

THE GADFLY



Kill Bill Volume 1: Bloody As Hell

Long Weekend Edtn.



Go Go Yugari is pretty darned insane.

by Ian McCracken

Quentin Tarantino's desperate, undying adoration of pop culture would be a mighty handicap in a less skilled director's hands. His predilection for brutal carnage is validated by his ability to create scenes of unimaginable violence that seduce without desensitizing. With *Kill Bill*, he delivers a film that is virtually plot-free, a collage assembled from stock pieces of our collective movie memory, and it's glorious.

The story is the simplest: The Bride, or Black Mamba, albeit in a coma, for another

member of the Deadly Viper Assassination Squad, a group of ass-kicking women (and Budd, a.k.a. Sidewinder, played by Michael Madsen, who take the names of poisonous snakes, headed by a man named Bill (played by David Carradine heard, but never seen in this installment)). She, pregnant, wants out of the gang at her wedding, however, the rest of the DiVas show up, kill the wedding party, and beat the living crap out of her, after which Bill shoots her in the head and leaves her for dead. Lo and behold, she survives, for another four years. She wakes up to

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Great Issues Lecture Review

by Wester Ye

In the middle of Long Weekend, the PSK Auditorium was packed to the gills with Johnnies, ex-Johnnies, and interested Annapolitans at the amazing time of nine in the morning. The lecture, by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, was entitled *The Supreme Court and the Shaping of Law*.

Justice O'Connor started the lecture by commenting on the notion of judicial tyranny.

Judicial tyranny represents a clear example of the challenges that face the Supreme Court in its decisions that inevitably shape the law for future generations. For Justice O'Connor, judicial tyranny was the possible extension of judicial review (in which the Supreme Court has the power to strike down acts of the Executive and Legislative branches as unconstitutional, carried out to its extreme case, and therefore,

a situation that the Supreme Court had to be careful of creating in its deliberations.

The lecture itself concerned the fascinating evolution of judicial review, which Justice O'Connor remarked, was a power that no other country's judicial system has. In her example, she portrayed the Mexican and American judicial systems as beginning with similar roots, but branching off with the American decision of *Marbury vs. Madison*. *Marbury vs. Madison*, she maintained, was the crucial case that gave the Supreme Court its explicit powers to review through court cases the constitutionality of acts by the other branches of government. At the same time; however, Justice O'Connor was careful to distinguish between the American form of judicial review, and the constitutional courts of other nations (such as the Constitutional Courts of civil-law countries in Europe). The Constitutional



Courts usually have a direct hand in the political process in countries such as France or Germany, in which they may directly advise the legislatures of those countries on the constitutionality of laws before they are even enacted. In addition, these courts are con-

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THE GADLFY

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The Gadfly was created for long weekend. Half of the Gadfly staff was gone, but we had information vital to the polity that we felt ought to go out. This issue wasn't budgeted, however, so we had to make it sort of cheaply. It took a while, but it was kinda fun.

Just to be clear, the Gadfly has no affiliation whatsoever with the Gadfly. They are completely different.

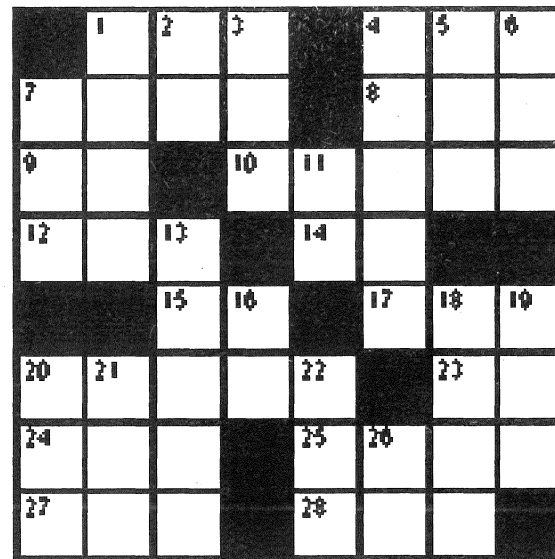
If you wrote a letter or article to the Gadfly and don't see it in the Gadfly, it's because it was directed to that other paper, or wasn't time-sensitive. You will probably see them in your regularly scheduled issue of the Gadfly, next Tuesday.

