

Picks of the Week

Soldier memoir rouses inspiration, awareness

BY JACKIE GONZALEZ
Assistant Features Editor

In the '90s, American children might remember being exposed to boy bands and JNCO pants. Yet the story of Ishmael Beah's childhood in West Africa opens eyes to another dimension of that decade: the civil war within Sierra Leone.

"A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier" is a vivid account of a young boy who is exposed to heavy amounts of violence and conflict at an early age. Before he even hits the age of thirteen, he is forced to become a member of the government army, fully aware that it is his duty to kill or be killed.

The memoir begins by sharing anecdotes from Beah's childhood prior to the conflict. He was just an average kid growing up in West Africa. He liked listening to rap music, playing with friends and learning various dances.

Although at the time he had heard rumors of the war, he and his brother assumed them to be exaggerations. But this age of innocence is shattered when the war enters their own backyard.

Fortunately, the brothers are away visiting a nearby village, but they return to find their town a bloody war zone.

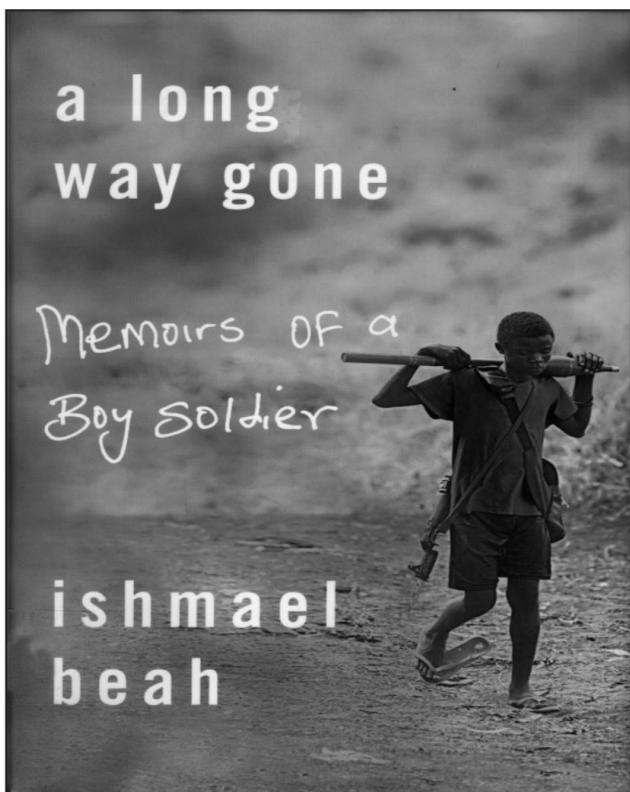
Although the brothers escape, they lose their family and enter a life of drugs and desensitization, forced to engage in the slaughtering of countless individuals who wronged the government.

Three years later, however, Beah is rescued by UNICEF, enters rehabilitation and eventually pursues a college degree in the United States.

This truly is a story of overcoming torture and trauma to benefit humanity. The words "sad" and "heart-wrenching" are not enough to describe the portrayal of child soldiers in "A Long Way Gone."

The manner in which Beah depicts his life and the ways of those surrounding him is gripping — there is almost an eerie sense of trauma and apathy stemming from the root of his tale, which makes it all the more engaging.

Beah provides a compelling account



Book Review
"A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier"
 by Ishmael Beah
 Sarah Crichton Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 218 pages
 Released: Feb. 15, 2007
Rating

of his transition from an innocent child to a killing machine.

The memoir is clear and poignant as Beah describes his time with painfully explicable narration.

"A Long Way Gone" is an emotion-

ally difficult read. It is a story that will remain etched in the minds of those who come across it.

It will leave readers feeling inspired to take action and a bit more appreciative of the life they currently lead.

Country duo hits home with self-titled debut album

BY WILL HOLLEMAN
Features Reporter

"Halfway to Hazard," but all the way to Nashville.

Chad Warrick and David Tolliver have hit the big time in country music with their self-titled release, "Halfway to Hazard." With a little help from two big name producers, Byron Gallimore and country music superstar Tim McGraw, this new country duo from Hazard, Ky., is here to stay.

Trying to choose my favorite song from this album would be like a teenage boy trying to choose his favorite Sports Illustrated swimsuit model.

All the songs on this 11-track disc are capable of radio play and certainly worthy of dorm room playlists. The lyrics, vocals and instruments produce a sweet harmony that would entice any country music fan.

