

My Own Kind of Music

Just drop to your knees, Louise.

I'm cruising down the interstate grooving to classic rock, tapping out the beat on the steering wheel. An over-caffeinated DJ spins golden oldies – the Top 40 soundtrack of my formative years. These lyrics guided me through adolescent crises in that steamy world of teenage parties, high school dances, and deep purple hickeys.

I sing along, although now the songs strike me as terribly naïve. Johnny Angel was not an angel to me. As it turned out, there was plenty you could say to tear me away from my guy. Not to mention that I don't particularly care what happens when a man loves a woman. It's not that I knock it, it's just that I'm not in the market for a boy. Period.

Things have changed since these old tunes were relevant to my life. I'm no longer looking for somebody to love. I know how ya do whatcha do to me. And after 18 years with my sweetie, they don't call it puppy love. Neither of us is wondering will I see you in September.

I sing along anyhow, dancing in my seat to stay alert until I'm back in her arms again. A het couple in an Escalade glare down at me. So what if I'm letting the good times roll at 70 mph? I can't help my-seh-eh-elf.



Old rock is fun, but oldies play lists leave out a whole chunk of my musical herstory.

Old rock is fun, but oldies play lists leave out a whole chunk of my musical herstory. They never play the woman-loving-women songs from the era of my dyke awakening. Those are the songs that were really talkin' 'bout my generation. Without that music I may have never known that any woman can be a lez-bee-an. As long as the music is taking listeners down memory lane, it would be nice to recall filling up and spilling over, even if your best friend never was a unicorn.

Too bad the classic hits don't include Alix Dobkin, Margie Adam, Meg Christian, Cris Williamson, Diedre McCalla, Ferron, the Washington Sisters, Berkeley Women's Music Collective, or Holly Near. I've got all those great albums on our shelves at home but no way to bring them on the road with me – my old car doesn't have a CD player, the cassette player eats tapes, and I'm still pre-iPod. So I'm stuck with mainstream radio programming that locks out huge chunks of my cultural experience. What else is new? They're here, they're biased, get used to it.

Still, I can make these songs work for me. I'm going to love her until two and two is three, even if our smirking chimp president and his media monkey yes-men are hell-bent on keeping us from ever going to the chapel. She's so fine, and I fully intend to show her a little R-E-S-P-E-C-T. When I get home.

Road weariness starts to set in. This home stretch between Brownsville and Coburg takes forever. Luckily, the next solid gold hit the DJ plays is a perfect sing-along. I have to say I'm grateful to Rhymin' Simon for tipping us off about the 50 ways. I've slipped out the back and dropped off the key a few times myself. No need to be coy. In my case, I also had to employ some techniques I've never heard anyone sing about – probably because not too many things rhyme with restraining order. (Complaining boarder? Disdaining hoarder? Defaming courtier?)

I like the song, but I take liberties and make up some of my own 50 ways.

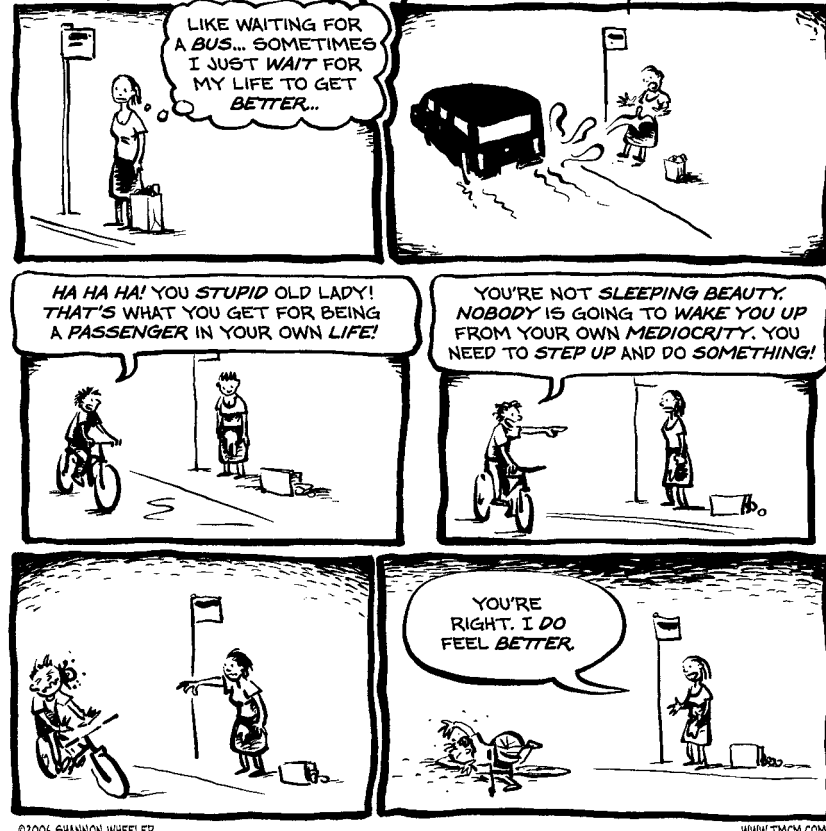
Here's what you do, Sue
Stick with the plan, Fran,
Just drop to your knees, Louise
And make her your wife
Tell her she's great, Kate
You know it's the truth, Ruth
Take a genuine tone, Joan
And do it for life.

