

Artsweek

The Arts and Entertainment Supplement to the Daily Nexus, for June 8th through June 14th, 1995



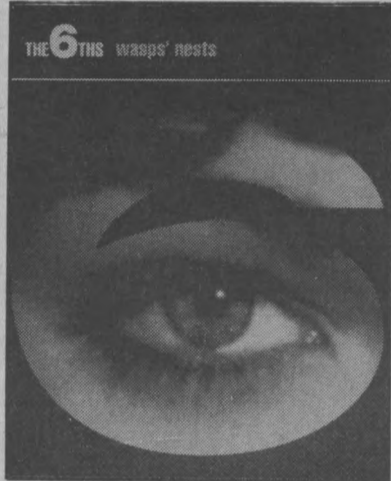
The Poppy Field

The 6ths
wasps' nests
London

I realized I was dreaming when I saw the album by the 6ths floating before me. It was the latest project from Stepin Merritt, songwriter and sometime vocalist of The Magnetic Fields. It contained a new batch of his songs, each sung by an already-proven figure of indie pop and rock. This was the ultimate supergroup: Georgia Hubbley from Yo La Tengo, Amelia Fletcher from Heavenly, Mary Timony from Helium, Lou Barlow from Sebadoh, Mac from Superchunk and Merge Records, Dean Wareham from Luna and Galaxie 500, Barbara Manning, Chris Knox, Mitch Easter, ahhhh! It was enough to put the whole indie world in convulsions.

And actually, it was no dream. The 6ths album is out, and since it's on London Records, it should even be fairly easy to find. Just contemplating the contributors is diverting enough, but the songs are a pleasure, start to finish. Every track is noticeably sweet-sounding. It's a musical confectionary, couched in Merritt's chirping, chiming production.

Merritt may have wanted to call the album



wasps' nests by the 6ths just to torment anyone trying to say it out loud, but it's also a fair nod to the songs. Lots of the statements flying around have nasty stingers — like Dean Wareham, stating in his distinctive twang that “every day in every way I’m falling out of love with you.” Which makes it all the spookier that the vocals are delivered in that calm, even-handed way, making you feel like *something's wrong here*.

Between the music, the words, the vocalists and the production, *wasps' nests* takes you to another planet. Especially the lyrics, which give the odd and the normal such an equal footing that you never know what's coming next. It all comes together on songs like “Pillow Fight,”

sung by Mitch Easter. Merritt supplies busy, attractive keyboard melodies, and Easter's voice is tremulous and full of conviction, as comfortable singing “Do we really need to hire a plane to carpet-bomb down memory lane?” as he is singing “Shall we figure out who's right or can we have a pillow fight?”

This album is pretty close to perfection, or at least one of the best of 1995. A songwriter like Merritt comes along once in a lifetime. This one has it all — don't miss it.

You can probably find *wasps' nests* in the shops, but I bet it's cheaper from Parasol Mail Order, 202 S. First St., Champaign, IL 61820.

—Kevin Carhart

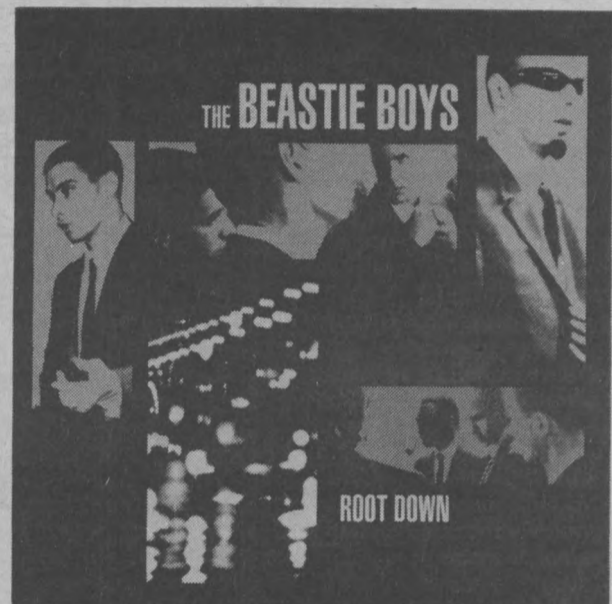


It's the Funky Shit

Beastie Boys
Root Down EP
Grand Royal/Capitol

“MY NUTZ,” exclaims Ad-Rock at the beginning of “Something's Got to Give” on the Beastie Boys' new *Root Down EP*. It's the kind of thing that you just can't say in a normal context. But the Beastie Boys, Ad-Rock in particular, can get away with it. The fact that they act like complete hams is part of their considerable appeal. The Beastie Boys are as silly and immature as we want to be.