Warrick and Tolliver start off their new CD with "Countrified," an upbeat, rockin' country song with electric guitars and screaming vocals, reminiscent of Big and Rich's rock 'n' roll brand of country.

Halfway to Hazard produces a sound somewhere in between the "pop country" of Rascal Flatts and the hard rock of country duos Van Zant and Montgomery Gentry.

Although I use these comparisons



Music Review
Halfway to Hazard
 "Halfway to Hazard"
 Mercury Nashville
 Released: August 14
Rating

to give a feel of where this new group stands, Halfway to Hazard is definitely unique — unique enough to grab the attention of McGraw, a superstar legend. Halfway to Hazard joined McGraw and his wife, Faith Hill, on their most

recent tour in 2007.

Being a sap who likes Mariah Carey and Savage Garden songs, I love to read into the lyrics of music. Halfway to Hazard writes most of its lyrics, collaborating on a few songs, and leaves this chick-flick fan very impressed.

Warrick and Tolliver can go from touching songs like their current radio hit, "Daisy," a song about a childhood love who dies giving birth to a daughter, to fun songs like the aforementioned "Countrified" and "Country 'Til the Day We Die."

I feel pretty close to this new country duo considering I have not been able to turn off their new CD since I bought it last Thursday afternoon.

The 11 songs from Halfway to Hazard are made affordable by the funding of McGraw and Gallimore. I was surprised to see the new CD only cost \$6.99 — an amazing bargain for such a high-quality work of art.

My personal favorite, "Devil and the Cross," a song both catchy and fun, tells about the son of a preacher who has a bit of a wild side (Just like the prodigal son/ I guess I got way too lost/ Livin' somewhere in between the devil and the cross).

This CD has become an instant favorite to this die-hard country fan as well as a CD I would recommend to anyone who needs a smile.

What's on your iPod?

Design by Andrea Bailey/Index

WHAT TO WATCH: TV at Truman

<p>Greek Mondays at 8 p.m. (ABC Family)</p> <p>LA Ink Tuesdays at 9 p.m. (TLC)</p> <p>Eureka Tuesdays at 8 p.m. (SCI-FI)</p> <p>Top Chef Wednesdays at 9 p.m. (BRAVO)</p> <p>Meerkat Manor Fridays at 7:30 p.m. (TLC)</p>	<p>Coming soon</p> <p><i>Beginning Sept. 6:</i></p> <p>Tim Gunn's Guide to Style Thursdays at 9 p.m. (BRAVO)</p> <p><i>Beginning Sept. 17:</i></p> <p>Prison Break: Season Three Mondays at 7 p.m. (FOX)</p> <p><i>Beginning Sept. 27:</i></p> <p>The Office: Season Four Thursdays at 8 p.m. (NBC)</p> <p>Ugly Betty: Season Two Thursdays at 7 p.m. (ABC)</p>
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Mainstreet Market

Sept. 10 to Sept. 14

Breakfast Special:
Breakfast Burritos — \$1.65

Sky Ranch Grill Special:
Grilled Cheese Sandwich and Cup of Soup (Not Chili) — \$3.00

World's Fair Cuisine:
Jamaican Jerk Chicken Sandwich — \$4.19
Roast Beef Gorgonzola Baguette — \$5.59

Classic Line	
Monday	Thursday
Curried Rice Noodles \$3.00/\$4.20	Falafels \$2.50/\$3.70
Swiss Steak \$3.00/\$4.20	Fiesta Flank Steak \$3.30/\$4.50
Chipotle Glazed Porkloin \$3.00/\$4.20	American Style Lasagna \$2.50/\$3.70
Bacon Ranch Chicken Wrap \$3.00/\$4.20	
Tuesday	Friday
Spaghetti with Meat & Marinara \$2.50/\$3.70	Spinach Ricotta Quiche \$2.50/\$3.70
Roasted Turkey Breast \$2.50/\$3.70	Breaded Tilapia \$2.50/\$3.70
Chipotle & Cheese Beefsteak \$3.00/\$4.20	Prime Rib \$3.30/\$4.50
Wednesday	Blimpie Special
General's Tofu \$2.50/\$3.70	Grilled Beef, Turkey & Cheddar Combo \$5.59
Georgia Pork Cutlets \$3.00/\$4.20	
Chicken Florentine \$3.00/\$4.20	

Jazzman's Special:
Tall Chai with a Muffin \$3.29

Freshens Special:
Regular Smoothie \$3.19

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