



THE MIX

THEY SAID IT

GEORGE WASHINGTON:
"Worry, the interest paid by
those who borrow trouble."

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BY ERIC SUTTON
THE GAMECOCK

If you turn on the radio Thursdays at 8 a.m. and hear Verbal Banana, WUSC's only talk-radio show, you'll probably love it. Unless, of course, you don't like gags poking fun at mainstream conservatism, pharisaical superiority complexes or the huge supply of daily disasters and triumphs we call news and life.

Brooke Connolly, the show's host, has received numerous awards from the station, including a 12-Inch Mic award for Best On-Air Personality, a Voice award for Offending Everyone With a Great Show and, perhaps most fitting, Most Likely to Be Knocked Off Air by the Christian Coalition. She has twice had to turn down offers from local celebrity Andy Thomas to act as co-host for his show.

Verbal Banana "is about taking a heavy piece of news and blending it down into a comical piece of rice that you can write your name on," Connolly said.

It's also a mix of stand-up recordings, fake commercials, funny songs and comedy skits. With the use of prank phone calls, investigative reporting takes on complacency and mundanity.

Politically, the show tilts to the left. Listeners can call and request their own pocket-sized copy of the Ten Commandments so "you can check off your sins all day long."

In an inside joke among the show and its listeners, Connolly considers herself a candidate for the Messiahship because, as she says, she is capable of performing miracles; recently, she drank two bottles of wine and didn't throw up.

The most impressive thing about the show is the response from listeners. Regular callers include people from

around the world who pick up the show on the Internet. Twice, listeners have brought flowers to Connolly and her co-hosts.

Connolly spent last summer interning at MTV.

"I got to paint Carson Daly's nails," Connolly said. "I was in show development and got to do makeup once a week. I saw Janeane Garofalo tweeze a moustache hair in the dressing room."

She is a founding member of the Barstool Philosophers, and she's served on the executive committee of the first Columbia Improv Festival. Her collection of Garbage Pail Kids trading cards is probably more impressive.

But, for all her success, Connolly knows the disappointment of competing in the high-stakes world of popular en-

♦ BANANA, SEE PAGE 7

Brooke Connolly, the host of Verbal Banana, has received numerous awards from WUSC, including Best On-Air Personality and a Voice award for Offending Everyone With a Great Show.

PHOTO BY CANDI HAUGLUM/THE GAMECOCK



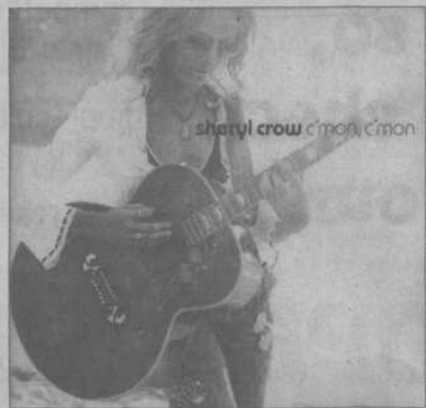
TOP 10

These were the most requested songs on USC's student radio station from April 10-17.

- "CONCRETE DUNES" Grandaddy
- "SHA SHA" Ben Kweller
- "IN OUR GUN" Gomez
- "LOVE APPLE" Love Apple
- "GONZALEZ" Gonzalez
- "PLASTIC FANG" Jon Spencer Blues Explosion
- "SPLIT" Face-to-Face/Dropkick Murphys
- "OPEN UP AND SAY AWESOME" Ultimate Fakebook
- "FREEBIRD" Built to Spill
- "WOOD/WATER" The Promise Ring

CD REVIEW

Sheryl Crow's newest CD forsakes old image



"C'MON C'MON"
Sheryl Crow
★★★ out of ★★★★★

BY WILLIAM MILLS
THE GAMECOCK

Sheryl Crow's latest release, "C'mon, C'mon," conflicts with her old status as a fun-loving rock 'n' roll diva. She focuses too much on packing the songs with as many famous artists and instruments as she can, and not enough on her songs' attitude.

Enlisting the help of Liz Phair, Lenny

Kravitz, Don Henley, Emmylou Harris and many others, Crow brings in so much outside influence that her independent sound is modified to mediocre, tending toward melancholy, rock. She even includes the vocals of actress Gwyneth Paltrow.

Crow is losing confidence in her sound's appeal and fun feeling. Until now, her albums were sold by the strength of her voice and her rock 'n' roll attitude.

Crow's rocker attitude is only surpassed by her sex appeal as an alternative-rock diva, and on "Soak up the Sun," she shares this spotlight with Phair. The two produce a song that's perfect for a day on the beach or just a summer drive. That song is one of the only optimistic, have-fun songs on the album; most of the rest are riddled with confusingly emotional lyrics such as "It's not having what you want, it's wanting what you've got" and "Life is what happens while you're making plans."

"C'mon, C'mon," Crow's fourth studio recording, lacks her individual, raw, alternative power, but it does show significant adaptability in her style. The album's wide range of talent gives it a full sound while pushing Crow's vocal strength to the back of the line. Songs such as "Safe and Sound" take the

emphasis off Crow and onto instruments such as a Wurlitzer organ, a synthesizer, a piano, violins and cellos. She does, however, reach impressively high vocal notes in the song's climactic ending.

Throughout the album, it's unclear whether Crow is deliberately taking the focus off of herself for this album or just having fun with her friends. Her longtime friend Stevie Nicks accompanies her on the album's title track, about heartbreak, in a duet of amazingly similar voices.

Another duet about heartbreak is the almost-certainly radio-bound "It's So Easy." This is one of the album's most heartfelt songs, and the contrast between Crow and Henley creates an MTV-compatible sound. Crow gets the same effect on "You're An Original" with Kravitz.

Though it's amazing how many artists collaborated on "C'mon, C'mon," which took three years to complete, it sounds less and less like Crow as it goes along. Whatever happened to the girl who just wanted to have some fun? I'm sure she did while making the album, but the listeners won't if they expect a product that's pure Sheryl Crow.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockmixeditor@hotmail.com

the
SHERYL CROW
music files



"C'MON, C'MON"
(2002)



"THE GLOBE
SESSIONS"
(1999)



"LIVE FROM
CENTRAL PARK"
(2002)



"SHERYL CROW"
(1996)



"TUESDAY NIGHT
MUSIC CLUB"
(1993)