Some may consider *Root Down EP* just another CD single, but it's really sooooo much more than that. There's seven live songs, two brilliant remixes and the *Ill Communication* album version of “Root Down.” The EP is full of the Beastie Boys' own smart-ass style and, of course, funky beats. Among the live highlights are the revamped version of “The Maestro” and the hype version of “Time to Get Ill.” “Oh my God, that's the funky shit” is the trademark “Root Down” line. The line is overdubbed and emphasized on the “Free Zone Mix.” This mix also features several different, hefty basslines, any of which could have been used for an entire separate song.



By far, my favorite piece of music on the release is what is apparently a radio station's commercial for an upcoming Beastie Boys show. The fun part is that the commercial is in what I believe is Hebrew and is done to the tune of “So What'cha Want.” It's a hidden treat placed about a minute after the last song. Hilarious.

I'm so into the Beastie Boys that I've already bought a live bootleg of their European tour, which is what the live tracks on *Root Down* are from, so I was already pretty familiar with their recorded-live sound. Even so, this is one of the Beas-

tie Boys' greatest non-album releases. It's right up there with the “Jimmy James” single, which contains the obscure classic “Boomin' Granny.” Despite getting a merciless beating at one of their shows and paying \$11.99 for a “specially priced” *Root Down EP*, the Beastie Boys have been really good to me. They're like the talented, nasal, annoying brothers I never had.

By the way, I'm the guy who keeps using a microphone and a big guitar amp to broadcast “MY NUTZ” on the 6600 block of Del Playa. Sorry, I'm just being a smart-ass.

—Noah Blumberg



Supes is Good Food

There have been some strange team-ups over the years between comic book characters. We've seen things like the Hulk vs. Batman, Robocop vs. the Terminator, Predator vs. Tarzan and, hell, we've even seen the Punisher meet Archie. But now a new combination has come along that really takes the cake.

Superman, everybody's favorite good guy from Krypton, has rocketed off into space to meet up with a batch of Aliens straight out of a James Cameron film.

Maybe right about now you are wondering what I first thought when I heard of this monumental event. Basically, “Chyeah, right.”

Ever since a couple of years ago when somebody over at Dark Horse Comics came up with the wildly successful idea of pitting Aliens against Predator, more and more combinations of different companies' characters have been in the works, and this one is just another step along

the path. Now it seems as though everybody and his kid brother are running into a batch of Aliens. While I really don't have a problem with some characters going a few rounds with some Aliens, I feel I do have to draw the line at Superman.

And I still feel that way after reading the first installment. However, I do have to give them some credit for an interesting idea, even if it is stupid.

It all starts when a space probe comes crashing to Earth. Supes gets involved when he realizes that the probe is sending out messages in his home planet's language. It seems that he's not the only survivor to escape Krypton's explosion and that, simultaneously, an entire city was enclosed and shot off into space. It's that city that the probe has come from. So Superman borrows a spaceship and heads off to find the survivors.

He arrives to find the city all but destroyed with barricades blocking all of

the doors to the city's outer wall. He then finds several survivors in comas with little “crab” things lying dead around them (sound familiar?), so, of course, he leads them into his spaceship and sends it back to Earth without him. Big mistake.

