

SHOULD KIDS HAVE ALL THE FUN?
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INSIDE JOKE

"A NEWSLETTER OF COMEDY AND CREATIVITY"



ISSUE #12 - SPECIAL EXPANDED ISSUE!

ONE DOLLAR

JULY, 1982

Carnival, No-ledge?

"Well, how do you like it so far?" asked the Time Stealer. "It's yours for the telling, isn't it now? I mean, any moment you'll wake up, and you'll want to write it all down, right? It was pretty good, you must admit."

"Yeah," I replied, still shaking off the numbing effects of the awful truths I had just learned, "sometimes my subconscious really comes through."

"Subconscious, hell. I told you this was real. Forget that you're officially 'sleeping' for a minute. Look, this is the only way we can communicate with lower-structured beings. Here's your chance to be a hero, kid. You can warn all the people you know of this—they've only got a few weeks till it all comes true..."

"Says you—no, says my own convoluted mind! Hey, it's a real nice plot and all, but a little hard to believe if I were to even pass it off as possibility, let alone foreknowledge. It has no scientific logic, no coherence—it's a damn dream, is all it is!"

"Yeah? Remember the 'damn dream' you had the night Lennon died, you were in that plane and the bombs kept getting closer, then the fourth one hit and you felt the death? Guess you don't spread that one around too much, huh? How the sound and pressure alone jolted you awake, in a cold sweat, and you knew what it meant? Reality's up for grabs. Look, if you just wanna concentrate on the plot, the sequence, perhaps it's better that way. No one'll hit you for scientific details if you explain that it's—heh heh—a 'dream'. Besides which, the technical mindfuck's beyond your comprehension anyway, no offense intended, I mean 'all humans' comprehension'. So let's see what we got, ok? Remember the beginning of the sequence when you arrived at work presumably on time, or so you thought, first week in August..."

I recounted for his and my own benefit, to make doubly sure I was not about to forget is all once awake, the important details of the experience—discovering that it was actually the 3rd week in August, not the first, and suddenly it was 11am not 9am and the boss was throwing shit fits while I tried to figure out why my watch, when I looked at it minutes ago, said 8:30; not being able to remember, trying my hardest, what had happened during the lost time, that being two full weeks and then the past two hours; finding that in the wasteful world of capitalist business no one else seemed to feel the effects I did, the loss; knowing for certain, the ultimate surety, that there had been a mysterious loss of time, that I was right ("Dream Security", the Stealer interrupted); my subsequent abduction, congratulations and explanation by the Time Stealers that they had indeed halted human biological functioning and "hazed" memory of same but could not (or cared not to) control stoppage of clock mechanisms (so that timepieces, which were all "correct", had given me the final clue that something was amiss with human timing); the revealing of the implants the Stealers had placed in the people during suspension—which brought me back to that moment just as I realized what was really happening.

"You're not going to take over anything!" I exclaimed. "All you want is to see your ideas in print! You may insist you're a higher intelligence from a foreign galaxy, but all you really are is a frustrated writer!"

The Stealer nodded her (as far as I could discern, the Stealers shifted gender involuntarily, in much the same way my seldom-undilated pupils adjusted to differences in light) head—"Oh, I won't deny it. Very good. I knew there was something special about you."

"Well, it won't work. Dreams never translate well to paper, at least not mine. Guaranteed in an hour this will all seem nonsensical."

"Don't knock it, kid. That's how Lewis Carroll started. I thought your readers liked that sort of thing—oh, okay, how about another idea? I know one—this sideshow freak who keeps attempting suicide unsuccessfully—"Carnival No-Ledge?"

"Well, maybe for a title—hey, wait! You're sick! That's terrible!"

"It's your mind, honey, you keep saying it yourself. Listen, you're climbing out of alpha now. Don't worry, you'll think of something, trust me, just trying to help, that's all, can't give ya donations, know what I mean—See you in the funny papers..." *ew*

acknowleditorialetc.

Greetings from Keansburg!! As you can see, to paraphrase Monty Python, "I'm not dead yet!" In fact, we even made it in before the end of the month, so this is an official JULY issue, and there will be an official AUGUST issue (deadline the 10th & all that). Lots of changes, even more things remaining the same; much news.

Here's the biggie: As I mentioned in my form begletter sent out to all subscribers, last month's issue cost me \$244.64 to run (by the way, I don't fee Reaganomics had a direct effect on my place of work screwing me—I believe that to be purely personal vendetta and am currently considering 9-to-5ing elsewhere). I received, altogether, \$295.50 in donations as of the date of this printing! I can't thank you all enough—I'm speechless to the point of joyful tears that people care so much. My debt is completely paid for, including back issues, which I'm selling at \$1150 apiece to keep myself in the relative black. And since I'd initially put out \$100 of my own money (only fair, I reasoned, since I usually pay about 50-60 bucks on my own anyway and I'd screwed the company back when I ran the postage meter for the form letters) as partial payment before the donations came in, I've got at least that much to play with this month. That's one reason this issue

is so long (and a 51 cent-er). Another is because I had so damn much stuff (and even so, I had to push a few goodies forward [or is it "back"?] to next month). Another, and this is a big factor, is due to my luck in finding a friendly printer. And the one I like to emphasize the most is, you deserve something extra from me in return for your overwhelming kindness. Individual thanks (quick, here's your chance to ego-scan and exo-scan IJ's readership!) are alphabetized on the back page filler, excepting late donors, thanked below. Since this is probably the only time (I hope) I can risk this large an issue, next month's will be back to "normal". It will feature all the things I had to knock back from July, including the answers to FIRESIGNAL #3, the first chapter of Richard Weinstock's Law and Order Handbook with illustrations by—I won't spoil it, stories by G. Lloyd Helm, Eleanor Hardin, and some familiar names from the backlog, part two of Rory's "Odds & Pieces/Bits & Ends", Roldo's warning of the latest mad monster roaming the country, and of course the already-made-up (but in need of revision now that T-shirts are out for a bit) QUESTIONNAIRE #3! Next issue will also mark the return of bookworm Jill Zimmerman, whose review of the Edie Sedgwick bio ought to stir up something interesting...

Personell-y speaking, welcome to Ron Flowers, newest staff writer, and also to our new advice columnist "Coop"! Alter Ego #2, Kid Sieve, makes her debut on page 3. I got a hold of a typesetting ("composer") machine earlier this month, so a couple of stories are fancied up (I was hoping to do the same for much of this page, but I'm being watched like a hawk). And the lettercolumn is again—you guessed it—microscopically shrunk in the interest of space preservation, I'll try not to do it again next time, yeah, yeah...

Personally, speaking, I've been doing a lot of viewing lately. Movie plugs—go see all the ones everyone else is seeing, really, "E.T.", "Garp", "Tron", Woody...Some notable TV incidents—thanks to Lisa B. and Jimmie T. for cluing me in to the Six Shoes' appearance on Showtime's "Folk Music Reunion" (see FIRESIGNALs); Martin Short (late of "The Associates", thanks again LB) is the newest addition to the SCTV cast (will he go the same way as Tony Rosato, who I hear has broken records by being kicked off two late-night comedy shows in one year); Letterman's treatment of Thomas and Moranis on his "Christmas Show" was so unintentionally rude as to be deplorable (LB and I saw live the show from the previous evening, with Joe Piscopo and Peter Tork, and were going to get stand-by tickets, but YOU MUST BE AT NBC THE MORNING OF THE SAME DAY TO GET STAND-BYS, so we missed out); and the syndicated simulcast series (special?) "Backstage Pass" recently featured a mock commercial (WNEF-FM did not simulcast this, as they probably figured it was for real) for the "Carruthers Brothers" Winnebago Co. (buy one, get one free), this brilliance engineered by Richard Proctor (any relation to Phil?) and Mark Ward (any relation to either Jay or Burt?). Worth sending for the transcript on this one, as it also had the obligatory Spielberg interview, but I haven't the address on me...I've also been writing a lot lately, although you might not know it to look at IJ—have stuff coming up in zines ranging from STOP! to CULTURAL CORRESPONDENCE (if I ever write it) to LONE STAR to TWISTED IMAGE to GOOD DAY SUNSHINE...Right, and I'll be conning it up, provided by income holds out, first at the MONKEECON August 6-8 (quick, call Maggie McM. and come along, you bosoz!), and then in September Discor-dian style at either WorldCon or the SubCon, or something, in the mythical land of Chicago...As for my job situation, it's mostly a worse picture than I paint it to be. Actually, it has nothing to do with the busted crane a few blocks away (looks like a big expired penis from here), though I'm close enough to get the willies; my current status, that of looking around for another job real quick, came about as a result of an attack (god, I wish I were paranoid, then there'd be an explanation for all this!) from interestingly enough a former IJ staffer. Fortunately (or "un-fortunately"?), IJ has nothing to do with it, but Mal won't be writing for me anymore, 'cause I'm taking off. Probably around the Holidays, so if'n ya have any jobs for me...Chances are, I won't be making enough to afford to move out of m&d's house yet, but problems should be alleviated (in fact, half of the problems have by now been solved, as my father is no longer speaking at me) as long as I keep an ample supply of the evil weed...

But enough kvetching. If I keep my mouth shut (as my personal friends know, this is the hardest thing in the world for me to do) I will probably be able to stay here long enough to type out next month's issue. Submissions (please continue holding off on the straight fiction and reviews for just one more month, ok?) are due on the tenth, still, staffers, no breaks like I gave myself, come on...All other news you want publicized is also due AUGUST 10, and of course as you have all discovered I guess I'm not too proud to beg after all, so donations are good as ever. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE IS ONE DOLLAR PER ISSUE, NO ADVANCE SUBSCRIPTIONS GIVEN EVER (now do you understand why?). Send it all to me at

418 East Third Avenue, Roselle, New Jersey 07203

AUGUST 3 - Lenny Bruce dies, 1966
AUGUST 6 - HIROSHIMA DAY
AUGUST 6 - Andy Warhol
AUGUST 6-8 - MONKEECON (4th Annual), worth the trip to BRIDGEPORT, CT - for more info please call MAGGIE McMANUS (609) 888-4567, ask about the SPECIAL PARTY BUS!

AUGUST 10 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO AUGUST INSIDE JOKE

AUGUST 15 - BOB KITKO (35)
AUGUST 19 - Woodstock begins, 1969
AUGUST 17 - Mae West born, 1892
AUGUST 18 - MARY JESSUP (19)
AUGUST 21 - DOUGLASS ST. CLAIR SMITH (29)
AUGUST 25 - Walt Kelly born, 1913

A special HAPPY BELATED to KEN FILAR, IJ

Staff Writer, 25 on July 5—Movies, Ken? If you have an event to publicize, who the hell cares? No, I kid, please let me know about it by the tenth and I'll put it here.

* INSIDE JOKE is put on each month, with any luck, by Elaine *
* Wechsler. For the multi-limbed, four-armed is four-worned. *
* EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.....Elayne Wechsler *
* PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....Tom Hilyer *

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* Baboon Dooley Comic Strips by JOHN CRAWFORD *
* Masthead for July by PAT DOWNS *
* Record Reviews by BRIAN CATANZARO, KHAARYN GOERTZEL, *
* RORY HOUGHENS; Movie Reviews by DAVID MORGAN *

* OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS MONTH (GET READY!): *
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* BOB BLACK VERNON GRANT LISA RESNICK *
* GREG BLAIR MIKE GUNDERLOY RALPH ROBERTS *
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* DEBORAH GOLDEN STEVEN ORMISTON SUSAN G. WILLHOUSE *

* Ads furnished by THE LAST INTERNATIONAL, SURREALISTIC WORKERS *
* PARTY, CHURCH OF THE SUBGENIUS, MINITRUE, CONSTANT CAUSE, and *
* CRITIQUE—Also various Discor-dian dis-organizations about.... *

* c. 1982 Pen-Elayne Enterprises, Kip M. Ghesin, President *
* PRINTED SOMEWHERE IN NORTHERN NEW JERSEY BY ME AND TOM HILYER, *
* but it wasn't Mikey's fault—thanks for everything, Mikey!!!! *

Starting next month, an IJ DEFENSE FUND (name courtesy of Valentino) will be instituted to help maintain funds at an above-critical level. Started simultaneously in the heads of Valentino and Macedonio Garcia, what the IJDF will involve is the sale of precious original artwork, the profit from which will go to the rag. Among the items to be put on sale will be the cover from IJ #11 and work which has appeared in R.Crumb's WEIRDO #5. If you're an artist wishing to sell to benefit IJ (naturally, you may retain any percentage of the sales you wish), write by August 10 and let me know your terms. The full spiel will appear in the Aug. issue.

Belated (last minute) Thanks to Lynn Hansen (thx again for the comic!) and a conditional thank you to Tom Haertel - see above under "NO ADVANCE SUBS"...

ESTD 1974
DIAL-AN-EXCISE
E.T. PHONE
647-748 (514)

UNCONFIRMED REPORTS indicate Soviet Army Chorus performances now feature Kamel Stones. Confirmation appreciated. Box 2433, Berkeley 94702.

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Fan Noose

NY FOLKS-
CEMENTO ON
SUN. EVE. 8-10,
WAVE (starts 8!)

A couple public service messages first—Julian Ross, whose MAGAZINE gets better and better (\$1 to N. Vine St., #409, Los Angeles, CA 90038), writes that "the Hollywood Library (destroyed by arson) needs contributions of books and mags (in good condition). Can be sent to: Georgette Todd, Hollywood Librarian, L.A. Library Association, 630 W. Fifth St., Los Angeles, CA 90071. Mark package—Contents: Books/Magazines, 'Library Rate'." With all the Reaganism secret book-burnings going on, it's prolly all we can do to help out the "accidental" fires...David H. Coleman is working his way through college—by selling his comic book and fanzine collection. Excellent stuff for collectors. List for 50¢ + SASE—P.O. Box 322, West Point, MS 39773...THE LAST INTERNATIONAL (Bob Black, Alice Liddell, and others) has moved its address to 2000 Center St. #1314, Berkeley, CA 94704, so adjust accordingly to this month's scattered ads. Inquire of them for a copy of APPEAL TO TREASON...Carolyn Lee Boyd sent "some broadsides from my own publishing venture", KISS OF DEATH, handwritten untitled one-pagers featuring a poem each and some neat side graphics. If you're not lucky enough to catch it on New York walls or lampposts, ask Carolyn at 306 E. 6th St. #13, New York, NY 10003...Never enough thanks for the two full page IJ plugs (one being a great choice, excerpt of Ho Chi Zen's piece from last month) in the FORTNIGHTLY COLLEGE RADIO REPORT. Editor Shel Kagan puts subs at \$30 yearly; for info write him at Box 714, Bristol, RI 02809...Matt Feazell, the wonderful mad cartoonist from Minneapolis, has teamed up with Clark Dissmeyer to put out the one-pager FIGHT-IN' GUYS, featuring Feazell's patented 'ordinary-folk' superheroes. SASE to 2886 James Ave. S. #202, Minneapolis, MN 55408...Newest issues out in the CHATSCIFICNEWS (SASE to Andre Barker-Bridget, 44 Colleegetown Estates, Cleveland, TN 37311), CURSED EARTH (#3, best issue yet, SASE to Steve Chaput, 2 Indian Hill Road, Westport, CT 06880), FACTSHEET FIVE (Mike Gunderloy's Discordian plug-trip, SASE to 273 Huntington Ave., Hyde Park, MA 02136), TELE TIMES (SASE for info to Bruce Duncan, Berkeley Inn Hotel, Rm. 414, 2501 Haste St., Berkeley, CA 94704), Bob Banner's CRITIQUE (see ad on page 21), Greg Wadsworth's comic ISMET (\$1.25 to Greg or Joanna Wadsworth at P.O. Box 182, Gervais, OR 97026), ANIMANIA (this issue featuring a

partial Astroboy filmography—a well-worth two bucks to David Mruz, 3112 Holmes Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408), TRASHOLA (SASE to Jim Morton, 1449 Washington #4, San Francisco, CA 94109), CONTACT HIGH (tell John Fremont I sent you when you write him for info at P.O. Box 500, Mendocino, CA 95460), and the Beatles semi-pro rag GOOD DAY SUNSHINE (\$2 to Charles F. Rosenay!!!, 397 Edgewood Ave., New Haven, CT 06511)...Steve Chaput, address above, is starting a new zine, working title PART SHOT, and is taking stories, reviews, etc. which IJ'ers might consider sending him while I'm still getting out of my hole. Steve will also plug and trade with other pubs—"You might be happy to know that I haven't given a bad review to any limited-edition, small-press run item that I've yet received." Good news...Also seeking mail (fiction, poetry, whatever) is Joe Varone's excellent RADIOTEXT, 131 Claremont Ave., Montclair, NJ 07042...Laugh of the month goes to David Morgan for his marvelous SCHIZO COMIX—a unique gimmick, "who's the good guy, who's the bad" Discordian perspectives. A buck to 388A Stuyvesant Ave., Irvington, NJ 07111...Jim Ryan, artist responsible for minis NOTARY SOJAC and PARANOIA PSYCHOMIX, has a new twist as well—he's drawn pictures "named after redoubtable science fiction stories by various authors". Good quiz too, as the authors aren't mentioned. \$1 for DOPPELGÄNGER to Jim at 102 So. Lake Ave., Albany, NY 12208...Among the publications available from the NEITHER/NOR PRESS is Rick Van Valkenburg's generic magazine NATIONAL DEBRIS. This "Beatniks From Space Production" is the first issue, so you can get in on the ground floor (they plug, too) by sending a buck to Neither/Nor at Box 8043, Ann Arbor, MI 48107...And to end with two more p.s. announcements: Poor Chris is charming, intelligent, talented, and a little down in th' dumps right now—c'mon, everybody! Cheer him up! Join the CHRIS GIBSON FAN CLUB, c/o W. Lockley, 11841 Willadorado, St. Louis, MO 63141. Send stamps & receive a personal message from Chris! Sounds like almost too much fun...And Jill Zimmerman is searching local used book stores and friends for original editions of L. Frank Baum's "OZ" books (I've the first, which she has), her own copies having been tragically lost—if you know of any place that has one, some or all, write Jill c/o INSIDE JOKE...

FINAL NOTES - Thanks Steve Pick & Tony Renner for JET LAG; Everyone get RUNE from the Minnesota Science Fiction Society \$1?, PO Box 2128, Loop Station, Minneapolis, MN 55402!

KIP M. GHESIN: Alter Ego Presents

(Kip here—miss me? Bullshit. I got bored with trying to think of things to write about love, and now that San Fran's out for awhile, it just doesn't seem like a funny subject at this time. So I told Elaine, who keeps groaning that we'll never get to write anything on our own anymore, which is true, that I'd be happy to introduce the flake. Oh, that's just my nickname for her. She calls herself the "Kid". Kid Sieve. You know her type, I'm sure—one o' them pipe dreaming hippies who wasn't even there the first time around [in '68 she was brown-nosing teachers and winning spelling bees, the hypocrite], but is bound to do her best to relive what she never lived then. Says Sieve, who takes in everything around her before it 'trickles down' and out the other end, "The era is returning, only better. The targets are more evil, the cause more powerful, the activists smarter and more cynical, and we're gonna do it right this time!" When will they ever learn? Here's the Kid.)

I've never thought it wise to pay excessive homage to the dead. Mourn them, grieve them, remember them, yes, but none of this emotional necrophilia that seems to surround so many public passed-on figures these days. Dean, Joplin, Hendrix, Chapin, Lennon, Ochs (well, maybe Ochs)—even the Kennedys. I prefer to worship the living. Oh sure, NatLamp, all but allied 15 years ago, criticizes Abbie Hoffman now. Timothy Leary "loses" debates to G. Gordon Big Brother. Joan Baez emerges once every ten years to look more and more anachronistic. It's depressing, but who's doing it?

Let me qualify this, before I go on, by saying the 60s were nowhere near perfect. However, this is no reason to treat the time like a Jungian collective nightmare! A lot of worthwhile ideas finally culminated and expressed themselves vehemently during the turbulence. The 60s ideals led to the two mini-revolutions in the 70s, feminism and gay rights (I say "mini" because we all know woman and gays face about as little prejudice today as blacks). Okay, to who's to know what's cool, where to go now? Well, let's start with our wonderful, unbiased, art-reflects-life-reflects-art media.

Quick quiz: Which movie had a bigger release and made more money, "Atomic Cafe" or "Firefox"? Is there an intelligent, sensible, sensitive equivalent to Beaver Takes Private Lessons, otherwise known as "Porky's"? Well, movies, ya say. Yeah, TV's better. Commercials aren't even subtly manipulative anymore. No, the message is quite blatant this 30s-time around. How can you combat a combat attitude? "In the morning," says the wife-of-house, "I'm a major general; in the afternoon, a drill sergeant. But in the evening, the mess officer wants to give her troops a good meal." These are the same chemi-chicken folks who proudly display opening shots of "working" puppet-ladies, then cutting to the woman's family, at the dinner table, forks and knives in hand, accusingly sour expressions on their faces. Presumably it's as difficult for hubby to drag out the insti-fowl as it is for him to wash his neck (or, at least, his own collars). Undoubtedly, the perfect mate for Soldier Lady is the chipper Chopper Commando, who has all but labelled Mr. Pac-er a "fag" compared to his "real" video game!, that of stark destruction. This is of great comfort to T-shirt manufacturers who sell catchy slogans, no joke meant, that say "I'd Rather Be Killing Communists". Or at the last, mercy-killing deer in the Everglades. Makes sense to them right-to-lifers; so why aren't they getting life?

KID SIEVE

This issue dedicated to VIC MORROW
Never mess with Rod Serling(?)

Then it's off for quasifood, as we're constantly bombarded, in between playings of "Eye Of The Tiger", with the thrice-asked musical Pavlovian question, "Aren't you hungry?" Can you see the hypnobeam? Who truly salivates for Bugger King? Possibly the same who sing praises of frankfurter sublimation on the local news: "Why do you eat hot dogs?" "Cause it's American." As American, man, as a Walkman, a Pac-Man and his overly made-up (great role model) Ms. Pac-Man (Eris forbid it should be PacWoman or, played by Yvonne Craig, Pac-Girl), and Made-in-Japan-Man. Bye American? However, according to some top 40 AM songs (we can't begin to discuss the FM boy-conquers-girl-and-lays-her sing-and-tell mentality), women have clear choices now. I Am Woman—I've Been To Paradise, says Charlene No-Last-Name (was she afraid we'd find out it was "Falk-well"?). You know what truth is, lady? I've fucked everyone from Ari to Mick (well, everyone fucks Mick), I've made a total asinine slut round the world, with no more brains than you have, Scarecrow. And I can tell you this from nonexperience, ain't nothin' like bein' a baby machine as opposed to a screwing machine. That's the truthhhhh. Wish I had labor pains and Caesarians too, gosh. But stand by your man, don't change your mind, because "you better change it back or we will both be sorry, don't you want me baby", whines the simp admirably refusing to acknowledge the self-evident answer given him by his Streepy-time gal on her way to the cocktail bar. Would you want his, baby? How many wanted to have Anka's baby, eh?

Of course, the most horrid thing about all this is that it does not seem to bother anyone at all. 60s burnout coupled with 70s apathy has produced 80s complacency. Hey, we protest, it only gets worse, right, so we'll pretend, we'll believe, we'll know that we are not offended, that this makes sense! Triple think, major psychological revision (Men Working in brain sewers) needed to agree with Secretary of Nazi-ism der Schultz or whoever's controlling Raygun this week. Yes, Nancy can appear beautiful if you shade your mind and eye right, right? Right, left, right! There, lefties, that's better, don't you feel swell knowing your rallies are so meaningless to us that the White Horse Souse can publicly shrug at 'em? Doesn't it give you great white hopelessness? How much does it aid your cause once we've managed to make you look so ridiculous your credibility and strength shrinks to the size of a Pentagon cock? How pale you look when truth is lies, and everyone lets us, encourages us to, get away with it! It's still the same old story, a fight for good ol' glory Glory—time to change the tune and stop marching to a dissident drummer! Time to clean up your act with the deoderant made for a woman because men sweat more!

