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THE INDEPENDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL STUDENTS' NEWSPAPER

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What characterized school year 2007/2008? Sounds like an essay question we do not want to contemplate when enjoying the sun and minimizing brain activity are the orders of the day. That's where this article comes in: perhaps we can help you sort out and recollect!

Way back in September when we were coloring schedules, labelling folders in neat block letters with our new set of fine liners (!) - table of contents (ha!) and all, studying, filling out, admiring our planners ("Boy, am I going to be organized this year!!"), and stocking up on activities like there was no tomorrow, the Student Council presidential elections were the big news. Campaign posters all over school walls - the competition got the school year off to a dynamic start. In the fall, our busy participation in activities carried fruits for all: The music and drama department staged "Working", which was highly praised by all who saw it. We remember impressive singing - hotel cleaning ladies, housewives, construction workers, firemen, factory laborers, call center employees, teachers belting for recognition and fairer pay. An ambitious project, but a grand success. Other highlights in the drama/musical department are the student-produced play "Shakespeare Abridged" - excellent acting, by the way - and the wonderful union of jazz and barbershop at the "B&J Potpourri".

Less dazzling but as much on people's minds

were the discussions on 11th-grade class trips and the English Zentralabitur. The former battle was quickly resolved. Trips to Barcelona, Greece, Lisbon, Rome, and Prague were planned. The English Zentralabitur was in dispute until recently. Student-led debates took place in W309, articles appeared in the parent newsletter and the Muckraker... A month ago, an 11th grade English Grundkurs actually took this year's Zentralabitur for English in place of their final Klausur to give decision holders a sense of how JFKS students might perform. The end of the story is that this year's 11th grade will be the first class to take the English Zentralabitur. Two further ongoing debacles were resolved

this year: We have a student lounge, which is inviting (student art on the walls; plenty of sofa space) and in use, which hopefully eased the library's noise problem. Also, we can expect less fluctuation in our staff: American teachers no longer have to leave after two years due to German tax policy. Teachers and students will get to know each other better - which is generally a positive thing...

JFKS also hosted very successful BERMUN and Bermun2 conference in November and March, and several of our students went to The Hague, New York, and Rostock for further model UN symposiums. A highlight for our MUNers this year was to hear Joschka Fischer give a speech at the BERMUN closing ceremony and the opportunity to ask him questions, which he answered in the fashion of a true politician.

To interrupt this somewhat chronological list of events: something that recurred this school year were the BVG strikes. For some this meant serious logistical trouble - adventurous biking and hiking through the rain others profited, an excuse for a tardy always ready. But quite a wave on the political landscape of Germany. Will this cult of going on strike continue?

Back to school: We're better equipped at the end of the school year than 9 months ago. Sleek computers in the library and adjustments in security measures. Though the closing of the ramp doesn't isolate the school from the wildlife that lives close by. Foxes and up to 28 wild boars occasionally had students and teachers with their noses up against class room windows.

At the end of the year, the more varied events and activities occur at JFKS: Spanish Open House Night, Soirée Française, Seminar Day, and all course trips. Unfortunately though, the 10th graders were burdened with an extra MSE math test due to a dreadful mistake at the Senatsverwaltung. Not only all 10th grade students in Berlin, but also all math teachers suffered from this error in the last week of school.

To the Muckraker, 2007/2008 means almost 11 years of raking, writing, raking the Year in Review, continued on page 3

# -The -Muckraker

We are sorry to inform you that the Muckraker has lost its voice due to too much singing...

# Muckraker Retrospect...





# JFKS Life

Wednesday, July 2, 2008

# **Having a Ball at BALMUN**

"Give and thou shall receive". This saying has rung true many a time, and never more than in the case of the JFKS Model United Nations program. You help someone out, and they in turn will repay you-most notably in the case of the new Baltic Model United Nations in Rostock. For a long time, students from the Innerstädtisches Gymnasium in Rostock have attended BERMUN in November, and students from JFKS have helped the students from Rostock develop their MUN skills. As the years have gone by, the students have perfected their MUN abilities and risen to new heights. Now, they have taken the big step. With the help of the JFKS MUN they have held their first MUN conference, which took place form the 29th of May to the 1st of June.