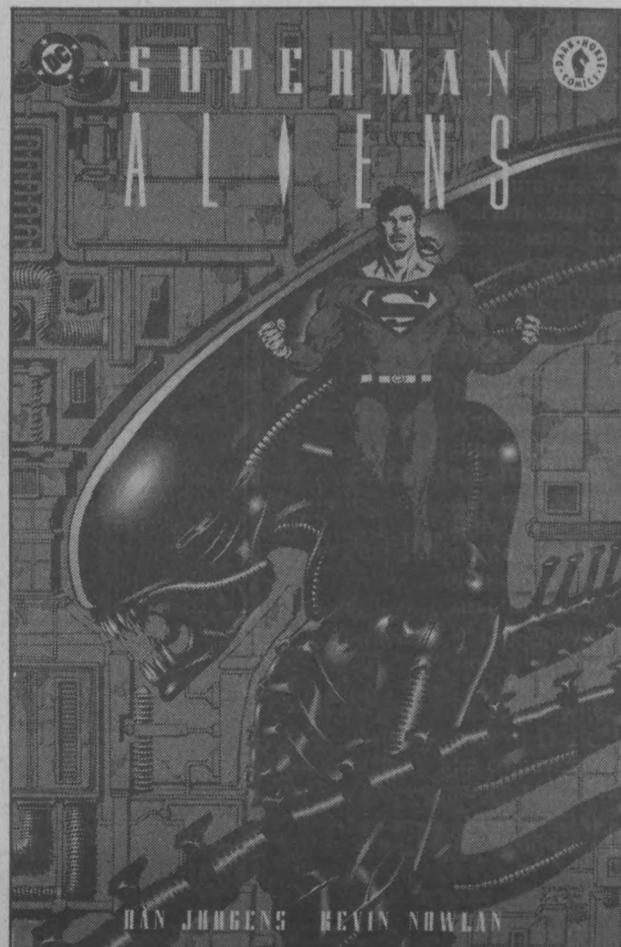
When he meets his first Alien, Superman realizes that his powers are rapidly fading due to his lack of exposure to sunlight, and that he is vulnerable. Anyone who ever saw the film *Aliens* knows exactly what's going on, even though Superman doesn't, and it begins to feel like one of those horror movies where you sit there and scream at the screen, “No, don't do that!” But Supes does it anyway. And it gets almost laughable when Superman gets attacked by an Alien, strikes a heroic pose and says, “Wait! I know you've never seen me before, but I'm no threat!” The Alien, of course, proceeds to take a big chomp out of Superman's forehead and just

generally kicks his butt.

All in all, the book is interesting to read, due in part to its laughability and also for its delving into Superman's Kryptonian roots. Supes even gets his butt saved by a Kryptonian woman with a flamethrower. But it's obvious that in the end, Superman won't be able to save the city and will be forced to destroy it to kill all the Aliens, à la the nuclear explosion in the film *Aliens*. The only alternative is to have the entire city of either Aliens or Kryptonians, just like Superman, land on Earth. Neither one would work very well for the comics business.

Superman vs. Aliens is interesting, but it may be just one of those comics you'd want to read at the store and then put back on the shelf.

—Matt Nelson



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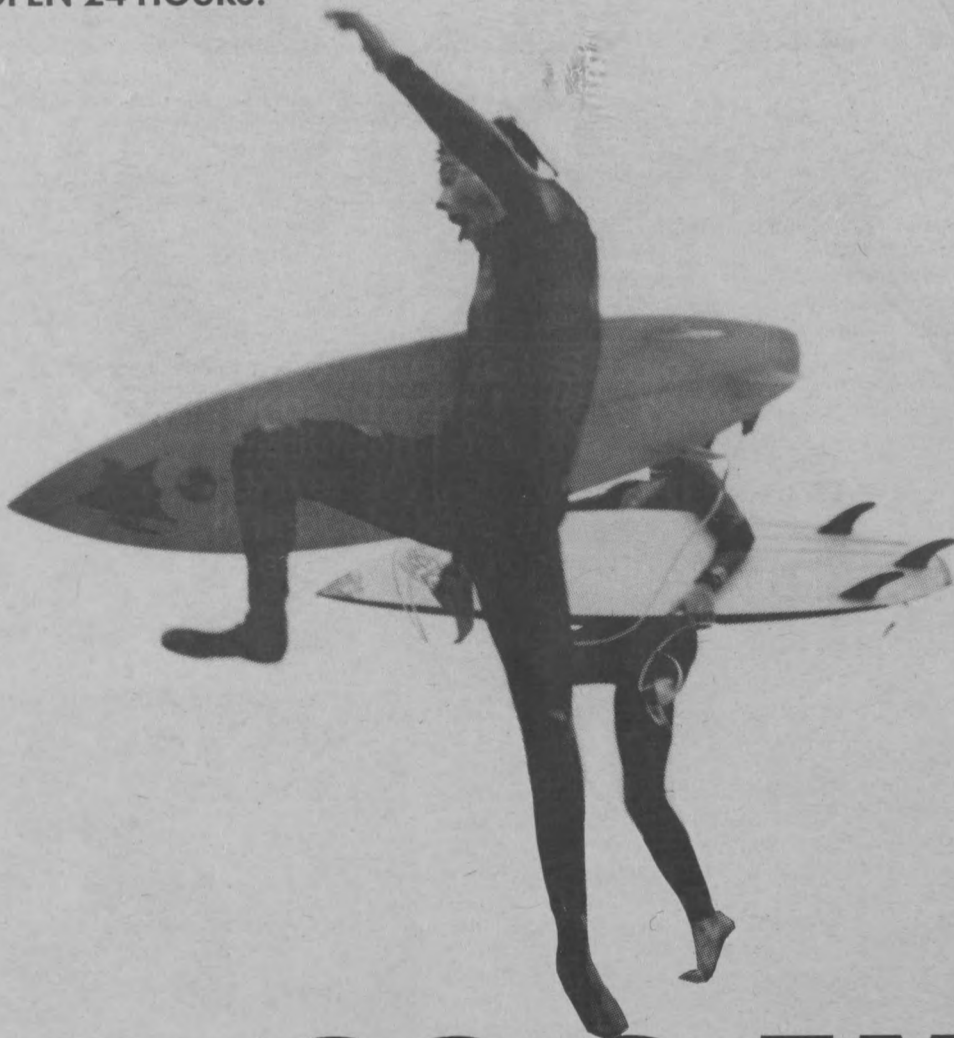
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SUB-URBAN
Jason Sattler