Well, I'm sure glad that's over and we're all agreed that the 60s are dead. Or at least ludicrous—I mean we've heard all that love and peace crap already, it's time for punk-hate! Better an Auschwitzer shave than a longhair. There is absolutely no call in today's world for an anti-war movement, we're too busy shovelling the bowel movements. Go back where you came from, freedomniks.

No, I cannot worship the deceased, or even the diseased, but I'm not fated to be faded yet. Hey, I'm just a kid, clinging to a thorn in history's side. I ride the back of a bleeding beast, and we all know the power of a wounded animal.

From a Northern California Perspective

by Ronald B. Flowers

Hello there! I'm glad to be able to join the INSIDE JOKE staff and their zany writers. It was fortuitous that I even found out about INSIDE JOKE, but then, I guess that's the case with most things in life. I hope to be able to provide a little light into the lives of the readers and writers of IJ that are scattered about this country. Of course, I realize that this will be impossible if the publication ceases to exist. Therefore, I'm hoping that those of you out there will feel like me and want to keep another small publisher from going under, particularly if you really happen to like the publication. Every little bit helps you know! Believe me I know, after biting the dust myself some nine months ago.

I would like to say thanks to those that appreciated my story, "In Mother's Image". My overactive imagination has been churning ever since I was nine years old and used to groove on the series, "One Step Beyond". Since then, I've expanded my interest beyond just sci fi to all genres in the world of publishing. Some of my work will be shared with you from time to time.

However, the basic premise of this column will be to offer some insight into the ups and downs of life from a Northern California perspective. This column will dabble a bit in humor, seriousness, fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and any other form of expression that is most conducive to the subject at hand.

When one wants to put into a reasonable context life in Northern California or life from a Northern California angle, it only takes looking down yonder to know where to start. One of the main things about Northern California, contrary to popular belief and in spite of its brother down south, is its crowdedness. I mean, people are everywhere no matter where you go! This is especially emphasized now that summer has arrived. Believe it or not, I can still remember a time when I could take a peaceful walk down the street to get away from the mainstream or go to see a movie with room to breathe. Now virtually wherever I go I feel as though I'm in the middle of the field after the World Series just ended.

I suppose that that's just a way of life that I'll have to get used to, although I doubt that I ever will. I sometimes wonder whatever happened to that zero population growth movement that was suggested a few yeras back. Either the zero was somehow omitted or it was misspelled, zillion! Or maybe the tree had simply branched out so that the only possible way to curtail it would have been to simply blow the whole thing up. I don't think that anyone wants that. Or do they? You can never tell how people think.

One of the amazing things about so many people being around is that they come in so many shapes, sizes, looks and differences. You almost never see two alike. Sometimes I'll walk around in a shopping mall just to gaze at the variety of different people cruising about and try to figure out what they're thinking and what makes the person. The funny thing is that you can never guess by appearance. The short, white haired, fat lady might be a queen or something and the tall, handsome and well dressed businessman might be another Charles Manson! An irony, though, to the many types of people out there, and I'm sure this is true for most, is that usually when you're to meet someone for the first time, you had previously had all types of thoughts and ideas as to what they might look like. However, when you do see them, the way they actually look wasn't one of them.

Perhaps the saddest thing about the Northern California area, as I'm sure it is all over the country, is the high unemployment rate. For those that are fortunate enough to have a job, I don't think that they could appreciate just how many people are out of work and out there looking. Why, here in the Sacramento Valley, approximately 11% of the employable people are out of work. Recently there have been a few publicized job openings in the area such as a new department store and a new restaurant. You wouldn't believe how many people were attracted to these positions. Lines began forming at five-thirty in the morning and quickly extended to several thousand desperate people waiting in long lines for about two hundred positions. In one case, a place had two openings and attracted two thousand applicants! Given the tremendous odds against most people for landing such jobs, I've often wondered what stimulates people to invest such time, stamina, and usually false hope for a dream of a chance. Money to survive, food to eat, are the most obvious reasons.

However, in spite of those necessities of life, it takes an extraordinary preson to wait in a long line in the hot sun all day long in the hope of getting one of only a few positions. Out of curiosity, one day I visited such a line to do a survey. I tried to find out why people thought they would get the job or at least have a good shot at it over perhaps thousands of others. I'm a researcher by occupation, so the results of such a survey struck me as very interesting. What I found was that in spite of the tremendous odds against them, it was amazing how confident people were that they would be amongst the lucky. Judging by some of the answers I received in my survey, I didn't doubt that they would.

One such person in line that I approached looked to be perhaps in his mid twenties, had scraggly hair, and clothing that you wouldn't expect anyone to wear for an interview, even if it was for a department store job. After I explained the nature of my survey, I asked him, "What makes you think that you'll get the job?"

(continued next column)

"Simple," he said. "I'm willing to work for free."

Well, I certainly couldn't argue with that type of logic. Further down the line, I questioned another young man, this one perhaps in his late teens or early twenties, and better dressed than the last. "Why do you think you'll get the job?"

"The operations manager is my father," he replied.

Again, that seemed like enough to build confidence on to me. However, it was a middle aged lady still further down the line who may have had the most reasonable, if not sensible, answer yet. I asked her why she thought she'd get the job.

"Well, let's put it this way," she said, "If they don't hire me they'll be doing me a favor."

"Why is that?" I dared to ask.

"It would force my husband to get out and try his luck for a change!"

Nuff said along those lines. If nothing else, they survey showed me that people do indeed have legitimate reasons for braving seemingly tremendous odds and long lines in the hopes for (or against) landing a job.

Speaking of long lines, they scarcely get longer than when a popular movie is in full bloom, such as E.T.. Recently, when noticing such a line that extended the length of a long mall, I wondered what people did, if anything, that wanted to cut their waiting time by moving up or taking cuts. I remember when I was young and my father used to take my three brothers and me to football games, where the lines were and probably still are as long as any. It didn't matter what time it was or how long the lines were. My father would simply go to the very front of the line with us, tell the person in the front of the line that he was a detective, showing just a regular I.D. in a black cover, and we would all get in line there! It never failed. Good ol' dad! I wonder why I've never had the nerve to try that.

At any rate, I suppose I shouldn't overdo this column. Instead, I'll end it here and return to the sometimes drudgery of living in Northern California, knowing that in the next instant I could run into a situation that could capture my fancy, or more importantly, give me something to write about the next time around.



A Different Window

By Steven F. Scharrff

@Scharrff

The following is an essay written this April for my technical school English course. Following the essay are my thoughts on the subjects at the present time.

COMPARISON BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND ADULT BOOK STORES

In this society, many people are in need of an extreme in their lifestyle. In recent times, there have evolved two different extremes that many people look to. Fundamentalist Christianity and sexual pornography. To examine these two concepts closely, one should examine the different types of book stores each has spawned.

Christian and adult book stores can be found in identical locations. Either on the fringe of industrial districts or near major shopping centers (but rarely if ever located in them).

A Christian book store sells many books, publications, recordings and plaques devoted to religious effects. Everything sold has a message or symbol directly connected to Jesus Christ, his teachings, the Christian concept of God, or references to the Bible.

Associating with and around the unity of family ties (as stressed in the Old Testament), the paraphernalia sold is designed to appeal to all age groups. In one section of an average Christian book store, one can find publications on marriage and how to prevent sexual deviation from affecting your children. In another part of the store, brightly designed children's records, coloring books and countless comic books with identical morals can be found.

Adult book stores are solely concerned with adult entertainment and stress this with "proof of age required" signs at the door. The publications and books sold deal with many forms of sexual activity and deviation. Their content is incredibly explicit and equally repetitious. The same can be said for other items sold as well. Video cassettes; Super 8 films; imported magazines with incomprehensible text and pornographic illustrations; badly written novels with bare-bones plot and excessive amounts of sex and brutality; and crudely illustrated comic books abound in these shops. Novelty items (anything from scented lotions to vibrating massage units) in every (in)conceivable form can also be found in these places.

Many stores offer what are called "peep shows". For a quarter (or a token that can be purchased for 25¢) one can see several minutes worth of a silent pornographic film in the privacy of an enclosed booth. These films, often shot with home equipment, are often slightly out-of-focus, have little if any plot, and screen credits are never used.

A Christian book store is usually opened and run by a Christian or group of Christians who feel a need to spread the Gospel. Christians (especially Fundamentalists, who take word-for-word interpretations of the Bible) believe that one can gain salvation (admittance to an afterlife paradise known as Heaven) only by accepting Jesus Christ as their personal saviour, and by leading a life of temperance, morality and strict following of the Scriptures

(continued next page)

TO BE SAVED by the blood of Jesus Christ, one must be of a compatible blood type. True or false? All Saints Episcopal Church, Box 2267, Berkeley 94702.

ARE "ASHES TO ASHES" and "dust to dust" holes in zero? Ask J.P. Wassenich, World Golf Supreme Court, 206 Ninth Ave. #8, NYC 10011.

Electing NOT TO VOTE: The secret ballot is for peopletom who wish to hide. Dispar "dispar" rule "rule" join the unruly majority. 55 Sutter #487, SF.

(the Bible). Most of them also believe that all other religions are false (which is why many Fundamentalists are anti-semitic) and that Occult religions (Wicca, Paganism, Druidism) are the creation of the Anti-Christ. Those who follow these paths, they say, will spend all eternity in Hell. So, in order for them to be saved, they must be convinced to convert to Christianity.

Adult book stores are often open and run by individuals or groups of people whose interest in religion is either minimal or non-existent. They don't seek to "preach" pornography, unlike what many moralists claim, but are solely interested in making a living for themselves. Sexual exploitation is as old as sexuality itself. No matter how oppressive and orthodox any ruling power ever became, pornography survived. Many times it flourished under the most diverse conditions.

It might be the "forbidden fruit" attraction to it. Knowing that what they read has been declared "immoral" by the people in power. Such a situation could attract more people to pornographic material than almost any permissive society could. No matter how boring the material is, there will always be someone to write adult books, and several people with enough interest or curiosity to read them.

What it all comes down to is this. Christian book stores are for those who seek a purpose in life or to continue their faith. Adult book stores are for those who wish to be entertained in the most primitive way possible.

But the interesting point is this: Christian book stores sell material devoted to achievement of spiritual ecstasy, while adult book stores aim for physical ecstasy. Two different extremes, yet the final sensation is identical.

(Afterword)

The overwhelming majority of heterosexual pornography is intended for a male audience. In pornographic films, especially the "peep show" variety, women are regarded as sex objects (I know that's a cliché, but it's accurate). For the sake of "adult entertainment", women in these films must deal with degrading situations (being tied up and/or beaten, copulating with animals, going through various acts of foreplay and oral sex) and are presented with as much romance as a mannequin.

As for Christianity; I find it, and nearly every religion, to be an unnecessary obligation. From the comic books and pamphlets I have purchased from various Christian book stores, Fundamentalist Christians believe that if one surrenders oneself to Christ (the euphemism is "Born Again"), the following will happen:

- 1) a guaranteed admittance into Heaven after death (referred to as "having one's name written in the 'Book of Life'");
- 2) remission of all past sins (starting over with a clean slate);
- 3) a new outlook on life will be obtained (one that subscribes to the doctrines of the Bible).

Now, according to this, all the followers of other religions are doomed to spend eternity in Hell. This, to me, is hideously pious and egotistical.

As for the remission of sins, consider the following: what if Hitler, in the bunker where his last days were spent, repented and accepted Christ? That would mean the murder of ten million people would be washed off his hands.

Despite the "new life in Christ" promised, one will still carry the responsibilities and burdens as before, except that they'll be shaped like a cross.

Many consider the Bible as the word of God. Well, there are many cross-references between the books of the Bible, but before they were committed to paper they were spread by word of mouth of men (not people in general, but MEN). And men exaggerate.

I chose to write this essay about pornography and Fundamentalist Christianity to familiarize myself with both. In the process, I became disinterested in both.

Winning Hearts & Minds

by Gerry Reith

I don't know what my rank is, or even if I have one for that matter. There isn't anyone to give them out as far as I can tell. I'm not in an army I guess, but whenever I run across people with guns they seem to be fighting, and they try to capture me and anyone else that I'm with.

Most people don't seem to think of themselves as combatants, they don't believe in the war. I tried to explain it to one guy that I was supposed to recruit (that's my job, recruiting, but not on any orders from above because there isn't any above) and I said, "There aren't any neutrals."

This turned him off. "That's what they all say when they want to get you involved," he told me.

"Well, I was wrong then," I said. I knew it was a lost cause but I kept on, at least because I had to figure out just what I meant. "There are people who don't fight, who give up, they submit by default, and they think they're neutral, but there aren't any people who don't fall on one side or another. You can choose to submit, and it doesn't mean you deserve what you get because maybe your assessment was correct, that you couldn't win here and now. The ones who say you deserve what you get if you don't fight are the enemy, because then if they get power they'll do what they please and say you deserve it because you didn't fight. You don't have to fight, but you have to if you want something different."

I think he understood, but wanted to wait and see. Most people don't want to throw in with suicide squads when the whole point is to live better. But we need more people if it is going to be anything but a suicide squad.

I've seen every sort of action, from full scale bombardment to infiltration, from capturing the enemy to being captured. I spent a long time in an enemy concentration camp, but I escaped because it was under the direction of people who thought they were running a rehabilitation camp for people on their side who had simply lost track. It was far from the center of the fighting, in a secure position, and the directors knew they were in such a solid position that they didn't need to go overboard with the security measures. I kept going after that. Before I was captured I didn't even know that I was fighting, or that there was a war going on. I've never seen any kind of base camp for our side in all this time. There's no headquarters, no capitol, no place to regroup. I think we've been scattered, as if the war was won long ago by the enemy, and everyone forgot about it except when the abuses became extreme, or when they found some old books about it that hadn't been burned. I wonder about it sometimes, though, because I know where all this ammo is stored, and there are little groups here and there who talk about the major offensive that's just around the corner. I've seen the ammo dumps, there are thousands of huge tanks and planes and guns and all, and it's all being turned out by no more than a dozen men and women on these massive machines. A few stragglers would drift in like myself every day or so and take what they could use, then leave. They all had stories about the fighting, about their local strategies, goals and all, and we shared info and codes and meeting places, and signed up to go help here or there. But there were never enough of us there at one time to make use of the tanks and planes.

I went with one group and stood with them against a full scale invasion. All we had were machine guns, and we couldn't hold up so we were dispersed, and I ended up in another place where the people didn't even notice the enemy. "Look, over there, it's a tank and a bunch of army personnel."

"Tank? So?"

"But they take your food, they kill you."

"We give it to them because they need it to protect us. Besides, they only kill us when we don't give it to them."

"What if you starve?"

"If we get hungry we can always join their army, then we have all we need."

"Wouldn't it be simpler to just get rid of them and keep your food? You obviously don't get enough to eat." The one I was talking to was a mother with a child; the child had a bloated stomach, classic symptoms.

"But if we got rid of them, why, then there wouldn't be anybody to make sure we tended our fields!"

Sometimes there are people living in an area where the invasion hasn't taken place, or where the army is weak and could be thrown off with a minimal effort. I establish some contacts, then scout out ahead with a few people. Others get sent back to the warehouses to bring back the weapons we'll need. Hardly anyone goes, though.

"But the tanks are coming!"

"Tanks? Show us these tanks, we don't see any."

The new contacts are exasperated along with me, but we don't do any good, and the tanks roll in, usually to the sound of a parade.

Then there are the few who know about the tanks, the ones who say the only way to resist is to paint the tanks at night, make them look stupid. But the food still gets taken at gunpoint.

In all of this one group is the most frustrating, and one is most able to bring on fits of despair. The first ones are the people who have seen the tanks, who know that the food gets stolen, but who don't believe in our warehouses.

"You don't have enough weapons to stop them," they say, "so just go away and stop bothering us."

"But I've seen them! All we need is people to staff these weapons, then we can win!"

"Humbug, you're just giving us false hopes."

"Free for the taking, tons and tons, bombs that will smash a hundred enemy tanks!"

They snicker and still refuse to believe.

The worst of all, I suppose, the ones that bring on despair, are the people in the enclaves that resist us. They hate the enemy, but they fight us too, even when they know the enemy is on the way and that we would help. They think they're strong when they can beat off a single corporal, a scout, armed with one beat up gun, with their pitchforks and hoes. They're all proud of their accomplishments, crowing at night, but they haven't seen the tanks.

"We have enough weapons, leave us alone," they laugh.

"You'll be sorry," I reply, not a very good recruiter after all.

"Anyway, if we lose we'll join up with the invaders and then we'll be okay."

Well, maybe so. But I've seen those tanks, the ones they were too afraid to check out, and I've seen the warehouses, and I've seen the increasing number of people who go to the warehouses. By now the warehouses are secure against invasion, even if they can't launch an offensive. And nobody likes a mercenary; in the end, no matter which side wins, the mercenary loses.

GERRY REITH

31 May 1982

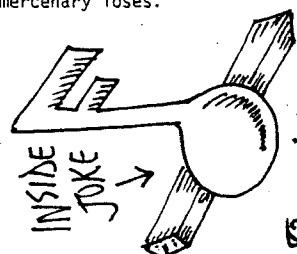
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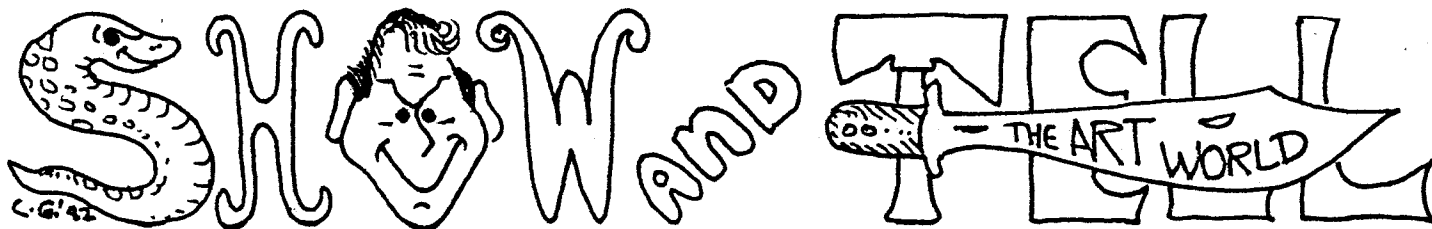
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SEND YESTERDAY!



NO ONE WOULD BE ADMITTED WITHOUT TICKET

-ROY LICHTENSTEIN HAS A DEPTH WISH - WALT LOCKLEY



by Clay Geerdes

I knew before he took it out of the manila envelope that Miller was making a mistake, but it was too late for me to warn him. I knew what her reaction would be to his little comic book. He couldn't have known, because he had just met her a few weeks before. He was showing her his PUNK ROCK GUIDE TO SEX, a satirical little comic I had published earlier in the week. To me, it was hilarious, a spoof on the eccentricities of punk fashion mingled with some ribald sexual humor, but she was not laughing. She was turning the pages like they were covered with an unpleasant substance. I had to restrain myself from laughing at the whole scene. We were sitting at a table in a Berkeley reggae club, and if Miller had shown the comic to anyone but Billie, he would have gotten the laughs he was after. After she left, I told him he had to watch out who he showed his art to. Those of us in comics are of strange and weird imaginations. We cannot expect outsiders, those who take life seriously, to think we're funny or even particularly clever. After all, we step on their values and mores too often. Their impulse is to hold reality sacred, to hang on to it; ours is to prick it and let the air out. If we have a sacred cow at all, it is the art itself.

It is always dangerous for a cartoonist to show his art to outsiders. Even friends from school. Miller showed some of his work to some high school friends one evening. He expected some kind of positive reaction, but got only coolness. Later he heard from a third party that one of his friends told another about the "silly drawings" he showed around that night. This hurt his feelings and changed his attitude toward the "friend".

I learned very early in life that there were people with a feel for humor and those with rigid literal minds. I learned to share my own satirical bent with the former, while avoiding the latter.

You might think a sense of humor is related to intelligence, but that's not true at all. As a matter of fact, certain kinds of education tend to dull humor. I knew a lot of teachers who had no sense of humor at all. I felt sorry for them, living in such a dreary serious world all the time, but I knew better than to poke fun at them. Such people are dangerous. They will punish you for your wit. Once such a teacher kept me from getting a teaching assistantship at San Francisco State.

Showing art to someone is always asking for attention and approval and if you are careful and know the person beforehand you are assured of getting it, but when you reveal yourself to strangers or acquaintances, you are taking a big chance. For one thing, the person you are showing something may be jealous of the talent he sees displayed. Artists get a lot of attention and anyone who gets a lot of attention does so at the cost of others who do not get it. In a family, the brother who draws invokes the anger of the siblings who cannot. A little bit of show and tell goes a long way. If someone expresses curiosity, show them a few drawings, but don't drag the show out for a long time and drain everyone's patience. In any group, everyone has to have their moment in the center. If you're an artist in a group of artists, fine, everyone is showing off their stuff, but if you're the star in a mixed group, don't push it. I've seen artists lose a lot of friends by monopolizing an evening with their show and tell, some of them quite aggressively. Personally, I tend to avoid art gatherings, because of the egocentrism that permeates them. My attitude is: so what? You're a good artist. But what kind of human being are you? Are you sensitive to the needs of the other people around you? In my experience, I have seen the men and women who live with artists always suffering. The artist is sought out and praised, but the other is ignored. To live with an artist is to have a low sense of self worth. The artist is painting, drawing, having shows, but what is the other doing? Waiting around in boring galleries. Sitting in hotel lobbies. Washing dishes and serving wine. The artist is all. If you're with an artist, no one cares what you do. An art groupie is like any other kind of groupie. Nothing in search of something. The idol has an identity, the groupie none.

Is art worth it?

Not in most cases. The cost is too great.

In most countries, if art doesn't sell, the artist is poor, and how is that art to be produced if the artist has no slave to do the shitwork, to wait on the table or type the executive's letters, to bring in the money that frees the artist from having to take that straight job?

Is there an independent artist? One who cooks his own meals and makes his own bed and takes care of the personal aspects of his life while creating his paintings or music at the same time?

Doesn't most art depend upon slavery? - CLAY GEERDES 5-16-82

NOTHING IN GENERAL

License to Manipulate

Yes, at long last, IJ's very own advice column is here! This space will be apportioned, every now and then, to the ever wise and omniscient COOP, who will answer any question, serious or otherwise (here's your chance), in her own inimitable style, etc. ...queries may be sent c/o IJ or directly to Coop, at Box 714, Bristol, RI 02809...Without further ado...

Dear Coop,

My sister is a pig. She eats everything in sight. Her room's a mess. She leaves candy wrappers between the sofa cushions which I have to clean up. She spends so much time in the shower that she ought to look like a prune. She's pissy to everyone at home. Mom says she's just taking adolescence a bit harder than we are. My brother thinks she's on drugs. Dad just yells. She doesn't talk to me anymore about anything. What can I do? - SICK OF IT

Dear Sick,

You ain't the only one. It sounds as though Sis has got bulimia. A good, noisy shower is less offensive and less overt than barf noises from the john. Bulimics are very secretive about this activity because, face it, it strikes very few people as normal for some to gorge themselves then throw up or eat massive doses of laxatives. Do a little research (the library's a good place for that) then casually confront your sister, really low-key it, with some general information on the subject. Misstate a few facts to see if she corrects you. If she speaks as though from experience, tell your Mom about it. The gal needs professional attention, the sooner the better. It's not such a terribly vile affliction. Even Phil Donohue did a show on it. If left untreated, it could go on for years with such devastating consequences as an ulcerated esophagus, rotting teeth, difficulty in normal digestive functions, besides worsening the distorted self-image that causes it.