We're sorry in this low-budget production fails to thrill you. We really wanted to print some stuff, though. At the moment, however, we can't exactly remember why.

Crossword
by Ian McCracken

One person in particular has gotten very angry at me for making my crosswords too hard. In order to gain this person's forgiveness, I have made this one incredibly easy.

This puzzle is dedicated to Kelley O Lonnell.



ACROSS

1. Requirement for 4-across
4. Party staple
7. Measures of resistance
8. Marriage words
9. Note the first
10. Eskimo house
12. The Captain and Tenille were one
14. Not oil
15. At the other end of the rainbow from UV
17. Drunkard
20. Relative by marriage
23. So sue _____!
24. Men's garment
25. On a voyage
27. Yeller qualifier
28. Put on

DOWN

1. Anachronistic you
2. Old-school radio band
3. Pressure meas.
4. Clay bakers
5. Old name for Tokyo
6. Slime
7. Not even
11. Strategy game
13. Lubed up
16. Egyptian sun god
18. Portent
19. Mid-afternoon meal
20. O.J. judge
21. Zilch
22. Crumple
26. _____ sue me!



Meno Seminar Open To All

What is virtue?

Is virtue teachable?

How can I teach a kid math by asking him questions?



In response to popular demand, there will be an All College Seminar on the Meno. This will be an opportunity for Freshmen who did not get to sufficiently discuss the Meno in their seminars, as well as for all members of the polity who would like to re-visit this timeless dialogue.

If you will be attending, please sign up on the SCI board by the morning of the seminars.

8:30 pm
Wednesday, October 22
McDowell Hall

brought to you by the Student Committee on Instruction

Are Johnnies Teachable Without Meno?

by Mark Ingham

Freshmen skipped the Meno seminar! Can it be true? Freshmen have told members of the SCI that some of their seminar tutors had to sacrifice something to Isabel, and decided it would be Meno. (One class was even told that it was a justified omission because they would read it anyway in Language.) Other tutors made them combine their Meno seminars with the last reading of the Odyssey, in accordance with the memo.

Other classes are one seminar behind. One of the things I love about this college is the after-seminar discussions with people from other classes. I am sad that some freshmen are not getting this experience. Also, are prospective students showing up having done the 'scheduled' reading, only to discover that they read about Lycurgus and Solon for a Gorgias seminar? Probably. To remedy the problematic situation of being a seminar behind, some tutors have decided to skip the Plutarch readings, in order to come back to them later. Are there not very good reasons for reading Plutarch before Herodotus?

It is good for each tutorial to have some flexibility. In

the tutorials it is very fruitful to have the freedom to spend an extra class on Euclid 3:16 or to figure out how much tin has been used to corrupt the king's crown of precious royal lead. Too much of the good of this community is sacrificed, however, when seminars are given this freedom.

Of course, we cannot chart the course of a hurricane, nor does a hurricane give us much time to attend to all such details. The tutors did not have time to meet for long Johnnie discussions about the very best thing to do. There is not a quick and easy answer to how to make up for missed seminars due to water or snowstorm, but I really do hope that we do better next time. A simple memo saying that all seminars will be doubled up may have worked okay for Juniors, who got to spend the night of the storm in a double dose of Paradise Lost. A more careful decision, however, could have been made for the freshman year readings. Perhaps those classes that were not able, or unwilling, to have an extra seminar, could have combined the Aeschylus seminars--anything but short-shrift a reading as essential to St. John's College as the Meno.



Meet Mark Ingham.

Generally, I commend the efforts of staff, faculty, and administration for a generally well coordinated reception for Isabel, and the cleanup afterwards. Although she wasn't as scary-looking as I was hoping, she did make quite a mess of our lawns. I know that it is very easy for the members of any polity to voice complaints with the vision of hindsight.

Nevertheless, I hope that if there is a snowstorm this winter that results in a lost seminar, we can make a wiser and more coordinated effort to adjust the seminar readings.

by Webster Ye

The issue of whether or not to charter a St. John's Objectivist Club has been on the agenda of the Delegate Council and the Polity for over a month now. In this opinion piece, I seek to lay out some of the more occluded issues that this issue of chartering has brought up, as well as explain my vote in the upcoming Delegate Council meeting on Wednesday as a Paca-Carroll representative on this contentious issue.