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Bjork's new album is called *Post* — she chose it because it is an international word. I think it's a good title and will have a very similar effect to the one N.W.A. effected when they named their second album *Straight Outta Compton*. By the time the second album was released, the group had defined their advertising strategy. Being proud of being from Compton in the 1980s was like being proud of going to Hell in the Middle Ages. The distant, forbidding nature of the name Compton was a central factor of N.W.A.'s attraction to white audiences.

N.W.A. and the Posse was the name of N.W.A.'s first album, Bjork's was *Debut*. On that album, N.W.A. recorded such classics as "Fat Girl" and "Panic Zone." That album didn't go platinum (sales of 1 million), as the rest of N.W.A.'s albums did. But it probably sold more than Hole's *Live Through This* will. Without MTV. Without an evil manipulation of the media by a woman of questionable ethics such as Courtney Love-Cobain, as she now refers to herself.

I have a lot of theories on how N.W.A. sold so many albums. The rap industry can probably count all of their multi-platinum stars on my appendages. Even N.W.A. points out in their prologue to their last album that "a lot of people have been rapping since the seventies and still never went gold."

It is quite possible that many people who bought the first N.W.A. album had to purchase multiple copies because a) their parents or girlfriend took the other one away, or b) they had their CD stolen along with their "system."

I never had a "system," and I never bought the first N.W.A. album, though I have listened to it numerous times. If I had all the money in the world and could afford a massive publicity campaign to erase my disgusting history of sexual misconduct with young boys, including Webster, I would probably have purchased *N.W.A. and the Posse* by now. But I do own every other N.W.A. album on this planet.

Lyric of the Week:

Everybody knows that the Milk's no killer, but you might catch a head-butt like Reggie Miller! -Milk D.

From what I have gathered in my exploration of Jim Morrison's life, I am led to believe that Morrison had a theory about crowds. They all wanted his cock. It wasn't just some narcissistic, Freudian theory. He was sure that crowds, in the repressed, passive-aggressive lifestyle of modern America, demanded a show that satisfied their every desire. Hence, the whole cock thing. So I guess that Morrison also believed this to be true in any situation. Remember that the next time you are at the circus, or Circus Circus.

My friend Jeff believes that we spend our entire lives acting out the roles of sperm and egg. The male in all of us causes us to just bump around aimlessly, fighting for a goal we can't even fathom. To Jeff, life is just a milky white substance.

Sometimes, when the world is just making sense and no one has yelled at me in a while, I believe that N.W.A. has the answers. They understood that their entire existence was just about getting laid, yet they continually disrespected women. Misogyny or satire? Probably both. To N.W.A., emptiness is form and form is emptiness. Darkness is not the opposite of light, it is the absence of light.

Things just are. Labels confuse things.