JFK was invited to participate as delegations from the Kingdom of Denmark and the United Kingdom, represented by 11 delegates. As well, four students participated as chairs. The JFKS participants left on Thursday in the afternoon and arrived just in time for the "delegate get-together", where they socialized and met their housing partners. After spending Thursday night getting acquainted with their hosts—and for many watching the semi-final of "Germany's Next Top-Model"—Friday began with opening ceremonies in the General Assembly. Speakers included the "Speaker of the House" of Mecklenburg Western-Pomerania and the mayor of Rostock, as well as ambassadors of the 24 delegations with students from as far way as China. For about an hour



before lunch the delegates held lobbying sessions in their respective committees. Lunch lasted an hour, and once it was finished the delegates listened to a speech by Green Party activist Jan Philip Albrecht, then held more of the lobbying that had been taking place in the morning. After a successful day of exchanging points and finding common ground, the delegates left the school, but the socializing was far from over. Many delegates spent time together after-hours that night, showing that MUN isn't all work and no play.

Saturday began with the debating of resolutions in the committees. By lunch most committees had two clear cut resolutions. After lunch, a real UN youth delegate spoke to everyone in the General Assembly. The delegates then got the second copy of the controversial but loved Baltic Herald, with its much read gossip page. The page told some of the stranger parts of the organizing team on the first day and outdid itself the second day by showing exclusive photos of the Secretary General and

his girlfriend as well as telling about the Belgian delegate's wish for a sex...cessful debate in her much talked-about opening speech. The committees finally finished debating their resolutions, and everyone went home to prepare for the party. And what a party it was. From the very beginning the delegates knew that something was different about their colleagues. Where were the suits? Where were the rules of procedure and conduct? The delegate of Japan even appeared wearing a Kimono. The music played late into the night and everyone had a great time.

With many delegates still tired from the night before, Sunday's festivities began promptly at 8:45 that morning. Speeches were given on every resolution, almost all of which included a JFKS delegate. The chairs of all committees gave reports, the Environmental Committee chair stating that "everyone pretended to like the delegate of Denmark". There also many other colourful remarks about JFKS delegates. The BALMUN photographer took a photo of all delegates in the shape of the letters B-A-L-M-U-N and the formalities concluded.

As goodbyes were said, there was much talk of BALMUN 2009, to which JFK is sure to send delegates. The receiving has only begun.

PS. When you read this on Friday morning I will be on my way back to Canada. Thank you all for an awesome year, I hope you've enjoyed my articles. A.C.

Alexander Cohen

# Muckraker Retrospect...







# JFKS Life / Columns

# Thoughts Aside:

#### Friendship

Although Facebook redefines the term "friend" to "include chance acquaintances and total strangers", we attribute sincere friendship with high personal value. A friend is someone to confide in, to trust in, to ask for favors, to offer help to, to talk to... Friends keep us sane and happy. Yet we tend to take friendship for granted, which can have ugly consequences. One false move might turn a friend into a foe or, in less dramatic case, result in the well-known 'mutual ignoring'. Friendship is a scale in delicate balance that needs to be readjusted every so often. It is a give-and-take relationship that would ideally be at equilibrium.

There is little more important in life than good friends as a source of happiness and support. We need them to enjoy our free time, to be happy, and to laugh. We need them to comfort us when we are sad, and to scream at when we are mad. Inter-human relationships are one of the few things that really make life worth living, considering that our existence seems absolutely insignificant in relation to the age and dimensions of the universe and its lack of an apparent center. Friendship among other things is a significant part of that 42 that we're looking for is this mind-bogglingly big universe. So don't risk losing a good friend!

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

**Year in Review,** continued from page 1

writing, layouting, running to the "copy-people" before class, folding issues, and watching on complacently as students get their copies.

