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Change I Can NOT Believe In BY PHIL HOBBS

Over the past few months, I have been anxiously waiting to hear about the measures that the Obama Administration is taking to change our ailing economy. In May 2010, like many of you, I will be entering the job market and it would be lovely if there were actually jobs available in it.

The Obama administration administered a bill passed by the Senate, which will provide "The American People" with at least 700 billion dollars in relief. Due to the various numbers thrown around for the final amount of

the bill, I will use the lowest of these estimates at 700 billion dollars for the rest of my article.

First, where is Obama getting 700 billion dollars? After digging into the matter a bit more, I discovered precisely what I was afraid I might find.

The bailout will be funded in three ways: tax revenue, private funding (most likely in the form of government-issued bonds), and by printing new currency. In the current economic troubles, where one dollar will only buy you .79 Euros and .70 British Pounds, it makes no

sense to further devalue the already weakened U.S. Dollar. The devaluation this bill adds should make the country's stagflation grow exponentially.

My second question is who will be getting this money? It appears that the majority of recipients receiving the bailout money will be hundreds of banks, insurance companies, and several auto manufacturers.

The reason that most banks need the bailout money is very complicated. In the simplest terms, the banks purchased bad loans (loans

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SELF-HELP ON THE BIG SCREEN? BY SAMANTHA MOORE

What drew me to *He's Just Not That Into You* was some kind of warped fantasy of gaining female empowerment via hard-to-swallow rejection. Knowing nothing about the book upon which the movie is based, I thought, "Finally, a film that de-

mystifies all the folly and offers a wider critique on gender relations!" But then I sat down.

Based on the bestseller by *Sex and the City* writers Greg Behrendt and Liz Tuccillo, *He's Just Not That Into You* conveys the stories of five women seeking

their individualized fairytales. Props to these women who stress and stretch and struggle to read the signs from a typical male cast of charmers and cheats:

Beth's man says he's in love but won't marry

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SAM BAM'S TOP TEN FOOD FINDINGS:

1. PAT'S KING OF STEAKS (1219 S. NINTH ST.)
2. OLD CITY CHEESE SHOP (160 N 3RD STREET)
3. CAPOGIRO GELATERIA (119 S. 13TH STREET)
4. THE LAST DROP COFFEEHOUSE(1900 PINE STREET)
5. MUGSHOTS COFFEEHOUSE-JUICEBAR (2106 FAIRMOUNT AVE)
6. READING TERMINAL MARKET (12TH ST. AND ARCH ST.)
7. CHRIS' JAZZ CAFÉ (1421 SANSOM AVE)
8. SOHO PIZZA (218 MARKET ST.)
9. NAKED CHOCOLATE CAFÉ (1317 WALNUT ST.)
10. DAVE AND BUSTER'S ARCADE(325 N COLUMBUS BLVD)
WWW.DAVEANDBUSTERS.COM

CHANGE I CAN NOT...



Image courtesy of Barack Obama website

whose recipients had no real chance of paying them back) from each other and when the recipients could not repay the debt on a mass scale the banks lost billions of dollars. The auto companies allowed the auto workers unions to control them for so long that their profits slowly asphyxiated in the already trying business environment created by the gas shortages, as well as their lack of attention to fuel efficient hybrid cars. The Insurance companies, from most reports I have read, do not even need the bailout. The treasury department simply wants to make sure that people have insurance funds available in case of natural disaster; an admirable thought to be sure.

“When did it become taboo to ask for a little bit of that “checks and balances” action when it came to people using hundreds of billions of our dollars?”

I simply have trouble keeping the faith after seeing multi-million dollar home owners in New Orleans receive \$1,200 checks from their insurance companies after their homes were completely destroyed. And to think that those were the fortunate ones.

Let us pretend for a moment that the government is a bank, much like these companies are doing. Most would assume that

Mr. Obama (Bank President) would want to give loans to companies who make wise business decisions, who have plans for getting to and staying on the top of their industry, and who treat their customers with integrity and respect. I’m just glad that we are not perpetuat-

ing the cycle by giving out loans to people that have not demonstrated a clear ability to pay them back.

Finally, I ask, what will the recipients of the money use it for? It amazed me to hear Obama throwing around the concept of “accountability” within government and at the same time seeing the democratic members of the house and senate say that the American people do not need a detailed report of how the money is used by the banks, investment companies and auto manufacturers that received it. When did it become taboo to ask for a little bit of that “checks and balances” action when it came to people using hundreds of billions of our dollars?