Hey! What'cha doin' Saturday Night?

26 Technologies, a progressive art exhibition is having a reception

**@Room 26
1727 State Street
8 PM**

It should be fun!



I Dream of Gene

Gene
Olympian
Polydor

I was never old enough or hip enough to be a Smiths fan when they were together. While the morose match, Morrissey and Marr, were writing songs like "This Charming Man," I was sitting in my room reading *Ramona Quinby* and *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*. By the time I became acquainted with and developed a passion for the Smiths, the group had called it quits. I never got a chance to see them live, to write them adoring fan letters in cryptic calligraphy writing, to buy every new single as it came out, to wait up 'til midnight in front of Tower Records as their next album was released, or to camp out for a week in the rain at Irvine Meadows to be first in line to buy concert tickets. But as my Irish luck would have it, both myself and the rest of the world's post-Smith breakup groupies have a second chance. No, it's not with Morrissey and the Smiths, but with Martin Rossiter and Gene!

Rossiter's group is in the crop of fairly new bands which have been releasing singles to pass the time over the past two years or so. These bands, like Gene and *elastica*, produce a sort of recycled music. They play the types of songs you would have heard in your youth if you were hip and had older siblings with cool record collections.

In my case, because I was the oldest offspring in the entire family, I never had that sibling guide to



lead me and mold my interests. I never had any older friends — well, actually, I never had any friends who could show me the map to musical bliss.

But it's OK. I'm fine now. I'm on Prozac. My psychologist told me I'm on the path to recovery. With Gene's songs, like the title track "Olympian," I can make up for those days when I never had the opportunity to dwell on how much Morrissey would have meant to me.

In reality, though, Rossiter does indeed have Morrissey-esque vocals. He extends notes a little longer than normal and he has a very distinct English accent. His lyrics, too, have that Morrissey pensiveness in them, like "Formidable and not afraid of the next world, just delayed / I wanted to be there with you, for I can only be normal with you..." from "Olympian."

"Sleep Well Tonight" is a brilliant single from the album that was released in Great Britain earlier this year. Its booming chorus

and lovely melody give it a mystical feel.

A most beautiful ballad is "We'll Find Our Own Way." Rossiter sings like an angelic poet with compassion for someone in need. Steve Mason's soft acoustic guitar provides a harmonious complement to Rossiter's sweetly peaceful voice.

It is true that Gene is not the Smiths. However, there are many unmistakable similarities that make the two quite comparable. Even album and single sleeves chosen for Gene's release have an element of Smith memorabilia in them. It's probably good that the Smiths aren't still together because Gene would definitely give them some strong competition.

—Jolie "whip" Lash



Original Recipe

It's scary what kinds of minds this university conceals. The annual *Original Scripts* productions are being performed this week, ending today.

Always Take A Dress by Maggie Mixsell is the story of a lonely 45-year-old woman and a young man dying of AIDS. The script is a tender depiction of loneliness and personal pain. Taia Kemp gives a pleasant performance as Jenny, although she sometimes seems 20 when her character is 45. Adam McGinnes as Tony was, quite frankly, dull. Yet, altogether, the play is enjoyable because of some beautifully quiet moments between Tony and Jenny.

The second play of the evening, *Wheel of Misfortune* by James Tooley, is a combination of *No Exit* and *Nickelodeon at Night*. In this brilliant farce of pop culture, the characters play *Wheel of Fortune* for their destinies. If they should have an original thought, they may choose their fate.

The direction is incredible with the stage out of balance between the actors and the "Wheel o' Fate" throughout most of the play. The blocking is diverse and precise, each action clear, impressive considering that it would be easy to turn this play into mockery and light comedy rather than satire.



This is the picture on the program.

The acting was also superb. I have never seen such diversity in a five-person cast with three of the characters having the same primary desires. The characters all had equal strength and carried the show collectively.

The most bizarre experience of the evening was Jason Douglass' *Imagos*, directed by Andrea Watson. It's definitely not for anyone under the age of 18. The play pulls you alternately through schizophrenia, sadomasochism

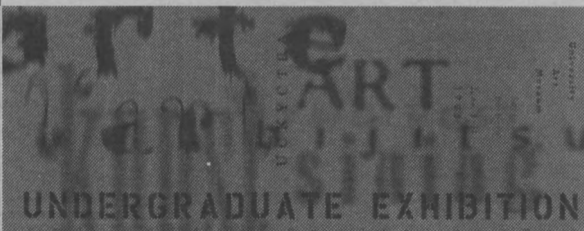
and the moods of the Carpenters.

