

Performance hits home with audience

JON HELMKAMP

co-Sports Editor

Five bullets, five killed, and thousands wounded. It's the story of one of our society's most troubling problems: school shootings.

The recent production by Acting/Directing Seminar students of "Bang, Bang You're Dead" on April 7 and 8, with a special school performance on April 11 during fourth period was phenomenal. The actors reminded us that this type of violence is a very real possibility. Their performances were heartfelt, personal and very powerful.

It was fourth period, and it seemed like an opportunity to get out of class. Students took their seats, laughing, talking and joking. But that laughter didn't last long. The auditorium went dark, and a white screen dropped. With "Nine Crimes" by Damien Rice playing in the background, the audience was pin dropping quiet.

Slide after slide, school shootings were shown. As the Powerpoint came to an end, every three seconds a school name, a shooting, how many were killed and how many were injured appeared. With every box, with every individual gone, it was easy to feel the weight of this frightening, and overwhelmingly American, problem.

Seeing these stories, knowing that these teenagers that had been killed were just ordinary students like me, I was deeply moved. It was with horrible realization that this could happen anywhere—even here.

Five students played the

roles of those who had been killed, haunting the shooter, Josh, who was played by William Farnbach, senior. The victims ask for answers. Why me?

Michael, victim one: played by Charlie Steele, junior, he was a football star who was looking at a full ride scholarship to play college ball. He dated the shooter's ex-girlfriend, earning him one of Josh's five bullets. He would miss being the best man at his brother's wedding.

Matt, victim two: played by Avik Bandyopadhyay, junior, he didn't even know the boy who took his life. He was simply a student with a kind heart who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. He would never again get to tell his mother, "I love you."

Emily, victim three: played by Alison McDonald, junior, she grew up just down the street from the boy who took her life. They used to go to each other's birthday parties and play together. Josh knew her his entire life, yet didn't hesitate to kill her when he had a gun in his hand. She would miss calculus class.

Jessie, victim four: played by Madelynn Marcotte, senior, found herself caught in Josh's path while she was eating lunch. Josh decided she was a fun target. She would never be able to forgive her father.

Katie, victim five: played by Tess Tillman, senior. Katie was a very sweet girl who had a good head on her shoulders. Katie used to hold a special place in the heart of her killer; they had been a couple. But even that wouldn't stop Josh from taking her life. She

would miss trying to find shoes to fit her big feet.

Five bullets, five people. Josh didn't think twice about killing five teenagers, each with their own lives, their own stories and their own dreams.

Those five teenagers were just like us. We all have our own lives, our own dreams, our own passions. And, as recent events show, a shooting rampage can put an immediate end to our lives, our dreams, our passions. Sometimes it happens on a smaller scale, like the shooting at Gresham's Springwater Trail High School on April 10, where the only injuries sustained were from broken glass. But sometimes, as on April 16 at Virginia Tech where 32 (the killer later committed suicide bringing the total death count to 33) college students were shot and killed and 21 others were injured, the results are catastrophic.

I applaud the student actors, who also include Amy Brumbaugh, Christina Becker, Jordan Grelewicz, Connor McGuire and Margaret Lewis involved in "Bang, Bang You're Dead" and their teacher, Jessica Murray. Their message was clear—they wanted to bring this issue to the forefront and get people to think, to talk, to feel.

This message is one that needs to be shared with everyone. Not all students had the chance to see the play that has sparked so many conversations and has touched so many people. It would be a great thing to offer an encore presentation and share this powerful message with everyone.

Athletes' salaries too high for their role in society

MAX HAYS

Page Editor

When thinking about the most important jobs in today's society, doctors, lawyers, politicians and teachers come to mind. Now think about the highest paying jobs: lawyers, doctors and politicians, as they rightfully should be, but also actors and athletes. Teaching is nowhere to be found on the list. This is outrageous. Teachers, who have one of the most important jobs, teaching the future of tomorrow to read and write and know about history, science and math, only make an estimated \$30-60,000 annually. Athletes and actors, whose role in society is to entertain us, they make millions of dollars per year.

Even though sporting events and movies are a big part of society and keep people entertained, giving students great extra curricular activities and a way to stay out of trouble, these roles

are not as important as showing the ropes to students who will someday become doctors, lawyers, politicians, business leaders, and, of course, teachers. It seems that entertaining people is much more important than teaching them to read, write and do math.

An example of this imbalance is a 1995 boxing match between Mike Tyson and Peter McNeely. Tyson made more money in one second (\$281,000) than some teachers make in almost a decade. I believe that there is something seriously wrong with the way our society works.

Salaries for jobs should be based on how important that job is. For most jobs this holds true but in some cases it doesn't. A prime example is teaching and athletics. I do not think that this is solely the fault of athletes. They get paid loads of money to do something they love. I don't think that many

people would turn down an opportunity such as that. I think that the problem is that people support this by buying high priced tickets, concessions and souvenirs. We support, consciously or not, these high salaries for athletes and actors.

