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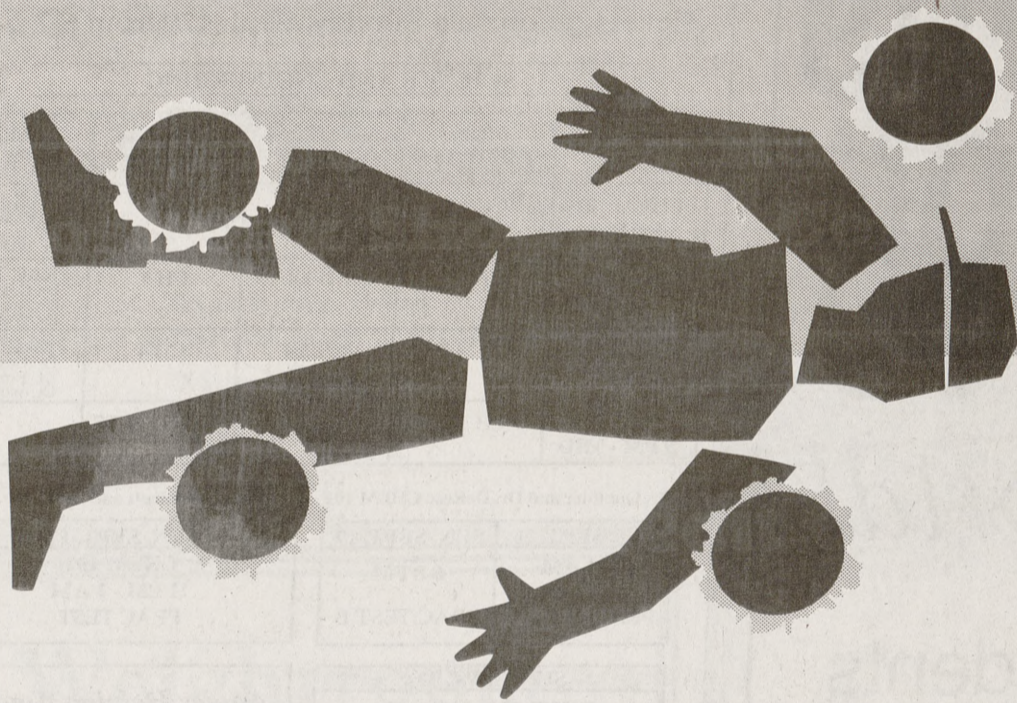
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Downright left-handed

Morrissey's Southpaw fails to deliver pun

By Kyle Littlefield
THE BATTALION

Picture Morrissey walking into one of those "Be a Star" recording studios in the mall. He sings over a soundtrack and the "engineers" — who usually make minimum wage — add a lot of echo and reverb to make his voice sound decent.

That's *Southpaw Grammar*.

The music sounds pretty good, but Morrissey sounds unrehearsed, out of the loop, as if the "engineers" handed him a chart of the songs five minutes before they pressed record.

Any other customer might leave the "Be A Star" place satisfied because it only cost them \$25 to make a decent recording. In Morrissey's case, though, it's not good enough.

For one thing, he's a professional — recording music is his job. Also, it probably cost him much more than \$25 to record *Southpaw*.

Morrissey's fifth full-fledged solo album offers more proof that he has given up on reclaiming the brilliance that the Smiths were known for — or for that matter, the brilliance of his solo efforts *Viva Hate* and *Your Arsenal*.

Although Morrissey once wrote about shyness, love, charm and other topics that elevated him to the status of guru to the lonely, *Southpaw* is blanketed in attempts to be clever that fall short.

"Reader Meet Author" starts out promising, but Morrissey's

ALBUM REVIEW

Morrissey
Southpaw Grammar
Reprise Records
★★ (out of five)



winded voice distracts from the song. However, Morrissey seems to resume the political commentary established by 1992's "Glamorous Glue," as he sings, "And the year 2000, won't change anyone here / as each fabled promise flies so fast, you'd swear it was never there."

Morrissey still has a way with words, he just isn't as consistent as he used to be.

On "The Boy Racer," he goes to great lengths to describe the racer but for no apparent reason, as he sings "he's just too good natured and / he's got too much money and / he's got too many girlfriends, I'm jealous that's all / but have you seen him go?"

In the past, Morrissey could not only create great character traits, but could then use them to tell a story that meant something.

Now, it seems he creates the characters and then abandons the plot.

Sometimes he does succeed. He describes a failed relationship in "Best Friend on the Payroll" with the humorous lines, "I turn the music down, and I don't know why, this is my house," and ends the song with the refrain, "it's not going to work out."

songs like "Everyday is Like a Day" and "Certain People" is lacking. Instead, Morrissey hides behind vague lyrics and references so tongue-in-cheek, aren't effective.

Musically, the creativity still there.

To Morrissey's credit, he's afraid to experiment. *Southpaw's* opener, "The Teachers Afraid of the Pupils" is more than 11 minutes long, and the song, "The Operation" begins with a two minute and 30 second drum solo.

But there really is no obvious purpose.

Many years ago, Morrissey was quoted as saying many musical artists just didn't write the type of songs that he could relate to.

He and his guitarist Johnny Marr took it upon themselves to remedy the situation, and wrote songs that did mean something to him. Along the way, they meant a lot to other people too.

But now, the same extravagant, hermetic lifestyle that perpetuated his fame has alienated his listeners.

The songs only have meaning for him.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Black goes to court to silence past lover

PHOENIX (AP) — Clint Black wants the mother of his love child to keep quiet about the 5-year-old.

The country star said Monday in a court complaint that Renee Lynn Bain talked to *The Globe* and *A Current Affair* in violation of a 1991 agreement:

"She went to the rag media," said Robert Schwartz, Black's lawyer. "Every time she wants a little pocket change, she tries to rattle his cage."

Black, who is married to actress Lisa Hartman, has acknowledged paternity and agreed to pay child support and health insurance and set up a fund for the youngster's education, Schwartz said.



Black

Photos of Charles cause royal uproar

LONDON (AP) — The royal family is not amused by an Italian magazine's photos of Prince Charles putting on his boxers.

"There is no justification for intrusive photographs taken of the Prince of Wales whilst on holiday at the private home of friends in France," the news agency Press Association quoted an unidentified royal aide as saying.

The pictures, published in *Eva* magazine, were taken with a telephoto lens and consist of back and side views of the future king of England putting on white boxer shorts.

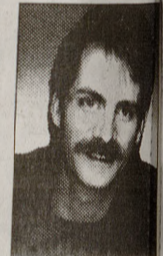
Foxworthy has no regrets about choice

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Country comic Jeff Foxworthy had his mother "flopping like a bass on the kitchen floor" when he quit his IBM job to make people laugh.

"Hey, Mom and Dad, I'm going to quit and tell jokes for living," the star of ABC's *The Jeff Foxworthy Show* recalled.

"You know, I mean, it was the round-table kitchen discussion — 'Are you on drugs? What's wrong with you? We can get you help!'"

"And they really thought I was crazy, you know, until the first time, the first time I was on Johnny Carson. Then my mom was like, 'Well, you just wasted all those years at IBM!'"



Foxworthy

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