Thanks for picking up the Muckraker a final time this year. We hope our brief run-through awakened memories. The above outlined is the school year at JFKS... You have your own lists of most important memories. Is there a certain class or teacher, a friend, an activity, a goal you set, a mindset you developed, a

mood that followed you...that comes to mind when you look at the sum total of experiences this school year?

We wish all Muckraker readers a relaxing, but eventful, warm, spirited summer break! Woohoooooo!!

Lena Walther Eileen Wagner Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

## The Seventh of the Nothings

By the time most kids enter high school, they have dealt with the "what do you want to be when you grow up?" question, oh, about a million times. From school nurses to bald uncles, every adult seems to use this subject as a rescue attempt for any dying conversation with a minor. Often, the question is posed like a fresh idea, as if that particular youngster had never considered his options until this moment, or else voiced with concern, as if the interrogated were in desperate need of guidance from an adult obviously removed enough from youth and youthful decisions to lack any more appropriate subject matter. Most teenagers have developed a standard answer, either a concrete goal, like, "I want to study international law and become a consultant for European-American corporations" or a vague direction they wish to go in, such as "I'd like to use my multinational background to accomplish something on the international scale, maybe in economics or business"; of course, some stick to the handy adolescent cliché, "I don't know yet, I have some time to think about it." The thing is, this safety net is being slowly stretched, and Time, that precious commodity that shields youth from responsibility, is running out. Students find they must

soon choose, are choosing, or have chosen AP courses or Leistungskurse. College Applications loom in the misty autumnal future and with them comes the question: Do I really want to study international law? What about Medicine, Art, Hairdressing, Psychology, Dance? What happens to all the `what-if's and `if-only's and also to the `I-definitely-want's when judgment day comes and choices have to be made? Some ambitions stay, some dreams go, and some plans change or are made anew. One hopes adolescent ambition, parental advice, school support, and whatever forces of the universe you happen to believe in result in a good choice. It is scary, thrilling and somewhat ridiculous how many important choices must be made at a comparatively early age. In the meantime, however, it's summertime, and the living is easy. While the papers you just ticked or signed or sent off may have decided your destiny. damned or otherwise, an entire summer comes between you and more decisions, or if you are graduating, between you and your destiny. May summer days be timeless, summer sunsets late, and summer's end many youthful adventures away...

Anna Zychlinsky

# Muckraker Retrospect...







#### Entertainment

# **Das Ungeheuer vom Schlachtensee**

Wie ieden Sommer in Berlin wird es an manchen Tagen höllisch heiß und Jedermann sucht nach einer erfrischenden Abkühlung. Erster Gedanke: Schlachtensee! Doch wie sich herausgestellt hat, sind wir nicht die einzigen Badegäste.... Der Wels, auch als Deutschlands größter Süßwasserfisch bekannt, übernimmt dieses Jahr die Rolle eines wahren Störenfrieds, oder wie manche sogar sagen, Ungeheuer, an. Der Wels (lat.: Silurus glanis) ist ein blauschwarzer, dunkelolivgrüner Fisch, der bis zu drei Meter groß werden kann und ein Mindestalter von 80 Jahren hat. Er wiegt zwischen 30 bis 55 Kilogramm und treibt sein Unwesen in der Tiefe großer Flüsse und Seen. Besonders nachts ist der Wels sehr aktiv und räumt regelrecht unter den Fischschwärmen auf. Aufgrund seines starken Appetits schrecken ihn auch Wassergeflügel nicht ab, und so kommt es schon einmal vor, dass sich der Wels eine kleine Ganz schnappt! Die Geschichte, dass jemand also mal gesehen hat, wie ein Gänschen verspeist worden ist, bleibt also kein Gerücht! Hin oder her, was betrifft uns das denn jetzt? Es wurde diesen Sommer von einer Frau berichtet, die bei der Erfrischung im Schlachtensee auf einmal einen starken Schmerz verspürte und als sie dann herauskam eine ovale, 17-Zentimeter-lange Wunde an ihrem Bein entdeckte. Die Wunde wurde genau untersucht und es wird stark vermutet, dass es sich um einen Welsbiss handelte. Begründung: Der Wels verfügt nicht über Zähne, sondern über zwei Hornplatten, mit denen er genau solche

