

Do Your 'Doody:' Let the Inner Child Out to Play

In my brief stint as a business major (Yes, I was accepted into the prestigious Kenan-Flagler Business School. Suckers.), I had the distinct pleasure of learning all about regression analysis. Apparently, it involves a lot of numbers and Greek letters.

Anyway, I thought I'd do my own regression analysis in today's column, but on a more literal level. I'm going to analyze my regression, from pseudo-intelligent college student to babbling, drooling infant.

I might be overgeneralizing here, but I think most of you know what I mean. There was a time when I theorized, pondered and explored. I was known as "The Dictionary" by my classmates.

Now my nickname is "Doody." And I'm oddly proud of it. I even used it for the name of my column last year ("Duty Calls" - get it?)

What the hell happened to me?

What the hell happened to all of us? In our cutthroat capitalist society, we have been engineered to grow up quickly. For some reason, growing up means giving up most of your toys. There's less and less play time and more and more work time. And as we all know, all work and no play makes Jack start calling himself "Doody."

Of course, there's nothing wrong with regressing to the days when we could make farting noises for hours and never stop laughing. There's no harm in spinning around in a circle for the sole purpose of getting dizzy and vomiting on or near your best friend.

The danger arises only when these natural urges are not given their appropriate outlet and become repressed deep within a student's psyche, burning and festering, until they explode like some sort of mental diarrhea.

So, to combat this frightening menace, I propose a worldwide network of regression centers, where people can



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SO ... HOW'S YOUR GIRL

go to really find their inner-child, and give him an atomic wedge.

Upon entry to these regression centers, students will be bombarded with Nerf projectiles, while rambunctious regressees give them the finger and display other lewd hand gestures.

Once through the gauntlet, new regressees can venture into a variety of different areas, including the 24-hour "Police Academy" movie marathons (N.B. - only P.A. 1 through 5 will be shown, as P.A. 6, "Mission to Moscow," was less a fun comedy and more a hard-hitting political commentary on post-Cold War foreign affairs).

They can also explore the science center, where an intense overhead light simulates the sun's rays, and thousands of ants scurry along frantically, trying to avoid incineration by magnifying glass.

Nintendo stations will treat nostalgic students to the classics they grew up with. Helium balloon corrals like those in Harris Teeter will provide hours of high-pitched entertainment, until the eventual and inevitable stroke suffered from lack of oxygen.

Not to worry, though - each center will have an in-house medical team specially trained in treating helium blackouts, sit-and-spin-induced nausea and Nerf-projectile-to-the-crotch.

David Povill can be reached at funk@email.unc.edu.

Manga Epic Tells Feudal Tale With Cinematic Flair

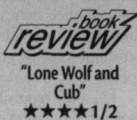
By JEREMY HURTZ
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

Samurai, swords and sex - "Lone Wolf and Cub" reads like an Akira Kurosawa film in fast-motion.

The first installment of one of the most influential manga (Japanese comic books) ever published is "The Assassin's Road" (Dark Horse Comics, \$9.95), a 300-page book collecting nine chapters of the story. Similar installments will follow monthly until the 8,000-page epic is complete.

These chapters follow Lone Wolf and Cub through nine barely-connected adventures. Lone Wolf and Cub (always referred to as a unit) is a wandering duo - a middle-aged warrior and the toddler ward he pushes around Japan in a cart.

In his wanderings, the hardened sword-for-hire encounters a village enslaved by bandits, a double-crossing assassin and various plots to kill various important individuals. Graphic violence often ensues, followed by moments of serene beauty.



Kazuo Koike's characters reveal themselves through the innovative art of Goseki Kojima. Kojima's expressive, urgent faces predict the work of popular artist Paul Pope ("Heavy Liquid"), and his cinematic style obviously influenced Frank Miller ("Sin City"), who drew covers for the new editions.

The pages are smaller than most American comics - smaller even than the average paperback novel. But since Kojima's art doesn't rely much on intricacy, the format isn't frustrating.

Kojima makes use of a bevy of filmic techniques to realize the comic's setting. The slowly dying feudal land comes alive in wide panels of desolate towns and lush mountainsides.

Overt visual imagery provides much of the book's emotional impact. After a peasant, brutally attacked by rogues, plummets from a rope bridge, we're confronted with the book's only full-page panel: the drowning man's hand, filling the foreground, reaching up toward our hero.

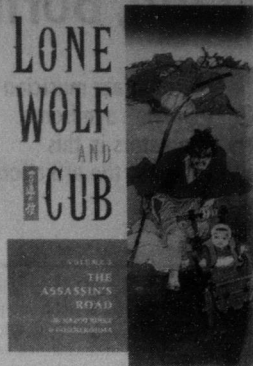
In the final chapter, another image initiates a flashback to the hero's past. He observes a child bouncing a ball similar to one his tiny ward once played with. His remembrance reveals that he

was once an important man, and sets up a narrative drive of greater urgency to be fleshed out in future installments.

The comic's first American publisher only managed to print the first third or so of the whole story. What's more, it omitted the first eight chapters.

Their reinstatement makes the new edition a director's cut of sorts. Over 250 pages pass before the revelation of the hero's identity. In this span we learn who Lone Wolf and Cub is; that we don't know who he was lends his actions a palpable mystique.

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