.com

# Pulse *Excite*

On Tuesday  
The long and  
short of it: Pulse  
takes on mullets.

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## Modern America recalls '50s era, social challenge, Kerouac's 'beats'

Joseph Bechard  
Edge Culture Columnist

These days, a lot of our values don't quite jive with the values of the turkeys who call the shots. As the future of the United States becomes increasingly uncertain, all we can do to reassure ourselves is look to the past for some sense of hope; a feeling that things will be better again.

Today's parallels to heightened Cold War madness and obsessive 1950s America are irresistible. Commercialism swept across the country. Politicians warned of hidden threats from people hell-bent on destroying our way of life — whatever *that is*. They asked everyone to settle down into some good ol' fashioned American pursuits. Blind patriotism was rampant, and there was a general tightening of the collective American sphincter.

Similar to the way many of us feel now, a number of post-World War II American youth felt like things needed to be shaken up, that it was time to discover a new, more meaningful way of life.

In the late 1940s, the war was over, America was in a new era and the famous beat writer Jack Kerouac began crisscrossing the states in what became a lifelong search for good times and spiritual calm amidst a world of suffering.

Kerouac always said he came from the heart. Supposedly, he coined the term "beat" to unite a sense of beatitude with a feeling of being "pooped." He represented an unheard voice in America interested in joy, piety, existentialism, excitement, love and humanity. He wrote about America, Christianity, Buddhism, jazz, writing and the people he met, as if they were all part of one big earthly kick. His semi-autobiographical works impart an excitement and respect for life that inspires people to search for meaning or identity. He is often credited for creating a "rucksack revolution" in the late fifties consisting of young, backpacked wanderers looking for who they really were.

However, there is a lot of myth behind Kerouac's politics. He would say he had none. Art came first for Kerouac and he typically shied away from political discussion.

Unlike most of the beats, however, Kerouac was more conservative. He had compassion for the soldiers in Vietnam giving their lives for the country he loved so much, and he couldn't speak out against the conflict like many of the other beats. He was also ashamed that people connected him with the hippie movement.

More importantly, though, Kerouac despised weapons and killing. His respect for beauty and life was at odds with the nature of war. The lessons he taught were meant to lift people above belligerent mentalities and focus America on what really mattered.

So what does really matter?

Kerouac would say that it's not fame or power, money or things, but life that matters. Humility, passion, joy and exuberance were the driving forces behind the poetic dynamo. He was a romantic in a time when people were supposed to be jaded; he was a true American who loved his country and wanted only the best for it — even if that meant challenging the tenets of those who make the rules.

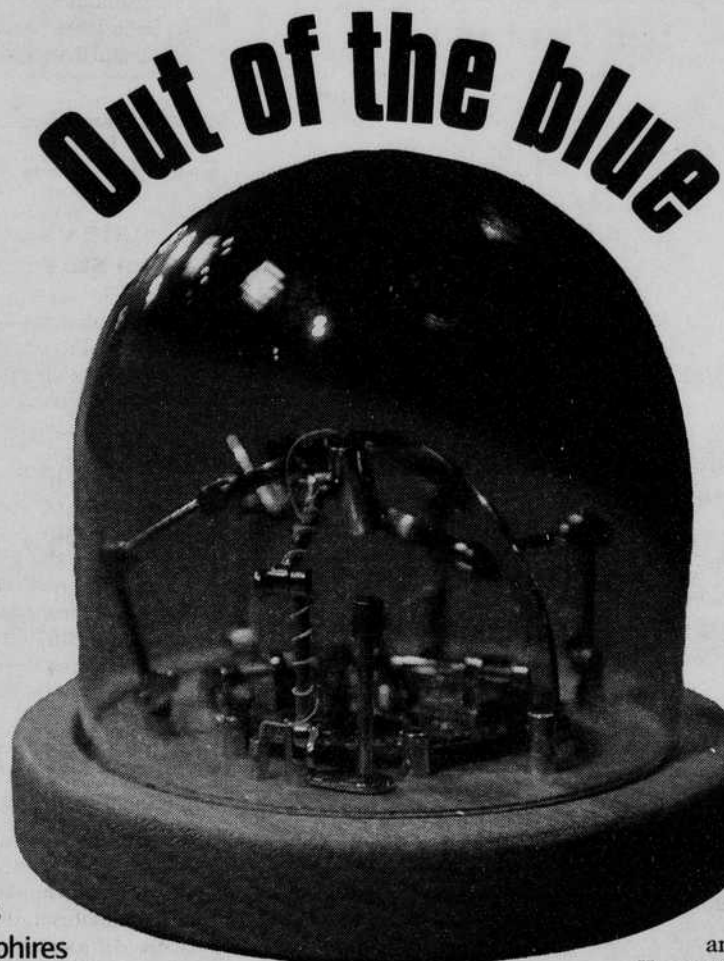
Unfortunately, after the beat craze took off in the late 1950s, Kerouac started experiencing the fame that eventually took his life. A movement that had once been very pure and personal to him became a joke and a commercial trend.