One of the most commonly mistaken notions that seems to be floating around the campus is that the Delegate Council may forbid a club's existence on campus. That is manifestly untrue; the Delegate Council may only bestow official recognition upon a club. The Delegate Council has only two explicit powers in this regard: it may officially recognize a club, thus giving that club an official status within the pantheon of clubs at St. John's, and it may give money to officially recognized clubs that request funding from the Delegate Council. Yet, the Delegate Council also has two principal directives, as stated in the Delegate Council Constitution: as the assembly of the Polity representatives, the Delegate Council gives approval on behalf of the Polity to an organization, and the Delegate Council represents the student Polity to the outside world

as well as the College Administration. The following must be made clear when debating on whether or not a St. John's Objectivist Club should be chartered: the Delegate Council cannot forbid the existence or operation of a St. John's Objectivist Club, and a St. John's Objectivist Club may request funding from the Student Committee on Instruction (SCI). The SCI has a standing 100 to give to study groups, with the provision that it may request more money from the Delegate Council until the



The page 4 faction is ideologically opposed...

semester budget surplus is exhausted (the amount available stands at around 3,000.00).

The official recognition of a St. John's Objectivist Club is the main issue on the agenda. In this, it was hoped that the Delegate Council would actively seek the opinion of their constituents, and thereby accurately represent the Polity as whole. Lord Thomas Burbidge, and I, acting as the dorm representatives for Paca-Carroll, presented a Dorm Referendum, in which the

nal dorm vote, out of a dorm population of about 45 was 16 Yes votes for chartering the Objectivist club, 20 No votes, and 1 Abstain. As such, I feel that I must accurately represent my dorm's vote by voting NO on this issue. Yet, the closeness of the vote leads me to the obvious conclusion that the Polity is split in its opinion. As such, I feel that it is necessary to find some solution to this matter so that a little under half of my dorm is properly represented in this matter.

It has recently come to my attention that there are two principal branches of Objectivism led by two organizations: the Ayn Rand Institute and the Objectivist Center. Both branches, are to my untrained eyes, are remarkably similar in initial language; they both adhere primarily to the works of Ayn Rand for their philo-

sophical foundation. Yet, the two branches has been in deep ideological conflict members of the Objectivist Center are proscribed by members of the Ayn Rand Institute as false Objectivists and blacklisted in any of their activities. The two organizations system of thought can be best explained through their own words. The Ayn Rand Institute states Objectivism is an integrated system of thought that defines the abstract principles by which a man must think and act if he is to live the life

proper to man. The Objectivist Center states Rand was a passionate individualist. She wrote in praise of the men of unborrowed vision, who live by the judgment of their own minds, willing to stand alone against tradition and popular opinion. Based upon my own reading of the two organizations manifestos on their websites (www.aynrand.org (ARI) &

www.objectivistcenter.org (O.C.)), I can only conclude that the Ayn Rand Institute seems to wish to foster upon an individual a pre-defined system of conduct that states exactly what a person must think. The Objectivist Center, on the other hand, seems to encourage a person's ability to think, which seems to me a goal also of the Great Books Curriculum.

Mr. Daniel Schwartz, an adherent of the Ayn Rand Institute, has lead the principle legislative effort to charter a St. John's Objectivist Club. At the same time, Mr. Kyle Varner, an adherent of the Objectivist Center, has also attempted to charter a St. John's Objectivist Club. The principal difference, based upon statements I have heard, is that Mr. Schwartz desires to inform and spread his faction of Objectivism on campus.

Mr. Schwartz's organization's advice to college-bound adherents is to: To preserve one's mind intact through a modern college education is a test of courage and endurance, but the battle is worth it and the stakes are the highest possible to man: the survival of reason. The time spent in college is not wasted if one knows how to use the comprachicos mind-de-

stroyers against themselves. I personally find it quite disturbing that the Ayn Rand Institute recommends that one go to college in order to get a college education while keeping your mind intact. This seems to go against everything the Great Books Curriculum is supposed to do which is to open your mind. Furthermore, the Ayn Rand Institute sug-



...to the page 5 faction

gests that a college club's purpose is secure funding for its activities instead of asking for funds from the Institute: You will be eligible for funding from your school. Every dollar you obtain from your school instead of from ARI is one more dollar ARI has available to spend advancing Objectivism.