Schürfwunden anrichten kann. Auch die Form der Wunde spreche eindeutig für einen Welsbiss. Aber warum greift nun der Wels Leute an? Während der Laichzeit hält sich der Wels nicht, wie sonst, im Schlammgrund auf, sondern sucht Wärme (mindestens 20 Grad!) und geht somit logischerweise an die Wasseroberfläche. Dazu kommt auch noch, dass der Wels in der Nähe des Ufers laicht- somit hält er sich genau dort auf, wo auch die meisten Badegäste rumplanschen. Der gestresste Wels versucht aber sein Revier zu verteidigen und wird daher sehr angriffslustig. So kommt es also auch dazu, dass neben Enten und übrigens auch kleineren Schwänen, auch ein Bein (kurzfristig), aufgrund des Beißreflexes, zwischen den Hornplatten des Wels landet. Auch wenn es nun nicht mehr so angenehm für manche Badegäste ist, im Schlachtensee eine Runde zu schwimmen, gibt es jedoch noch genügend Badegäste, die sich von diesen Neuigkeiten nicht verunsichern lassen. Ist vielleicht auch besser so, bevor man sich die ganze gute Sommerlaune verderben lässt. Eins ist jedoch sicher: ja, es gibt Welse im Schlachtensee (für diejenigen, die immer noch fest daran glauben, dies sei auch nur ein Gerücht!) und ja, er ist nicht so harmlos wie jeder andere Fisch in diesem See....Zu welchem Ausmaß hat man diesen Sommer ja nun gesehen, aber dies war und bleibt zu größter Wahrscheinlichkeit die schlimmste Straftat des "Seeungeheurs".

Karen Fischer

# Muckraker Retrospect...



The Muckraker will also be present at this year's FUN DAY. Come to the creative writing competition given by the 10th grade German Wahlpflichtfach and the Muckraker will publish the winning entry!

# The Cynic's Dictionary

#### **HISTORY**

"An account mostly false, of events mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers mostly knaves, and soldiers mostly fools." Ambrose Bierce

Feeling cynical, too?
Then submit your own definitions to themuckraker@gmail.com.

Eileen Wagner

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- 1. Come to our weekly meetings in the 20 minute break on Tuesdays in B214 2. Send in your articles to
- themuckraker@gmail.com
  3. Join the Muckraker
  Yahoo! Group
- 4. Drop a note in our mailbox or approach us randomly in the hallways

#### Entertainment

# Im Frühtau zu Berge wir zieh'n Fallera

Ich muss ja immer so lachen. Ich muss mich bei den Südafrikanern unter euch Lesern entschuldigen, aber Südafrika scheint sich viel Mühe zu machen, dass mir der Schreibstoff nicht ausgeht. Ich meine: Eskom, Zuma, die Scorpions; das alles ist für mich immer sehr verlockend. Doch gerade darin liegt das Problem: Es ist alles so verlockend. Und deshalb arbeite ich nach dem Prinzip "Wenn drei sich streiten, freut sich der vierte", und such mir ein anderes Thema für diesen Zeidler Zappt aus.

Es muss im August 2005 gewesen sein, als meine Familie und ich uns das Ziel steckten, die Zugspitze (zumindest teilweise) zu erklimmen. Der Plan war recht einfach: Wir wollten mit dem Auto nach Ehrwald (auf der österreichischen Seite der Zugspitze) fahren, mit der Gondel das erste Stückchen hochfahren, dann den restlichen Weg bis zu einer Hütte laufen, dort übernachten und dann am nächsten Tag wieder runter laufen. Klingt einfach. Gell?