These productions are the most promising and exciting display of collegiate talent I have seen in three or four years. Missing this event would be denying yourself one of the most visually powerful experiences of a college career.

The final *Original Scripts* performance will be tonight at 8 p.m. in the UCSB Studio Theater.

—Shannon L. Blue

The Annual Art Studio Department Undergraduate Exhibition is at the University Art Museum Through June 11. Call 893-2951 for info.



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COMMENCEMENT

Schedule of Events 1995

Tuesday, June 6, 4:00-6:00 P.M.

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Reception to honor 1995 graduates
Corwin Pavilion, University Center
Invitation only



Saturday, June 10, 3:00 P.M.

COLLEGE OF CREATIVE STUDIES

Reception
Immediately following commencement ceremony
Pearl Chase Green
For graduates, parents, friends, and faculty



Friday, June 16, 2:00-4:00 P.M.

SOCIOLOGY

Honors Reception
2824 Ellison
Invitation Only

Friday, June 16, 4:00-6:00 P.M.

PSYCHOLOGY

Departmental Awards Ceremony
Cliff House
Invitation Only

Friday, June 16, 5:30-7:00 P.M.

OFF-CAMPUS STUDIES

Graduation Reception
UCSB Ventura Center
For graduates, family, friends, and faculty
R.S.V.P. (805) 644-7261
or (805) 893-7154



Saturday, June 17

Immediately following Commencement Ceremony

PSYCHOLOGY

Graduation Reception
Psychology Building Courtyard
For graduates, parents, and friends

Saturday, June 17, 11:00 A.M.

GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Reception
Geological Sciences Foyer (Webb Hall)
For graduates, parents, friends, and faculty

Saturday, June 17, 11:00-1:00 P.M.

BLACK STUDIES

Reception and Awards Ceremony
Santa Barbara Harbor Room-UCen
Graduating Seniors
Invitation Only

Saturday, June 17, 11:30 A.M.

MILITARY SCIENCE

ROTC Commissioning Ceremony
1004 Girvetz

Saturday, June 17, 1:00-3:00 P.M.

ECONOMICS

Economics Award Ceremony and Luncheon
State Street Room-UCen
For Economics graduates, family, and faculty
Invitation Only

Saturday, June 17

Immediately following the 1:00 P.M. Ceremony

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Reception
Engineering II Courtyard
For graduates, parents, friends, and faculty

Saturday, June 17, 1:30-3:00 P.M.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Graduation Tea
2052 North Hall
Anthropology Conference Room
For graduates, parents, friends, and faculty

Saturday, June 17, 3:00 P.M.

CHICANO/LATINO GRADUATION

Harder Stadium
For graduates, parents, friends, family, and faculty

Saturday, June 17, 3:00 P.M.

EOP BLACK COMPONENT

Black Graduation Ceremony
Campbell Hall
For graduates, parents, friends, and faculty
Open to the Public

Saturday, June 17, 5:00-6:45 P.M.

ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

Graduation Reception
Flying A Studios-UCen
Invitation Only



Sunday, June 18

Immediately following 9:00 A.M. Commencement Ceremonies

WOMEN'S STUDIES PROGRAM

Commencement Reception
Women's Center

Sunday, June 18, 10:30-Noon

ENGLISH

Girvetz Courtyard
Commencement Party
For English graduates, parents, friends, and faculty

Sunday, June 18, 11:00-12:30 P.M.

HISTORY

Reception
4824 Ellison
Invitation Only

Sunday, June 18, 11:00-1:00 P.M.

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND LAW & SOCIETY

Graduation Honors Award Reception
The Music Bowl
Invitation Only

Sunday, June 18

Immediately following Commencement

LINGUISTICS

Graduation Reception
5607 South Hall
For graduates, parents, friends, and faculty

Sunday, June 18, 3:00-4:30 P.M.

CLASSICS

Graduation Reception
Girvetz Courtyard
For friends and family of students in Classics



Saturday, June 17 and Sunday, June 18, 1995

Two seatings daily-11:30 A.M. and 6:30 P.M.

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