If I were Obama, I would give the money to the people. According to the 2008 Census there are approximately 303,824,640 people living in the United States. If we took the 700 Billion dollars and distributed an equal share, every person would receive \$2,303. I picture a family of five living in West or North Philadelphia receiving a check for \$11,515 dollars and starting a fund for their children’s college education. I picture a lower-middle class family paying off a car loan, or a young couple paying off their student loans. Furthermore, I picture a homeless woman with two children renting a cheap apartment,

finding a steady job and finally turning their lives around. The magnificently rich will always exist and survive economic turmoil. I believe that economic progress is defined by what happens to the little people: the people who struggle to feed their families and barely afford the rent. I believe that a prosperous nation will emerge when we get the homeless off of the street and feed the children going to bed hungry just blocks from where I’m writing this. So I ask the United States of America:

Where is that kind of Change?



MCPC students visiting Love Park after a day of touring through Independence Hall.

(Photo courtesy of Kelsey Theuerkauf)

AESCHYLUS GETS PIMPED IN *THE SEVEN* BY: TIM MACKIE



Photo courtesy of Temple University

In his spectacular rendition of Aeschylus's immortal *Seven Against Thebes*, hip-hop theatre pioneer Will Power blends ancient and (post) modern elements into a masterpiece of rhyme, dance, and high tragedy. Power's *The Seven* is more than just another "twist" on a classic work; it takes on a life of its own by infusing an up-and-coming genre with the epic grandeur of Greek drama.

As with the classic play, *The Seven* is essentially a sequel to the more familiar story *Oedipus Rex*. In case

you were too busy passing notes in high-school lit class, Oedipus was the exiled prince with whom (accidentally) killed his father and married his mother (gross). *The Seven* picks up where *Oedipus Rex* left off, with the disgraced Oedipus (here sporting shades and five-inch platforms) pronouncing a curse on his two sons Eteocles and Polynices that they will live as enemies, not brothers. Not willing to let their crazy ol' pop have the last word, Eteocles and Polynices agree to split the office of king, with each brother ruling "one year, one year." Things don't work out so smoothly as Eteocles decides that he should rule Thebes forever and Polynices

in retaliation raises an army of seven champions to take back the city by force.

Pretty heavy stuff, right? Well, yes and no. *The Seven* is awash in funky anachronisms that mash-up Greek myth with modern urban slang. Characters are just as likely to name-drop contemporary hip-hop icons as mythic heroes, and most of Polynices' crew are caricatures of various elements of hip-hop culture, including the gold lamé clad beat poet and the heat-packing Snoop Dogg clone. This works if you find King Eteocles promising his subjects to "keep Social Security around till 17 B.C." more clever than cheesy. Otherwise, it might just look like modern Philadelphia vomited all over ancient Thebes.

Of course, you literary purists can hold onto your monocles since *The Seven* throws a shout-out to Aes-

chylus himself in the form of the ghostly, face-painted narrator. This narrator preserves the original language of *Seven Against Thebes*, hems the action, and acts as a unifying force.

The Seven is presented in black box format, putting the audience up close and personal with the action. If the infectious hip-hop rhythms are giving you happy feet, don't worry, you'll get a change to bust some moves with the cast during the 15 minute intermission.

The art of drama has come a long way from the times when plays were written on papyri and performed in outdoor amphitheaters. The lighting, sound, and theatrical effects may be better, but the themes explored by the earliest playwrights resonate so strongly in contemporary America as to make me seriously doubt the idea of human progress.

VAGINAL DISCOURSE

BY: MEL MCKRELL

If you're unaccustomed to pondering what your vagina would wear if it got dressed, or what it would say if it could speak, there was plenty of squirming for you at the annual performance of the *Vagina Monologues* held in Temple's student center. "Should I have been there?" I heard one male ponder aloud after the show.

This frothy silliness is part of the show's power.

Any of the monologues that imagine the vagina stepping out in evening wear or disguising itself as a red leather sofa are actually borrowed from interviews creator Eve Ensler conducted with more than 200 women about their bodies. Ensler intended these pieces to connect to the women's rights movement as genuinely as the monologues about rape, infidelity and poverty. For me, the heart of the *Vagina Monologues* lies in the intersection between these bits: the serious and the

non-serious.

Granted, it is difficult to integrate a rant about tampons with a "Not-so-Happy Fact" about female genital mutilation in African countries. In this juxtaposition, the international usually lost out to the tarter, grabbier parts of the show. It didn't help that the actors speaking on global femicide read the information as if it were nutritional facts.

But the blame does not lie purely with the delivery. As Ensler has said, "the epi-

demic of violence toward women is so profound [and] so in every little pocket in every little crater of society that we don't even recognize it because it's become ordinary."

