

RANDOM THOUGHTS

Old Troll's lovers never die — just ask a soldier

By ELIZABETH ELLEN
Staff Writer

Are sailors inherently more apt to adopt democratic values than are soldiers? More importantly, do soldiers prefer Troll's as it was or Troll's as it is? On the resolution of such matters does the fate of Western civilization, and the world in general, depend.

According to author Barrington Moore, England's traditional reliance upon naval power at the expense of building up a strong army helped nudge the nation in the direction of democracy as opposed to fascism or communism. A fascinating thesis to be sure, and understandable in the sense that a warship is unlikely to sail into your home or business and repress whatever it is you are doing. Submarines are not really visually intimidating sitting on Main Street, whereas an armed detachment could be.

So we come to the question of whether landlocked countries have a harder time becoming democracies than those with

substantial coastlines. Is there some political destiny written in the geologic plates which separated into the continents we know today? Should those who oppose authoritarian regimes blame geologic forces for stacking the cards against democracy developing in their nations? This could create a powerful "we/they" distinction, original revolutionary rhetoric, and a significant rise in the popularity of rock collecting for fun and profit.

The decline of a particular "we/they" distinction is just one of the tragedies of the remodelled Troll's. By actually cleaning up the place, the owners made the bar more like the other bars in Chapel Hill. Many of us liked the scum pit ambience of the old Troll's. One could dance on the tables without fear of retribution and sing along with Hank Williams without fear of appearing uncouth.

There are now things one can do there that were not possible before. One can walk in and out the door in white shoes, and one

can pry those same white shoes from the floor without enlisting the assistance of friends. These new liberties just don't make up for the losses, however. The possibility of individual prying of shoes really cuts down on the camaraderie associated with the old-style bar.

I also miss the Trollsters, those regulars who appeared to have crawled out of a swamp for an evening of hardcore drinking in a more cultured swamp. These people are becoming an endangered and displaced species because their habitat has been radically altered. Maybe we should call in the World Wildlife Fund on the case.

While on the subject of changes in local bars, let me put in a complaint about the repainted bathrooms at Henderson Street Bar. I sorely miss the philosophizing on the women's room walls, now a solid stomach-turning hue. "Cyslexics of the world, untie" heads my list of good H-Street graffiti.

Transforming bars can have reverberations far beyond the scope of downtown Chapel Hill. For instance, look at the effect on literature. If Trollsters leave Troll's *en masse*, will they live under bridges and frighten the Three Billy Goats Gruff? Will generations of young fairy tale fans have this old favorite altered beyond recognition by a new, troll-like population unleashed on society and entering its folk culture?

Furthermore, what if soldiers and not sailors decide they like the new Troll's better than the old one? If soldiers adopt the bar as a locus for establishing greater solidarity and communication, we might head down the road to a stronger army, a weaker navy, and eventual fascism.

Furthermore, what does a clean Troll's imply about the eternal nature of Platonic forms? It is unclear what an ideal Troll's, existing in the realm of forms, would look like. While I contend that the version with tar-like

residue on every flat surface is preferable to the newer and more sanitary establishment, the concept of such a bar in the dreamlike Form Land somehow jars the senses. The renovation, by offering Plato an alternative, could have induced him to introduce a different ideal Troll's into the realm, thereby screwing up all our lives, as well as the effectiveness of satellite communication.

Now that the Space Shuttle program has gotten off the ground again, satellites could possibly be adjusted to compensate for the atmospheric distortions caused by a change in the Platonic forms. George Bush showed up at the Discovery's touchdown the other day and claimed his appearance was not campaign related. This is intuitively true. He probably came to emphasize the urgency of keeping the world safe for sailors and Trollsters so that Old Glory may continue to wave proudly over this glorious democratic nation. God bless him!

Poi Dog Pondering resists having address or style tied down

By ALLISON PIKE
Staff Writer

What do you do when you live in Honolulu and your band is having trouble getting booked in the local clubs? If you are like Poi Dog Pondering, you take to the streets. And when you have played all the streets? You fly to the mainland, buy a van and some sleeping bags, recruit some new band members for gas money and you hit the road.

Poi Dog Wandering might be a better name for this now Texas-based band which has completed two tours across the United States and ventured into Canada and Mexico. They'll be at the Brewery Oct. 11. Last year they stopped at Cat's Cradle, and anyone who saw that show will probably remember Poi Dog because this band's music is hard to forget.

It's nearly impossible to place Poi Dog in any music category. "We borrow and steal from all types of music," main songwriter Frank Orrall says. "And we play any instrument we can get our hands on." Guitars, tin whistles, accordions, banjos, and trombones are only a few of the instruments found on Poi Dog's self-titled debut album. The result is a sort

of progressive-Irish folk sound. "Living With the Dreaming Body" and "Postcard From a Dream" are reminiscent of the early 1980s original but forgettable hit, "Come On Eileen," by Dexy's Midnight Runners. Substitute synthesizers for acoustics on "Pulling Touch" and you would swear this was a New Order song.

The one constant element in all six cuts on this album is simplicity. The songs are light and spontaneous as if Poi Dog was playing on a street corner when they recorded this album, and they will compel you to dance, or at least whistle along. Orrall says he focuses on the positive rather than the negative when writing, and his lyrics are proof. "She says my work is like eating cold oatmeal" and "Keep on the sunny side, always on the sunny side" are some memorable lines.

The key to this band is its love for travel. Why else would they trek across the country sleeping in vans or in parks or in zoos, not knowing where their next meal was coming from? "Everything revolves around traveling," Orrall says.

What are his future plans? "I want to make more records and travel."



By CATHY McHUGH
Omnibus Editor

When I was a little kid I used to ask my mom and dad on Mother's Day and Father's Day when Children's Day was. I was really hoping there would be a Children's Day, because getting breakfast in bed seemed like a pretty good deal to me (specifically, I wanted a Youngest-child-in-the-family Day, so my brothers and sisters would have to serve me). I was told, rather

sternly if I remember correctly, that every day was Children's Day. I didn't understand it then, and I'm not sure I do now. I've never, ever gotten breakfast in bed. Anyway, all of this does have a point. Sort of. I can understand naming days if something productive comes of it, like school gets cancelled, but there exist on our calendars some truly obscure and just plain unproductive holidays. Ponder these:

■ **Friendship Day** is Aug. 6. Nice sentiment, I suppose, but has anyone ever heard of it?

■ **Mother-in-Law's Day** is Oct. 23. What's the matter, isn't Mother's Day good enough? Breakfast in bed twice is bordering on bogus.

■ **United Nations Day** is Oct. 24. So, does this mean there's

going to be a huge party in New York City three weeks from now?

■ **Armed Forces Day** is May 20. Do all the military people get the day off? Or do they just get more TV time?

■ **Columbus Day** is Monday. I guess good ol' Chris deserves his own day, and I did get out of school for it when I was a kid.

■ **Sweetest Day** is Oct. 15. Who thought this one up? Do you do something for the sweetest person you know or the one who eats the most sugar?

I still feel left out. Why is there no Student's Day? At least on this campus there is University Day on Wednesday. And we do get to miss some classes.

Hey, maybe there's something to this day-naming stuff after all.

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