

# Be wary of rabies hype

Melissa Hoopes  
Guest Writer

There are many causes of paranoia, including the media. I recently read an article entitled "Rabies cases infiltrate N.C. for record high" in the August 29, 1993, *Greensboro News and Record*. The article stated that there is a "rabies epidemic infiltrating North Carolina through vicious bites and toxic saliva." According to the *News and Record*, "In Columbus County, a rabid cat chased one man indoors and clawed and chewed its way through a screen door until the man shot it dead." Please understand that I am not suggesting that this event never occurred. However, I cannot help but question the accuracy of this account.

I will not try to diminish the facts. Apparently, there have been fifty recorded cases of rabid animals this year. This is a record high for North Carolina and almost double the number of reported cases at this time last year.

Rabies is a deadly disease that attacks the central nervous system of warmblooded animals. Humans can be affected by the disease if they come into contact with the saliva of a rabid animal. However, according to the book *Primary Care Medicine*, there have been only one or two cases per year where humans have died from this

disease. Therefore, let's try to keep the facts in perspective.

The article quoted some people who were "chased" and "attacked." One woman said, "It was like something out of a horror story." Unfortunately, without a first-hand observation of these events, I find it difficult to believe that these situations were as terrible as the victim suggested.

When I worked at two nature centers this past summer, a colleague and I found two baby raccoons searching for food. We discovered that the raccoons were motherless. Within a few hours, several parents and teachers reported their concerns that there were some "rabid raccoons wandering aimlessly on the property." These adults were convinced that the animals had rabies--because it was the middle of the day. My colleagues and I explained that without a mother to tell them that they were nocturnal animals, the young raccoons were desperately searching for food in the sunlight.

There were multitudes of other instances when people, adults and children told me stories of a parent, spouse or friend shooting a raccoon because he or she *thought* it had rabies. I also heard tales of people in the New York area intentionally driving off the side of the road to hit raccoons. I could not help but wonder where this paranoia and hysteria had origi-

nated.

In my opinion, the paranoia is created by the ignorance of the public as well as over-dramatization by the media. In the *News and Record* article, there was a lot of hype about the magnitude of this disease. Yet the article did not provide the reader with information about preventative measures, precautions, or an additional information source. During this past summer, I did my best to inform the public about what to do if they think they have located a rabid animal. I cautioned people from taking matters into their own hands for two reasons. Firstly, there are certain procedures that must be used to eliminate the spread of disease. Also, there have been too many unnecessary deaths of innocent animals. No person or animal should die because of ignorance or unwarranted actions.

Although numerous animals such as raccoons, skunks, foxes, and bats do contract this disease each year, humans can take preventative measures to eliminate the risk of contracting rabies. Please realize the seriousness of this disease as well as the reality of recent events. Ignorance can easily lead to paranoia which can result in rash actions. Please protect yourself, your pets and the beautiful creatures of the wild by becoming informed.

# Movie Review: "Boxing Helena"

Amy Newsome  
Staff Writer

What a delightful movie. That is, if you are into corny lines, bad acting and a ridiculous plot. As you probably have heard, "Boxing Helena" has become something of a joke among critics everywhere (this year's "Hudson Hawk," perhaps).

Poor Jennifer Lynch. Who could foresee it wouldn't become a box office hit? A movie about a man so obsessed with a woman that he climbs up trees to watch her have sex and then ultimately cuts off her arms and legs to keep her prisoner in his mansion.

As I said before, the plot is somewhat absurd. Julian Sands ("A Room With a View") plays Dr. Nick Cavanaugh--a man so enamored with Helena, played by Sherilyn Fenn ("Twin Peaks") that he follows her around constantly and continuously phones her. Re-

fusing to believe that she is not interested in him, Cavanaugh tricks Helena into coming to his house. Soon after, she is maimed in a car accident, and in an operation at his house he amputates her legs, and later, her arms as well. Julian Sands, it has to be said, is plainly and simply a bad actor. The lines he delivers are unnatural and make his character seem like a wimp. Unfortunately, Sherilyn Fenn is not that far behind. Her total bitchiness makes anyone wonder why Cavanaugh would be obsessed with her, since she treats him like filth.

