

# Replacements' drifting finally ends

By MARK BRETT

## Review

The Replacements used to be a good punk band. Their early albums contained songs that can only be considered classic punks, with tunes such as "Hoote-nanny," "Take Me Down to the Hospital," "Mr. Whirly," "Androgynous," and the ever-popular "Gary's Got a Boner."

The music was certainly not pretty, and barely competent in some places. Still, there was an undeniable energy present, and

the lyrics were usually perversely well-written. In other words, the Replacements had all the makings of a truly great punk band.

Somewhere along the way, however, they got off that track. Replacements albums went from being humorously addled pack-

ages of punk attack to scatter-shot collections of punk and mainstream rock.

The perverse genius of the lyrics was still mostly there, but the energy was getting de-fused a bit by attempts at more mellow stuff. The punk stuff seemed to come in an occasional "Dose of Thunder" (the title of a song from the "Tim" album,) and then wander off until needed again. The Replacements were drifting.

That drifting has finally come to an end. Recently, the Replacements

released "Don't Tell a Soul," and found their musical voice again. The lyrics, though still well-written, are somewhat less perverse. The punk influence, though still detectable in vocalist Paul Westerberg's scratchy singing style, has been left mostly behind.

The Replacements, it seems, have become a mainstream rock and roll band, and a damn good one.

"Don't Tell a Soul" holds together as an album much better than the Replacements' last couple of efforts. It begins with "Talent Show," a truly wonderful place to start. In this song Westerberg croaks out the lines, "We ain't much to look at, so/ Close your eyes, here we go," and perfectly sets the tone for the rest of the album.

The view of "Don't Tell a Soul" is kind of scruffy and is really not very pretty to look at, which should ensure almost complete Top 40 failure. From "Talent Show" we move on to "We'll Inherit the Earth," a burden that

the Replacements apparently find to not be worth the effort; "Anywhere's Better Than Here," which has pretty much the same message; "Asking Me Lies" (a great title); "I Won't," a song written partially in response to fans who want to hear the band plan punk again; "I'll be You," a really bizarre little love song that echoes the Replacements own "Androgynous;" and "Darlin' One," the closest these guys have ever come to a sincere, straight love song.

"Don't Tell a Soul" presents a dark world, though not one without hope. If the Replacements can keep up what they've begun here, they'll go down as one of the better rock bands ever.

There's still room for improvement; I find the studious denial of the group's punk roots a little forced. Why would anyone discard such a great source of musical energy? Still, the potential is there and I, for one, want to be there to see it develop. Something special is going on here.

## Vampirism offers vicarious escape from life's pressure

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and men — moaning and gasping in obvious sexual delight at his bite [see Badham's 1979 movie.] Perhaps we've simply become immune from evil — or because vampires are a common fiction, we have lost our fear of them. Hollywood has changed our view of him from Bela Lugosi's otherworldly solemnity to Christopher Lee's bloody, snarling face to Frank Langella's elegant potency.

We are fascinated by Dracula's powerful repudiation of normality because normality itself seems to have disappeared. And think about it — the Count has all that a good capitalist secularist yuppie could want — power, money, sexual attraction and freedom, immortality.

What he doesn't have, and this is the connection between all the different versions of his story, is satisfaction. If he's a completely evil devil, his lust for bloods always reappears, even after centuries of feeding. If he's merely a victim of his own condition, his conscience eats him alive for killing the weakly humans. If he's an intelligent scholar, he worries about his participation in evil. If he is lonely and can love humans he must decide whether to kill them and make new immortals or to let them slowly rot into a natural grave.

And this howling lack of satisfaction, finally, makes the vampire human and sympathetic. Sex, power, money, food — for him, and us they all lead to new cycles of desire and pursuit. This is the major theme of Anne

Rice's series of vampire novels. If man has evil, then cannot the vampire have goodness? Rice's vampire stories disappoint because of this lessening of horror; she suggests we don't have that much to fear from the vampire.

But we still have a great deal to fear from and learn from him. He fools us into believing we can escape Death's scythe. And what more beguiling antidote for a nuclear world? He tricks us into believing he wants to offer sustenance when he actually wants to bleed us and transform us. And what better symbol for a world with gasoline engine pollution, cancer-causing pesticides, nu-

clear power?

Most of all, the vampire out-smarts us by changing shapes, by dissolving and reappearing, by speaking to wolves and other animals. What more appropriate spokesman for an MTV video world in which elegantly dressed people solve complex problems in a 30 second television commercial?

We fear his power; and his power comes from his ability to escape the pressures and problems we must eventually face.

We love him for his ability to help us forget for a few moments, whether we moan and gasp or scream and pray.

## Student vandalism ridiculous

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extinguishers dispersed, front door of dorm broken, dorm refrigerator thrown out window, and end table in dorm lobby broken;

A good bit of vandalism wouldn't you say? Oh, this is just for Nash Hall...*this semester!* And I'm sure I've forgotten some. Even more shocking is that of these 25 or so counts of vandalism, only in four cases do we know actually who did it. That means about 85 percent of all vandalism is unaccounted for.

Students don't think it's such a big deal when they get caught for vandalism, but when they get a bill at the end of the semester for community damage, they re-

ally complain. Since students won't stop vandalizing on their own, that job falls to Student Life. No wonder we are so well liked. I came here to help improve campus life and student development, but instead of having experience in college housing, I needed experience in criminal justice or detective work.

Some students put a great amount of effort into destroying a dorm. I can just imagine how strong our campus life would be if all that effort were focused into many of the worthwhile groups on campus, such as the Student Government Association, the Student Activities Committee, and the Yearbook, staff.

At these type organizational gatherings, the usual turnout is

easily counted on two hands, if not one. Yet, let there be a party on a given weekend, and there will be 30 to 40+ people gathering. These parties are a breeding ground for vandalism, since about 75 percent or more occurs when these parties are held.

The only time students complain about their rights is when they are written up for a violation of the Code of Conduct. Until then, they do hardly anything to see that their rights and needs are met. They seem to leave that up to Student Life. Students have complained that Student Life has been strict on them, but no one has been suspended this year.

Actually, I feel Student Life has been rather lenient this year, whereas at other colleges, many

for independent self-supporting students and is *not* based on financial need. The third program is for parents of dependent students and is *not* based on financial need.

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of the violations students have done would have gotten them suspended. At some schools this can be as minor as having a couple of alcohol violations.

The past Student Life staffs have had some problems. This year, I feel, we are improving. Students must do the same also.

A much better relationship would result between Student Life and students if only they would direct as much effort into worthwhile improvements on campus as they do into throwing beer bottles out of the residence hall windows.

Please note that the opinions expressed are solely mine and not that of Student Life.

Tim Meeks