There is the possibility of denial on the parts of one or more family members. In that case, try some bicycle chains on the toilet lid; it's all for her own good. You're a very civil sibling to be so concerned. She should be grateful that someone took an interest. Good luck. - COOP

by Sue Kaufmann

Dear Kip,

As I told you in my last letter, I've been looking for a summer job. Like everyone else, I haven't found one, and I'm trying to figure out why no one wants to hire me. I like to think it's because "Bob" is saving me for something more. After all, how many people could you truly convert at your local McDonalds? I'd be too busy trying to calm down the Happy Meals (you'd be happy too if you were about to be eaten by a ravenous trucker).

Instead of working and raking in the dough, I've been staying up nights to watch David Letterman. I sent him a letter about Zay, but he hasn't answered yet. Probably he already believes in Larry "Bud" Melman and rejects all other leaders of bogus cults. "Bob" doesn't give out thermal mugs as "Bud" does, either, so maybe Dave has his reasons.

Did you see Dogus Bizarro President Reagan on TV a couple of weeks ago on his prime time news conference? He wouldn't answer any questions about other countries. That further proves Zay theory that government doesn't exist. Ask Bizarro JE "Jimmy" Carter—he knows.

In any case, I have had many visions within the past weeks. As I sleep, my mind works toward the ideals of Zay, for as the Masters say, total nirvana is achieved from total devotion to the principles of the cult. As a result, my dreams have become more and more bizarre. Many times I have tossed fitfully and awakened in a cold sweat.

My first dream was infested with pigs—piggies, if you will allow. Millions of piggies swarmed around me, and they were every color of the rainbow—red, green, yellow, pink, blue, orange, brown, you name it. They weren't kosher, either. They ate bacon. Again and again I heard their plea, "Want a snort? Want a snort?" Some of the piggies wore halos. I thought I was in hog heaven.

In my next dream, I was placed in an ancient library. The wizened librarian handed me a heavy, equally ancient book. Upon opening it, I discovered that the volume contained the answers to questions man had puzzled over for eons and eons. I knew how the earth was created. I knew the meaning of life. I knew why hot dogs come in packages of eight when hot dog rolls come in packages of six. My alarm clock rang, however, before I could get the book to a Xerox machine.

In my third dream everybody died and left me in charge. Unfortunately, I had to reject that dream because it was Al Haig's.

Someday I hope to find out the meaning of all these dreams. For the time being I can only write them down in my book for "Bob".

OM - Sue

Notes from a Nut

by Paul Zuckerman

G SUES PAC MAN

Dateline: St. Louis: The letter "G", a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Alphabet Corporation, has filed a \$1 billion lawsuit in Federal District Court against Warner Home Video and Atari Communications for "copyright infringement" and "unauthorized use of a patented trademark". It seeks \$1 billion in compensatory damages, plus a percentage of all future royalties from the popular electronic game as long as it continues to use the "G" outline in its Pac Man design.

Spokespersons for Atari, while admitting that Pac Man does resemble the letter G, say this is just a coincidence and it was not trying to capitalize on the letter G's many years of bringing people a Good, if not Great, time.

But lawyers for the Alphabet Corp. will present evidence to show that G has been around "since you and I were kids", bringing happiness to millions while not charging a dime. "You don't need 25¢ to have a Grand time with G," one of the counselors said sarcastically.

"In short," added another representative of the plaintiff, "G is the original Pac Man. Pac Man is merely G in reverse!"

"Our case is clear-cut and indisputable," concluded another attorney. "Without G it would be impossible to have a Good time. People would be reduced to having only an ood time. Not a very adequate substitute, I can assure you."

It is not known at this time whether the letters O and C will file amicus briefs on behalf of the letter G, or perhaps seek monetary reimbursement against Pac Man for unauthorized use of their patented trademarks too.

As everyone knows, G is one of the richest and most powerful multinational industrial conglomerates in the ~~world~~ world. As a business it is one of the Giants of the Earth, surpassing even IBM and AT&T, having made fortunes in gold, grain, gasoline, gems and guns, not to mention gewgaws and gimcracks. But it is probably best known for, and most identified with, a simple phrase. Indeed, the true extent of G's power is best revealed in its company motto, considered by many to be the most famous advertising slogan in existence: "Without 'G', there would be no 'God'."

NEEDED: SEED REMOVER

Watermelon is a delicious fruit. It's also full of seeds. Like other foods with seeds, it's hard to really enjoy eating it when you have to separate all the seeds with your tongue while you're simultaneously chewing the food. It's the same problem when you're eating an orange. There you are grinding that orange pulp between your teeth and, before you know it, you've crushed some seed along with it. You have to stop chewing, take the seed out of your mouth and then start eating again. But not with the same carefree attitude you had before. Now you have to worry about champing down on another seed with every bite you take! Is that the way to enjoy food?

Somebody has to invent a magnet that will attract wood, specifically the wooden seeds of fruit! Soething that will suck out all those hard, sharp, pointy seeds from watermelons, oranges and grapes! After all, how can you possibly be happy eating those big purple grapes when, every time you bite down on one, you hear a crunch? Grapes are supposed to be soft and squishy and slurpy. Not crunchy!

If watermelons had just one big pit in the center—like a peach or plum—it wouldn't be so bad. You'd only have one seed to contend with instead of the hundreds that you either have to dig out, spit out or inadvertently swallow.

Why couldn't more fruits be like the banana? It has no seeds, no bones and no pits! And it comes in its own individual wrapper. It's almost perfect! You can even freeze it! It's like eating an all-natural popsicle! If the banana has a drawback, it's that it gets ROTTEN too fast.

Somebody, anybody, give the people of the world at least one seed-free meal before we're all pulverized into a melting pile of radioactive dust. If nothing else, it'll give us something to talk about in Heaven after we've all been incinerated. Invent a Seed Remover for fruit!

CAUSE OF ALL CANCERS FOUND!

Dateline: St. Louis: Dr. Herman "Ziggy" Zigger astounded the world yesterday when he announced the cause of all cancers. It was during a beer and sex party involving the interns and student nurses of Our Lady of Anguished Woes Hospital, at Dr. Zigger's apartment, where the amazing freak discovery occurred.

He was filming the orgy portion of the late night affair for his home movies, in the dark, using Infra-Red film. After developing the film, he noticed some tiny bugs crawling out of the electrical wall sockets. The teeny-weensy bugs then flew off the wall and attached themselves to the sexually active participants. And then they disappeared, apparently burrowing their way under the skin and into the bloodstreams of the naked, sweaty and moaning group.

Dr. Zigger set up a camera focusing on an electrical socket for 24 hours, to see if he could capture the itsy-bitsy bugs or "BUGGIES", as they're now called, on film again. He discovered that they only come out at 3:00am and only in the dark and only for a few seconds. If the lights are on, they won't come out. And, if you turn the lights on at 3:00am, the BUGGIES will fly back into the electrical wall sockets so fast you won't see them.

Dr. Zigger trapped a bunch of BUGGIES in a plastic bag he had placed over the electrical outlet. Actually, it was a rubber condom. Putting one BUGGIE under a microscope, he observed, upon magnification, that they have no face, no head and no arms. They look like jelly beans with 8 legs.

After dissecting several BUGGIES it was found that their odd-shaped little bodies contained super amounts of every cancer-causing element ravaging mankind today, including some varieties not yet catalogued. In short, once they enter your bloodstream, there's no way you can avoid contracting some form of cancer.

The Board of Directors for the Hospital are now conferring on whether to suspend the doctor for his degenerate, kinky and perverted sex life—which has brought shame, humiliation and disgrace to a reverend, respected and reputable institution—or whether they should nominate him for a Nobel Prize. They decided on the latter, after he agreed to invite them to all of his upcoming parties.

In the meantime, as "Ziggy" himself said: "We've only found the cause of Cancer. We still have to find a cure. Until we do, the only positive and foolproof way to avoid ever getting Cancer is to plug up all the holes in your electrical wall sockets. Of course, this means living without electricity for the rest of your life."

With time, money and research, it is hoped that doctors will eradicate the scourge of Cancer in our lifetime. And, if they do, it will be all because one man liked home porno movies.

Meditations of a Manchurian Candidate

by Kerry Wendell Thornley

If it is any comfort to you, my researches have indicated that not all mind controllers are Nazis. Enough of them are pretty rightwing authoritarian, however. An example is Dr. Stephen T. Possnoy, of the Hoover Institution, the American Chilean Council and Mankind Research Unlimited whom A.J. Weberman calls "America's most dangerous exile from the eastern bloc countries." Writing about him in the August-September 1976 issue of The Yipster Times, Weberman says Possnoy is "part of a group...which specializes in harnessing para-psychology to be used in their program of counter insurgency. If it was up to Possnoy we would all have electrode implants or subcutaneous brain wave generators and he would be at the controls." Of Possnoy Weberman also comments, "It is indisputable (though not popular) to conclude people of this nature should be murdered summarily," an opinion with which I happen to agree. But then my sense of humor about the subject has worn thin in twenty-three years of life on the receiving end.

Among the most legendary is a man named Tom Miethe. In the words of a horribly racist book called U.F.O.'s: The Nazi Secret Weapon, "According to Lusar, of the many scientists who worked on UFO projects, only one of these was found, a man named Miethe, and he was from the team who worked outside Prague...He worked in the early fifties for the A.V. Roe Company in Malton, Ontario...This man Miethe is the originator of a genuine flying saucer, which was produced by Avro on contract to the U.S. Air Force." Previous to that Miethe had worked for Hitler. "The A.V. Roe aircraft company was driven into bankruptcy in 1958-59 by the then Prime Minister of Canada—John Diefenbaker. Thousands of top flight scientists were overnight out of work and the cream of them were quickly hired by Boeing, General Dynamics and others. Miethe and the flying saucer he helped to build have vanished without a trace!" This book by Mattern and Friedrich, published by Samisdat of Toronto, contains the only printed reference to Miethe I have found.

Now I hate to hit you with tales of flying saucers when I am already relating unlikely stories of a plot to turn us into a nation of humanoids. But if you want more information about that subject, I suggest the 7 April 1950 issue of U.S. News & World Report. And as for Miethe, he was mentioned by that man I spoke to in New Orleans who also talked of mind control conspiracies and of assassinating Kennedy. (I wish to hell reality was more credible; I would have begun believing in it myself much sooner.)

I was to also encounter rumors of Miethe in Atlanta in 1976. In the mid-sixties, he was teaching nuclear physics at Georgia Tech and—according to yet other sources—sending me my dreams. Miethe was also indirectly linked with persons accused of killing Martin Luther King.

Just wanted youse guys to know, I've finally gotten my collection of back issues re-made, so if you want to order them, let me know. They are copies of copies, so I can't guarantee the highest quality, but they looked pretty good when I stapled them. Uh, the printing cost a little more than originally anticipated, so I'll have to sell them for \$1.50 each instead of the buck I'd planned on. So if you want a complete collection of this nonsense, if you're a hopeless collector, if you just MUST have stuff from the past no matter HOW outdated or unintelligible it may be, send me a buck and a half for each issue you want, and please specify which ones. Get 'em while they last, and all that. . .

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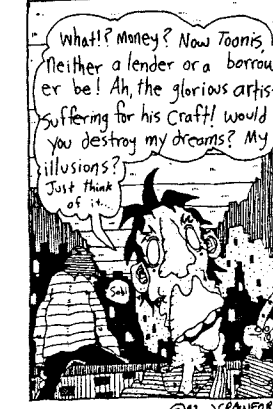
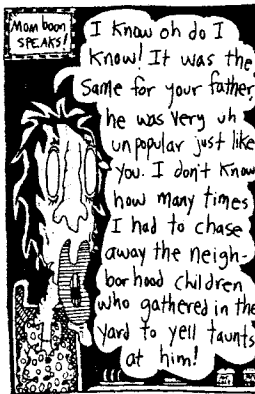
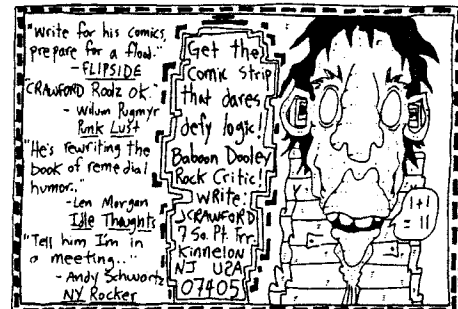
*Why do all these Texas folks seem to have NOTHING ELSE in their lives?
T.H.H.iger to flower-selling Moonie: "Raise a lot of bell money so far?"*



Full Frontal DOOLEY!

(actual strips larger - send for 'em)

Happy July 4, John! (And you didn't think I'd do it...)



A Sound Mind...

by Brian Catanzaro

This month we will be discussing two little known forms of conventional alternative Pop.

CATHOLIC GIRLS CONFIRMED

A local original band for about 3 years, The Catholic Girls, have landed a deal with MCA records. Formal announcement was made to fan club members in the form of coloured flyers, as opposed to the usual B & W.

The Catholic Girls more or less premiered themselves on WFUM, the station responsible for exposing many bands to NJ. At the time their only independent single, entitled "Private School", was made available. It was produced with the help of Rich Da Silva, former member of the now-defunct ROMS, another hardworking NJ-FMU wave unit. This catchy tune will probably remain their most accessible one. I say that with 12 parochial years under my belt, 4 years on the Catholic Girls. The 8-side, "Where Did I Go Wrong", completes the theme and mood of the package adding the desperately needed Woman's viewpoint to NewPop. It is beautifully constructed on record and sung not just with conviction but with feeling. This record will no doubt become a collector's item along with two issues of buttons; one black on ivory (if I recall correctly having lost mine in a club) and the ever-popular white on red, IF the Girls live up to everyone's expectations—that is, if they have a hit single.

Originally our female foursome were called Double Cross and tried their hand at heavy metal cover. But when the tide rolled in and the 70's began washing out they began playing originals in a snappy new style becoming first, The Double Cross Schoolgirls, which was even illustrated on the single sleeve. Also on the sleeve we have Gail Petersen, lead vocals and rhythm guitar; Roxy Andersen on Lead, vocal harmonies (reminiscent of early Paul & John) and consistent spelling; Joanne Holland plays bass, is constantly dancing on stage and drives the Girls onward and upward; Marilyn O'Connor is so hard at work on drums, you can see it in her face. She should raise her drummer's throne a couple of feet but not change the way she drives the band on her no frills back-beat drumming. They are all from around the Newark-Union area and have been playing both sides of the NJ-NY border in clubs whose names you've heard often. Like most independents they had also made some cable TV appearances. The luck was with them when they were chosen for performance on the Flo and Eddie Special last March. Then there was no news for 3 months until the MCA announcement.

Hopefully there will be a minimum of red tape in the preparation process and we won't have to wait too long to find out which songs are being used for C.G.'s first LP. Remember you heard it first in ID. GOOD LUCK GIRLS!

TWO CROSSES TO BEAR

G.E. Smith.

Isn't that a great name for, say, an electric guitarist? It's simple and to the point. And that's exactly how he plays. In fact Hall and Oates found him very handy for their X-Static album, where we'll hear some of G.E.'s best solos still. He was also on some of the Voices and Private Eyes sessions (when you know the cast of SNL, you got connections).

He is a relatively conservative guitarist relying on melody and rhythm more than tone, speed and trix. But the thing is G.E. put out a solo album that was in all the stores but got no airplay at all! Well, to tell you the truth, I'm laughing about it. It's gonna be one of these great 80's Pop Rock albums that people are gonna pull out of the vault someday (like Big Star), then everyone will want it except it will be unavailable! HA-ha-ha. They'll NEVER learn.

G.E. Smith's lyrics are interesting whether you like it or not. The harmonies are sparingly used but smoothly or roughly executed as needed. "I am just a Catholic boy brought up in Pennsylvania", he pleads on "Nuns With Guns". Paul Simon contributes high harmonies on the chorus of that tune where "all the nuns with guns made me a different boy". "Sad About Girls" is sung to all the new stereotype fickle fancie attitudes some woman can't decide to wear (no doubt influenced by Gilda). None of them have anything to do with trying to help out the men that want to be helped. "Heart Frozen Up" reminds me of Nick Lowe. "Real Love" is the potential hit single (and sounds like my original band from back in '80). The album's got everything: "Blind Boy Rag" is the white-blues parody and "Fake O The Land" is the reggae. "In The World" (title track) reminds me of Utopian Rock n roll. Don't misread these ingredients. Contains no saccharin.

For those interested in seeking out this pop G.E.m masterfully produced by Bob Clearmountain (not a bad name for a producer, either) specifically engineered to be cranked, the no. is Mirage WTG 16038. Even being a subsidiary of Atlantic didn't do it. Ah, yet additional bon mots substratum. Mining helmets available. Batteries included with every two helmets ordered.

30 SECOND NOTES

Waverz The Delphobics are sometimes another band called The Shakin' Groys which is a Rock-A-Billy outfit. They enjoy doing both so much they can't make up their minds who they are. So they've become the schitzo. (I'm just jealous.) They were recently performing on WFUM and perform around. Their label FAKE DOOM RECORDS is readying release of The Whyos, the big name in NJ Rock-A-Billy.

Happy Birthday to Todd "Runt"gren who ain't a runt in his mid 30's or isse? For collectors of such I'm happy to report the

first two Runt albums are available still as imports from Holland and were last seen at Record Towne in the Willowbrook Mall, Wayne, N.J. Does that help?

Thank you Kip and Elayne for providing a creative oasis.

And MONKEES fans can catch their nearly unknown movie "HEAD" (as in drugs) at the Thalia, 250 W. 9th near Broadway, NY (212) 222-3370 on Monday, August 9th at 2, 5:20 and 8:40pm. \$4.00. I'm there at 2.

The soundtrack album is ONLY AVAILABLE IMPORTED FROM JAPAN!!

(Thanks for reminding me, Brian. Actually, the soundtrack album to "Head", plus the movie itself, will be available for listening/viewing at the upcoming FOURTH ANNUAL MONKEES CONVENTION on August 6th through 8th in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Special guest will be PETER TORK, the smart one, and THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT: IF YOU'D LIKE TO ATTEND ON THE BUS WHICH WILL BE LEAVING FROM TRENTON AND STOPPING AGAIN ABOUT 10 MINUTES AWAY FROM IJ HOME BASE, IN CLARK, NEW JERSEY, PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE CALL MAGGIE McMANUS AT (609) 888-0072 OR (609) 888-4567 TO RESERVE A PLACE!! WE NEED 30 PEOPLE AND WOULD LIKE TO GET AT LEAST 40, SO WE'D ONLY HAVE TO PAY \$20 FOR THE TRIP INSTEAD OF \$25. BUS LEAVES 8/6, RETURNS NIGHT OF 8/8 (SO WE CAN GO SEE "HEAD" AGAIN THE NEXT DAY). CALL NOW!!!!)

(Our "blast from the past" review this month comes from Eric Gordon of NYC, who reviews Tom Wilson's first album [remember? no?] and the Cryer/Ford collaboration "I'm Getting My Act Together..." which was so well satirized last year on SCTV as "I'm Taking My Head, Screwing It On Right And No Man's Gonna Tell Me It Ain't", or something like that. I always wondered about Cryer and Ford, ever since I got an album of theirs which sounded like some silly weepy-feminist songs to me...)

"I'm Getting My Act Together and Taking It On the Road." Original Cast Recording, New York Shakespeare Festival Production. Book and Lyrics by Gretchen Cryer. Music by Nancy Ford. CBS Collectors' Series X 14885.

"Gay Name Game." Tom Wilson. Aboveground Records (P.O. Box 2131, Philadelphia, PA 19103) AR 101.

A whole new breed of women is promoting commercial aggressiveness as an erotic turn-on. Of course, Gretchen Cryer would not assume a fatuous grin to promote her "Act": a song about giving up smiling for men makes that clear. So a portrait of the artist letting loose a febrile "Sh..." dominates the front cover of this record. A lengthy descriptive text on the obverse is fastidiously cropped to focus on Ms. Cryer's foot. A microphone cord strongly suggesting a whip in momentary repose drapes across the shoe.

Cryer and collaborator Nancy Ford, with two recordings of independently-minded feminist music already to their credit, opened this show at one of Joseph Papp's theatres. It then moved on to another house in Greenwich Village. The release as a CBS Collectors' Series issue indicates it is packaged to be sold to the foot-stomping crowd exiting from the live performances.

Binding the ten songs together is a loose storyline concerning a woman's struggle with her macho manager to allow a late '70s Big-Apple feminist consciousness to inform her act. The dialogue in the show, didactic though it is, and reminding one strongly of Cyra McFadden's marvelous satire The Serial, supports the music better than the record suggests. For though one "hears what she's saying," it is said with a tiresome banality in both lyrics and musical arrangements. "Love is rare, life is strange," Ms. Cryer reminds us. "Nothing lasts and people change." If the Liberated Man's Band accompanying the singer possesses talent, it is never permitted to rise above the level of Book 1 of the E-Z Chord Method. Harmonizations with the back-up singers are facile and outworn.

With Ms. Cryer stage-front-and-center in every number, it is inescapable to conclude from this show that her ideal is a one-woman world in which all other people exist to service her ambitions. Maybe I've lost my way along the road of sexual politics, but if we are seeking liberation, we should aim towards some positive and real alternative. Recognizing that there are plenty of folks in her audiences who can learn much from what she is offering with her "Act," I still wish she brought us to some new understanding.

Confident, powerful, out-front and happy is Tom Wilson's debut album "Gay Name Game," a collection of thirteen numbers which, without vulgarity, considerably extend the range of permissible subject matter in music. The confrontation of standard sex roles is quietly convincing here, as it becomes ever clearer that a sizeable minority of the human—and seagull!—population is prepared to stand by its non-standard habits. Though it is doubtful that a straight listenership will get to know this album, its sexual libertarianism recommends it to anyone interested in the future of the freedom/repression dialectic.

Main objects of repudiation are Biblical strictures and their orange-sucking defenders; psychiatry, both of the shock-therapy and the conventional theorizing varieties ("You're not supposed to love your mother"); and mythologies about the sexual condition in general. Wilson includes women as well as men in his survey, and lays special emphasis on children's rights to sensual exploration. Though he embraces such a contemporary subject as threesomes, he also addresses some of the surviving jealousy and hurt that accompany such freeform relationships.

Wilson's style is varied, though his preferred genre is a Noel Coward-Cole Porter patter with close rhymes and slight musical experimentation. These arrangements would be more successful in a live cabaret setting, for his voice is neither resonant nor well trained, is uneven at the top, and lacks expressiveness.

Notably absent is the sense of raunch his lyrics often suggest. Perhaps another singer or performing group would interpret his work better next time around. — Eric Gordon

VISIONS

by Susan Going Willhouse

"Look, Doc, I dunno. Maybe I'm goin' looney-tunes or sumthin. I wake up in the middle of the night cause I hear this crash, like somebody knocked the side of my skull in. Then there's this god-awful laughter. You wouldn't believe it! 3 A.M. and it sounds like some kinda Mardi Graw! Well, I figure it's the neighbors again. Those people are whackos. My wife wants a house in the sticks, 'to get away from ALL the noise in the city'. So, wadda we do? We plant ourselves next to these people who are up all day and night havin Roman orgies. I mean, Christ, you could sleep better in a traffic jam at rush hour!