Also, brummbrummbrumm mit dem Auto nach Ehrwald, dort aussteigen, Proviant überprüfen (Proviant-Stand: Für jeden ein Brötchen und einen Apfel; ein Laib Brot, 8 Schinkenknacker, 4 Pfefferbeißer, außerdem eine Flasche Wasser), rein in die Gondel (vor uns eine leere, hinter uns eine mit drei Personen, wir zu viert in der dazwischen). Dann im früh Rau zu Berge wir zieh'n Fallera, über Stock und über Steine und über matschige Wiesen und stinkende Kuhfladen. In etwa 200 Metern Abstand vor uns lief eine fünfköpfige Holländische Familie, etwa 100 Meter hinter uns ein älteres Ehepaar. Irgendwann wurden wir hungrig und machten deshalb nach gut 800 Metern Picknick. An uns zogen währenddessen das ältere Ehepaar, eine 15-köpfige Reisegruppe aus Japan (die uns fasziniert fotografierte) und ein Bauer mit seiner Kuhherde (für die wir nicht faszinierend waren) vorbei. Proviant-Stand nach dem Picknick: Ein dreiviertel Laib Brot, drei Brötchen, 6 Schinkenknacker, 1 Pfefferbeißer und eine halbe Flasche Wasser.

So ging's dann immer weiter den Berg hinauf, über Wiesen, Felder, Steine, bis wir am Abend schließlich an der Hütte, die uns über Nacht beherbergen sollte, ankamen. Proviant-Stand bei Ankunft an der Hütte: Ein halber Laib Brot, 4 Schinkenknacker und 1 Pfefferbeißer. Also, rinn in die gute Stube. Über den Rest des Nachmittags und der Nacht ist nicht viel zu sagen, außer dass es ar... mleuchter-kalt war.

Und am nächsten Morgen erwachten wir und wurden sofort mit einem Schrecken begrüßt: Die Schneefallgrenze war über Nacht um 500 Meter gesunken; um die Hütte lag mindestens ein halber Meter Schnee. Im August! Klingt herrlich, was? Also erst mal schnell anziehen (Duschen ging nicht, da es kein Warmwasser gab und beim Kaltwasserhahn nur Eiswürfel herunter purzelten) und schnell beraten. Einfach runter laufen wie geplant ging nicht, denn die gestern noch matschigen Wiesen waren nun sicherlich vereist, wodurch das einem Selbstmordkommando gleichgekommen wäre. Deshalb blieb uns nur ein Ausweg: Den Berg hoch.

Also ab die Post, im Frühschnee zu Berge wir zieh'n, allerdings ohne Fallera, denn nach singen war uns absolut nicht zu Mute, der Schnee fiel immer noch, so dass man keine fünf Meter weit gucken konnte, wir waren alle verzweifelt und es ging nur mühsam voran. Proviantstand: MÄP! Wir hatten alles aus Versehen auf der Hütte liegen gelassen.

Also stapften wir zwei Stunden lang, ohne zu wissen, wo wir wohl hingelangen würden, entlang der Fußstapfen, die Andere hinterlassen hatten, durch den Schnee, und gelangten so schließlich erschöpft und müde auf das Zugspitzblatt.

Zur Orientierung: Das Zugspitzblatt liegt einige hundert Meter tiefer als die eigentliche Zugspitze. Von hier aus fährt eine Zahnradbahn runter nach Garmischpartenkirchen (in der Regel mit Garmisch abgekürzt) und eine Gondel auf die Zugspitze, von der aus man wiederrum mit einer Gondel nach Ehrwald und mit einer anderen nach Garmisch mit Zwischenhalt am Aibsee gelangen kann.

Wir nahmen also, logischerweise (wir wollten ja nach Ehrwald), die Gondel auf die Zugspitze und liefen zur Ehrwald-Gondel

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Was wir dort sahen, gefiel uns absolut nicht, denn wir sahen – nichts. Also genauergesagt etwas sahen wir schon, nämlich eine Gondelstation, aber wir sahen niemanden- die Gondel lief nämlich nicht. In SA würde man jetzt in der Regel "BEEP Eskom…" sagen, da jedoch ein Schild mit der Aufschrift "Wegen schlechter Witterung geschloss" stand, konnten wir die Schuld nicht auf die Stromfirmen schieben.

