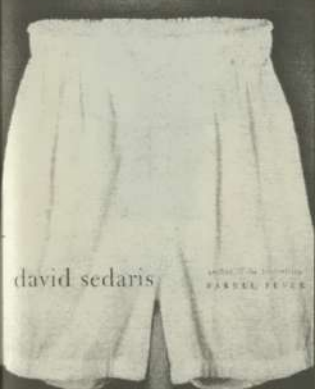


THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

Author bares all

naked



ERINN LERTEN
Staff Writer

David Sedaris, well known from his commentaries on National Public Radio's *This American Life*, and author of *Me Talk Pretty One Day* and the bestselling *Barrel Fever*, offers a wickedly witty collection of autobiographical essays in *Naked*.

Sedaris takes the reader along on his catastrophic detours through a nudist colony, a fruit-packing plant, his own childhood, and a dozen more of the world's little purgatories. As Sedaris chronicles the low points of his life, from his suffering as a boy from a debilitating compulsive behavior (licking light switches, counting steps) to his earliest, terrifying intimations of his homosexuality, to some near-death hitchhiking experiences, he leaves his readers breathless with laughter and wide-eyed wonder at his daring both out in the world and on the page. A self-described "smart-ass," Sedaris is a gifted

satirist with an uncanny knack for recreating dialogue and revealing fantasies.

From the first line, "I'm thinking of asking the servants to wax my change before placing it in the Chinese tank I keep on my dresser. It's important to have clean money not new, but well maintained," *Naked* clobbers the reader into dizzy submission.

Growing up in Raleigh, N.C., Sedaris had disruptive nervous tics that only disappeared once he took up smoking, which, "despite its health risks, is much more socially acceptable than crying out in tiny voices." Sedaris' funniest scenes feature his mother getting a succession of schoolteachers drunk, while performing heartless imitations of her obsessive-compulsive son. Her sour detachment serves David well, however, when he develops an enthusiasm for theater "and undertook a campaign to reintroduce Elizabethan English to the citizens of North Carolina."

Sedaris' best humor is generally rooted in misery: At college he befriended "a fun girl with a degenerative nerve disease" confined to a wheelchair, with whom he successfully shoplifted (no one stopped them) and hitchhiked (everyone stopped for them).

In his final and title inspiring story, David ends up naked but consoled in the nation's most bereft nudist camp: "Coming here from New York, it is heartening to walk into a room and know you're not being judged by your clothes," he tells the reader. "Still, though, as bad a dresser as I am, anything beats being judged by my character."



Derek Zoolander (Ben Stiller) struts his stuff on the catwalk, as a male supermodel.

Zoolander hits Hollywood

The not so funny tale of a supermodel turned assassin

DAN MERYS
Staff Writer

Derek Zoolander (Ben Stiller, who also directed) is the world's most famous male model. Armed with magnificent facial expressions which had names like "Blue Steel," "Ferrari," and "la Tigra" (which are actually all the same) he has won the VHI Best Male Model Award three years in a row. The only thing standing between him and a fourth straight award is Hansel (Owen Wilson), an up-and-coming model who recently landed the cover of *High Times*.

The big news in the fashion world is the prime minister of Malaysia and his plan to eliminate child labor and raise the minimum wage. This is unacceptable to the fashion designer syndicate (which has

been behind every political assassination in the past 200 years). Their fall collections are due on the runway in weeks and the prime minister's plan would make them too costly to produce. Their only option is to have the prime minister assassinated. The syndicate hands the assignment to Mugatu (the always amazing Will Ferrell), the poodle haircut-wearing inventor of the piano key tie. Mugatu must brainwash Zoolander Pavlov-style to become a killing machine whenever he hears the song "Relax" by 80s New Wave band Frankie Goes To Hollywood, of which Mugatu was the keyboard player. Quite the little predicament for Zoolander. No one wants to be brainwashed into killing a foreign dignitary.

But first, Hansel must be dealt with. How do male

supermodels settle their little tiffs? Fighting is out of the question, since that would ruin the ol' money-maker. How about a "walkoff" judged by David Bowie, who so conveniently hangs out in a musty old warehouse? Perfect.

While most of Ben Stiller's work is pretty funny, *Zoolander* isn't in the same ballpark. A good concept falls short, then onto its face. When this movie does make you laugh, it's a kind of forced "I'm laughing to make myself think that this movie is worth the \$6 I paid" laugh. Ben Stiller is trying to make models look stupid, but the only way he goes about this is mispronouncing big words that your average seventh grader would screw up. The biggest mistake *Zoolander* made is the most basic: It was made.

Medieval action with pro football flavor

NICK BARRON
Staff Writer

Movie stores around the country are now renting *A Knight's Tale*, starring Heath Ledger, Shannon Sossamon, Alan Tudyk, Mark Addy, Paul Bettany and Rufus Sewell. *A Knight's Tale* is a romantic-adventure film, touched off with comedy throughout its two hours.

Ledger plays William Thatcher, a squire who decides to mask his true identity for the sake of competing in jousting events, in which one must be of noble birth. Mark Addy and Alan Tudyk are transformed from fellow squires with William Thatcher to squires of Sir Ulrich Von Lichtenstein, the identity of Thatcher's false knight. It is on their way to their first complete jousting match that the

trio runs into Geoffrey Chaucer (played by Bettany), who is strolling along in the buff. Upon further inspection, Sir Ulrich and his squires discover that Mr. Chaucer is a writer who has a knack for losing everything he owns when he gambles, including the clothes off of his back. Despite his obvious flaw of a gambling habit, Sir Ulrich invites Chaucer to come with them and be his herald.

The movie follows Von Lichtenstein in his pursuit of being the number one jousting knight in all of Christendom. Chaucer takes great pride in announcing Von Lichtenstein before every joust, arousing the crowd to cheer enormously for Sir Ulrich. A major obstacle arises, though, when Sir Ulrich is de-

feated in his first encounter with Count Adhemar, who just so happens to be pursuing the same princess, Jocelyn, (played by Shannon Sossamon) as Von Lichtenstein.

The majority of the film is dedicated to building up the obvious clash between Adhemar and Sir Ulrich, and the development of Sir Ulrich's relationship with Jocelyn.

An underlying theme throughout the movie is the charge that Thatcher's father gave to a young William, that he can "change his stars." It is this request that his father laid upon William the last time he saw his father, twelve years ago. And it is also this request that possesses Thatcher, or Sir Ulrich, to do anything he possibly can to become a knight.

The music featured in this film is perhaps the most distinguishing feature of *A Knight's Tale*. Instead of the expected medieval tunes, the 1970s music scene is revisited with Queen and KC and the Sunshine Band, as well as others, being used for the musical background of the movie.

A Knight's Tale can be a humor-



A wounded and unarmed William Thatcher (Heath Ledger) courageously charges towards Count Adhemar.

ous and romantic film, but the adventure leaves one knowing the outcome halfway into the movie. As for history buffs, they would be better off renting *Monty Python: Search For the Holy Grail* for the umpteenth time, as *A Knight's Tale* supplies hardly any true historic characters.

But for two hours' worth of

laughs and slight entertainment one might want to consider renting *A Knight's Tale*. You can watch the movie with almost any audience, minus younger children. And the lack of suspense would leave this film to being a top-notch choice to have on during a party or any other get-together that may contain loud guests and plenty of conversation.



Actor, Heath Ledger plays a squire turned knight.