A car with rainbow stickers like mine toots and the gray-haired women inside flash me a thumbs up. They're singing, too! I can't read their lips, but I'll bet it's not "Heartbreak Hotel."

Writer Sally Sheklow, recipient of the 2005 Houston Press Club "Best Magazine Column" award, sings her own special song in Eugene.

How to Be Happy

by Shannon Wheeler



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SKINNER AND KESEY

I appreciate Dan Carol's column (6/1) about downtown sites, but my beholding and his of the Eugene Skinner statue differ. The statue, designed by James Carpenter, is accurate. The expression is not depressed. Maybe he's a little dumbfounded; I do sense some bemusement, maybe a touch of "What the ...?"

Carpenter is a fine cartoonist, and the expression invites the viewer to supply one's own thought balloon. Skinner was a mousy-looking guy. Think Dylan on the *John Wesley Harding* cover minus the cryptic subtext.

A piece of columnar basalt from Skinner Butte is a seat for E. Skinner and any passer-by who wishes to join him. I've enjoyed seeing the many companions and adornments he invites. This is a popular photo-op for visitors to Eugene, and this aspect would be lost were the sculpture moved.

Regarding the Kesey plaza and the statue by Pete Helzer, the city seems to have an unwritten policy of no new fountains. When the plaza was reworked, Forouz Carpets proposed putting a doorway in the wall and serving at tables. The wall was considered inviolate, but this may have been a lost opportunity.

Kesey reading to kids is OK, I guess, but this will probably be the only statue of Kesey the city will have. It does not attempt to portray the salient points of his public character.

John Rose
Eugene

ONLY SO TOLERANT

The news brief "UO Approves Diversity Plan" (6/1) confirms the blatant hypocrisy of some of those who cooked it up. When professor Ellis speaks against it he is "booed and hissed." When professor Summers speaks in favor, he is given a "standing ovation."

These proponents want "diversity" only if

it follows their strict, leftist interpretation and tolerate only those who agree with them. I'm hoping that Oregon taxpayers get really tired of funding this institution.

Jerry Ritter
Rural Springfield

REALITY RECRUITING

I enjoyed reading the article by Michael Williams, "Confronting Recruiting," in the (5/25) *Weekly*. I found it inspiring when I read that protesters had succeeded in helping the National Guard become more honest by changing their billboard from "100% Tuition Paid" to "Tuition \$4500 + G.I. Bill." The fact that the Guard changed the billboard really proves the

power of protests.

Recruiters should also be very real and candid when convincing our young people to make life-altering decisions like joining our military. The recruiters need to inform their recruits that there is a potential that they may be killed or badly disfigured. We are at war after all. Once recruited, the soldier may be placed in precarious situations where poor leadership and hive mentality causes the deaths of innocent women and children. They then may have to live with the memory of collateral damage (innocent people who died because of their actions).

I wonder how many recruits were involved in Haditha or Abu Ghraib? These young soldiers may have to fight an unpopular war that was started under false pretense. If the recruits survive this, they may return home with post traumatic stress disorder which can give them anxiety attacks and war flashbacks for years to come. The good news is the recruits will get \$4,500 tuition + G.I. Bill.

Steve Brown
Eugene



The confused but upbeat Eugene Skinner