

'Aerosmith' pumps out new album

By MARK BRETT

Review

The first thing that catches your attention is the cover. It depicts, in vivid black-and-white, two flat-bed trucks caught in what can best be described as the throes of passion. Appropriately enough, both trucks are stripped of their flatbeds, leaving only the frame. On the door of the truck on top is painted the work "Pump." Locked together like two dogs in heat, the trucks represent a wit that is both tasteless and clever. That combination is also highly appropriate, as it turns out, because this image fronts the new album from Aerosmith.

Entitled "Pump," this album serves notice to all of us out here who had thought that the A-Smith boys had finally lost their grip and succumbed to the Top-40-worshipping legion of Pop-Metal Bon-Jovi-wanna-be's. While that thought was well-justified after last year's "Permanent Vacation," the album that brought us "Angel," "Pump" kicks the notion in the teeth. With the kind of tough, growling, grunting blues metal Aerosmith is known for, this album brings the band back to its former glory. In addition to that, however, new musical styles are woven into the old patterns, making this more than just a re-hash of the past. "Pump," again appropriately enough, pumps Aerosmith into the future.

All of which makes the first track on "Pump" a bit ironic. That song is entitled "Young Lust," and it takes a look back to the past. Done in Aerosmith's familiar blues metal style, the song has the feel of a man approaching middle age looking back fondly on the hormone-controlled days of his youth. This is followed by "F.I.N.E.," which, according to the liner notes, stands for (and I quote,) "F**ked up, Insecure, Neurotic, Emotional." This song continues in the vein of the first; a look back, this one to a rough period. Both songs, however, are a celebration of youth; they look

back with no regrets.

Next up is "Love in an Elevator," a song that probably everyone has heard by now. This one combines Aerosmith's blues metal standards with a sort of sing-song feel that reminds me in a way of prison work songs. This would seem to be borne out by the song's opening lines: "Workin' like hell for the boss-man/(whoa-oh)/Working' for the company/(whoa-oh-year)/Bet-tin' on the dice I'm tossin/(whoa-oh)/Gonna have a fantasy." The song itself, however, according to lead singer Steven Tyler, is based on an actual occurrence. Some guys have all the luck.

"Pump" turns dark for a couple of songs at this point. First is "Monkey on my Back," a song about the band's well-known problems with drug and alcohol addiction. The song is, thankfully, not preachy. It tells its story and ends, leaving the listener to decide on any meaning it may have had. Next is "Janie's Got a Gun," which is about child abuse and one tragic solution to it.

The album continues with a strange instrumental that begins and ends side two. Untitled, this short snippet of music sounds like the kind of music that is usually heard in movies set in the Middle Ages. Its presence is inexplicable, but interesting. This is followed by two standard Aerosmith tunes, then by "Don't Get Mad, Get Even." This one's a

blues revenge song with a vocal delivery straight out of a lullaby, which gives the song a very authoritative tone. Next is "Voodoo Medicine Man," about the rash of strange behaviors that seems to be sweeping the nation among teenagers as they pursue cheap thrills (such as "masturbating with a noos.")

Many of these activities can be self-destructive, but they are engaged in anyway. The song

compares this insanity with following a witch doctor. The solutions don't make much sense, but these people are so desperate for release that they'll do anything. The song does a good job of conveying that kind of desperation.

The album ends with "What it Takes," best described as a heavy metal ballad. This one, however, is well-written (at least as these things go.) While in the fine tradition of the "woman done me

wrong" song, this one sounds more like a sappy teen love ballad. An interesting combination, perhaps, but there's a bit too much sap and not enough meat here. Still, even ending on this sour note, "Pump" can stand high among Aerosmith's albums. It acknowledges the past, but moves on to the future, building up enough energy to move Aerosmith through the next decade and beyond.

Professors say cheating increasing

Students today are more interested in getting better grades than their predecessors, but are more willing to cheat to get them, the nation's professors said in a poll.

Students' study habits generally aren't very good, the professors added in the survey, conducted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

"Today's faculty present a discouraging portrait of students," said Carnegie President Ernest Boyer in the foreword to "The Condition of the Professorate: Attitudes and Trends, 1989," which was released Nov. 5.

Of the 5,450 professors polled, 70 percent said students have become more grade-conscious over the past five years, but 43 percent said students are more likely to cheat and 55 percent said students do only enough to get by.

"About two-thirds of the faculty say that too many students are ill-prepared for academic life, and they conclude that their institution spends too much time and money teaching students what they should have learned in high school," Boyer wrote.

The study, conducted every five years to measure faculty members' feelings about their

lives, concludes that "public education, despite six years of reform, is still producing inadequately prepared students."

The professors also thought their schools should emphasize giving students a broad liberal education instead of narrower, specialized training.

In October, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) separately issued a call to alter all students' graduation requirements to include 50 hours of liberal arts classes.

The professors in the Carnegie poll felt better about their campuses than they did about their students.

Classifieds

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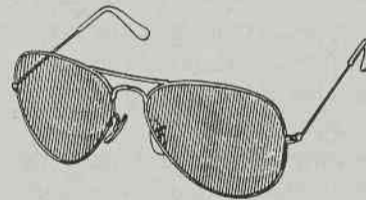
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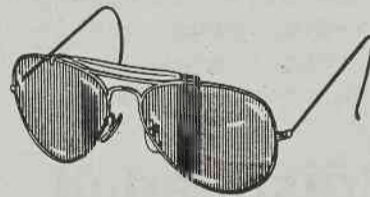
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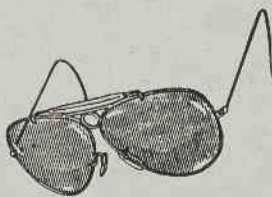
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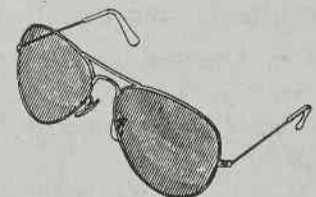
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