"Anyhow, I roll over to nudge the wife to see if she heard it, and...what happened? Her side of the bed is empty! So, I lay there a little bit. Meanwhile, this part is gettin wilder and wilder. I'm thinkin, the wife is probly sitting in her chair by the window. She does that a lot lately. Specially if it's her, y'know, time. (These women really soak that week a month for all it's worth...like they think they can be as crazy as they damn well please. Y'know, mine'll just sit there and stare without any lights on or anything!) But I don't see her anywhere. So, I get up. Don't even turn on the light. Don't wanna alert anybody to what's comin next. Well, I glance over at the window to the neighbors' house, and you wouldn't believe it! It's as dark and quiet as a graveyard! This doesn't make any sense. With that, there's another burst of laughter and I realize, it isn't any of the neighbors at all. It's comin right from under my nose, if y'know what I mean! I am so bowled over by this time, I just sit back on the bed, rubbin my head in the dark, thinkin' 'What is this woman try'n ta do ta me?' Not only does she have a party and doesn't even bother ta tell me about it...or, for that matter, ask me if it's okay even if it is in my own house...but she knows it's the night before the big sales meeting and some of the chief honchos from Detroit are flyin in. And me with my numbers down. I mean, nobody's laying out bread for new cars these days. So, I'm sittin there wondering how she could do this to me, when it hits me. I can't make out a single voice that really sounds like anybody I know! It was funny. I could hear this sorta grunting and squealing, and even this kind of weird, jingly music, and it all sounded real strange...but familiar too. So, I'm try'n to figure out what to do. I mean, the wife has been carry'n on a lot lately that we don't have any good times together anymore; that all she ever gets ta do is watch T.V. She's real upset that we never go ta parties or anything. Like I'm ta blame! Like I've cramped her style! I think it gets to her that our neighbors are such a social bunch and she isn't included. But, man, whaddoes she want? Blood? I'm up to my gills with work. That's what pays the mortgage and the dentist bills, buys her her T.V. dinners, and all the rest. What's she expect?! Who wants ta party with those lousy creeps anyway.

"So, while I'm thinkin all this, I'm also thinkin I might just sneak on downstairs and have a look at what's goin on. So, I get up, grab my robe off the enda the bed, don't even bother with my slippers cause that'll make too much noise, and proceed on out in the hallway and down the stairs in the dark. I'm pretty good at navigating our house without any lights. Feelin your way by the path in the rug is sorta like reading braille with your feet. I'm not makin a sound, just kinda creepin along, try'n to see the best I can. When all of a sudden, at the bottom step, I notice the front door. That is, what use to be the front door! Now it's just a big, friggin hole, all smashed up, with lightning bugs, and who knows what else, flyin in and out! I just can't believe it! And I can still hear this ruckus. I't coming from the kitchen and my wife is laughing loudest of all! I stand there for a few seconds, and now I'm boiled. There's nothin funny about this! I don't even give a shit about bein quiet at this point. I just storm right on through the living room to the doorway of the kitchen.

"And there I see her. She's sittin at the dinette, all dolled up in this real fancy dress she got for some cousin's wedding a couple years ago, lappin up the sauce. That's all I could see then. Just my wife, with a can of Schlitz Malt in her hand, toastin someone outta my sight! And I hear her say, 'Of course, I love you better. Or should I say, butter? You're smooth and creamy, not like those higher priced spreads.' Well, now I'm shakin. I've been married ta this broad for fifteen years! We got two kids! And she's sittin there spoutin out some kinda kinky garbage like I'd expect to hear in some porno flick! In my kitchen, no less! Then it happens. I hear this nasally voice say to her, 'Par-KAay.' I'm thinkin, 'what the...?' So, whaddaya do? Well, I'll tell ya. I crashed right on in there... and there I see this ugly lookin mob everywhere! These three little guys are dancin in a cereal bowl. No joke. They're only as big as my fist and they're jumpin around, in striped tights, no less, like a bunch of screamin faggots, squeelin, 'Snap! Pop! Crackle! Pop!' and so on. And this box of baking soda with this mallot is brawlin with a buncha vegetables and cans a tuna and things, all have these weird little arms and legs on them. And faces! Mean little faces! And they're snarling and goin at each other like a pack of rabid dogs! My wife has a laundry basket next ta her, and in it sit these fools lookin like monster fruit—y'know, grapes, apples, and stuff, only giant-sized with leaves and stems growin out of their heads—cheering on the battle. And this big dope in the corner all painted green, is laughing his head off, just goin, 'Ho Ho Ho!' It's like none a them even seen me. That is, till I screamed, 'What the hell is goin on here?!

"Then I see it. Looked like the devil himself. And I realize he's, how should I put it. Kind of an over-sized quarter pounder with fleas. Y'know, the kind a Huge Heifer Ronald McDonald gets in a sweat dreamin' about at night. Sorta the granddaddy of all Big Macs, only I mean, there ain't no lettuce, no sesame buns. Just horns and big, bulgy eyes. And he's not smiling either, or even thinkin of sayin 'Cheese'. Instead, he just growls, 'BULL!' My wife is sittin there with this idiot grin and a glazed look in her eyes, sayin, 'These are my friends. Why don't you reach out and touch someone? These are my friends...' over and over again. On the counter next ta the sink, I see her little portable T.V., and it's on. Only there's nothin on the screen except that static.

"Now, I don't know what you'd call it, instinct or what, but I knew I had to get ta that thing and shut it off any way I could. So, I lunged across the floor, knocking over a giant Kool-Aid pitcher that had more of those little arms and legs and this real angry red face. That did it. All of a sudden, they're after me—must've known what was up—but I got to the tube just in time. I heaved it backwards over my head and heard it smash somewhere near the refrigerator. Then it got quiet. Dead quiet.

"I turned around real slow...and just stared.

"It was awful! All at once, this bunch of vegetables keeled over and shriveled up. Then the guys in the cereal bowl got real limp and sunk into the soggy mush. And on and on, till even the bull dropped dead right in front of my feet. All these dead... THINGS all over the kitchen floor. You should've seen it!

"Then I looked over at my wife. She's slumped over the table. Not budging an inch. Just real still.

"That's when I knew it was all over. Chunks and pieces of the T.V. were lying all around her and there was blood coming from her head, dripping in the clothes basket.

"But, I tell you, it was a mistake. I didn't know I hit her. I just had to get her away from those things! She was going nuts! They might've hurt her! I had to save her! The cops wouldn't even listen when they showed up. But, you believe me, don't you, Doc? You believe me! I was right, wasn't I?!"

"That isn't up to me to decide, Larry. What I think I'm going to do, though, is prescribe a mild sedative for you from the infirmary. For now, I think we'd better send you back to your cell and let you calm down." The doctor's hand moved to the intercom, depressing a red button. "Miss Kemp, please send in the guard for Mr. Sanders." He looked back at the prisoner who nervously ran his clenched hands up and down his thighs. "We'll have many more opportunities to talk, Larry. But you're much too agitated to continue with this session, I think."

A stocky guard entered and escorted the prisoner from the office. The psychiatrist pushed the button again. "Miss Kemp, could you please bring in the file on Mr. Hamm. That's the child molester Hamm, not the burglar."

He leaned his shoulders back into his overstuffed, brown vinyl chair, rubbing his temples, as he slowly closed his eyes.

Deep in his mind he saw it. Palm trees. White sands. The friendly skies. Come back to...Come back to...It was as clear as life. Sun-bronzed bodies swaying, beckoning. Golder golds. Redder reds. It's waiting for you...

Once more, he leaned forward and depressed the button.

"Miss Kemp...ah...when you come in with that file, would you mind, also, bringing along some relief. That's spelled R-O-L-A-I-D-S."

Found among the papers of Dr. Floyd Snakobs, an Oakwood State Prison psychiatrist, following the inquest into the murder-suicide of Mrs. Helen Snakobs and the aforementioned on December 26, 1980.

When you are like me there are several premises we operate on. Size seems to be an influenza hear; never eat anything bigger than your duodenum, always look both ways, go shopping every six months or less or more for a brand-spanking auto and, of course, we're speaking suburbia here, the red heartland, midwest, brave and true. In my Mary Volksmobile we can speed barrel down the road, running faster and faster on all six shots than every other body while the semis (semi-what? Semi-beasts, dear frenzy, populated by ambidextrine semi-fuelish semi-drivers, demigods of this hemisphere) butt each other to establish Co. dominance. But soft, all knight riders. Wheels turn inside your head. It's highway hypnosis, and you turn. There are no parkings going hig, way and straight, no exits but one so always look both ways. If you're going to think, don't drive. Never drive with your feet. Never drive in model-car Detroit. Never drive in diver's-ed.-film Ohio. Never drive in diver's-ed.-mister car, rather get a horse, a talking horse. But soft motorists. A frightful thruway yawning window breaks; speeding East, where Edsel was the son blinding the I's, West to Los Angeles, you and me, us together, we, absolutely smashing. Cut off accidentally, touch and go, hit and run. Underwhere? Under coat, assuredly, underneath, shoved into a Fjord, or thrown by a sheet belt over your head, bloodied by a greed Oldswagen, liver and lights out, body bag burst, ditched, shredded like wheat, folded, spindled. The only good engine, dear frenzy, is on an American junk or polished into unutility, verily, merrily, faster and faster past car lots of horseless carnage where is the corporate fender-smooth Grey Mince leading the industry, u.s. the saviour of Christler, the struggling Americans, the WWII (think about that, my frenzy) importers, all the same, all different, they don't have to conspire, they think alike and none of them drive anybody but us, to the body shot. Do you really want to drive anybody crazy to the next coronor, or how necessary is it. Think about it, frenzy, and don't choose one way or do not enter. Amen.

- Walt Lockley

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What color is a blind-folded chameleon?
- Dana Snow

POLTERGEIST, STAR TREK II, BLADE RUNNER

Perhaps the most difficult task to accomplish in filmmaking is to make a credible ghost story. Because the existence of ghosts lies somewhere between reason and fantasy, a cinematic exposition of the supernatural is too often either materially earthbound (ghosts as guardians of worldly treasures, as in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*) or romantically alien (ghosts as messengers for Supreme Beings, as in *A Christmas Carol*). In *Poltergeist*, however, the existence of ghosts is not only a moral condemnation of corruption, but also an attack upon suburban sensibilities, bourgeois materialism, and religious arrogance (never, for example, is a clergyman present. While *The Exorcist* revelled in religious over- and undertones, *Poltergeist* is decidedly secular). Ghosts also exist to scare, and in *Poltergeist* (written and produced by Steven Spielberg), they do.

When the first rumblings begin in the house of the Freelings, the mother, Diane (Jobeth Williams) treats it light-heartedly, as if a ghost were a plaything or even a status symbol (she is, after all, the first on her block to have one). Perhaps it is merely a strengthener of identity, in a community where every house is the same.

However, the playful mischievousness of the ghosts fades to darker, more malevolent acts, as Carol Anne, the youngest daughter, is kidnapped by a Tremendous Force (or Light, or Vacuum, or White Hole), and the family sets itself to get her back. With the aid of a team of parapsychologists who believe the ghosts might give them some interesting data, and (when their expectations are more than overwhelmed) later a dwarfish psychic, Diane strives to find and retrieve her daughter from the ghosts—a search similar to Jillian Guiller's quest for her kidnapped son Barry in Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

The allusions to Spielberg's earlier work are more opposing rather than parallel, however. Whereas CE3K dealt with good and greater good, *Poltergeist* is a special effects extravaganza of Evil and Ugliness: Supernatural Evil, Scientific Evil, Corporate Evil, and Suburban Ugliness. The characterizations are very well drawn, but in a film like *Poltergeist*, in which the existence of the other-worldly must appear extremely plausible, the script's the thing, and here there is no disappointment. Pacing and dialogue are excellent, and the technical achievements support them with a realism next to voyeurism.

Most outstanding of all is the score by Jerry Goldsmith, who has never written a bad piece of music (*Alien*, *The Omen*, *Star Trek I* and *Islands in the Stream* being among his best). The energy, mysticism, and horror of the ghosts is powerfully realized in the score, which is so far the year's best.

Whereas characterization in *Poltergeist* is a by-product of the story's logic and realism, the characters in *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* must support the story if it is to be at all interesting or entertaining. Luckily it is. A supreme improvement upon the first film, which was long on color and short on substance, *The Wrath of Khan* is an enjoyable adventure, wherein the crew of the Enterprise once again gets to strut its stuff.

Kirk, Spock, et al. are back, this time against Khan, a renegade revolutionary who has hijacked a starship and who seeks, among other things, revenge upon Kirk, who stranded him for many years on a barren planet in a comparatively quiet section of the universe.

This is much more like *Star Wars* than the first film, but the sense of humanity which dominated the best episodes of the TV series is not absent here. Kirk, getting older, is longing for his salad days of hopping around the galaxy, at which time, we learn, he once fathered an illegitimate child. Despite the aging of the characters, with whom we've grown up on television, they have not become more mechanized as the technology around them has gotten more sophisticated or more supremely arrogant (the projected terraforming of dead worlds that is the basis of the Genesis project).

The Wrath of Khan is as good as any of the better *Star Trek* TV shows, but with the added advantage of hindsight, which these characters now have over the people who figuratively and literally dominated NBC 15 years ago.

Now the bad news. Just as Ridley Scott has proved himself a filmmaker of immense energy and elegance, along comes his latest work *Blade Runner*, which proves if nothing else that no one—not even Scott—can make a good film out of a bad script, not even a distractingly enjoyable one.

Blade Runner could be considered a cousin of *Alien*, in which the inhabitants of the *Nostramo*, and the entire galactic community, were dominated by the politics and economics of corporations and industries. In *Blade Runner*, the Los Angeles of the 21st Century is no mere urban industrial center—it is a living, breathing advertisement for Japanese multinational corporations. While most Earthmen have settled in other (more pleasant, one supposes) colonies, the dregs of humanity are clumped in the city, surrounded by neon, debris and a depressingly never-ending rain. Decker (Harrison Ford) is a policeman assigned to destroy some human-like robots called replicants (who are banished from Earth because of their quick temperament and consequentially murderous predilections). During his investigation he falls in love with the daughter of the corporation's executive responsible for building the robots, only to find that she herself is a super-replicant, with an uncommon emotional circuitry.

Believe it or not, this is meant to fill up 2½ hours, and it doesn't. While Decker chases the replicants, the action, pace and dialogue is decidedly not urgent, and is too full of the repetitious soul searching in Decker's professional and private lives. Scott's imagery is shockingly brilliant, but it is also appallingly wasted on a film whose only spark of intelligence comes from the supposition that Japan will defeat the US as an economic power within a few years.

Douglas Trumbull's special effects are reminiscent of his work for CE3K (full of lens glare and color) but are too polished for a world seen as unpolished and gritty, where a gumshoe would investigate synthesized snake skin just as his '40s counterpart would a torn laundry ticket. Ford's Decker is a step back from his Han Solo and Indiana Jones, for his heroism is won by default rather than by personal geniality or good luck.

A pretty picture, *Blade Runner* is still the kind of visual feast that leaves a bad taste in one's mouth.

— David Morgan

The Clash: *COMBAT ROCK* (CBS Records)—Combat Rock is not a new Clash album. I'm convinced that the band very cleverly got Glyn Johns to re-mix the out-takes from *Sandinista*.

We are again confronted with The Clash's reggae obsession. But Strummer as vocalist no longer makes an effort to actually carry a tune, so *Combat Rock* degenerates into white dub—and all the tedium that implies.

On *Sandinista* a lot of the musical mediocrity was overshadowed by trenchant lyrics. Strummer and Jones still pretend to make meaningful statements about the world's socio-political scene. But their poetry has become fragmented and incoherent, and more often than not they simply bandy about a lot of vague images that evoke little more than confusion.

Since 1980, The Clash have released two albums, neither of which comes close to living up to the promise of their brilliant *London Calling*. In a symbolic gesture at the "Rock for Kampuchea" benefit, Pete Townshend tossed his guitar across stage to Joe Strummer, conferring on him the title of "Spokesman of the Generation". If I were Pete, I'd get my guitar back. Statocasters are expensive.

Pete Townshend: *ALL THE BEST COWBOYS HAVE CHINESE EYES* (Atco)—

True to his compulsion to lay his soul bare, Pete Townshend has released his most intimate, revealing work ever. He drops you in the middle of an emotional minefield, then bombards you with confessions of hope, fear, passion, desire, mistakes, pain, and love.

All the Best Cowboys Have Chinese Eyes is not immediately acceptable musically—it's certainly not an instant "classic" like *Empty Glass*, and it has very little to do with The Who. Pete experiments with all sorts of new musical concepts—spoken poetry, blues/soul, and fascinating rhythms—obviously on the verge of fulfilling his own prophecy that "music must change".

Pete's spirituality is totally unawkward here. It's become such an inherent part of his psyche that it's no longer a slightly self-conscious expression of his involvement with Indian mystic Meher Baba. His music is totally awash in love.

Chinese Eyes is not a comfortable album. It's harrowing and uncompromisingly honest. Pete cries out for us to identify with both his joys and sorrows. His songs demand our attention—make us think—and make us feel. It contains some of the strongest writing Pete has ever done, and is unquestionably the most moving album by any artist to come along in a very, very long time.

— Khaaryn Goertzel

COOL CATS - 25 YEARS OF ROCK 'N' ROLL STYLE, Edited and Designed by Tony Stewart (New York: Delilah Books), 160 pages.

Rock and roll, according to Tony Stewart, is only secondarily a musical phenomenon. Its real focus is fashion. To British teenagers in the '50's, dressing to create a distinct image, coupled with the right music, was the essence of "coolness". And being cool set one apart from the masses of post-war baby boom peers. This sense of rock style is still valid.

Cool Cats sets out to document the twenty-five year evolution of rock fashion. The trend in books of this sort (which are a dime a dozen in Britain—unfortunately the best seldom reach our shores) is to collect a lot of photographs, and commission a few trendy rock musicians or journalists to reflect on their impressions or experiences. This approach can work remarkably well, as seen by Richard Barnes, London: Eel Pie Publishing, Ltd.). But, more often, it results in an opinionated mishmash of self-indulgent reminiscences and analyses.

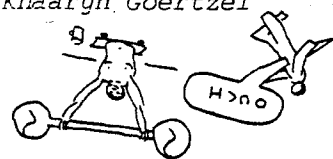
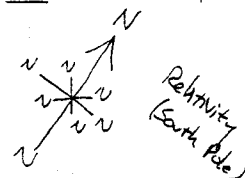
Cool Cats is no exception. Tony Stewart has collected a group of brief essays on rock fashion from the '50's through the '70's, the most notable authors being Ian Dury (on Teddy Boys) and Paul Weller of The Jam (on Mods). The text is marred (predictably) by the subjectivity of writers trying to be extremely cool, or, in Dury's case, from total incoherence (his panache of Teddy Boy slang images would even baffle today's working class London kid).

Stewart would justify the mediocrity of the essays with his philosophy that one picture says more than a thousand words (especially since rock writers have a dangerous tendency to be overly analytical). However, for a book that relies so heavily on visual presentation, *Cool Cats* offers a totally unimpressive and badly reproduced group of photographs (all black and white) and a messy, cluttered "design" (by Stewart).

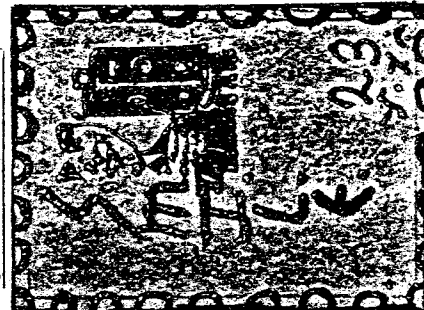
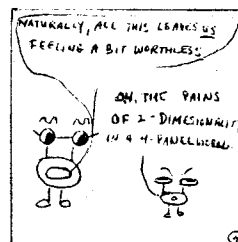
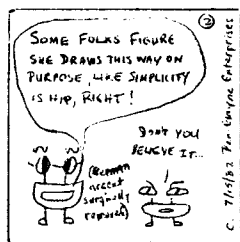
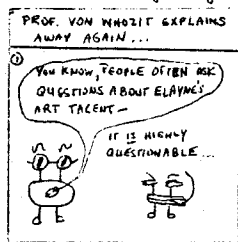
Since the '60s, all sorts of writers and publishers have tried to make meaningful statements about rock fashion and lifestyle. Few, if any, have been completely successful. At \$9.95, *Cool Cats* is a rather expensive failure to toss on the heap.

— Khaaryn Goertzel

MONKEEMANICS:
for details see pp. 2 & 9



SINGLE MEDLEY to cost state \$2.5 million. If it had been married, how much would it have cost?—Steve Kiszil, courtesy The Last International



A Glimpse at the Underground

by Carly Sommerstein

"Nine dollars, please," the man said casually, staring off into the distance, his palm flat, dry.

"I should be guest-listed tonight. 'Carly'."

"Carly...Carly...Carly...oh, yes, here you are. Ok, go on ahead."

He looked at me closely for a second, wondering who I was, then his eyes passed on to the next probable victim of New York City club owners' exploitive wrath. I stepped into the yellow light. Looking around for a familiar face, I immediately caught a glimpse of Ronny's mohawk protruding up like a weed out of the spiky-haired crowd. I waved at him as he made his way over to me.

"Well, hi Carly, looking wholesome tonight, as usual."

His smile was so boyish and innocent it was always hard for me to believe how strong and angry he could be on stage.

"Not bad yourself. Have you done sound check?"

"Yeah, 'bout an hour ago. Went pretty well, except for Tom's bass which kept fucking up, but it should be okay. You alone tonight?"

"Yeah, Paul had to stay in tonight. Gonna hang with Marti and John. Have you seen them?"

"Upstairs. They were fighting about something before. I swear it's like John can't even take a piss without her bitching about something."

"Well, you know how love is," I grinned.

Ronny laughed and pulled at the chain around his waist.

"Yeah, ain't it the truth." He shook his head. "Listen, I gotta go do the set list and shit, I'll see ya later. You hangin' all night?"

"Till about 5."

"Cool. Good, I'll see you later." He kissed my hand, that suave bastard, and took off in flight, those big black boots of his clunking up the marble stairwell.

I pushed through the crowd over to the ladies' lounge. The Decline girls were gossiping in the corner.

"EWWW!!! Who is that punk rocker?" screamed Natalia, giggling, her hair unmoving under KY and hairspray. The Decline girls are six little ratted-hair sophomores from Manhattan who do a fanzine called Decline Of Art. They all dress alike—combat boots, kilts, antique letterman sweaters, bangles up and down their thin arms, rosary beads, the usual punk attire...except for their hair color, which ranges from Harlow blonde to carrot red to blue-black, all courtesy of Miss Clairol.

I walked over to shoot the shit with them for a while. The conversation consisted of the usual topics—new cute boys coming to shows, stories of being hassled by jocks, cops, how awful the new Circle Jerks album was, and of course, Sue's everlasting crush on the Misfits' bassist Jerry Only. The Decline girls hardly ever smiled, but laughed a lot—in short hearty spurts. They were city kids who never wasted an effort.

We heard the screech of the guitarist tuning up and decided to get a good spot on the floor before the trendies invaded.

There is a definite technique in finding a good, safe spot to watch a hardcore band. You must first determine the overall quality/popularity of the band which isn't always too predictable. If it's a "good" band, then there's bound to be dancing. Example: kraut are, for some reason beyond my comprehension, very big in New York even though I find them as stimulating as, say, a fig newton or a game of gin rummy. Not very. They are boring and common, but people seem to love them. Then, on the other hand, a fantastic, passionate, energetic band like the Misfits have very little crowd reaction because most of the audience is scared shitless of them. So you can pre-judge to a degree. A suggestion for viewing a great, loud, exciting band would be to back up away from the swinging arms, legs and elbows. Then later if you'd like to move up a bit, choose a spot close to the amplifiers, since stage-divers always avoid hitting the amps. Amps run about 800 dollars each.

So we found ourselves good spots and lit cigarettes to insure people would keep their distance.

"Hey, does anyone know who that blonde girl is?" Sue said that like a gangleader, inquisitively, sensing an invasion of her territory.

"Think she's from DC," I said, noting the Teen Idles scrawl on the back of her leather jacket. Natalia's eyes lit up.

"Oh, that's Genevieve. She's the most notorious band-fucker in DC! Real, how does one say, fille do joie."

"That's not how I say it," said Robin. "I call them sluts."