This is the tension and the mission of the *Vagina Monologues*: to awaken a numb audience to the vagina as a source of power and thus, warfare. From here, the intimate becomes inseparable from the global statistic. They need each

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Discourse

other. A play specializing only in violence would simply numb the audience, while a performance glorifying sexual satisfaction would allow women to think only of their individual bodies.

Did the *Vagina Monologues* master this tension? "My Vagina Was My Village," a monologue for Bosnian rape victims of the early 1990s, is evidence enough. While a lush-voiced girl sings poetry like "my vagina singing all girl songs/all goat bell ringing songs/all wild autumn field songs," a woman writhes next to her on the ground, speaking in a deadened voice about her deadened body.

It was a beautiful welding of the personal and seemingly impersonal. Blusher or non-blusher, you should make it to the show next year.

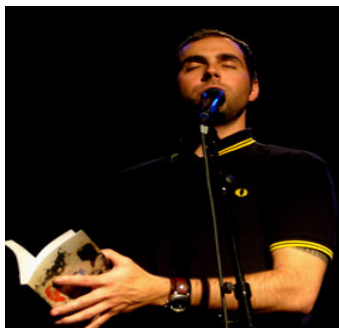
SELF-HELP

her. Janine's man is having an affair with Anna who keeps Connor close just in case the married man disappoints. Connor rooms with Alex who starts dishing out advice to Gigi who is a dating basket case obsessed with finding 'the one' (except every guy she speaks with promptly assumes that potential). And Mary, well, her tale hangs about in cyberspace until she finally meets a real man in public, who just happens to be Connor, her advertising client and by movie's end, Anna's ex.

This untidy web of relationships forms an amusing parade for us women sitting back si-

Artist Spotlight

BY MICHELLE CANALES



Derrick Brown reads from his book Born in the Year of the Butterfly Knife and will perform in Philadelphia at the Kyhber Inn April 18, 2009. (Image courtesy brownpoetry.com)

Valentine's Day in Dresden

(From his new book *Scandalabra*)

I feel as ridiculous as faith-based food,

directionless like rain in outer space when you reach for me.

Don't unful your vanilla fantastic at my black molasses.

Our love would be as dumb as a bomb on a boomerang.

You are sacred, ugly solace and sweet enough to have dentists boycott you.

Figs in your lips

Let's not fall in love.

I am tired of stroking that kitty.

multaneously chuckling and relating. But by the end of it, these women's trials wind up just as routinely expected from the chic flick: more mythically goeey and redemptive than not.

The only real relational blip is the one that inevitably develops among the Janine-Anna-Ben triangle. But the rest of the women end up maneuvering what the title implies and

I am tired of the colon cancer from the smoke it blew up my porthole.

Don't show me that you are an observatory of wet hot bummers and boy germs.

Don't come to me all dressed up in a peanut butter and nightmare sandwich.

Your eyes as boring as a desert photograph, your body, a nude model for bad hotel art.

Jealous as a lush, I know you will apologize in the morning for all the misplaced I love you's.

I know your type. I know your font. Wingdings!

Zapf Dingbats! Verdana...wide!

You're a European mess rolling around in my favorite dress, a mouth full of hell and a chest full of hell yes.

Big deal, your eyes are green and gray.

Shut off the night vision, ya creep.

You say you can see halos streak down onto the tarmac?

Those are your drunk friends, former guardians illuminating

the dark interstate.

I know that you hope love will come and get you but it might rise up and banana split you, so knock if off with the eyes, sister.

You kissed me on the throat. What is wrong with you?!

That's where I make my money!

You made my heart go Max Roach.

The rude noise.

Our sex is just going to be a constant bungled stumbling into each other's gross.

It is going to be like throwing pasta against the wall to see if we're done.

I know your favorite drink is casual tea.

Don't pour it on me.

Get me to the hospital, now! I'll have to tell the doctors how good I was feeling that day

and beg them to operate to get me back to poetry normal.

Speak love all you want.

I don't believe what you say but

I appreciate your tone.

discovering that he was into you, and oh, he was into you too, and don't sweat it, he will surely be into you soon enough.

For what it's meant to say and be, the film did a fine job, featuring big star names like Drew Barrymore, Ben Affleck, Jennifer Aniston, Scarlett Johansson and more. I admit I laughed, I sniffled. But all in all, and for what

it's titled, the film kept sending me mixed signals (akin to Neil's and Anna's and Ben's and Alex's and [insert man or woman of choice here]).

**Words are Sexy
Join our exorcism**

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