Also, change of plans: Wieder runter mit der Gondel zum Zugspitzblatt, um dort mit der Zahnradbahn nach Garmisch zu fahren. Doch in der Gondel wiesen uns zwei freundliche Herren darauf hin, dass wir schneller ankommen würden, nähmen wir die Gondel an den Aibsee, und bestiegen dort die Zahnradbahn nach Garmisch. Also, zum dritten Mal rauf mit der Gondel, umsteigen in die Gondel zum Aibsee und dann mit der Bahn nach Garmisch. Schnell raus aus der Bahn, an den Ticketautomaten, und noch schnell in den letzten Zug des Tages nach Ehrwald.

Doch in Ehrwald angekommen, erwartete uns die nächste Enttäuschung: Wir waren am falschen Ende des Dorfes, denn wir waren am Bahnhof; unser Auto stand jedoch an der Gondel, und zu allem Unheil hinzu begann es nun auch noch zu regnen. Unsere letzte Hoffnung setzten wir auf den Bus, doch auch den hatten wir gerade verpasst, der nächste sollte erst in einer Stunde kommen.

Also machten wir uns schweren Herzens auf die letzte Etappe unserer Reise, nämlich durch Ehrwald zum Auto. Wir waren gerade fünf Minuten gelaufen, da rauschte der Bus an uns vorbei. Toll. Scheiß Busbetriebe. Scheiß Wetter. Scheiß Tag. Scheiß drauf.

Also weiter durch den Regen, bis wir schließlich, nass und erschöpft, die Gondel erreichten, ins Auto stiegen, nach Hause fuhren und uns erschöpft und noch immer in unseren tropfenden Kleidern in unserer Betten warfen.

Moritz Zeidler

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### JFKS Life / Entertainment

# Thoughts from a Senior

Another year has come to an end. Many of us take this as yet another year culminating and look forward to a summer of travel and fun. As for this year's senior class, however, this summer brings on a whole new chapter of life. Many of us will be moving out and enrolling in schools across the globe. For a lot of us, this summer means learning to live on our own, finding a job, studying, and exploring a new environment. It also means saying good bye to childhood friends and having to start anew. For others, this summer not only means saying good bye, but also preparing for the Abitur, buckling down and getting ready for a year and an exam that will determine a lot about our future academic carriers. The end of this year brings along a string of parties and events like Prom and the Kursfahrten and will result in a summer we will never forget. It will certainly be a blast, but at the same time, it is the most terrifying moment in our lives. In the course of the next year, we will have to learn to be 100% independent; we will undergo the ultimate transformation from child to adult, either leaving behind our friends and family, moving out of the houses and cities we grew up in, or watching our friends move away and facing a year of non-stop study and chore. As a soon-to-be Abitur graduate, I see myself standing in the intersection of becoming an independent adult and the comfort of childhood life. If all goes as planned, I will be able to realize my goals for the future, study in my aspired universities, and chase down my desired carrier. On one hand, I can't wait to plunge myself into the Abitur year, move out, work, and live on my own, on the other, I want to run away screaming. I don't want this summer to end, I don't want my friends to leave, I don't want to mess up, I don't want to grow up. But it's inevitable, isn't it? This article serves as a tribute to and a remembrance of the senior