On the other hand--and to be fair, Jennifer Lynch's originality and guts to make this film in an industry that is so unwilling to take chances is commendable. Even though the plot and acting left much to be desired, some of the visual aspects were amazing, and, in my opinion, this isn't the last we will hear of Ms. Lynch.

# Creative Resistance

Naomi Blass  
Staff Writer

Little boys, and sometimes grown men, call their penis Peter. Women on the other hand have no term of endearment for their vagina. In fact, the associations in American society with the vagina range from outright hostility to images of uncleanness, unpleasant odors, and general negativity. So why is it that women who have never even seen their vagina conceptualize it as something totally disgusting?

We live in a patriarchal society, but let's narrow it down. The American Media and Advertising industries play a central role in controlling and distorting women's views of their bodies. An easy example, and one that is most deceptive, are those tampon, pad, yeast infection (Monostat 7, Gyne-lotrimen, how many are there? Suppository or cream?), douche, and feminine deodorant spray (FDS) ads that seem to run rampant on television. And exactly what are these ads saying? Something to the effect that women are

walking vaginas and can be made "naturally better," "fresher and cleaner," and smell better if these products are implemented. Implemented indeed! Over half of these products involve insertion, a process which for some women can span from uncomfortable to painful. Exactly what does "feminine protection" protect us from when it has been proven that both tampons and pads contain a whitening bleach that causes CANCER? Who are we protecting when we use this so-called "feminine protection"? Mostly men and society from having to register *the reality that women are even experiencing* their periods, that vaginas have more of a use than providing sexual pleasure for a lover. Yet when was the last time you saw an ad for Blue Star Ointment, or even a condom, on television? Condom?! If you've been watching American television you may not even know what it looks like, let alone how to use one, or for that matter, who's supposed to wear it!

Moving on to the American Media and outright hostility... The only difference between art and

pornography is a matter of refinement. Is there a significant change of meaning between a Hustler layout of a woman pointing a knife at her vagina, and an art piece illustrating St. George slaying a dragon, while a naked, chained virgin waits near by? The symbolism, metaphor, and meaning are the same.

So what is the worth of the vagina, the physical, mental, and emotional value placed upon it by American society? \$4.99 at the grocery store, \$2.50 at the bookstore, and free on Wednesdays if you present your student i.d. at the Museum door.

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## WQFS Top 30

compiled by Louisa Spaventa and Becky  
Browning, Music Directors

ARTIST	TITLE
1. King Missile	Happy 14 1/2
2. Mudhoney	Piece of Cake
3. Eugenius	Oomalama
4. The Sundays	Blind
5. Pigface	Fook
6. Daisy Chainsaw	Eleventeen
7. Throwing Muses	Various Tracks
8. Soul Asylum	Grave Dancers Union
9. Alice Donut	Untidy Suicides...
10. Lulabox	Full Bleed
11. Darling Buds	Erotica
12. Wax	What Else Can We Do
13. Shatterposts	Spear & Magic Helmet
14. Ned's Atomic Dustbin	Are You Normal?
15. Bleach	Killing Time
16. Mommyheads	Coming into Beauty
17. various	Techno Sound of Berlin
18. Jesus Lizard	Liar
19. Drunken Boat	See Ruby Falls
20. Chainsaw Kittens	High in High School
21. Helios Creed	Kiss to the Brain
22. Popinjays	Flying... Mono Valley
23. Inspiral Carpets	Revenge... Goldfish
24. Loudspeaker	Supernatural
25. Young Fresh Fellows	Doc Sharpie...Bad Man
26. Rembrandis	Untitled
27. Bus Stop	Bus Stop
28. Lagwagon	Duh
29. Gruntruck	Push
30. Lovechild	Witchcraft