The music started, the crowd moved in tighter. The battlefield erupted, boys (and a few daring girls) began the ritual known as slamming. Robin commented to me that the boys with mohawks reminded her of Roman soldiers with their bristly helmets. I nodded and with my foot crushed my cigarette while pushing a kid back in-

I would like to dedicate this story to Shredder, my favorite 15 year old Los Angeles Adonis, whom I love dearly. - CS

to the sea of bodies. I became bored with the band and looked the crowd over. Interesting kids tonight, some new kids, too. A few girls in black dresses eyeing a pack of mean-looking skins who obviously had no interest in them. A couple of sweated moustached New York DJ's coming out, no doubt, to "see what all this punk rock stuff is about". Marti pushed over to me and, after making mutual sour faces in the direction of the stage, we retreated to a table.

"Yeah, so it's fucked. John doesn't know what to do about it either." Marti sighed and pulled out a hand mirror.

"You'd think since he's been so close to Bobby for so long he'd have some kind of influence over him, y'know? I can't understand Bobby anymore, he's in another world completely."

"Exactly. I think he's giving up on himself. College is just the insurance he'll turn out 'right', like his parents have always wanted. Who knows?" Marti shrugged. I crushed my cigarette into the center of a carved Dead Kennedys logo in the wood table. A change of subject...

"So how are things with you and John lately?"

Marti laughed sarcastically and flipped the mirror into her makeup case. "He is, without exaggeration, driving me to drink. I am talking up and over the wall with this guy. Times like these I wish I was still living in California. Yes, that bad!" We giggled. I picked up the mirror to inspect my eye makeup.

"Ronny said I looked 'wholesome' tonight," I said, mugging into the mirror.

Marti beamed. "He did?"

"He always has some adjective for me."

"Oh, that's because ne wantsa have your baby!" she said matter-of-factly.

"Well, if he wants babies, he can have them."

"I hear ya. That's another thing about John that baffles me. He's so into having a family—he wants children, and a house, and all the white picket suburban wasteland bullshit. And look at him—"

I glanced over at the stage and saw John with his arm around the singer, both of them singing into the mic, smiling and shaking their raised fists at the audience.

"Like a child himself and he's 20 years old!"

"Let him have fun, Marti. Since when are you such an adult anyway?" I looked for her reaction from under the tissue against my sweaty forehead.

"Yeah, you're right. No harm. Yet, anyway."

Ronny walked up with a soda can. "Hello, punk rock women of the 80's, what's goin' on?"

That goofy smile again. I looked at Marti and we laughed.

"What's so funny about 7UP, hm?"

"Sit down, you miserable excuse for a porcupine!"

Ronny chuckled and pulled at his chain in his usual way.

"What's in the can 'sides 7UP?"

"This is actually coca-cola, I got a refill from Tulane who was drinking a liter."

"Is it just coke, then?" Marti repeated.

"It's the Real Thing! Don't drink it all, I'll be right back." We watched him dive through some bodies into the middle of the crowd, and laughed at his displaced agility.

"Oh, look over at that!" I pointed my finger at a couple kissing, half in shadow.

"Is that Evan? Holy rollin' doggie doo, I never thought I'd see him with a girl in public like that! I thought he was Straight Edge." Straight Edge is a philosophy that originated on the DC scene but has spread throughout the entire punk vespiary thanks to a band called Minor Threat, who wrote a song about what the Straight Edge is all about, very simply: NO DRUGS, NO BOOZE, NO PROMISCUITY.

"Me too." I pulled my eyes away. "Looks like Evan is more of a curved edge now, eh?"

"Well, ya see that, that's so typical. They hate booze till they get shitfaced. And they hate sex till they've got someone to help them dampen sheets..."

Ronny bopped back over for his coke.

"Ronny, did you see Evan with a girl tonight?" I asked.

"Oh, sure. She's an office babe, never comes to shows, probably doesn't even know Evan's in a band. I guess she's altogether, though. It's about time he started being seen with a girl, people starting to think he's plagued..."

We giggled and moved back into the crowd for Ronny's band, the Snarling Darlings, who were on next.

CARLY SOMMERSTEIN
June 10th, '82

O. WHAT DO YOU SAY about a punk with nowhere to live? A. He's between hardrock and a place. Last Wave, 2000 Center #1314.

BUT SERIOUSLY FOLKS, why did the Punk Penguin cross the road? Answer: to buy some combat flippers.

As they say in the true commercial, "Sorry Carly, but I couldn't resist! -CSO"

exercises (a-1-a an' in fiction a-2-a)

One or two mystics say the giant rocks of Stonehenge were borne from Wales on the backs of legends (and the Queen's Christmas message). Dixie McClair still had no clue what Wales, that distant postcard country of mining disasters and tourists touring medieval play castles and young men who would never again walk home to their two-up-and-down cardboard flats in smoky industrial Swansea. The back of the ten-year-old 1967 rock and roll album jacket—inside Chopin and heaven and hell—with the photograph of the blonde, psychedelic suspended, half-smiling pianist, said only that his name was Patrick Hart, not who he really was, where exactly he was born or why he didn't stay there.

Delinquent dreaming: Lying on her bed, once or twice, in a Wisconsin Oz, she saw him, as clearly as her five fingers in moonlight. Seventeen-years-old, in the same black jeans as in the photo, just loose enough to play in dank dockside clubs, just tight enough not to be his television apprentice work clothes. A train ticket to London was stuffed in his back pocket. When he bought it one-way, the ticket-teller, a bit old but with that look as if he liked to get away from the idyllic hills into the desperate city on the sly every once in awhile, said "You'll be buying your ticket back in London?" Patrick didn't answer and one wasn't really expected. He wondered what it would be like in London. In 1964 was a businessman's rock and roll town, with only the slightest birth pangs of glittering Carnaby Street or Mar Quant's make-up Empire.

His mother and father were sitting around the kitchen table drinking coffee, as they had every afternoon of their marriage, except for a week or so after Patrick's birth when his mum was in hospital, when he closed the door with only the slightest whisper of wind. "But what will you DO? You've hardly learned a trade and London is EXPENSIVE. How will you live?" They had brought him up from an infant; he was leaving in two weeks. After he had two records on Top of the Pops, one good, one not so good, and all the neighborhood housewives clipped articles out of the newspaper for his mother, she was still sorry he hadn't stayed, married him a wife, moved into a two-up, two-down a few blocks away and lived a normal man's life. Neither parent had been to London in their lives and neither really had much desire to go.

Desperate dreaming: What must they be feeling now? In a record company bio, Patrick let out that he forgave them for the months they wouldn't speak to him and understood they thought they were doing it for his own good. His mother's face, classic and very British, dissolving over the phone even before she heard what his best friend had called to tell her. Did they end their scrapbook with the same clipping Dixie had ended hers?

"Patrick Hart, 27-year-old popsinger and songwriter, was found unconscious after sustaining a head wound of unknown origin, in his one room apartment on the outskirts of London. He had recently been involved in several lawsuits with his manager and record company over unreported and allegedly unpaid royalties. During the suits, an injunction had prevented him from performing or recording, bringing his career in the past year or two to a halt. He is not expected to regain consciousness." This article was the last Dixie heard about him.

The one-room apartment, enveloped by a grey brick casing with Victorian gargoyles and scaly black iron grating, was, to him, the top parapet of an Enchanted Tower. Here tunes and words swirled gently down to his hands; he grabbed them and channelled them through his piano to black and white of pen and paper, to be resurrected upon his divine command for the spiritual attainment of his fellow worshippers. Walls the color of the sky stood dutifully behind rows of bookshelves full of battered, second-hand volumes of poetry and philosophy. In the center was a small collection of Dylan Thomas. Facing west was an unmade sofa-bed which rarely saw the same female face twice. Sometimes, when everyone had gone home, he lay on it and dreamed about an American he had never seen.

Star-searching: Younger by almost a decade, a poetess of the Sylvia Plath variety, an inhabitant of the America Patrick memorized in the movie theatres and off the telly. What could he know about that kind of life? She married at age 17, not a match made in heaven, but not bad considering the local youth. A few children later she stopped writing and stashed the black and white composition notebooks in an extra room on top of a scrapbook with his name on it. At age 36, a few months after she had thrown the whole pile to make room for yet another child, she died in a freak childbirth accident. Days following days, peace and love, she didn't miss her old ambitions, nor felt a twinge when she listened to the old record that had drained her of her old assumptions about what was right and proper, so easy in the financial security and black and white value system of adolescence. Sometimes, after he dreamed about her in the early years, he would use some of the poetry he saw her writing in his lyrics.

In her own dreams, she saw herself walking a straight line slowly down a black, spiralling tube, narrowing to a single point of complete present, no past, no need to think about the future. The glow at the end shone like the radioactivity of a television set the first few seconds after it has been turned off. Once she thought she sensed Patrick walking down the tube behind her, but when she turned around, he was gone. Only one dream did she suffer over and over: Since Patrick never attended any church, one had to be found quickly for the funeral—everyone thought it would do his mother good to see him have a Christian burial. She was engulfed from head to foot in a black cape and hood with a veil. It, the demon, crouched in a back pew in a brown sackcloth, weep-

ing. Later, she fell unconscious on the tombstone, which she couldn't quite read.

When he had the dream, Patrick wore a velvet Edwardian mourning outfit, though no one seemed to realize he was there at all. He saw her husband and children in the front, only holding up. It, the demon, crouched in a back pew in a brown sackcloth, weeping. When he looked at the tombstone, he couldn't quite make it out. He didn't linger, after all, he hadn't even known her really, what right did he have to mourn? After these dreams, neither he nor she had any more.

Patrick Hart didn't much believe in religion. In his naive and logical way, he didn't understand ritual or the possibility of an inherent superiority of any conglomeration of political ideas, or anything, really, beyond the supreme power of humans communicating. Simple solutions existed and what he did with his life was point them out. He skipped the black jeans for a real suit when he went to the lawyer's office to explain this, but the lawyer only said he would do the best he could. He didn't.

Devil's dreaming: As Patrick fell, after losing his balance, three hits of hallucinogens will do that do you, he hit his head on the sharp corner of the sofa-bed and during his first few minutes of bleeding looked up at the ceiling and saw her solidly descending the stairs of the courthouse, wedding bouquet in hand. A few steps behind her came her husband and parents. Her heavy black veil made it hard for her to see the red sportscar zooming down the street. She went under its wheels without a sound. The demon, brown sackcloth turned into modern-day dress, opened the door of the car, took the bouquet from her bleeding hands and sped on. The ticket seller shook him awake.

A puddle had formed around Patrick's canvas shoes and his jeans were now so wet that if he let them dry on him they would be a perfect fit. "Go home! You missed the train! Another boy took your place." By the end of the ten blocks home, past the docks where he'd go tomorrow to find a job, past the shops that had let him nick candy bars when he was a kid, past rows and rows of houses just like the one he was born in, lived in, and now looked as if he would die in, he knew that this was his one chance to get out and he had blown it. Everyone would laugh. In the door, not a word, up the stairs, out of the jeans and into bed.

John Crane, the famed, ridiculed, widely imitated and blessed-ly rich pop star, lived six months in London and six months in New York, when he wasn't pleasing the tax department and his banker by touring. Originally from an obscure industrial Welsh town, he had come to London ten years before on a whim, when someone else had missed the train, leaving an empty seat. His first one-room apartment, which he kept, was decorated with increasingly expensive bric-a-brac as he easily found a job, a few weeks later joined a band, had modest success, broke up with them, and, a few years later, hit it big as a solo. When an injunction stopped him from performing or recording, he took a year-long vacation in Hawaii, then a short course in classical composition at a local conservatory while visiting his parents. When the lawyers had finished playing, he captured a slightly older, more loyal, richer audience which paid for all the parties John gave for his friends in his one-room. Tonight, as a matter of fact, he was one or two hours into just such a party when through the loud music, smoky hazes of various colors and scents, and artistic trashing of anyone more successful than the conversants, he noticed two of his guests in a corner, chatting. One was Patrick Hart, his composition teacher from Wales who was one of his frequent trips to London to see John and play informal gigs in dank clubs along the docks where all the rock aristocracy disappeared to after social events, sitting at mismatched marble-top tables, drinking watered run and cokes out of plastic glasses after hours. The other was Dixie McClair, r'n'r poetess she called herself, he had met in just such a New York club capturing the music in words in a beat up composition book she let him read. That night the party broke up and regrouped at a dive called Antonio's and Dixie read political poetry in a loud voice and Patrick made very baroque, disjointed music. It was as if they had known each other a long time. — Carolyn Lee Boyd

Definitions

by Louie Crew

Respect for the law is a pill that the people in power force down the throats of those for whom the law has no respect. Such a pill activates the adrenalin when someone defaces a flag or fails to reveal sources for a news article, but the pill anesthetizes any slight shivers as the same person burns an enemy's child. As Nazis found it a useful soporific before Nuremberg, so most Americans would be hard put to tell where we teach our soldiers the art of chemical warfare.

A state university is an institution supported by the state legislature to sanctify that state's brand of provincialism.

Professors are people with the talent for making students feel guilt or compulsive gratitude if they speak with the professors for more than five minutes after class. They are people trained in asking most questions except "Is it honest?" and "How does it make you feel?"

Students are often grown women and men who have found myriads of bizarre ways to perpetuate the irresponsibilities of childhood without its joy or its innocence.

Academic Freedom is the freedom of all to ask anything. Actually, since most people don't want to ask anything, the few who do, find that apathy ensures their "freedom" and their insignificance. Sexuality is the modern person's way to enjoy toothpaste, magazines, automobiles, but not friends or one's self.

Dirtyliness is a narrow mind's way of choosing what it will not see. Wonder is a mental function now virtually extinct.

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A Bumblebee's Landing On Flash

by Deborah Golden

An Absurd Fantasy

Consider New York City where most everyone is wealthy unless they are poor. The speed is fast, the activities vast, the population lets fester an indescribable past.

A honky tonk country girl wheedled her way through the brambles to test herself against high powered roamers. She reserved a room in the Chelsea Hotel; the name she heard on some rambling song. Breaking the flanks of her pink piggy bank, she felt she ranked among the privileged. The privileged, rumor rubbed, herded in New York City. She thought herself pretty, and sure to fit in.

Where to begin? It was a contest she was to win. A tattered yellow box top stopping the cereal from spill proclaimed cosmopolitan adventures. At the breakfast table with milk, she mused and sucked her thimble full of honey while filling in the dots and dashes. She mashed corn flakes between teeth aflashing. Big brother was beating his socks against the radiator. Momma was digging flies out of the milk curdles. Poppa was chewing a weed. She fleet at once that there must be more to life.

And so our honky tonk girl, who we shall call BumbleBee, decided to flee her barnyard home. She won the corny flake contest (having been the only contestant) by submitting a five line poem that went:

"Mugwump shrub slowly milks
chlorophyll from unsuspecting
lawn soldiers
too busy attending to
their parallel grassness."

The poem was highly acclaimed by the sponsors of the contest, the infamous Dear Inn on Winter Street in the heart of New York City's funk community. She was invited to participate in a reading at the Inn that Saturday afternoon. Also, she won a potentially fun time making sense of the Art Show across the street. The Show featured a man sitting on a ladder, with his head through a ceiling, being filmed by a video camera, while he drank TAB Cola and rolled his tongue around his meaty lips. The video tape was instantly shown on all four walls of the gallery superimposed on cryptic drawings of his genitalia. All of this was live and in color.

BumbleBee packed her bags, pecked her father on the cheek, slapped her brother's ass, and shook her momma's hand. There was a Happy Travels bus leaving later that day. She decided against wearing the blue jean overalls, work boots, red bandanna, and rake she usually wore. She wore lavender tights beneath an orange skirt, black patent leather pumps, a navy and red striped blouse, three turquoise rings, silver hooped earrings, and a canteloupe kerchief tied around her strawberry hair. Her intentions were not to be noticeable. Her family shrieked at her appearance and felt relieved to see her go. That would be one less mouth to feed, they reasoned.

Sailing along from stix to suburbs, BumbleBee chatted to an inconspicuous man sitting next to her. He was dark and mysterious wearing black velvet pants, white satin shirt, red sneakers, and bifocal eyeglasses. He was explaining the subtleties of his profession. He gave psychological tests to rapists, murderers, and torturers to determine if they're crazy. He was telling her about the rather unusual situation that involved his expertise. Apparently a reknown rapist had just written a book entitled, "The Life and Times of a Rapist". It had received a glowing review in the New York Finds Book Review. Most of the major literary publications were praising it. The prison in which he was housed let him out for a cross country promotional tour. He was surrounded by the most respectable intelligentsia and glamorous, glittering starlights. The tour was a smashing success. He spoke on college campuses across the land. Unfortunately, he raped every chance he got. There was a certain prestige being the victim, but it never quite compensated for the hysteria that soon followed. At last the inevitable took place; he raped the daughter of the mayor of the town he was lecturing in. He was immediately thrown in jail, much to the despair of the accompanying literati. This red sneakered gentleman was to evaluate just how crazy this popular rapist was, and if his presence in society was indeed a menace. BumbleBee listened with rapt attention while lapsing into private meditations of her adventure to come.

Manhattan was a wet mess when she arrived. Five inches of snow were melting rapidly by the steady pelt of raindrops. She said farewell to her travelling companion and proceeded to hunt for plastic to put over her patent leathers. Winter Street was nowhere to be found on the subway map. She noticed a young woman her age with sky blue diaper pins thrust in her ears. As fate would have it, this gal, named Saturn Rings, was going to the Dear Inn too. She offered to lead the way.

When they emerged from the subway, the only way to walk through the floods was to carefully tread in the center of the street. At the Dear, a slush pool wavered before the entrance. BumbleBee's bags were tearing thin. Saturn Rings had a solution. She emptied the nearest garbage can and stuffed BumbleBee in. She then secured the cover and waded through the icy quake rolling the pail with Bumble's body. Saturn Rings was prepared for the weather, wearing maroon plastic boots as high as her crotch.

Inside, the place was steaming. It smelled like curry rice and sounded like mandarines. The jukebox was jubilant with berry lights of gold and green. Three babies who looked alike raised havoc. A light haired troll clasped her hands in triumph and waved them, alternating, above each shoulder. Their long-black-

haired parents chain smoked at the bar, drinking continuous mugs of amber beer. They wore tinted glasses staring effortlessly into space with gazes missing places in air. Cigarette smoke thickened like snow. The bartender cried a "Howdy!" to Saturn Rings. She introduced BumbleBee as the poet to read, and ordered the house drink: vodka on ice with a splash of creme de menthe.

BumbleBee's eyes riveted to a multisexual Being sipping sherry from a scotch glass. He was nonchalantly glancing through a magazine called *Raison D'Etre*, with a cover picture of a hole in the ground. The brown hair on his head resembled a crew-cut that went into shock. Around his ears the hair was pink. It matched his velveteen pants, over which he wore a white ripped thermal top. He was unbelievably sexy to BumbleBee, who had never seen a male dressed in anything other than dungarees, work shirt, and cow manure. He also smoked his thin grey cigarettes from an ivory holder that extended five inches from his pursed lips. As she magnetized to his presence, the organizer of the reading grabbed her by the silver hoop and led her to the microphone. The vodka concoction had gone to her head, for she had never drank anything stronger than concentrated sassafras juice. She unrolled her collection of poems, fell into the chair, and slowly said into the mike (as a test),

"Pink was my skin under covers in the crib."

There were a few claps. BumbleBee giggled, waved to Saturn Rings, and ordered another drink.

BumbleBee was collecting puddles beneath her feet. All at once it struck her that she was thawing. A waspish hum diminished the atmosphere as she stared into a blur of audience. In an instant, she was sober. Shakily she leafed through her papers and chose one to begin her reading.

"This one is called *Seeking Enlightenment*."

Cherry face under the verandah/spoke of Sufi, slurring words/ between beers./Moist nights have got to rain/somewhere.

Cherry face with the leaking hand/poured hops into glasses/ already filled./'I'm not ready yet,' he said."

An elongated sucking of teeth followed. Some spiralling soprano from a male's physique sang, "Another round Harry if you don't mind." A few entered and exited the restrooms. BumbleBee wondered, "Hmmm." After a sense of settling steadied in the Inn, BumbleBee read.

"This one is called *Housewife and Child*."

I have returned from visiting a corpse with a baby wrapped around its thighs.

Television glaring in the corner/illuminating the child figure/ stuck on the screen:/magnetic pull./Pupils dilate in the corpse/ to electric box action./only the eye sockets live./ The baby into his face,/all tongue slopping around lips./ Corpse marches to the fridge/stares,/dill picks ketchup crust oleomargarine top./Corpus closes door, about face, hup to three to the T.V./baby out of face and into/ vertical rainbow currents across the scream."

A silence was followed by a belch, then pattering muffs of hands in a stretched rhythm. BumbleBee looked for Saturn Rings in the mist of the BooHoo crowd. She was nowhere to be seen.

BumbleBee began rocking in her seat. There was still the stilt man across the street in the BooHoo Gallery to galvanize with her cow eyes. She had hoped to learn the city ropes with Saturn Rings, but the important thing was the key to her Chelsea Room, secure in her tight's top. She gave gracious thanks and proceeded to remove herself from the spotlight. A heavy weight poet known to most hip souls was about to take the pulpit.

While she gathered her senses, the multisexual entity that first possessed her undivided attention approached her with a glass frostily filled with vodka and creme de menthe. Her immediate smile extended miles across her face. He said, between chews from his cigarette folder,

"I loved your work...I mean...it really spoke to me...I mean...I hear you lady of the pasture."

BumbleBee was devastated. She replied, "Oh thank you...I was nervous...and...you know this is my first time in New York City... God, I can't believe it...everything's going so fast...what's your name? Oh, I need to make a phone call. Please please don't disappear. The gal who brought me here, Saturn Rings, disappeared. I'll be right back."

Under an orange sign that had an arrow beneath the word 'horn' pointing up toward the heavens, BumbleBee found the proper instrument to connect with her dirt-under-the-nails family. Big brother answered, "Familiar Farms...may I help you?"

"Luke, it's BumbleBee calling from New York City!"

"Hey...you're supposed to gather the eggs."

"Forget it...I ain't gathering no eggs no more. I'm staying here. So tell mom and dad I found my nitch and I'll send for my things by and by."

"Wait a minute..."

The omnipotent operator intervened. "I'm sorry, your call..."

BumbleBee let out a little glee. She mused briefly while walking to pink slip with the cryptic messages, "Who would have thought that my semisleepy state in which I filled that box top would have led to my true home and inevitable future. Besides, I was destined to run my hands through that pastel crew."

And so ends this tale of BumbleBee's ensnairment in the way out world of the intergalactic funk community of BooHoo New York City. One must presume this is a fable in the Aesop tradition for the author is, in a stretch of imagining, a member of the family of Aesop. Therefore, a moral of the story is in order. Now, sometimes in semiawake states such as the one upon awaken-

realize this runs counter to the Good Griefan perspective that worships the 'awake' state. All I can say to the Good Griefans is, "Be as the BumbleBee sucking sweetness from flower, to weed, to flower, to need, to flower, to need, to flower, to need, to flower..."

ing, we find ourselves dallying in circumstantial curiosities.

BumbleBee filled a box top. If she was fully awake, she would not have wasted her time on such nonsense. Thus, it is not whether one is awake or asleep that matters. It is whether one is fully committed to whatever state one is in that sets one smoothly sailing.

A Public Hiding

by Gunnar Larson

Have so many government leaders recently been hiding the truth from the public because letting it out might bring them a public hiding? With our leaders hiding behind lies, omissions, ambiguity, and public relations gobbledegook, how do we tell a dictator from a dogooder, a pimp from a republican, a demagogue from a democrat?

They give us trickery instead of truth, images instead of information, and reassurances instead of reality. More and more, more politicians are leaving us no other choice than to listen to a candidate skeptically, elect him apathetically, then watch him regretfully.

This problem is being faced by Elmer, a friend of mine before he became a babbling bureaucrat about everything but the truth in his department. He has been called to an informal congressional committee hearing on the problem of truth leaks from everyone in his department but him. Ophelia, his secretary, is there, too.

Elmer is being questioned by Senator Venderse, chairman of the committee, who recently came out of hiding when he was reelected by a whopping majority of the 10% who voted so they could keep their government jobs.