class of 2008. Unfortunately, I failed in collecting enough credits in math in the last 2 years and therefore cannot graduate with the high school Diploma this year. Because I am in the Abitur program, it has little meaning to my academic carrier, however, it is a huge emotional strain. I have been going to this school since Vorschule and have grown up with many of the students in the senior class. On Thursday the 26th of June, all of my friends, with a few exceptions, will be receiving their diplomas; they will throw their hats in the air and celebrate. A lot of my friends will leave the school after this. The graduation ceremony is the last time that the entire senior class will be together and I would love nothing more than to stand on the stage next to them and throw up my hat and wish them well. I would love nothing more than to share this final moment of achievement, celebration, and farewell with the class I have grown and developed with. It took this terrible experience to make me realize how much each and everyone in my class means to me and how much I want to share this with them. We really were a great team! I would love to tell you all this on graduation day but I can't and so I would like to dedicate this article to, not only my senior class of 2008, but to the kids I grew up with and to the new friends I've made. Thank you for sharing your childhood with me, thank you for growing up with me. Thank you for everything- it was a great ride. Congratulations and Good Luck! I look forward to those of you embarking on the Abitur with me next year... and for those of you leaving, you will be missed. Finally, for those students in 12th grade next year, Good Luck and make sure you pass math!

Leonie Schulte

# Movie Corner!

# **Daniel Der Zauberer**

Making a movie about Daniel Küblböck, the androgynous runner-up to the German version of Pop Idol, would be bad I enough; portraying him as a saint of sorts is just... beyond words. The technical merits are on the level of cheap home videos, and the plot goes as follows: Evil goths want to kill Daniel, but he converts them with "positive energy" and dances with them in the end (which is very disturbing). He does this with the help of his dead grandfather, who is a magician, carries around a French horn (sometimes, but not always), and only has one arm (sometimes, but not always). I was starting to feel very sympathetic towards the villains, but found them to be equally repulsive. It's quite inconceivable to me how a film like this could ever be made, especially by those who call themselves professionals.

Currently on DVD; can be purchased cheaply at Woolworth (really!).

and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull

urally, the adventurer/archaeologist has ern, "The Proposition", a 2005 film directaged, and the film, rather than shying away ▮ ed by John Hillcoat, sets itself apart by from the topic, makes it the subject of quite | its setting: the Australian outback of the a few jokes. The setting is now 1957; the | late 19th century, a world of grimy yel-Nazi villains of the previous films have been ▮ low dust and dead bodies. The film conreplaced with Soviets, and the plot is rife I cerns itself with the aftermath of the rape with references to 1950s culture. Though I and murder of a family at the hands of the film is unabashedly pro-American, it I the notorious Burns brothers. When Charsubtly parodies the atomic age and hints at I lie Burns (Guy Pearce) and his younger, the darker climate of fear during the Cold I dimwitted brother Mike (Richard Wilson) as does the fact that all the actors play their I police captain (Ray Winstone), knowing roles quite well. particularly Cate Blanchett, I the extent to which Charlie cares about who does a fine job as Jones's nemesis, the I Mike, offers the two of them a pardon if Soviet agent Irina Spalko. Still, it would be I Charlie is able to kill his older brother Ara gross overstatement to say that the plot I thur (Danny Huston), an almost legendis the film's strong point. The Russians are I ary figure feared for his brutality. The little more than cardboard villains, and the I consequences of this decision unfold merentire thing is very predictable, from the cilessly and build up to a suspenseful cliold legend that's "just a story" (of course I max. The atmosphere is contributed to in it's not) to the test of character at the end where the villain either melts, ages rapidly, or, in this case, burns up. Surprisingly, this campiness actually becomes a part of the film's appeal. It never takes itself quite seriously; there's something knowingly selfindulgent about the physical implausibilities and clichéd moments that causes the viewer to accept them even while chuckling at how exaggerated they are. All in all, the plot carries the well-executed action scenes along quite nicely, resulting in a very enjoy-

Currently in theaters.

# **The Proposition**

After 19 years, Indiana Jones returns. Nat- | Though it can best be described as a Westno small measure by the score, composed by Nick Cave (who also wrote the script) and Warren Ellis, incorporating rough violin sounds and whispering voices to complement the film's harsh and meticulously composed cinematography. The film also effectively touches on themes such as colonialism and racism, particularly through one character, a bounty hunter gone halfmad in the wilderness, played memorably by John Hurt.

> Currently on DVD. Viewers should be cautioned about the film's strong and frequent violence.

> > Nikolas Jaeger

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