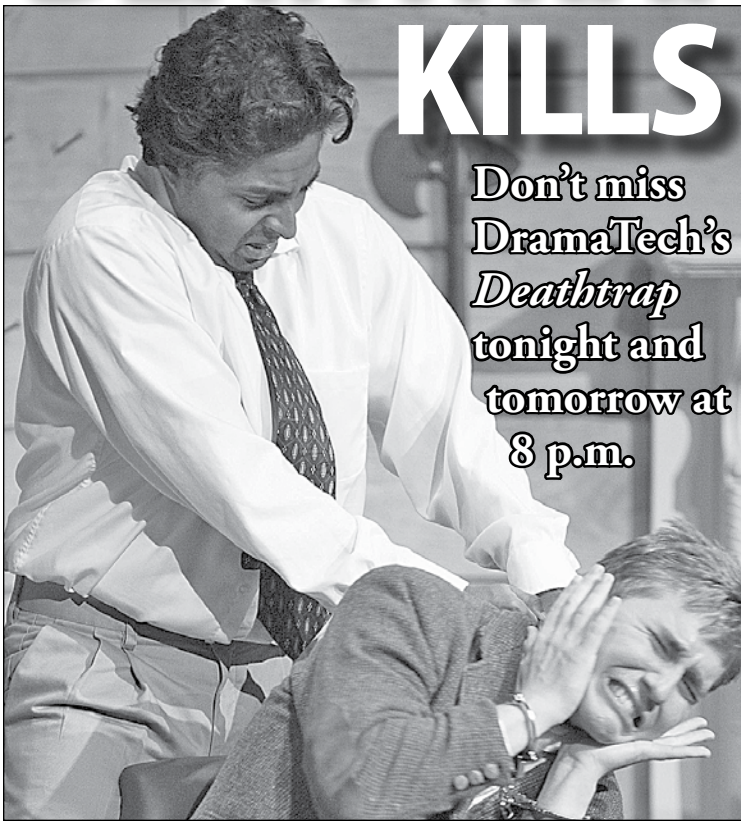


DEATHTRAP



KILLS

Don't miss
DramaTech's
Deathtrap
tonight and
tomorrow at
8 p.m.

Photo by Kelvin Kuo/Student Publications

THEATER

Deathtrap

GENRE: Comedy thriller

STARRING: Brittany Roberts and Tamil Periasamy

DIRECTOR: Melissa Foulger

PLAYWRIGHT: Ira Levin

OUR TAKE: ★★★★★☆

By Alexandria Stephenson
Contributing Writer

Deathtrap, the longest running comedy-thriller on Broadway, boasts twists and turns enough to make any audience member dizzy and doesn't disappoint. The style of the play, especially the writing, is very indicative of the period in which it was written. Some word choices and references are so obviously from the seventies that one can't help but chuckle.

Sidney Bruhl, a playwright most famous for the longest running play on Broadway, has retreated to his home in Westport, Connecticut in order to work on a new play after all of his most recent ones have flopped. He is joined by his wife of eleven years, off of whose trust fund he is living.

After receiving a superbly crafted manuscript from one of his students at a seminar he led, Sidney jokes to his wife Myra that he should kill the boy for it—especially since the manuscript's author Clifford Anderson has made only two copies and no one knows of his work.

Myra is naturally quite disturbed by this prospect, and when Sidney invites Clifford up to Westport from New York, Myra makes sure to stay in the room to ensure Sidney does nothing rash. Once Clifford confirms no one knows of his manuscript or where he is, Sidney is free to act, and he takes complete advantage of his opportunity.

I will point out that the play's ending is a bit strange and was a muddle of actions that weren't substantiated by any kind of real characterization. But besides the ending action of two of the characters, everything else was well thought out. The main characters weren't static, and two of the supporting cast members were hilarious foils for one another and the main characters. One such character, Helga ten Dorp, was played by a man dressed as a woman—an eastern European woman, complete with accent and all. Matt Carroll did quite a good job filling those womanly shoes, not to mention that his accent was fantastic.

Carroll wasn't the only superb actor in *Deathtrap*. The entirety of the troop was quite impressive. Brittany Roberts tackles her portrayal of Myra's internal struggle between condoning and condemning Sidney's murder of Clifford beautifully. Tamil Periasamy as Sidney does an enchanting job with the antihero, making the audience both root for and revile him.

Brian Webber's turn as an ingenuous first time author rings true, and the latter parts of his performance are pitch perfect. Finally, Johann Margulies as Porter Milgrim, the Bruhls' lawyer, is fantastic.