The Objectivist Center, which Mr. Varner sympathizes with, on the other hand states: The Objectivist Center neither officially endorses, nor attempts to control, the activities or statements of lo-

cal clubs. His version of the St. John's Charter seeks only to provide an opportunity for interested Polity members to explore Objectivism and its critics. Mr. Varner is not concerned for a dogmatic interpretation of Objectivism, but rather a deep, multi-viewpoint exploration of a philosophy, which I personally believe to be in much more in accordance with St. John's tradition of At St. John's, books are not treated reverently or digested whole; they are dissected, mulled over, interpreted, doubted, often rejected, often accepted. They serve to foster thinking, not to dominate it.

As such, I appeal to my fellow members of the Delegate Council to not reject the philosophy of Objectivism out of hand, but to work together towards endorsing Mr. Varner's proposed club, which openly stands for a non-dogmatic study of a deeply intriguing philosophy. Lastly, I appeal to all members of the Polity to refrain from uncivil conduct like the following message Mr. Schwartz posted to his club's website:

Next Wednesday, during lunch, I expect the Objectivist Club charter to be voted down, with something like 14 out of 18 people voting no. It doesn't seem there is any way to influence the vote, even though I have evidence of both dishonesty by DC delegates and that many oppose the club merely because they do not want to support Objectivism. I

ask everyone who can to come to the Private Dining Room at 11:45 next Wednesday to witness this atrocity. I also appeal to Mr. Spalding to maintain civil conduct in his expected reply. The entire point of democracy to me is to maintain a tone of toleration and compromise; to degenerate into accusations and hatred is a terrible thing.

Sportswire

Unseen Consequences

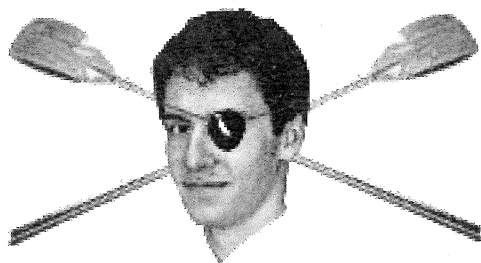
by Michael Malone
Class Historian,
Class President

This is a warning to all of the naive freshmen out there. Beware the unseen consequences of experiments. I guess there are some naive upperclassmen who could stand to hear this but it is more important for the freshmen.

My friend, Troy names have not been changed to protect the innocent was at lunch with his totally hot girlfriend at the time, Sharon Stone, enjoying the tripe Bon Appetit was trying to pass off as food when he realized that, despite being 23, he had never had moonshine. Troy asked Sharon if she had ever imbibed the mysterious liquid by the name of moonshine, and she replied that she had not. So Troy decided that anything hillbillies do he can do, and he sets out to make his own moonshine. (Certainly not in his dormitory, of course).

Side Note

Moonshine for those of you not in the know is basically homemade booze of questionable safety, but unquestionable strength. It has more than a passing familiarity with NASCAR. The Internet provided Troy with unlimited access to information about making moonshine. It turns out that hillbillies were a good deal more adamant about making booze out of potatoes than Troy was ever going to be. You see, stills the illegal distill-



eries of the moonshine manufacturing community are very complicated and dangerous. Far more dangerous than anyone would be willing to put in his not-dorm room. But among the numerous sites talking about the joy of hooch, there were a few simple recipes for a quaint little concoction by the name of Grandma's Moonshine Wine. Numerous testimonials to the wonderful taste of this nectar of the gods, convinced Troy and Sharon his super hot girlfriend at the time that they should give up on the distillery and focus on this apparently simple and delicious alternative.

So on to the Store They Went

The ingredients were mixed in accordance with Grandma's secret ratio which was damn near certain to provide some quality product. Since everyone knows how smart Grandma is, why would anyone question her?

The ingredients were put into the spring water container but due to the gas produced by the yeast, and from fear of airborne contaminants a latex rubber glove was attached to the mouth of the container. This was done around four in the afternoon. After seminar that evening the gas formation was really noticeable. The latex glove began to fill up, and you could watch fingers extend. This concerned our intrepid young distillers who worried that a gas explosion would be very messy. They decided to place a couple of

trash bags over the jug, in case of explosion, and went to bed separate beds, of course giddy with excitement.