This fame, coupled with the public's misunderstanding of the work to which he dedicated his life, took a serious toll on Kerouac. His hope for America dwindled, and he began drinking more heavily than before. In 1969, his drinking finally caught up to him at the age of 47, and America's heartlessness killed yet another dreamer.

Contact the Pulse columnist at [josephbechard@dailyemerald.com](mailto:josephbechard@dailyemerald.com). His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



Joseph Bechard  
Cultural  
Obstetrician



Metalsmithing  
students craft  
innovative displays  
using donated sapphires

Helen Schumacher  
Pulse Reporter

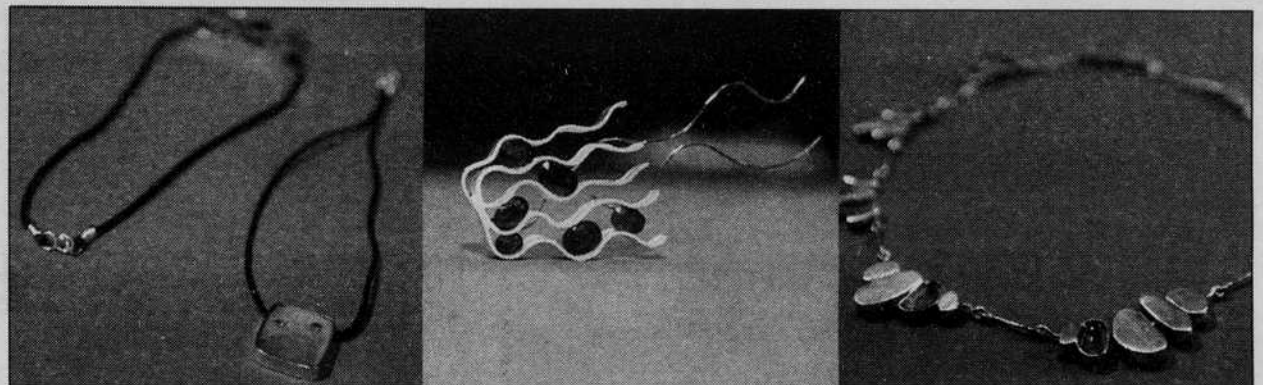
Students can see the results of creative craftsmanship and the donation of several sapphires in the LaVerne Krause

Gallery in an exhibit titled "Blue."

The stones were given to last term's intermediate/advanced metalsmithing students with instructions to find innovative ways to set the stones.

Visiting Assistant  
Professor Tracy Steepy  
taught the course.

"The stones were anonymously donated to the University," Steepy said. "They went to the geology department first, and then they found their way to us and we were able to use them in a stone setting class. And so everyone Turn to **Sapphire**, page 6A



Metalsmithing students shied from traditional stone-setting techniques, instead embracing unusual, avant-garde designs.  
Photos by Jeremy Forrest Emerald

## Students produce dance show

The all-student produced "Kinetic Intent" concert features original compositions by University students

Jacquelyn Lewis  
Pulse Editor

University dancers maneuvered and balanced their way through the past few months, choreographing, rehearsing and re-choreographing for the all-student-produced concert, "Kinetic Intent." The show opens tonight at 8 p.m. in the University's Frances Dougherty Dance Theatre. Later performances will be Feb. 28 and March 1 at 8 p.m.

The concert comprises eight choreographic works, including graduate dance student Leslie Gallagher's "Incarnation." Four dancers will perform the piece — a tapestry of linear movement, improvisation and rhythmic manipulation with a Middle Eastern flavor.

Gallagher said "Incarnation" has transformed dramatically since she first conceived the idea last spring. When dancers performed the piece at last year's Graduate Loft Series, it was set to music by Tool, a stark difference from its current, trance-like score by the band Hana.

Senior Philippa Anderson said her experience as a dancer in "Incarnation" has ebbed and flowed throughout months of rehearsals.

"Every choreographer that you'll ever work with is really Turn to **Dance**, page 7A



Jacquelyn Lewis Emerald  
A dancer from Amy Gaeth's "For the Love of Dance (FLD)" soars through the air. The choreography incorporates 15 dancers and a live DJ.