The writing and the acting weren't the only exceptional things in this production. The set and costume design were superb. That is the thing that most impresses me time and again when I see DramaTech productions. The craftsmanship that goes into creating the backdrop for the actors is fantastic and engenders complete immersion in the story.

It is a joy to go to DramaTech, partly for the great repertoire and acting, but also for the heart and the soul that goes into their productions. *Deathtrap* is no different, leaving audience members glad for the five bucks they paid to see the play.

Inferior plot defeats *Transformers*

FILM

Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen

GENRE: Action, Adventure

STARRING: Shia LaBeouf and Megan Fox

DIRECTOR: Michael Bay

RATING: PG-13

RELEASED: June 24, 2009

OUR TAKE: ★★★★★☆

By Chris Ernst
Staff Writer

Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen is a hot, hot mess. It's so hot it should be on a tin roof, or be dropped. But however bad any review may be, people will still go to see this movie. Nothing can stop the power of sex appeal and robots together.

It earned \$16 million on its Wednesday night premier alone, which is a record. It earned almost \$600 million in two weeks. This movie is so shiny that people will stand everything else that is terrible about it.

The story makes no sense and the way it is presented in the plot is chaotic at best. There were so many action scenes the dialogue punctuated the fights ... not the other way around. For being two and a half hours, a great, complex

story could have been carefully designed to engross the audience. But instead, it is action followed by explosions followed by yelling, running and explosions.

There was no way for it to end well because absolutely nothing had been done over the course of the movie. It just ends, the credits roll and then the audience wonders what just happened.

This movie is too big for its own good. There are too many fighting robots and not enough reason for them to fight. Everything was very epic, but for no reason. What was not epic was the ending.

For being so grandiose, there should have been multiple dimensions in peril, not just some machinery, or aliens, or Megan Fox's empty head or whatever it was. This script is so incredibly terrible and cut and pasted together there was no way it wouldn't be one of the worst movies of 2009. To be fair, it is a causality of the writers' strike.

The plot holes are jarring, distracting and confusing. The heroes walk out the back door of the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, which is located in downtown Washington, D.C., they are suddenly in a field with the majestic Rockies in the background. There were no apologies or attempted Lucille Ball style explanations. It just was.

Also, Petra is not visible from the Great Pyramids, so there is no way the heroes ran from one to the other. And if there is a mythical gun, why not use it on more than one thing?

Shia isn't given much to do and only really has one moment to shine. It's about four seconds long and then something explodes or invades earth or bursts through a wall. Furthermore, Shia is in one of the robots when it transforms. I thought there might be a cool control room, Shia driving a huge robot, but instead he is just running on the ground a shot later like nothing happened. Somehow he traveled several hundred feet to the ground safely, quickly and without a hitch step.

As a final note, someone needs to be either fired or promoted regarding these "racist robots." It is a steaming pile of controversy that could have been avoided easily, but then GM would have to be plugged elsewhere in the movie. The robots add nothing to the movie and could be excluded entirely, but instead I guess it was supposed to be funny.

But the movie is just so shiny. It's so pretty. It's so pretty it hypnotizes the audience into apathy. This is its only redeeming factor. The robots are pretty, Megan is pretty and the \$600 million isn't arguing.

LP fails to rival members' previous work

MUSIC

Discovery LP

LABEL: XL Records

GENRE: Indie Rock

TRACK PICKS: "Orange Shirt," "So Insane" & "Carby"

RELEASED: July 7, 2009

OUR TAKE: ★★★★★☆

By Mark Jackson
Contributing Writer

The duo consisting of Vampire Weekend's keyboardist, Rostam Batmanglij, and Ra Ra Riot's singer, Wes Miles, makes a lot more sense than you may think. They were friends even before their respective bands blew up, Batmanglij has production cred with VW and Miles has a voice that would suit almost any moderately paced pop instrumental. When I found out they were making an electronic album together (one that has been in production since 2005), I wondered what exactly they were aiming for.

In a *Pitchfork.com* interview they revealed some of their original ideas for a Discovery album—use hand claps in every track, use lots of vocal melodies (along with Auto-Tune, the effect T-Pain uses) and have every member of the band play synthesizer. *LP* was a pop experiment from its

conception.

"Orange Shirt" and "Osaka Loop Line" kick off the record and coincidentally were the two songs that made rounds on the Internet long before the album was released on Tuesday. Synthesizers pulse, glitter and climb on "Osaka Loop Line," and we get our first taste of vocal looping and tempo shifting. Auto-Tune is briskly used to touch up the ends of phrases, and the sound is genuine given the limited instrumentation. Hi-hat ticks are also a Discovery favorite and they show up on "Orange Shirt."