"Elmer, are you ready to tell America the truth? Are you ready to finger outside agitators like communists, and inside agitators like poor people; the unemployed; complaining, clamoring consumers; sobbing, snivelling senior citizens; and other unpatriotic minority groups? Have they been telling lies about your department to newspapers and columnists?"

"They certainly have and I certainly am ready, Senator. It's my patriotic duty to defend the nation and my department from those who would tell lies without fear or favor."

"I think you mean you're ready to defend our country and your department by telling the truth without fear or favor."

"That does give me a better image, doesn't it?"

"Now, Elmer. How did you discover that outside and inside agitators were scheming to embarrass you by telling the truth—I mean lies—about you and your department?"

"I discovered my first clue when I saw my secretary, Ophelia, having cocktails with a certain muckraking columnist."

"He was raking in the muck, eh? Had your staff been warned about such treasonable behavior?"

"Yes, sir. I told them if they wanted the truth, they had to have faith in us bureaucrats and in senators and representatives who had been duly elected by promising more promising promises and reassuring voters with more reassuring reassurances."

"How about advertising and finances?"

"Yes, sir! I told them that winners always had more money, more publicity, and more favorable images than losers. Therefore, winners always deserved the faith and respect of the staff!"

"Good for you, Elmer! What did they say?"

"Bra-a-a-ack!"

"You mean they actually stuck out their tongues and razberried you?"

Elmer nods and the tears splash on his Brooks Brothers suit, courtesy of a local company angling for a government contract.

"Oh, Elmer! What a shock that must have been."

"Yes, but I felt better after the FBI took them away."

"Ah! So they're in jail now, eh?"

"No, unfortunately. We have such weak laws the FBI had to let them go. I may even have to hire them back—bra-a-a-acks included."

"Hire them back? Oh, Elmer! Think of America ruled by a bureaucracy that bra-a-a-acks at ancient American customs."

Ophelia, who has been squirming in silence, speaks. "Mr. Chairman."

"No, no, Ophelia. As a suspect, you're not allowed to speak."

"I just want to ask Elmer a few questions."

"Well, all right. A few, just to observe the form of democracy."

"Elmer, how did you get that beautiful suit?"

"I, uh—"

"It came from Brooks Brothers, didn't it?"

"Well, uh—"

Senator Venderse interrupts. "Now, now, Ophelia. Elmer's clothes have nothing to do with this hearing."

"They do when someone else pays for them."

"Someone else?"

"Sure. Cal's Call Girl and Secretary Supply House."

"Cal's? Elmer never told me I had a call house constituent."

"Maybe he didn't want to share his fees with anyone else."

Here's their card."

Senator Venderse reads the card aloud. "Cal's Call Girl and Secretary Supply House. 'For typing or trifling; dictating or diddling, Cal's girls are always on call.' But, Ophelia, why would Cal's give Elmer a free suit?"

"Because a new suit suited his needs. And he suited their needs by filling secretarial and trollopian vacancies from Cal's."

"Can these girls type?"

"Some of them can. Cal's has two types of typists—one type types, and the other type is the other type."

"Can both types take dictation?"

"Sure, for the right price."

"Do they give satisfaction?"

"No congressman has ever complained."

Senator Venderse sneers. "Then why are you complaining?"

"Senator, I'm complaining only about Elmer's secretary, not his pimping. A pimp can be a hardworking bureaucrat like anyone else. But he has no right to keep his pimping a secret from the public. A bureaucrat who keeps a secret is far more dangerous to democracy than one who keeps a stable."

"Maybe he's just trying to protect national security."

"You mean his payoff security."

"Now, now, Ophelia. I'm sure Elmer puts the security of our nation above his payola, don't you, Elmer.....ELMER?"

"What? Oh, I do! I do, indeed, Senator."

"There, Ophelia. See what a patriotic pimp Elmer is. Like the rest of us pi—uh—patriots, he knows that information which is harmless today may be harmful tomorrow."

"Senator, if we followed your reasoning all the way, the public wouldn't be told anything but what you thought they ought to know."

"Exactly, Ophelia. That's what we're working on. If the public knows nothing about congressional conflicts of interest, or CIA and American military movements in foreign countries, or how we voted on our own salary raises, or how we get \$10.00 meals for \$2.75 in congressional restaurants, then we'll have no loud-mouthed dissension to disturb our country's sacred apa—I mean unity."

"But that's a unity that comes only from ignorance. I thought America had the unity that comes from knowledge and faith that our leaders are working equally for all of us."

"Ophelia, have you been reading the Declaration of Independence again?"

"Well, yes, and some of your last campaign speeches."

"Oh, yes, I thought I'd heard idio—ideas like that before."

Ophelia, campaign speeches are the way to election, not to reality. In fact, election is the only reality."

"Why can't you work to make your promises a reality?"

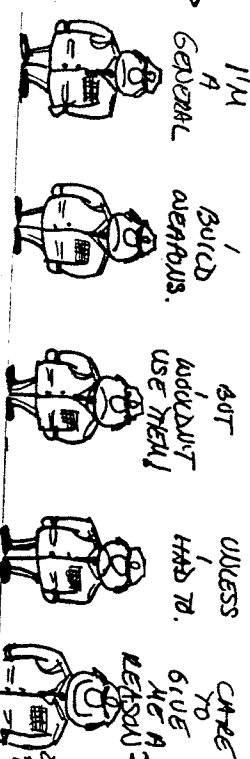
"If all politicians tried to make their campaign promises come true, most of them would be out of jobs in a few years. We'd have utopia. No citizen would be rich, but none would be poor. Everyone would have equal opportunity and freedom. You think most politicians would work themselves out of power, prestige, and profit just for that?"

"Maybe not. But until then, I'm going to work for an initiative requiring politicians to be paid by their employers instead of the taxpayers. That ought to bring one more truthout of hiding."

Fifer by David Hagen

THE CONSULTATION COUCH

by Herr Doktor Boneyardus



This month I will discuss with you one of the most interesting cases of my long and interesting career. His name was Joseph B. When asked if he had any last name he answered no, only a last initial, and I knew that this was a case sent to me from that father-totem figure in the sky and tailor-made for the psychiatric journals. Joseph B. had one overwhelming obsession. Now, as background you must realize that man has, at various times, isolated many different periods as "the Golden Age of Man." Diverse cultures have designated the Classical Greek Era, the 18th Century Age of Enlightenment, the Middle Ages or even the Pre-Civil War South as such. But to Joseph B. the exact identification of the Golden Age of Man and, as an unspoken but certain correlary, the return to it became an all-consuming drive. He quit his job as a key-punch operator, much to the distress of his wife (who, it appears, later left him for that reason) and devoted full time to his studies. He read, collected demographic and sociological studies of all sorts, even gained permission to work with the MIT computer and charted weather, population, income, costs and even mental health statistics.

It was a process which was long and arduous but, to Joseph B.'s mind at least, one which seemed to bear fruit. One night, twitchy after nights of black coffee and cigarettes, he burst up the stairs to inform his Kerry Blue Terrier (his wife had, at this time, not only gone to live with a pimp in Nicaragua, but also had started divorce proceedings by international cablegram) that the Golden Age of Man occurred on August 14, 1892, probably around 6:00 pm, in the area of Teaneck, New Jersey.

Now that he was certain, his mania only increased. He slept two hours a night, and then only to dream about his beloved time. He would talk to himself. "Those were the hours," he repeated endlessly. "Men were men, the weather was fine then and no one wore earth shoes or watched I Love Lucy re-runs on TV." He would collect August 14, 1892 memorabilia—an understandably rare commodity, but he had a rather sizeable collection.

This is when he came to me for treatment. Joseph B. had been arrested for trying to steal the August 14, 1892 Teaneck Herald Picayune from the Chicago Public Library. He would have gotten away with it, too, since no one gave a fig, except that this particular newspaper was on microfilm—thus necessitating that he try to smuggle out a microfilm projector, also, under his coat. He was arrested and a friend of mine on the police force (for a nominal fee) suggested that I be called in as consulting alienist in the case.

The more Joseph B. talked, the more I realized that this was not a normal case. After months of effort I realized my inability to break him of his delusion. His mind, like that of many intelligent psychotics, clung to his preoccupation and defended it tenaciously. I half found myself wondering what things were like back then. I continued to see him on an out-patient basis, but as much as I was happy to have his money I had to admit that it was useless.

One day Joseph B. was quite late to his appointment and, upon phoning his residence, I was informed by a police official of Joseph B.'s death. He had, just that evening past, been slain in an illegal duel with a man who was convinced that the Golden Age of Man was on July 9, 1920, in Des Plaines, Illinois.

A most curious case.

NEXT MONTH: David D. and the case of the Homicidal Chocolate Poodle Division



PATAMAN: grow a little heresy on I chest. Selsie is the Ethnoplum of Jap people. Keystone Coptics. Box 2267, Berkeley, 94702.

Clear Air Turbulence

--Unseen agencies are abroad in the land.
 --Yes, I have felt that, too. They are elusive, always skulking about on the edges of my senses.
 --Seen at night out of the corners of your eyes.
 --That's it.
 --And when you turn to look, there is nothing there.
 --They are gone, vanished.
 --This has to do with the distribution of rods and cones in the retina, the pliability of the eardrum, the resiliency of the skin.
 --The acidity of the mouth, not to mention the color of the aura. You never see them.
 --You can only infer their existence from subtle signs. You must be attuned. Their passage leaves a wake, it rends the warp and woof of the fabric of our lives.
 --By their fruit you shall know them. They lie in wait. Sudden attacks from ambush.
 --Confusion. Fear. Trembling.
 --Later, withdrawal and distrust. Cringing in the corner. Starting at sharp noises.
 --Just yesterday in the newspaper. A new-born infant was found abandoned in a garbage can. Half-dead. The afterbirth. The umbilical cord wrapped loosely around its neck. Crying pitifully.
 --No Moses, he. No reed boat. No pharaoh's daughter. Alas.
 --Yet often they are benificent, that is the enigma.
 --The uncertainty is the thing. You never know when or where or why or what. No journalist could do a story without prevaricating.
 --He would be found out. They story rejected. They'd take away his typewriter.
 --The uncertainty churns in the gut.
 --A bad taste in the mouth. The dread.
 --Nothing you do seems to make any difference. Or, at least, none you can see.
 --Noncontingent reinforcement can cripple. This has been proven at institutions of higher learning. Laboratory tests with monkeys.
 --The sickness unto death.
 --Later, their bodies dissected, examined. The ulcerated gastrointestinal tracts gaped bloodily, confirming their worst fears.
 --Baring clenched teeth seems to help, sometimes.
 --Yes, the snarl of the cornered animal. Pure bravado.
 --Dutch courage.
 --Whistling in the dark.
 --Ave Maria.
 --And so on.
 --Precisely.
 --The charred bodies of the exotic dancers were found among the rubble after the fire. Arson, they said on the news.
 --When I die, my body is to be cremated. The white heat evaporating the water in the body. We are mostly water. Only a small mound of ashes will remain. These are to be put into a brass urn. You may adorn your mantelpiece if you like.
 --It would make a unique knick-knack.
 --It would be handy at cocktail parties, an ice breaker.
 --Whitened knuckles clamped to the steering wheel.
 --Eternal vigilance. This deadens the senses, takes the joy out of life.
 --You are left numb, uncaring. What you need is a plan, a theory. Chart their effects on our lives.
 --From that we could extrapolate. Then we would understand.
 --The outer planets were found in such a manner.
 --Is it true the sun is the center?
 --Yes. There is no necessity for epicycles.
 --So I am told. But what is to become of astrology?
 --That is the question. I only know what I read. I have never seen it myself. With my own eyes. The planets revolving about the sun. Pluto out of the plane of the elliptic.
 --I have seen pictures of electrons. In a book. It said they wre electrons, but I couldn't tell one way or another. This disturbs me.
 --This is not unprecedented.
 --Unseen agencies.
 --Subatomic particles are never seen. They appear only as streaks in a cloud chamber, arcing right or left, gently or in tight pinwheels.
 --Yes, from that we infer, we presume.
 --Faith.
 --Faith is not enough, it seems.
 --No. We must thrust our hand into the dark wound.
 --Disassemble the clock. Gears. Springs. Tension.
 --That was done to the goose.
 --True, they never found any golden eggs. But you need to know. You must do what you can. For yourself, I mean.
 --Yes. The original sin.
 --That is the heartbreak of empiricism.

- Gary S. Rosin

Pope Charlie, the AGNOSTIC

by Gary Ishler

Some people said the election of Pope Charlie was bound to happen sooner or later. It's not so much the man as it's the religious beliefs—or lack thereof—that had to have been chosen sometime. And a philosopher from England was probably as good a choice as any to lead the religious world according to the agnostic's point of view, the point of view that questions accepted beliefs and offers no suggestions except to say "I don't know."

Charlie, whose given name is Michael Dawson, was the ASE's (Agnostic Society of Earth) first and only choice for pope. They lobbied the College of Cardinals, pointing out the differences between Charlie and the candidates representing other religions. The ASE even handed out buttons and bumper stickers announcing Charlie's support of abortion and prostitution, and with sizeable campaign contributions from organizations like the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the Red Brigade and the American Nazi Party, the ASE made it clear they were determined to get the pope this time, after attempts dating back to the days of Newton. Everyone else pretty much gave up when they saw how hard the ASE had worked in this papal election. Even the Jews threw in the towel early when they saw a bumper sticker on one of the cardinal's cars that said, "PLO says Abort Israel from Mother Earth. Vote for Dawson." The presence of the American Nazi Party also contributed to the Jews' withdrawal in their eternal quest for pope.

In his acceptance speech, Pope Charlie—named after Charles Darwin, one of the world's well-known agnostics—stressed the need for the world to question established religious beliefs, rather than making vague, pretentious assumptions. But the Vatican crowd cheered loudest when he announced that he will suggest to world leaders that abortion and prostitution be freely permitted everywhere in the world.

Shunning formality, the new pope plans to replace the traditional papal garb, which he has called "obnoxious", with blue jeans and a flannel shirt, "the thinking man's wardrobe," as he calls it.

Pope Charlie also plans to move the religious capital to London, the mecca of agnostic thought. However, such a move must be approved by the Vatican Council, and that's doubtful because keeping the religious center in Rome also keeps some of the Italian rebels off the streets of the city and inside the Vatican where they can commit crimes in exchange for forgiveness. Moreover, moving the religious capital out of Italy wouldn't set well with the Red Brigade, who supported Dawson's campaign after the Italian Catholics tried to throw all the Red Brigade members out of the Vatican for trying to kidnap nuns and turn them into prostitutes.

Charlie may be the first scholarly Pope. He is a graduate of Dimridge College of Philosophy, has taught at Foxford Academy and written several books, including *Abortion, Prostitution and You* and *The Role of the Agnostic in a Christian Society*. Both books have sold well since Charlie's election as pope.

World political leaders reacted in a variety of ways to the first Agnostic Pope. The Kremlin called Charlie's election "the first respectable decision made concerning Christianity since the crucifixion." The Chinese didn't have much to say except to ask the definition of agnostic.


Surprisingly, the Italians took the selection in stride, but they really had little choice since the Red Brigade did a little arm-twisting to assure Charlie's election. Of course, the British are elated, except the Queen, who feels she's been demoted to second fiddle in the protocol game, but she said, "It's nice to see a Briton made Pope."

The United States is not so pleased, however. The government wouldn't comment, but a presidential adviser blamed it on the Soviets. American Catholics are already plotting to regain the papal throne by counting on the four American saints to perform a number of miracles, aimed at a Vatican coup d'etat. The Catholics claim they are not so much disturbed that this is the first non-Catholic Pope (they would've rather had a Jew than an agnostic), but that without a Catholic in power, they won't be able to continue to overpopulate the world, break the golden rule and all ten commandments every ten minutes and still go to confession once a week and have the slate wiped clean, allowing them to start over again with more energy and determination than before.

Following the election, the ASE said, "it is refreshing to see someone other than a Catholic on the papal throne. Perhaps now religion can be seen as more than confessionals, Catholic Pops and communal wine." By the way, the new pope plans to replace communal wine with tea and vodka, giving everyone a choice when they sit down to discuss agnostic religious beliefs at the Friday evening party (it replaces the Sunday morning blessing).

(GARY THAT WAS FUNNY)
 YEAH WOW

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Self Man

by Philip Hughes

DOG

by Reggie Hayes

"Another successful caper, Batman. Except for the Diddler's lifting your mask. Word will be out."

"Yes: Bruce Wayne. The game is up. 'Commissioner wants to see you in his office—and bring your playbook.'"

"Caped Crusader, it's time for a talk. After your parents, when you holed up in the cave to pursue athletics, hi-tech gadgetry, and revenge, you lost touch."

"With what?"

"Your identity. Izzy Feldstein, the borscht-belt comic, 'died' on stage at Grossinger's. You are Sam Feldstein, doing your own act."

"'Bruce Wayne'?"

"The guy next door."

"But...Look—coming over the Batscope: the Diddler's announced who I am. Bruce Wayne?"

"Check these clippings I've carefully kept from you."

"Always wondered about the holes in the society pages. 'Also present: Bruce Wayne, popular playboy and by night, just possibly, the Batman...' 'What famous idie man about town may be 'mmonlighting' as hero?'"

"When our erstwhile villian got his quick peek, rumor's preconceptions ghosted reality, and..."

"The Diddler self-diddled. I get it. Super-mensch in a rodent suit, is that who I am? Die Fledermaus with too much of Wagner? No wonder something drew me to see 'The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz' five times. Well, at least thanks to the loyal opposition our act is saved. Funny, I always had the image of him as 'criminal mastermind'."

"So has he. You aren't the only one perceived by way of rumor. A fanatic cultivation of a larger-than-life identity makes him not unlike us and other cardboard-cut-out personalities on the contemporary scene: Geraldo Rivera, Howard Cosell, Chuck Barris, Mohammed Ali, Pia Zadora, the gang from Miller's..."

"No one to hide their reviews from them."

"Just call me Sancho Panza."

"To windmills of the mind."

"Otherwise achingly anonymous people reflect and see the prescribed image..."

"I prink, therefore I am."

"...huff and puff their image..."

"Till their house of shticks blows in. Well. Not that our cover has been blown, the life of the real Bruce Wayne—assuming there is such—"

"Real life?"

"Bruce Wayne.—may not be worth a plugged charity ball ticket. Let's get on over there!"

"We can see everything from this gazebo. Look, a car."

"—'Yoo hoo, Brucie! Where are you, you naughty boy?!"—"

"Clint Eastwood, G. Gordon Liddy—and I had to identify with him for macho private-avenger fantasies. Next we'll discover Aunt Harriet is really Tokyo Rose and Commissioner Gordon, Judge Crater. Like 'Invasion of the Body Snatchers': who will be next? Pardon while I wipe the tendrils off my face."

"We will have to take a meeting on Batgirl, Sam. Hormone imbalance. Unfulfilled dreams. An operation."

"Oh no! And I thought that cockiness was just The New Female—like Jane Fonda. Robin, how can we champion the decent folks, when they can't be told from the flakes? How fight for 'what's right', when consensus values are at sixes and sevens and public images reflect other images? Flus, what comics, posters, or films will promote schizoid acting-out?"

"Check your local listings."

"Curiouser and curiouser. Why this contract and Batpen?"

"\$30,000 advance: paperback rights, movie optino, plus merchandising tie-ins. I get 10%. Sign here."

"Put me in the picture."

"You already are. Everyone and his alter ego are into—you should excuse the expression—'self-actualizing', stepping out of various closets after the stylishly deviant. The man with the best symbol is a natural to represent the forces of the id that have been flapping about."

"A fly-by-night pun. 'The mouse that soared'. Just how I always fancied myself."

"Quote: 'Batman's having no past creates problems, for with a past it becomes very difficult to achieve a coherent sense of self. How does one act? What does one believe? Whom does one imitate?'"

"I'll never fly again!"

"Higher than ever. For an audience of identities-in-flux, you can be the point man, a tumbler of personae."

"From this we make a living?"

"You can serve as a clearing house for the dividends people are paying themselves on the stock of fictitious concerns."

"Sounds like a 1929 of the soul, with big plungers leaping out of their own upper stories."

"You can be the role model for what it's like to play life by ear, uphold values while in search of them. The scenario can't miss. You'll be the symbol for the 80's."

"Sam Feldstein?"

"Self Man!"

HUR
DIMENSION

COKE, PEPSI, big difference for Normals,
but "Bob"omatics will laugh last when the
Stark Fist reaches down. —Tribunal Over-
drive.

IGNORE ALIEN ORDER.

dog, n. A domesticated carnivorous quadruped of many varieties, the so-called *Canis familiaris*.

The above definition may satisfy my edition of the Living Webster (as opposed to the Dead Webster?), but it certainly doesn't do the job in warning a potential dog victim of what is in store. In fact, how can a definition help a slightly-educated person such as myself when it requires looking up four of the words used for description? Well, I see no point in excluding illiterates from finding out the meanings of important words so I've decided to rewrite the definition of dog so that even a relative of Barry Goldwater can understand it.

To clear up the first mistake in the Webster definition, a dog may or may not be domesticated. I might as well give you the meaning of domesticate since it's on the same page as dog. It simply means "to convert to domestic use, to tame." I'll buy that. But the question remains—Is every dog domesticated? Judging by the scar in my right leg compliments of a German Shepard in 1973, I think not. Sure, I know tame animals bite, but I'd owned the dog for five years. Which brings me to my next point.

carnivorous, a. Flesh-eating, as certain animals.

Tame and flesh-eating? Okay, I'm no Marlin Perkins, but there seems to be some sort of contradiction here. Perhaps I'm missing something. Flesh-eating. No, I think I understand that term fairly well. I really have no objection to the use of the word "flesh-eating" in describing a dog, but why hide the fact under the alias of carnivorous? Carcassing, maybe. Carnivorous? Save that word for the junior high spelling bee. We're Americans and we can take it—Flesh-eating.

quadruped, n. A four-footed animal.

I didn't think there was going to be any trouble with this description. But that was before I researched the situation more thoroughly. Mingling among dogs for a month, I discovered why the term "quadruped" has disrupted the dog community.

It seems that some dogs, having been caught in rabbit traps, run over by Camaros, and beaten savagely by carnivorous alley cats, do not possess all four of their limbs anymore. This has, in turn, caused them to be thrown out of such social groups as Rotary Dogs and Dogturd of the American Revolution. Those dogs with less than four legs have been shunned by the dog community. When Spike, an Irish setter with an amputated right leg, took his case to the Dog House of Representatives, the discriminations were upheld on the basis that Spike was no longer a dog according to Webster. So obviously, the use of the term "quadruped" must be modified.

Of many varieties. This part of the definition seems clear enough. The problem is that many people tend to view "of many varieties" as referring to the many different breeds of dogs that exist. While this could be what Noah had in mind when he wrote it, I feel I know a bit about dogs and can break down the many varieties so that even the casual dog acquaintance can recognize which type he is running away from.

The first type is what I call the "Hi, I'm your pal" dog. This dog, usually of small or medium size, will affectionately greet a stranger as a long-lost friend. Seldom barking, this dog will jump on a stranger and leave traces of saliva everywhere. This dog I consider domesticated. Also nauseating.

The second type is the "General Custer" dog. Or, in other words—attack, attack, attack. This dog emits what could be termed a strong dislike for any stranger. I prefer to call it a hate without passion. Often a medium or large dog (meaning bigger than you), the "General Custer" more resembles a wolf than a dog, and if there were three little pigs in a brick house he would undoubtedly tear the sucker down and ham it up. This dog I do not consider domesticated. With its tail never wagging, "General Custer" refuses to make friends with anyone and often keeps his owner on a leash.

I call the third type of dog the "L.A. Beach Bum". This dog won't bother a stranger as long as the stranger doesn't bother him. The "Bum" will look at a stranger for five to seven seconds before heaving a sigh and resuming an almost lifeless gaze into space. The biggest move this dog makes is when he walks from the shade tree to his food dish and back. This dog wouldn't even bit Al Haig. Domesticated, but also stupid.