There is a fairly uncomplicated solution to this problem: simply stop paying such outrageous prices for these items and spend more money and time helping schools with funding for new books, computers and other necessities to provide a proper learning environment. If this is too much to ask, then at least match the amount of money you spend on tickets and souvenirs, and give money to local schools, charity and local non-profit organizations. So next time before you buy an expensive ticket for a concert or a pricey souvenir at a baseball game, really think about the cause that you are supporting.

STUDENTS

PEAK OUT

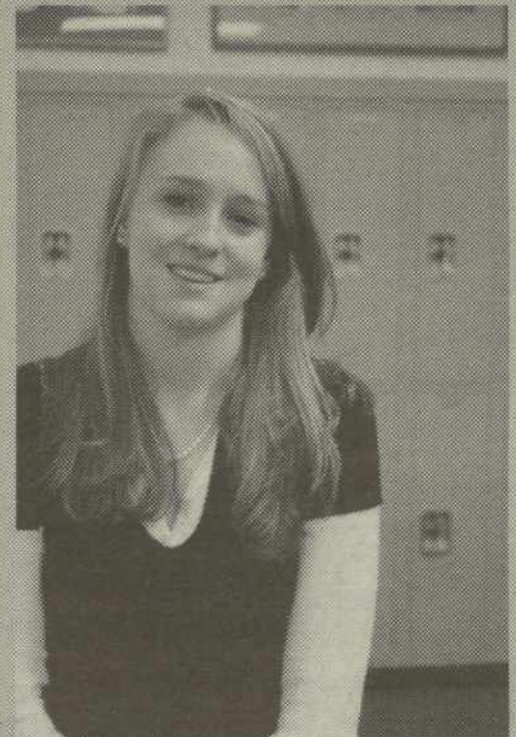
What was your reaction to seeing "Bang, Bang You're Dead?"

Tatianna Young, sophomore



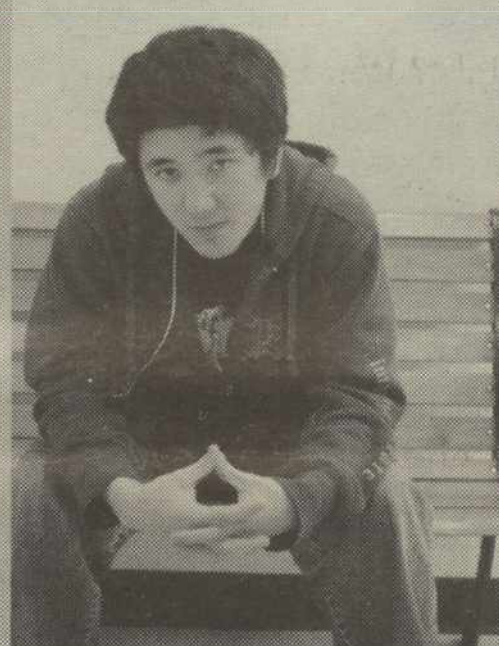
"I personally thought that it was really well done, and the responses that I've heard from it were all really good. I think the thing that stuck out the most is that they were actually high school students."

Jordan Scott, junior



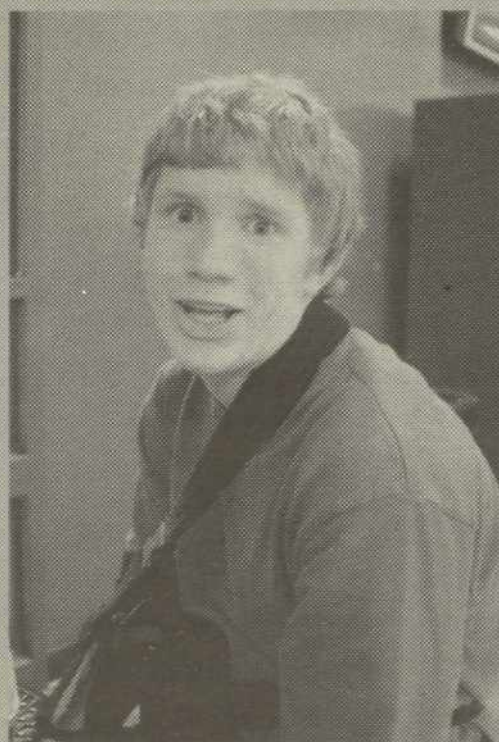
"I thought that it sent a very powerful message and helped me to be more aware. I think that it took a lot of courage for the actors to perform it and they did a good job. It did a good job of sympathizing with the killer but not justifying it. It helped me realize that it could happen anywhere."

Sean Edwards, senior



"At first I was hesitant to see it because I thought it was going to be 'too fake' but as the play progressed, it became heart touching because it really hit home and it made you stop and think about how that could really happen."

Tyler Whitcomb, freshman



"It helped me realize how easily it could happen."