Ra Ra Riot's "Can You Tell" is remade and dubbed "Can You Discover?," and in all its Auto-Tune glory, it's not all that bad. It just doesn't match up against the record's best tracks. I say leave it up to other people to remix your other band's songs. I guess they came to the realization that nobody was going to inject Auto-Tune into a Ra Ra Riot song any time soon.

The trio of "So Insane," "Swing Tree" and "Carby" (featuring Ezra Koenig of VW) is quite impressive, and it's on songs like these where Discovery seems to find their niche in the sea of synthesizers.

Production is crisp, percussion is used fluently to shift speeds drastically and the vocals fit somewhere in the middle. Auto-Tune is taken away for the most part, and the songs wouldn't have it any other way.

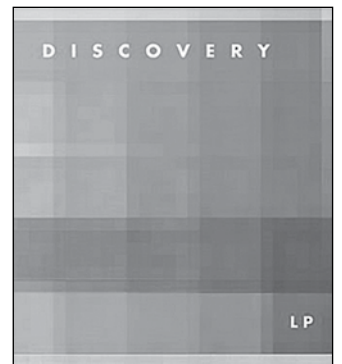


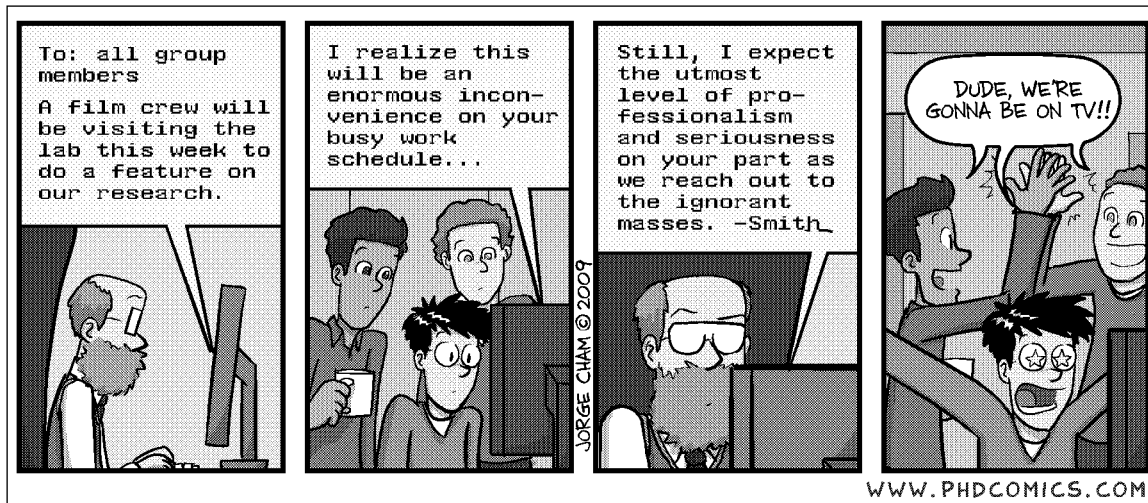
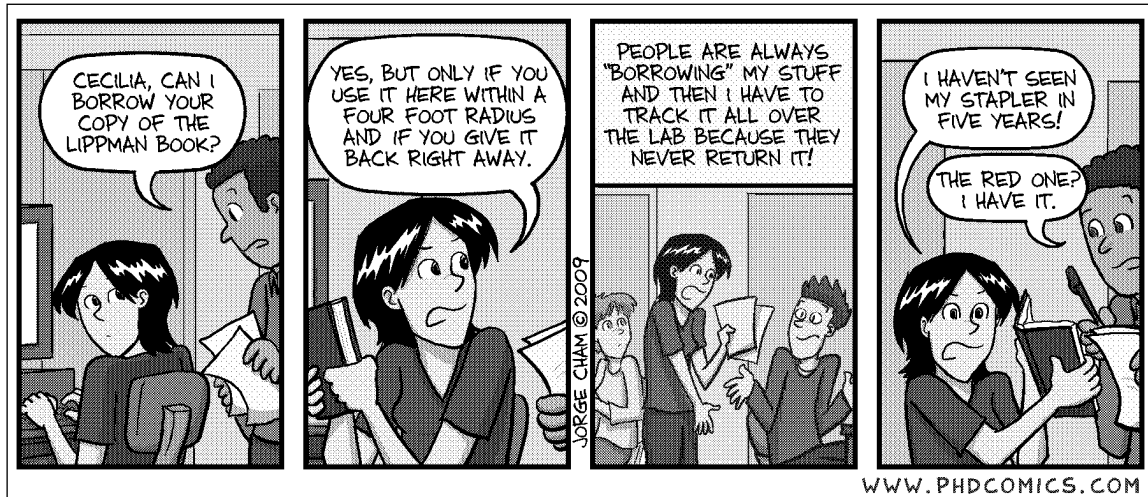
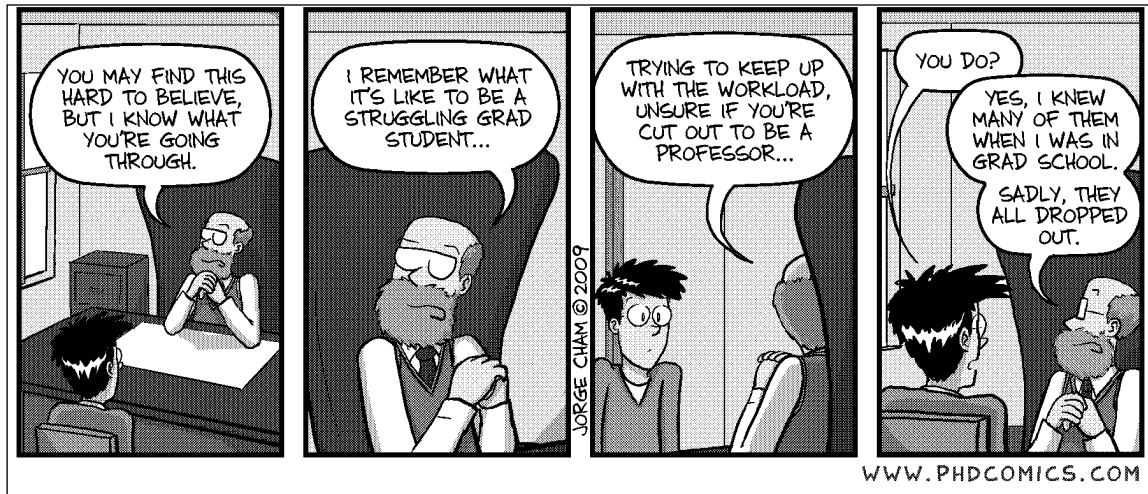
Image courtesy of XL Records