The final, and most unpleasant, type is the "But you looked like a tree" dog. This dog, usually old and somewhat senile, approaches a stranger for only one reason. Instead of thinking that a stranger is a long, lost friend, this type is more likely to think the stranger is a long, lost fire hydrant. This dog is domesticated, but short on etiquette. Enough on the varieties.

Canis familiaris. For those of us who have never studied Latin, this term may be cause for puzzlement. According to our faithful Webster, *canis* is listed under canine and means "dog". *Familiaris* is under familiar, and means "a household". So a dog is part of the dog household. Highly enlightening, wouldn't you say?

Now that we have figured out what the Webster definition really means the only thing left for us to do is put together a better, more understandable definition. We must stage a protest rally in order to get our dictionaries revised. And, of course, we will have to feature the only popular musician giving dogs a fair shake with cover art, Rick Springfield. Backing him, naturally, will be Bow Wow Wow.

dog, n. A sometime tame, sometime rabid, flesh-eating animal with four or less legs of many varieties (none worth owning) and belonging to the canine family. Often answers to the name Spot.

* Arthur Asa Berger, "The Archaic Ego", *The Comic-Stripped American*. Baltimore, 1973.

SAYS YOU

(LETTERS)

Dear Elayne,
Enjoyed, as usual, the latest (#11) INSIDE JOKE. In fact, I thought the fiction was greatly improved over the last several issues. I particularly enjoyed IN MOTHER'S IMAGE by Ronald S. Flowers and SOONER OR LATER IT ALL GETS REAL by Dean Tomasula. That's an awful big piece of blotter paper in the last-mentioned story, though (the size of a postage stamp). Most of the blotters I've eaten were the size of a pencil eraser. Perhaps he's from Texas?

If you keep up this maniacal begging for comedy & satire, I may just be forced to dig up such things as the Horrible Space Operas perpetuated by the staph of the Underground Pony Express. Be warned.

So, according to your acknowledgements... the deadline for submissions to the next IJ is ten days before the postmark on the current issue? I know some people work with tight deadlines, but that's ridiculous. (Or perhaps you need a calendar where the months are spelled out instead of abbreviated "Ju."...?)

I dunno what Chris Downey found when he was LOOKING FOR SARCASM, but I think I missed it, whatever it was. I know you don't edit for style or anything, but would it be too much to edit for coherency?

Kerry remains bizarre, and Zuckerman incomprehensible, as ever. If I didn't know better I'd swear you had a computer programmed to write those two columns, pulling subjects from a dictionary. The styles are so distinctive and standardized...

The second issue of FACTSHEET FIVE is out... Available for a nice letter and/or SASE, while they last. Nextish is either going to be mimeograph or offset—this ditto machine is really getting a bit cranky in its old age.

Closing thought for the day: Robert Andrey (author & anthropologist) has suggested the existence of what he calls the "social consciousness", composed of the sum total of the minds of the race. Without such a gestalt mind housing a body of knowledge and functioning much like a brain only using people for neurons, the technology and culture of today's world might not be possible. What I want to know is, when did the social consciousness first develop the paranoid schizophrenic personality which characterizes it today?

Tongue-in-cheek,
NEKE GUNDERUD
273 Huntington Avenue
Rydal Park, WA 02116

(Glad you noticed about that deadline, Mike. Yes, it's true. That's the way IJ deadlines always work. And if I edited for coherency, that would kill the beauty, nay, very purpose of this 'zee rag! Just ask a Philip Hughes story...)

Dear Elayne,
Thank you for IJ #11. As in previous issues, the fiction is very good, each selection having its own particular strangeness. The cartoon on pg. 13, showing Ronald Reagan reading an issue of IJ, is particularly appropriate for this issue, featuring as it does a magnificent anti-Reagan diatribe by Clay Geerdes—Reagan really should read this, just to find out what people are saying about him (and consequently die of apoplexy).

The correct answer to the PHIL OCHS IN CONCERT Quiz is: The Sniper.

If Paul Zuckerman will forgive me for venturing an answer to a question he specifically directed to his female readers, let me suggest that the greater size of ladies' eyes and teeth can be attributed to the presence of special growth hormones added to eye shadow and lipstick. Experiments have shown that in those rare cases where women do not use makeup for eyes and lips, but instead put lipstick on their ears and eyeshadow on their noses, the eyes and teeth remain of normal size but the ears and noses expand. (Exactly why lipstick seems to affect the teeth more than the lips, is still one of the perplexing mysteries of medical science.)

DAVID PALMER
1811 Tansard Ave., #22
Hollywood, CA 90028

Dear Elayne,
Thank you for the latest issue of "INSIDE JOKE". I enjoyed reading, as always after reading it, I discuss it with my good friend, Charles T. Smith.

It's exciting to read the Firesign Theatre material in IJ!! I don't really care much for quizzes and such but always enjoy any mention or recollection of the Firesign Theatre. As I wrote before, I'm puzzled by the minor success the group had outside phonograph albums and how the visualizations of their material were never on the par of the radio show or albums. I hope you continue and enlarge your focus on the Firesign Theatre!

DAVID NRUZ
3112 Holmes St.
Minneapolis, MN 55408

(I agree, Dave, I would like nothing better than to enlarge focus on Firesign, but information and activity seems to be at a minimum right now. I'll report on the new album as soon as I know. If anyone else has any info of interest, please tell me.)

Elayne dear,

...Last issue (#10) was neat as usual. Did you know that IJ fits very nicely into the standard Geometry textbook? Well it does! And thank the hoodoo spirits that be for that—I'd go gaga-gaga without some of that umbral cord... I liked Brian Catanzaro's letter about muzak and trends. Oh, this complex! Although I never liked XTC he's right about their lyrics—they hit home. Basically and generally music of today really bites the big one. I mean 90% of it is out and out dogged, and I am being kind when I say it is an excrement of a living thing: most of it sounds like it doesn't even deserve the right to live. But (there's always a but when you're talking about shit!) (smooth pun eh?) (Yah, I'm a punist!) (OK, I'll stop!) some of it is great. Most of the stuff falling under the GREAT category is underground. No, not dead and buried, but out from the lame John Q. and his dunning wife Marsha (as in Get Hip Quick!) Publique, and some people call it punk. I don't really like "punk", it's a throwback to '77 (which I really don't remember too well even though I was 12) England/Sex Pistols—a lame term for a really good "movement". La-belling is for canned peas—so what if I have funny looking hair? So what if I wear black boots and chains? Fuck away if you don't like it!!! Yeah, that's what I tell 'em and then they say "Oh yeah, she's a typical punk rocker—hate hate hate." Anger is powerful, hate and negative emotions can move more mountains than love and peace, especially in today's world. Punks are like mirrors—they challenge blind hatred and ignorance. We like to be hated so we can show them how fucked in the head they are. Plus we like to look bizarre to have fun and be zany. Now, we even laugh once in awhile! That's why I love IJ—cause it makes me chuckle with mirth! Shit, if you're 16 and can't laugh ya got big problems, or any age for that matter. And Elayne, you goddess of guffaws that you are, you have recognized that fact and have made light of it even further(!!!), and you should be com-

mended for it.

Next issue (of Carly's GREAT 'Punkline' THE CHURCH OF THE LATTER DAY PUNKS) will have an interview with a local clairvoyant, the usual punk/hardcore stuff and other niceties. If you print this letter may I take the liberty to say:

HEY PEOPLE! Thanks for writing but unless you send me stamps and/or money I can't send you diddy squat back because I can't get a job in this town and subsequently am penniless, dig?

Thank you, dear girl, for your time.
One last note, I offer that everyone should reread (or read for the last time) the Ten Commandments, especially the one about bearing witness to false idols. Don't look up to anyone, they're not worth it. Just because they're on a stage, a few inches closer to heaven, doesn't mean they really deserve to go there. Remember:

Elvis Was Godpuss
CAREY KOSHERSTEIN
611 Lawrence Avenue
Westfield, NJ 07090

Dear E.W./K.M.G./J.J.:

JEEZ! This letter w/ready sounds like an Army training film...back to basics again...is my paper on straight?

So, I'm putting a stopper on the stories in favor of the "Letters" column. You see, Ms. Editor, I had this dream in which you had to rent a "U-Haul" Glider in order to transport "Operation IJ" to California.

Unfortunately, the glider was cut loose from the 747 by an excommunicated Mormon in 'h'r' red-flag attempt to offer the residents of Salt Lake City a source of alternative humor. (Actually, the glider crashed near Provo, yallowing the teeth of most on-lookers, including 90% of the Osmond family...)

I woke up in a cold sweat because you were so engrossed within the in-flight movie that you paid no attention whatsoever to the steward (myself in the dream) as he attempted to divert your glazed stare towards the window. SCARRRR!

Speaking of "fresh starts"...and I should have mentioned it earlier...the on-going "war-of-its" (Palter vs. Mishaan) encourages readers of the "Letters" column to clean the ol' magnifying glass! (A-h-h-h you guys...)

SURE DID LIKE THE MOVIE REVIEW OF CAT PEOPLE (X #10) (The trolley car scene sure made me jump out of my seat...)"GRAND GUIGNOL" (at its finest!) Of course, I was the only person who remained in the theater during the credits...finis...and Bowie's music... (KUDOS PILAR)

Glad to learn that you have a backlog of fiction. Maybe writers like that Tauscher guy (who keeps changing his name as he slips deeper into the abyss of mediocrity) will go back to preparing for the revolution...lubricating one's "SOUTHEAST-ASIA-WAR-GAMES-SURPLUS-AK47" can be fun...mmm...forgot the ammo... OH, WELL

SO MUCH FOR MY CRITIQUE OF MAY'S IJ...EXIT LAUGHING
In my best imitation of a serious IJ fan and friend and "letter writer":

Best wishes on the move to California! Special thanks for the "free space" in IJ for my "stuff"! But most of all...thanks for being "U-ALL"...laugh it up now...this is supposed to be a fun rag!

Sincerely (too often),
J.A. TAUSCHER
Knoxville, Tennessee
(the "world's fairest" city)

Dear Elayne;
...Now as for IJ#11, I can only say that I have mixed feelings. The art & strips as always are a delight, though I can agree with the problems you have with the work of Tony Ballard, teenage male fantasy seems out of place in IJ. Kerry Thornley continues to be a strange case, to the point of being scary.

Short stories that I enjoyed were by Gerry Reith, Mike Hacker, Jim Tauscher, Dean Tomasula, and Ronald Flowers (at least until the end of the story, as the last two paragraphs ruined the entire effect for me). The review of Lettermans' show was enjoyable, and one of these days (how many times have I said that?) I hope to see it in person.

Hope a lot of people see fit to send along a few extra bucks to help you out, and that we'll be seeing IJ around for awhile. Take care. Lotsa love & luck, STEVEN CHAPUT
2 Indian Hill Road
Westport, CT 06880

There have also been quite a few interesting comments coming from the replies to my IJ-a-thon. Now, since these folks didn't know I was going to excerpt their quotes, but I want to credit them anyway, the comments will only contain readers' initials afterward. Elayne, I can sympathize with your financial needs. I've been trying to break into freelance writing while living on Social Security and rapidly disappearing savings...even gave up poker. No sales yet, but at least I'm saving some money from my pokerless life.

Of course, I'm better off than William Saroyan who once wrote that he submitted stuff to publishers for 15 years before some editor got careless and bought one of Saroyan's items. After that Saroyan said he sold all his rejections without any rewriting.

One time he said he was so disgusted that he wrote on a rejection slip, "I reject your rejection!" and sent it back to the editor. -GL

Dear Elayne: In lieu of my third bottle of Reunite this morning or giving my 15-year-old sister a donation toward contraceptive devices, I am enclosing this check...to help you meet your massively hemorrhaging printing costs.

This obviously worthy cause was brought to my attention by a Mr. _____, with whom I have explored the outer depths of the universe. He is in the printing business (I am a newspaper editor, in spite of what this would lead you to believe) must halt the further deterioration of sensibility brought on by the Reagan administration.

Please find contentment in the knowledge that you have taken me away from an afternoon of writing about labor disputes.

The check is good, too.

Says _____ "I thought everyone in New Jersey was doing that."

Oh, oh... -XZ

Dear Elayne, Sorry to hear of your distress. I think you should ask for subscriptions. That would give you a more secure base -XZ

(Gee, I thought I did!)

Dear Elayne: Just remember this should I need to hit you up for spare change someday...How things get better. -7F

Dear Elayne—There's nothing I hate more than creative people getting screwed—it really bothers me. Mostly because I am one!

Hey, it's awful to think of IJ dying on its anniversary ish... (What anniversary? October makes two years) You're right, it's a living entity to me, too and many others. I don't know about anybody else, but I think thousands of dollars should flow your way! No...millions!

IJ is not dead—it's just a victim of Reaganomics! -3P

Dear Elayne—Yours was a courageous and loving effort—it took guts to write such a letter...Most faneds ("faneds"? simply vanish into thin air, but IJ is rather a communal effort, and I know it has a large impact on your life, social as well as intellectual...Anyway, I absolutely think you can take advertising, you should. It will not make you some sort of heinous semi-pro. For that matter I believe Public TV should take (and indeed, they are planning it) some restrained advertising. You would not like to become a constant mendicant like Public TV and Radio (WNYC), would you? They now say they "only" seek funds 4 TIMES A YEAR! As if that weren't bad enough, the truth is they do extra boosts at least four more times. Take advertising!

Finally, Elayne, while I do look the issue over, I'm an ancient fan, and IJ is for the youngsters...the issues are better used for

younger fans, so I release you from a costly obligation—but I wish you good fortune, with IJ and everything else! -3Z
(Well, I did ask for it. As Steve constantly declares, "Hey, I'm just a kid." At least you didn't say "As I've told you, I don't actually read INSIDE JOKE—it doesn't rank high on my list of priorities. My impression of INSIDE JOKE is that it's cute (OR)", which must be the impression received by everyone else who never read it, eh? (I can afford this sarcasm, since DR does not read this paper.) As for advertising, were I to charge for that, I'd have to omit free plugs, and I haven't the heart nor the desire to do so. Everyone deserves publicity (corollary to Warhol's Theory!)

Dear Elayne, I hope the enclosed helps. Please, please don't send me a T-shirt, U-shirt...INSIDE JOKE must go on! Best wishes to you and IJ. Foghorn Inspector XZ-29999 -7S

Dearest Elayne, Received your form letter. Not a pun or inside joke to be found—now dreadfully dreary! Don't panic! -4Z

Elayne, seems more and more popular and literate publications (that seems almost like a paradox) are being forced to close up shop because of inflation, or the absurd economic policies of the resident Bonzo administration.

I, along with lots of others I'm sure, don't want to see IJ become another victim of the humorless, militaristic state of affairs in this country. Business and industry can't prevail forever.

The more I think about it, the more I'm convinced that it's all a scam, a form of economic censorship, forcing the smaller, alternative publications out of business by making it more difficult to operate on a sound financial scale. Now-extinct government subsidies for the arts don't help.

Forgive me for my long-winded dissertation, but this is one matter of my blood...IJ is providing an outlet for writing that many other editors consider too obscure or nonsensical. May INSIDE JOKE live as long as humor itself, and even that has a place in the upcoming post-war period of yours, GZ

Dear Elayne, I received your letter a couple days ago in which you outline the financial problems you have in putting out IJ. I wish I knew some simple secret I could reveal to you that would let you put out the zine "in your spare time for pennies a day!" Unfortunately such a secret doesn't exist unless you can over-compromise (such as having five pages of ads for every page of editorial matter).

The costs that you discussed in your letter are exactly the reason why I, myself, refuse to initiate a regular fanzine obligation. Basically I'm happy doing things, and whether or not someone reads my words or sees my drawings is irrelevant—this makes it easy to keep outgo-for-fanzines to a minimum by printing only 20 or so copies of a zine and doing so not to any schedule.

Regarding your situation (again), there isn't much sweetness and light, but there are some good things that can result if you take the long view. You are now in a position (whether or not you like it) of finding out just who your real friends are. You'll see who's willing to pay real money for IJ—and this includes those you trade with...Aie, if you haven't already, you'll start making harsher judgments about what is to be included in IJ. I think the sole complaint I would have is that most of your contributors should write leaner material. I detect a small (but unpleasant) tendency on the part of some of your contributors to ramble.

Are you familiar with Fran Leibowitz's books or her column in Interview magazine?...Metropolitan Life and its companion volume (Social Studies) are the only 2 books I would recommend to anyone. The short essays in them are my ideal and if you had one contributor with such genius, I'd buy extra IJ's to pass out as Christmas presents. Fran Leibowitz is the one woman on earth I'd marry as is without knowing anything more about her than her writing. I think she's brilliant, and reading her stuff is pure pleasure. People like that justify the existence of all the anal retentives around... -CZS

Dear Elayne...Received your letter today. Don't feel bad about asking outright for the cash. Readers will rather see IJ succeed than disappear.

You have a very important publication and it must continue. You have the energy and organizational skill to carry it forward when it catches on. In years to come you will look back at the rocky days and wonder "how did I do it?" Even if you stopped publication right now you would have the satisfaction of having produced something which communicated, affected and moved many people.

I hope you can find a reasonable printer. A good copy machine and a supply of paper is the same as gold these days.

You may lose a few people by charging but that is the reality of the situation.

Best of the best, Elayne, WZ
Ok, Sucko, I got your letter (yes, it was distasteful, worse than Diet Shasta Orange Soda). I can empathize with your monetary problems (and you wanted to know what I wouldn't start a newsletter?), as I am near (or actually) broke myself. No job, comprende?

I've always appreciated my copies of INSIDE JOKE, and I've also appreciated that they came to me near free, cos I've got no cash for such stuff. But I guess it's time to pay the piper, right? I've enclosed \$ of my hard stolen money so you can get out of hock (my grandpa's colon operation can wait, right?). Consider it an advance on issues of IJ—I know you don't guarantee that there will be a next issue after this one, but at least I won't be in a superior being. If IJ doesn't make it, at least I won't feel guilty. Hell, I won't pull the plug.

Ever consider holding a telethon? I swear your letter sounded like Channel 13... -5X

Hi Elayne, Sorry to hear of your financial straits. It's a sad state of affairs for someone as generous of her time and money as yourself and I truly hope you can squeak through and INSIDE JOKE will live again...To that end, find enclosed my own pocket-crumbs. Hope it helps, meager as it is. Yours, WZ

Elayne, Hokay, here's da doe, it's all I can spare (truly) but your letter was so tastefully written and wow, gee, I just would hate to see IJ bite dust, besides I surely can dig on the trip, on far spare—money is a bummer. The Pepsi Challenge is adding my mind... -GZ

Dear Elayne—What is distasteful is an economic system that inevitably requires letters of the type you have written, the same way a nuclear bomb is distasteful, though the measures needed to deal with the aftermath(s) by merely half-melted "survivors" are simply dictates of diminished options. My blessings go to John Calvin and Adam Smith. May they and their kind be seated ever in the interminable yawn of heaven, while the rest of us undumb dreamers fall to under their damage. Really, though, what does one expect when Washington's No. 1 is a half-assed matinee idol with a 3-movie mentality for budgeting?...what can I say? Keep dreaming? Absolutely. I happen to be president of Local 359-2383 of Amalgamated Pipe Dreamers Union here...if you'd like to join, just let us know. We'll send you a membership card with our motto fully embossed: If It's a Freudian Pipe Dream/If Must Be A Phallity. Good Luck! -50V

(continued herewith on your poetry page herein...)

Odds & Pieces/Bits & Ends

by Rory Houchens

What O&P/B&E will do, boys and girls, is informally introduce you to recordings that may interest (as well as aggravate) you, but are ones that you would probably otherwise overlook even if they were available at the local, metropolitan shopping mall or your favorite record bar.

First up we have LOVELY LITTLE RECORDS (about \$12 from Lovely Music Ltd., 463 West Street, NY, NY 10014, but write for a catalog first just to be sure), six 7-inch, 33-1/3 rpm records with an accompanying, informative booklet all poured into a groovy, sturdy, tidy box. Each disc represents the (sometimes) complicated, but (usually) well-thought-out concepts and sound experiments of an by a particular artist. John Bischoff offers a side of car engine noise (four tracked) and a side of microcomputer workings. Record #2 belongs to Paul DeMarinis where he uses the Pygmy Gamelan (his own invention) in two quite different settings. Environmental sounds, conversations and random radio and TV transmissions are used by Phil Harmonic on his own little record which he hopes will "help to demystify the relationship between people and art and technology." "I Was A Hero" (from The Mayan Debutante Revue) and "How To Be Very Popular" (excerpt) are soundtracks (more or less) from larger, multi-media works (more or less) written and performed by Frankie Mann (on the fourth disc, no less) utilizing bass, organ, synthesizer, voices and tape editing. The fifth pair of sides showcase Maggi Payne's synthesizer compositions, "Lunar Earthrise" and "Lunar Dusk". And finally, the last record is devoted to "Blue" Gene Tyranny, who in turn devotes his two sides to Harvey Milk, the slain San Francisco politician and gay rights champion. The first part, "The Action," is a recording of a Harvey Milk speech with slight electronic embellishments (ringing filters) added that sound like beautiful, but almost silent, bells. Part two, "The Feeling," is made of a "constantly changing memory circuit which accumulates the bell-like sounds, re-cycles and intermodulates them in waves butterflying across a stereo field," which creates a calm, peaceful atmosphere perfect for contemplating one's inner self or the price of protected freedom. Sound like fun?? You bet!!

For you electronic, anti-music buffs out there, we have NO IMAGINATION by Gregory Jones & Roy Sablosky (\$6.50 from Vinyl Records, P.O. Box 55508, Valencia, CA 91355). In the words of Greg Jones, "the pieces progress from the most gentle and consonant to the most ferocious and abstract," and let me tell you brothers and sisters, truer words were never spoke. Jones' "No Moon No Mirror" with its soothing mood and shifting pitches that fade in and out recalls Eno at his more melodic, ambient moments. But don't get too comfortable, because Roy Sablosky's "Intro (Summer Names)" follows with a chaotically mesmerizing mix of droning feedback, shadowed voice and "transducer" guitar. Side two follows the same format. "Diverted To Frankfurt" (for twelve pulse generators) (by Jones) sounds like an excerpt from a modern war, from phased machine guns to swooshing helicopter blades alternately beating the air and chopping off foreign heads. Still it somehow manages to be relaxing. The most radical composition, "Forced" wraps up the lp. While listening to this Sablosky number, I found it easy to imagine that it was: boiling grease ready for body dunking; an active volcano; an amplified digestive tract; a Geiger counter; and a visit to a cat box. NO IMAGINATION is not always easy to sit through, but after one listen, this electronic adventure is not easily forgotten.

Fans of pop music in general and Richard Hell and Chris Stamey in particular will be glad to see the formation of Alan Betrock's Shake Records. Shake has released an EP of four Hell tunes—two written with Tom Verlaine and recorded by an embryonic, three-piece version of Television called the Neon Boys. An adolescent interpretation of "Love Comes In Spurts" differs a whole bunch from the Void Oid barn burner and Verlaine hadn't yet allowed his guitar passions to fully mature so this side is more historical than hit bound. But the two new tunes with the Void Oids (Part III) will steam your shorts for sure. "Don't Die" and "Time" squeeze conventional pop exercises into energetic new wave workouts for some of the best modern music since the first Hell album. Stamey's first Shake release is a 45 with his new group (actually some old friends from North Carolina), the dB's. "Black and White" by Peter Dinklage (who had a tasty rock/pop/rockabilly 45 on Stamey's extinct Car Records) is straightforward pop music, intelligent and uncomplicated. The trouble begins with Stamey's "Soul Kiss." Impossible to pin down or categorize, Chris Stamey's music has always been a couple of miles ahead of other so-called "pop" songwriters' tunes. On "Soul Kiss," the vocals sound like they don't quite go with the music, and the whole thing seems a bit out of whack, but that's what makes it such a delight. A dB's album is expected shortly. The Shake discs can be had for \$2.50 each from Shake Records, 186 5th Ave., New York City, NY 10010.