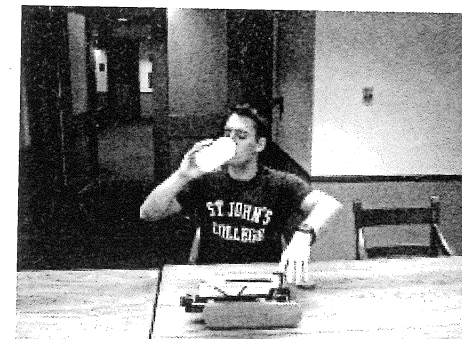
Grandma thought the fermentation process would only take about four weeks. Compare that to your average store bought wine that probably rots for about 2 years. Clearly Grandma knew what was up. During the three weeks until spring break Troy and Ms. Stone frequently checked on their little bundle of wine. Gas formation was furious. You could hear the bubbles running up the sides of the plastic jug. Instead of the fecal odor surrounding a still there was the actual smell of wine. And you thought nothing could go wrong.

Several St. John's people tutors, graduates have gone on to successful careers in the wine-making world. Check the alumni notes and you'll see how Johnnies I admit that I really dislike that word have gone on to win awards for their products, and other sorts of things that making good wine gets you. For Troy and Sharon, it didn't seem possible for them to fail. They had Grandma's recipe, and liberal arts education of those same expert wine craftsmen. But on that fateful Wednesday, the day before Spring Break, when they opened that jug, and took that first sip it was like opening Pandora's box.

It tasted vaguely like wine. One student thought it tasted a little underdeveloped, as though three weeks was a little young for a wine. Troy thought it tasted like death. It's

doubtful Sharon even tried it again.

Troy, being scientific about the whole thing, decided to see how strong this wine was. So after each dining hall-sized glass he would never have taken cups from the dining hall he wrote out the alphabet and signed his signature. Over the course of several hours he finished eight of these cups, nearly three quarts of liquid, before his slurred speech told him he should stop. His signature was odd, and his alphabet was kinda iffy. That was around nine o'clock. Sharon decided to leave. She missed out on quite a show. Troy got super drunk. He blacked out but he didn't pass out. Instead he did some crazy things. All Troy remembers from the time he started drinking to the time he woke up was throwing up and thinking that it was certainly a worse experience than hell would ever be. Troy threw up a lot that night, and woke up with 36-hour hangover, which was certainly worse because he never



Grandma's recipe for writing success.

drank during the school year. He woke up unaware of anything bad happening, but quickly realized from the wine-colored stains that something bad had happened. When his housemates came in to check on him they showed him that in his prime he had taken another handwriting sample. The alphabet was full of Greek-like characters and so many were run together that it looked like Troy only believed in an alphabet with 20-23 characters. His signature looked like the kind of crap your fiancé will want as calligraphy on your wedding invitations.

Sandra Day O'Connor, continued from page 1

cerned only with the constitutionality of laws and nothing more. The Supreme Court, instead, does not have to act the role of firefighters responding directly to the scene of the blaze when confronted by a constitutional question. Instead, court cases must be first vetted by the lower courts before the Supreme Court even has the chance to decide whether or not to accept a particular case. Moreover, when the Supreme Court decides on the constitutionality of a case, the vast majority of the American populace accept its decisions because the Supreme Court uses its power of judicial review sparingly (an example was brought up in the seminar that followed on

Marbury vs. Madison and the roughly 60 year interval between it and the next landmark case involving the Dred Scott decision).

The process of judicial review was a curious evolution of the Supreme Court's power. The case of Marbury vs. Madison was inconsequential in regards to Marbury's fate, but the second half of the decision written by Chief Justice John Marshall proved to be one of the most powerful precedents ever set by the Court. Justice O'Connor remarked that nowhere within the Constitution, or its accompanying Amendments are explicit provisions for the Supreme Court's power of judicial review. In fact, she maintained

Epilogue

Troy missed his only Freshman lab class of the year. He also missed Freshman chorus and has yet to apologize to Mr. May. He also can not drink wine. The smell and taste are completely lost on him. They don't bring back flashbacks, but they don't make him happy either.

Troy broke up with Sharon. Actually, they never went out. I thought it would make a better story if they did.