Most of these songs are hit-or-miss, and when they miss it can be quite painful. "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend," featuring Angel Deradoorian of Dirty Projectors, is especially bad. Loop Deradoorian's polished vocal scales with glitchy drum ticks and stalkerish lyrics and you have yourself the worst song on the record.

As a whole, *LP* is a mixed bag of summery, synth-drenched pop songs that draws less from Vampire Weekend and Ra Ra Riot than expected. A few tracks bring down the overall quality and replayability.

The problem here is what's under the surface. At times it seems like the hooks are the mainstay, which is aggravating for Vampire Weekend and Ra Ra Riot fans because while irony is one thing in music, using it to create an overall experience is another, and lyrically it definitely lacks in comparison to the duo's other outfits.

PILED HIGHER & DEEPER BY JORGE CHAM

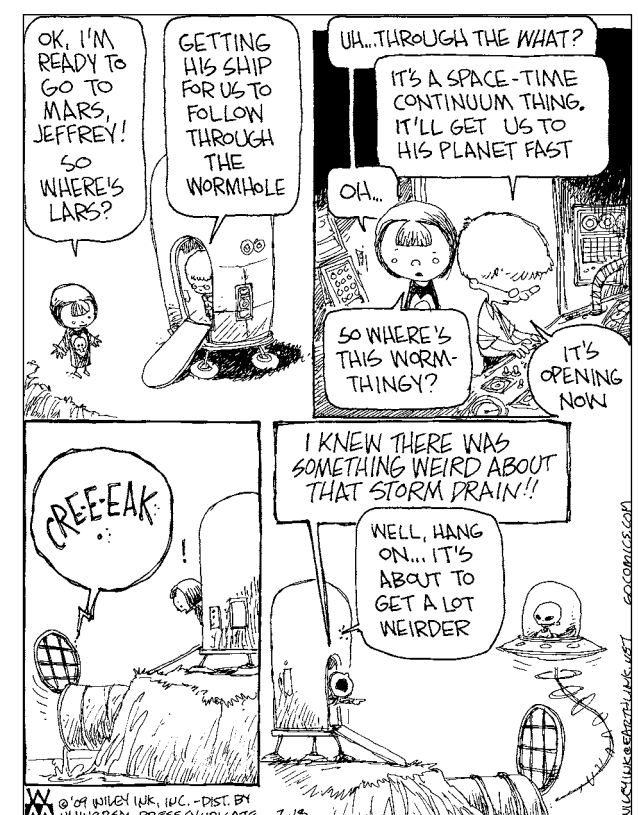
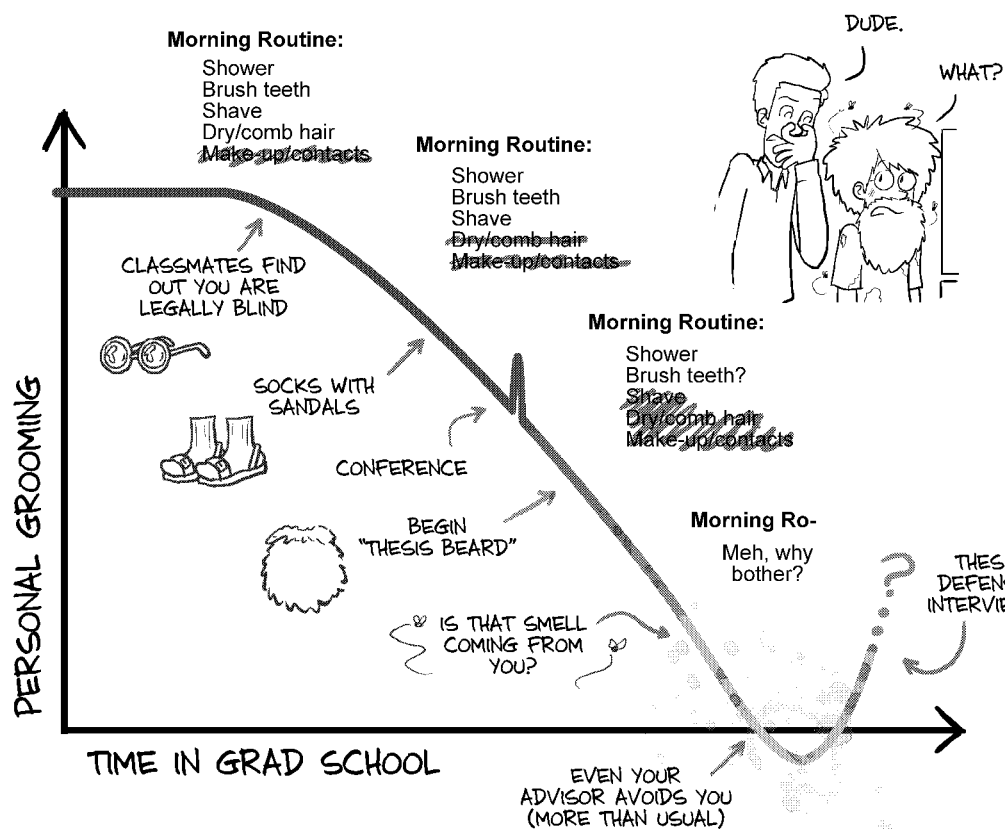


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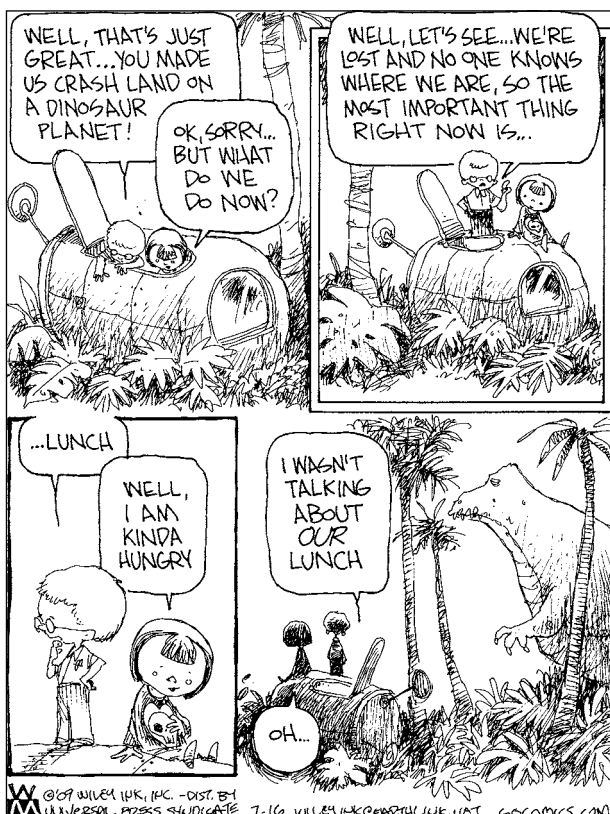


GROOMING VS. TIME IN GRAD SCHOOL

What happens when you realize nobody's paying attention.



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