

Man of the month

Zack Ordynans

Some Kissup-Writer recently tracked Ordynans down for a brief discussion about fast food, *Beverly Hills 90210*, and his haircut.

You may have seen him walking around campus, grimacing thoughtfully to himself. You may have seen him checking his mail in the UC, a worried wrinkle creasing his eyebrows, shaking his head and scowling at an unwanted flyer. You may have even seen him in previous issues of *WheatBread*.

The figure in question, of course, is Zachary Ordynans. That mysterious and elusive persona, that skeptical and wary expression, that confused and crooked look that could only belong to one person: Zack Ordynans. He is a person that continues to fascinate all of us, as we emerge from dorms to brave the murky weather, as we discover the latest issue of *WheatBread* in its stack, as we bring each bite of that Bistro pizza to our lips.

Zack is here, he is around us, as we nap, brush our teeth, procrastinate writing that paper. Zack embodies the molecules of the air around us while we sleep. Zack is a question and, somehow, miraculously, an answer.

Zack is the fuel of each *WheatBread* issue, and the inspiration for each and every work of creativity and individuality displayed there. How does he do it? I have wondered this often, observing the characteristic expressions that define his presence.

“Well, that’s going a little far,” someone familiar with both Zack and *WheatBread* stated, upon reading my observation that Zack is perhaps the driving force behind the paper, the inspiration, the incentive to keep working, hour after hour, until every last word is beautifully executed on the page.

All right, he’s not all that. But he *does* have some unique and compelling features, many, I’m sorry to admit, that are impossible to repli-



cate on paper. I mean, if you’ve never heard Zack grumble “I dunno, I dunno,” followed by unmistakable whining, sniffing, the trademark “Err, um, I mean, That’s so random” with maybe an occasional “Oh Wow!” then there just ain’t no way I can explain it here. Maybe I’m just not a good enough writer. Or maybe his mannerisms, his characteristics, are *beyond* explanation, beyond anyone’s ability to capture and reveal the phenomenon that *is* Zack.

Walking closely behind him as he ambles off to his room, I see a tilted,

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confused Zack, his head bent sideways, pondering something that he probably cannot explain, something that, on first take, seems to be troubling him, but after a second or third look, reveals the true source of the grimace.

"I dunno. I mean, when are you going to have that article in? I mean, I'd like to.... Well, I was trying for..." He coughs, and sniffs a little. "I mean, it's just that, like, when are you gonna have it in? I'm not trying to put pressure on you or anything but if you could just.... Whatever. Yeah, okay, I mean, yeah." He tilts his head back the other way, to the right side this time, still seeming to be deep in thought, but then suddenly mentioning that he has to run to the bathroom since he just ate at Wendy's.

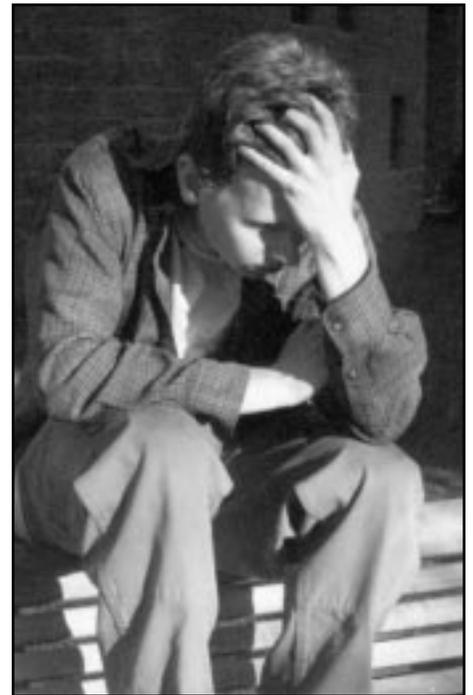
During this time, I was unable to answer Zack's inquiry, maybe because he never really gets to the question, or maybe because I was busy studying him intently. His hair, matted damply on one side of his head, sticks up and flies in all directions on the other. I'm thinking that maybe it's gravity that's caused this, because he's always got his head tilted to one side, trying to figure something out, or think things through. His scowl has a comfortable permanence on his face, like a weathered ambivalence that he is accustomed to living with. His winter coat poofs up around his skinny form, the hugeness of an unnecessary hood looming behind his head as if to magnify his questions, his confusion, his consistently unformed answers. "Yeah, whatever. See you later." Zack walks off crookedly into the night, and I imagine his long skinny fingers grasping the door handle, typing up his *WheatBread* article, changing the channels, bored, but persistent, on the remote control.

Suddenly, I make the connection.

Bob Dylan pops into my head as I recall Zack's face, his contorted expressions, his impatient gestures. Could he really be reminiscent of that brilliant figure? His head sort of tilted in that same thoughtful way, and his hair sort of stuck out angrily and confused, maybe like... Bob Dylan's hair? No it couldn't be. I began comparing him to other important historical figures. Like Shaggy in "Scooby Doo." Yeah, that was it. That was more like it. The same dazed exclamations, the same stubble left lazily on his chin. But no, Zack is not as laid back as Shaggy. I've heard a lot of people compare him to Woody Allen (in his more artistic, less tabloid days) who is, after all, his favorite filmmaker. I imagine Woody Allen in his character in "Annie Hall", repeating things over and over, worrying to himself, whining and complaining to his therapist. Irritable and moody. Dissatisfied and distracted. Yes, that was more like him. With the exception, of course, of being a major pervert. No, Zack is not that. Irritable, maybe. Hard to work with, definitely. But a sex-obsessed pervert? Never. Well, maybe *WheatBread* obsessed. Which, of course, is conducive to the magazine. Maybe not for the writers who contribute to it, but for the magazine, yes.

Later, in the *WheatBread* office, I try to interview him. He tells me that he wanted to be an ambulance driver when he was six. "I never really thought about it. I guess someone just asked me, and that's what I told them." I wonder if he has any pets. He admits to one Golden Retriever, Cosmo, and two cats. One cat is Gabby; the other, well, apparently, this one has three names.

"None of us could agree on any names, so we all call him different things." Wally, Louie, and Dylan. Not Bob, but, he later explains, after the



90210 character. "Yeah, that's what my sister called him. I couldn't stand that, so I could never call him that."

Eventually he gets tired and irritated with my unending stream of random questions. "Why are you doing this? I mean, what is this for? Are you writing an article for *The Scarlet* or something? I dunno. I mean, why are you asking me all these questions?" And with that, he gets up and leaves the room, running from the interrogation. "I'm not answering any more questions. I gotta go."

Later, I explain sensitively that I'm writing about him for *SweetBread*, a kind of personal profile. He dodges this concept, at first, liking the idea and then, suddenly, concerned and unsure. "I don't know if that's going to work. I mean, I guess it could be okay, I mean, yeah, I guess you can do it." He consents finally to the idea, insisting that I provide him with a copy to read over first. "Sure I will," I tell him. "So now will you tell me your favorite color?" Zack sighs and looks at his feet. "It's light blue," he confesses reluctantly.