All of that misery. All of that pain. And there's a good deal more than I can fit into this week's GADLIFY. All of that horror from one simple little experiment to see how to make moonshine, and how well it could be done. And the worst part of all. It would have been cheaper to buy a bottle of wine.

that the Supreme Court's ability of judicial review is in direct conflict between law and freedom. The Supreme Court is the only truly undemocratic element of the American governmental system. Yet, the Court is only organ of the government to not only rule on decisions concerning the federal government and the states, but on a wide range of social issues (ranging from civil rights to the degree of involvement between federal and state agencies). As such, Justice O'Connor maintained, the Supreme Court must tread a careful line between following legal precedents exactly and creating new precedents.

THE GADLFY

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Kill Bill, continued from page 1

find the baby she was carrying gone, a metal plate in her head, and a nurse named Buck pimping out her comatose body.

The rest of the plot is even more uncomplicated. Black Mamba writes down her Death List Five, consisting of the rest of the LiVAs and Bill. Then she tracks them down and kills them.

The movie is told in chapter format, arranged out of order in typical Tarantino fashion. The first chapter is a battle to the death between The Bride and Vernita Green, a.k.a. Copperhead, played by Vivica A. Fox. These two beautiful women engage in a kung-fu knife fight, which is briefly interrupted by the arrival of Vernita Green's four-year-old daughter at this point the two women hide their knives behind their backs and, despite myriad evidences to the contrary, pretend they are just having a grownup chat (apparently, the maxim *no stabbing in front of the children* holds true even in extreme cases). Black Mamba wins, and carefully crosses Copperhead off her Death List with a Magic Marker. We see the name O-Ren Ishii (Cottonmouth) already crossed off, a killing that ends up being the finale of this installment of the movie.

The childhood tale of O-Ren Ishii (played by Lucy Liu) is related by means of a breathtaking anime segment. Had it been told normally, the film would have garnered an NC-17 rating, due to the extraordinarily disturbing depiction of the murder of her parents before her eyes, and the impor-

tance of pedophilia to that particular subplot.

During the four years that The Bride was in a coma, O-Ren Ishii worked her way up to head of the Tokyo Yakuza, surrounding herself with the protection of a personal army, the Crazy 88. Her personal bodyguard Go Go Yubari, played to perfection by Chiaki Kuriyama, is intensely disturbing, and completely insane.

The Bride flies to Okinawa, where she meets up with Hattori Hanzo, last of the great katana craftsmen, played by Sonny Chiba. He is done with making tools for killing, but she manages to persuade him by informing him that she will use the sword to kill Bill, a former student of Hanzo. After a month, she is presented with her custom-made sword in an riveting scene: This my finest sword. In your journey you should encounter God, God will be cut.

The culmination of the film is a twenty-minute fight sequence, brilliantly shot, in which Black Mamba dispatches the Crazy 88, Go Go, and O-Ren Ishii at the House of Blue Leaves, a Tokyo restaurant. She leaves Cottonmouth's lawyer Sophie alive, sans limbs, to tell Bill what happened. And cliffhanger.

The film is gleefully self-aware, a mixture of camp and homage that transcends both: Tarantino shows those of us unamused by camp exactly what others find so compelling, in an homage that nonetheless seems wholly his own. He builds a grisly bloodiest out of B-movie conventions and oilhand pop-culture references

that somehow manages to be more than the sum of its parts. Despite the shallowness of the archetypical comic-book characters, we end up genuinely interested in their destinies. Tarantino takes the trite and makes it enthralling for the cynical viewer.

Though the plot is simple and the characters shallow, the film is rich with visual detail. A slightly cartoonish alternate reality is created, which allows the viewer to take the ultraviolence at least a little bit more in stride. In Japan, everyone carries a samurai sword. One of the LiVAs, Elle Driver (a.k.a. California Mountain Snake, played by Darryl Hannah) wears an eye patch that changes appropriate to her costume. The Show-down at the House of Blue Leaves switches between color and black-and-white in a way that maximizes both effect and appreciation of the gruesome spectacle. One section of that fight is shot in a surprisingly balletic silhouetted kind of kabuki, and is breathtakingly elegant.

You might call *Kill Bill* a kind of metafilm about why schlock and gratuitous violence are entertaining. The remarkable dialogue that helped make *Pulp Fiction* such a success is nowhere to be found a full third or so of the film is in Japanese. It just doesn't matter. *Kill Bill* is so seductively shot, edited, and performed that its total simplicity is an asset. Its cliffhanger ending is tantalizing, making it difficult to wait for *Volume 2*, which comes out in February 2004.