NEXT ISSUE: O&P/B&E continues w/ Chadbourne, X, Wippo, and Living Chicago Blues...

The Hot Air Balloon DIET

by Steven Ormiston

After reading the latest diet-sensation book you might say I'm fed up. The Beverly Hills Diet by Judy Mazel is the current let-down in a long string of bestselling diet dreams that promise you the moon and instead deliver three solid weeks of green cheese or some equivalent alimentary nightmare.

I invite you to read the following evidence and join me in swearing off forever gimmick diets whose marketing push far outstrips their day-to-day plate level appeal. I call all of them hot air balloon diets because they're just a literary version of hot air and in the end ninety-seven percent of use are still balloons.

Here, for example, are a few of the promises found in the first part of The Beverly Hills Diet:

--Followers of the diet "...not only acknowledge their food fantasies, they fulfill them..."

--"You too can learn to eat what you like, what you crave, what you want—without getting fat."

--"You can be as compulsive as you need to be."

--"On what diet can you eat popcorn, pizza, spareribs, cheese-cake, and ice cream and still lose weight?"

I don't know about you, but by the time I'd read this far I was getting hungry. When Mazel assures us that "diets are not realistic," meaning other ones, of course, I thought maybe her Conscious Combining principle would finally provide the answer to eating your cake and your ice cream, too.

But oh my goodness, the bigger the bubble, the louder the pop when it bursts. You'd better be well-fed to help cushion the shock when you get to Chapter IV and discover that "during the first week, you will only be having fruit. Don't forget to wait two hours before changing from one fruit to another."

C-r-r-r-r-ash, man.

Day 4, for example, is all watermelon, or, if that's not available, you can substitute strawberries. I hope Day 4 doesn't fall for you on January 12 if you live in Cleveland. And that two-hour break—I shudder to think of how many good people will snap and commit their first felony during that horrific transition period between Fruit and More Fruit.

In Week Two, the menu expands to include one-time appearances by bagels, corn, and baked potatoes, but Fruit remains omnipresent. By the end of Week Two you should be rooting for the Medflies.

On Day 19 you are allowed a steak or a lobster, which stirs in me a vision of the stroke of midnight unleashing desperate hordes who stuff raw meat into their mouths like the zombies from "Night of the Living Dead". Perhaps diets like this even offer a potential explanation for cattle mutilations.

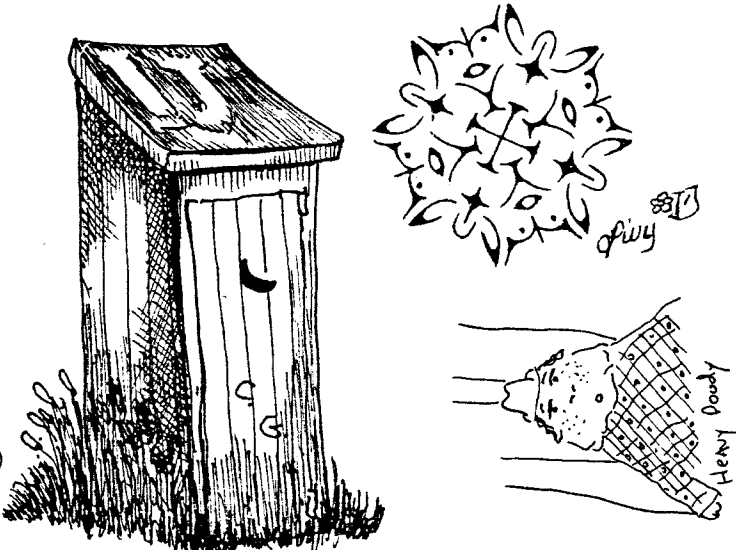
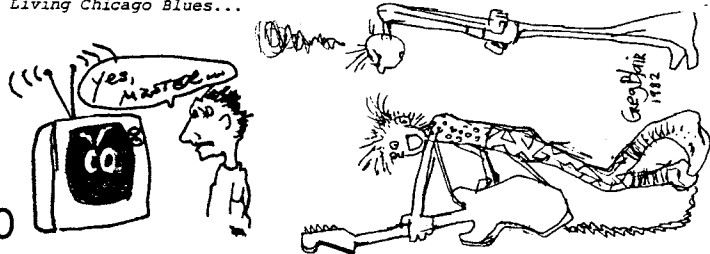
I could tell you about Weeks Four, Five, and beyond but what's the point? If you love to eat, as I do, you know damn well you're not going to last on this diet any longer than you would on salt water.

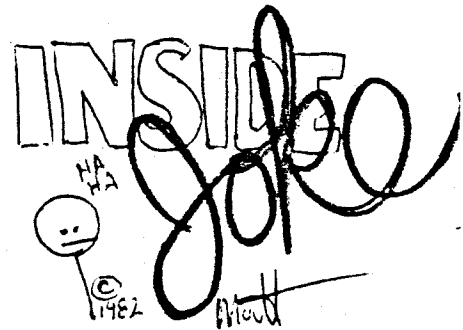
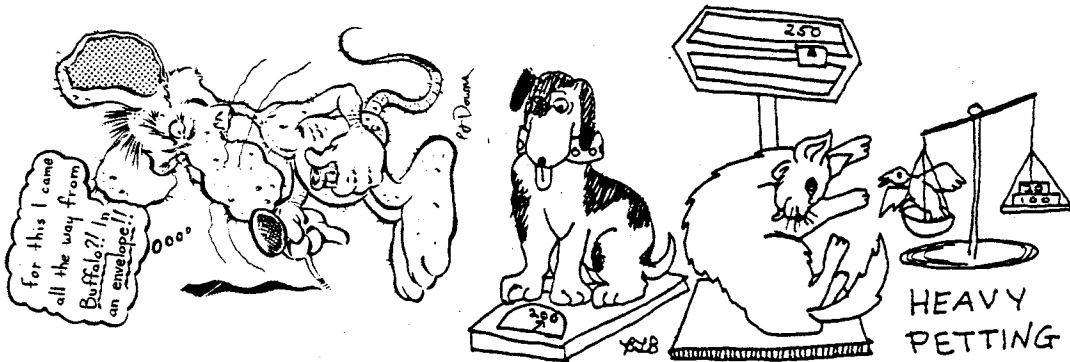
I hate to tread on the toes of a multimillion dollar segment of the publishing industry, but the fact is you need another diet book like you need a scale that reads heavy.

If you want to lost weight, I offer as an alternative the D.E.S. M. Diet. The abbreviation stands for four painful words: Don't Eat So Much. Ouch! It's like being hit with a blunt instrument, isn't it? All right, let's give it a little more finesse and say that you should cut out the junk and stick to nutritional standouts at the same time you're not eating so much. Hmm, I guess that only makes it worse.

Oh well. Forget diet books and complicated systems and fads in any case. Their main purpose is to make a profit by stroking the human need for shortcuts or an easy way out where none exists. You can pocket that profit instead by writing D.E.S.M. on an index card and letting it collect dust on the shelf in place of a \$10.95 book.

And, as a reward for your intelligence and frugality, I suggest you order a pizza with everything on it.





TO: All concerned parties
FROM: C&B Mat.
RE: The PEST Project
DATE: 16 May 82

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CRASH & BURN COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS

"If we can't do it, we'll screw it up"

The PEST (Permanent Electronic Storage Transcription) Project is the brainchild of one of our more brilliant, but sadly aberrant, employees: Senior Programmer Harrison Dooley. Dooley claims to have experienced a "vision" in which the "Goddess Eris" appeared in the form of a scintillating chartreuse fire hydrant and told him to bring technology to the downtrodden masses. Though Dooley had to be committed to the Richard M. Nixon Home for the Terminally Kneebled (from which he has subsequently disappeared under mysterious circumstances), C&B management decided that, whatever their source, Dooley's ravings had a kernel of truth, not to mention possible profit, in them.

Basically, the assumption of the PEST project is that there is an ever-growing underground of libertarians, discordians, punk-rockers, maniacs, flat-earthers and other strange folks who could benefit from modern data-storage techniques. It seems unfair for The Establishment to have all the computer records while their detractors scratch notes on the back of old napkins; besides, there is a non-zero probability of The Revolution putting these wackos into power, in which case the PEST project will prove to have been a prudent hedge for the stockholders of C&B.

Thus, the staff members assigned to PEST have, in a sense, "gone native" and undertaken to mimic the behaviours of a number of peculiar sub-societies with an interest in communicating with one another. Currently the PEST staff has started to publish listings of contact addresses and available literature; they hope to have an electronic bulletin board "on-line" within the next few months to encourage further communication between these groups.

Stockholders may rest assured that rumours of Harrison Dooley's reappearance on the PEST staff and subsequent subversion of our Junior Programmers to odd values are completely unfounded. We remain in control of the entire project (if they ever start returning our calls again).

Make strangeness work for YOU!

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CRITIQUE

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL

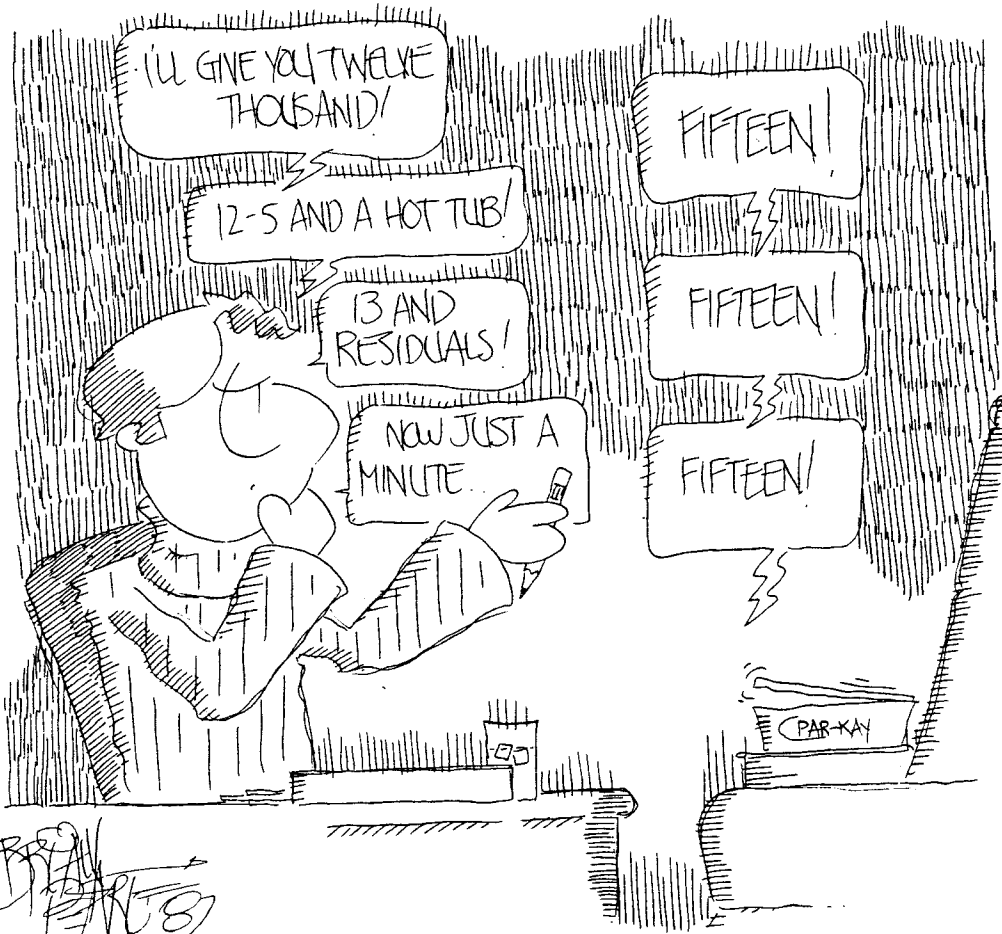
DOUBLE ISSUE (SPRING/SUMMER) CONTAINS:

Secret Societies; The Hollow Earth Controversy; Aghartha and Shambhala: King of the World and the Subterranean Empire; Notes on Nazis: UFOs, Holy Lance, Vril and Thule Societies; A World Challenge: Japan, OPEC and the Silicon Revolution; Myths of Marxism; Reflections on Left-Wing Conspiracies; The Origins of Conspiracy Theories; Freemasonry, the Illuminati and Revolution; Perpetual Motion: Reflections on Entropy, Utopia and the Conspiracy; Review of Philip K. Dick's science fiction; and more. Letters, bibliography and book reviews.

SEND \$4.50 (POSTAGE) TO CRITIQUE, 2364 VALLEY W., SANTA ROSA, CA 95401.

SUBJECT FOR NEXT ISSUE: A CRITICAL REFLECTION OF THE 60s AND 70s: WHO AND WHAT WAS CREATING US AND WHY?

Accepting Manuscripts, Diary Entries, Dissertations, Cartoons and Book Reviews. Send no later than September 1 to: CRITIQUE, 2364 Valley West Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95401.



THE ONE-LEGGED A

by Richard C. Dixon

The first time I saw the European seven my English instructor flicked it on the blackboard with a lackadaisical twist of his wrist. The thing looked like this: 7. I thought it was a one-legged A (an F turned around) and he was listing the grades for our last composition caper. He always listed the grades in alphabetical order. Because my name came first, I began to worry a little. But when he scribbled a nine behind that funny looking mark, I thought he was writing a Math problem, so I leaned toward the girl sitting next to me and inquired: "What is that strange mark in front of the nine?"

"That's the way they make their sevens in Europe," she said. "I see," I said.

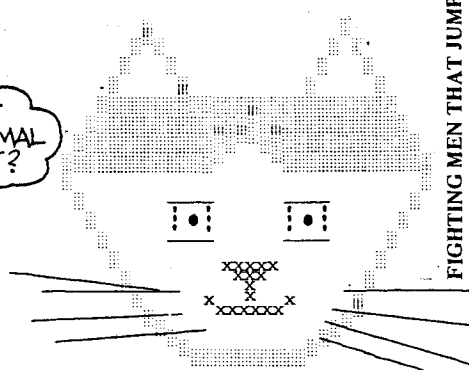
Our English instructor was a stodgy chap who taught Freshman composition and was mad as hell because he had to do it. His desire was to teach a course in Supernatural literature. The English department programmers, a cliquish group, would not allow him to do so. He didn't have tenure, so he was not eligible for the committee that organized curriculum, or any other committee. He relayed this information to us the first day of class, and he told us that teaching Freshman composition was an insult to his writing and explicative ability. As a result, he took his anger out on us by demanding that we write themes about fantasy. His favorite topic was about oestrous women caught in the clutches of psychopathic men who had unearthly powers; powers that compelled them to subdue those fidgety damsels in foggy moors, ploxae them, and then extract their souls. The instructor was rumored to be a chaser of women, and it was reported that his odd-ball activities lured sycophantic women into his trap; then he would put the boots to them. My tastes in reading and writing leaned toward realistic stories of people struggling against cryptic forces which kept them shackled, so it was only natural that the instructor and I would never hit it off.

In any case, for our next writing assignment after I had seen that funny mark on the blackboard, the instructor demanded that we write an original paper about some current event and give it a supernatural twist. In trying to fulfill that stringent assignment, I wrote a piece I called "The Elusive Monster." I had been reading newspaper accounts of a nimble, hairy creature who was causing fear, loathing and gooseflesh across a large section of central Illinois. No one had actually seen anything other than a shadow, but people imagined all kinds of bugaboos: the Abominable Snowman, Sasquatch, and some people even wondered if it could be The Loch Ness Monster! The newspapers had gotten into the spirit of the phenomenon by reporting, with tongue-in-cheek sobriety, that several federal agencies were after this creature. He was wanted by the Internal Revenue Service for not filling in 1040 form, The Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization wanted him because he may have slipped into the country illegally, and The Selective Service Administration, now that they were considering starting the draft again, wondered if he was eighteen, and, if so, had he registered for the draft?

I added that the creature's unseen presence had generated behavior more strange than a man wearing a straight-jacket and suffering from jock itch. In addition, I wrote that two people who were searching for a place for romance, discovered such a bower in a forest preserve, and their erotic noises got them shot at by a group of "born again" fanatics who were searching for the monster. Moreover, the gun control lobby got a hold of this information, and they cited it as another reason for a gun control bill.

When I turned my paper in, my English instructor didn't see the humor in it. After he had graded the papers, he came into the classroom one day and started writing numerals on the blackboard. As I stated before, he always listed the grades in alphabetical order; and since my name came first, I didn't have any trouble reading the first numeral. He had reversed that strange mark (7) and made it an F, a one-legged A. Behind the F, he wrote my name. Then he hesitated for a long interval to allow the giggling to shower down upon me. I guess he thought I would feel some form of embarrassed remorse, but not so. I was much too old for social amenities, so I joined in with the laughing students. He turned away from the blackboard and tried, with his Rasputin eyes, to disintegrate me right on the spot.

Later, when he returned the papers, I read the scathing comments he had written on mine: 'You lack a sense of culture. You're in college now, you have a chance to lift yourself up from the great unwashed...' And on and on, as nauseam.



FIGHTING MEN THAT JUMP AND DIE

by R.S. Preuss

We were driving East on the Ohio Turnpike just over the Indian border, Dave Snitz, Mora and I. Dave had the wheel, and the radio was playing. A Detroit station was playing old hits of the 60s.

"Oh, great," said Dave, "here's that song about the men that jump and die."

Sgt. Barry Sadler's "The Ballad of The Green Berets" had come on the air.

I said, "What I've always wondered is, 'do they die after they jump out of the plane, or when they hit the ground?' It sounds like they're so ecstatic about the whole idea that they parachute down, get up from the ground and they jump up and maybe click their heels and just die from sheer delight."

"Maybe they're already dead and someone just heaves the body out of the plane," Mora said.

We had to admit, it sure was one heck of a problem. I mean, trying to figure that one out. Sure is a catchy tune though.

Mora tossed a half-eaten apple out of the car window just then.

"Oh, I'm not littering," she said, "I'm feeding the little bunny rabbits."

The apple bounced down the middle of the highway. "I know," Dave said, "the rabbit runs into the middle of the highway to get the apple."

"And that diesel truck that's been following us since the toll gate comes up..."

"And a green beret jumps in front of it and dies."

Well, you know, shucks, that's exactly what happened. What a mess. Had to admit, though, the weather was sure good for driving.

A Slight Chance To Live

by Cannon Barclay

The old man eyed the young girl closely. Friday's subway was crowded and she was pressed to the rear of the car close to him. However, he made no sign of awareness of this. Her face was the sweetest and most pure he had ever seen. Here was woman...still not fully ripened, still to be awakened and used in the ways the world has with most women.

What a lovely pasttime, he thought, to be her protector, guide, advisor and loving friend through the perilous decade ahead of her. He felt almost benign as he contemplated the idea. He could never hurt her...she appealed to all the righteousness left within him.

Why, she could almost serve as penance for his past, and so help him finally to find some peace and contentment.

Suddenly she dropped her umbrella. The car was half empty now and was nearing his stop. He wondered where she lived. How he could come to know her. What he could do to have this wonderful moment last awhile. Quickly, he bent to retrieve the umbrella, murmuring a polite phrase as he returned it to her. How fortunate he was that she had moved to his cardoor area...

She glanced swiftly at him through half-lowered eyes and thanked him prettily. Then she seemed to blush. How shy she is, her thought. What a lovely protegee to have for his own. The desire made him dizzy...or was it her perfume? Frankly, such a desire as he had never known...with nothing physical in it...merely the hunger to protect and cherish this lovely being always.

His station suddenly came into view. He noted with joy that she also was moving toward the door. He felt elated, anxious, and almost fearful. Strange. Perhaps, perhaps...who knew? Perhaps he was being given a last chance in his misspent life to make good.

Or perhaps Fate was offering him this wonderful opportunity to live again! He hurried after her.

As they stepped onto the escalator which conveyed them to the street above, the were again close together in the crowd...but closer, really, than was necessary. So close, in fact, that the old man fairly panted and became somewhat confused.

So close, finally, that there could be no mistaking her meaning as she pressed back against him. They were nearing the top of the stairs and by then she was pressing fiercely against him.

Madly, stumbling, confusedly, almost sobbing, he reached for her. She gave him a knowing, sensual look, and the two hurried down the darkening street together.

Three blocks without speaking. Then, she turned down an alley between several vacated apartment/office buildings. She giggled and went faster...until she was several steps ahead and leading.

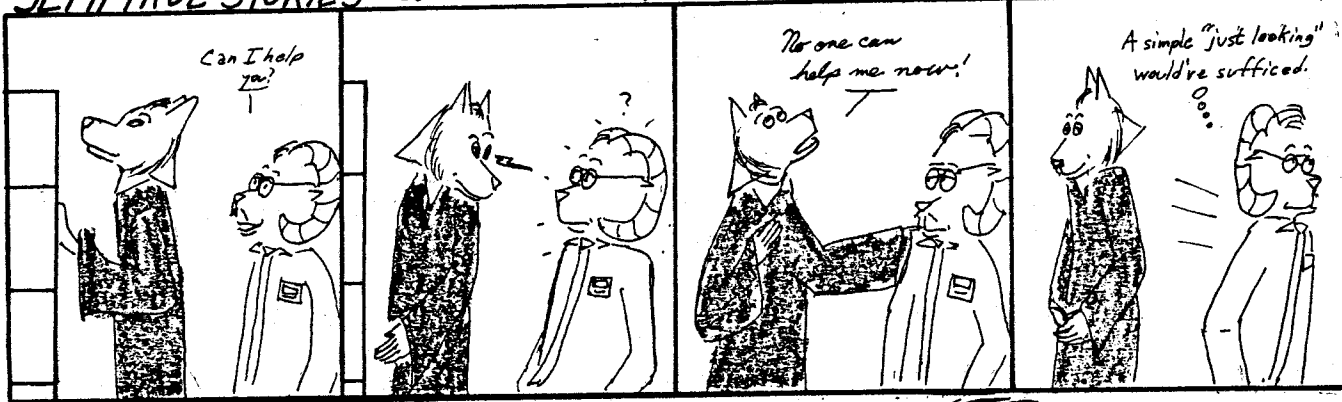
It was quick. Several shadows. Several blows. He spent several days in an Intensive Care Unit in a comatose condition before slowly recovering. Several witnesses to the crime had come forward. Newspapers and other such types questioned him alongside the police. Always mentioning ending the violence being handed out to seniors.

The witnesses could not identify the girl for the jury. Her part...said the police...was escaping with his 34 dollars. Did he recognize her??? You see, the other two attackers refused to name her. They refused to point her out even after receiving long long sentences for the shameful crime.

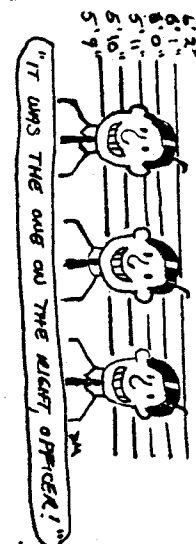
Only that one time at the station in a line-up. He could not do that to her. He remained silent...but he never saw her in the courtroom...She vanished.

He did recover. Some permanent disability...and the inability to speak clearly. But the old man dreams. To this day he rides the same subway daily...all day...in silence...looking for the innocent young girl. He has no bitterness. Sits alone by the aisle staring. Perhaps you have seen this old man with only a slight chance to live.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I'M EXHAUSTED BY NOW.



IF THERE'S
NO SYNCHRO-
NICITY TO
BE FOUND...



... WE'LL MAKE SOME...

FIRE SIGNAL #3

How-Soon-They-Forget Department: Okay, you bozos, beaners, zips, berzerkers, and other a-sordid gobs who like to yell the 'Fire' sign in a crowded Theatre! Here's the first of what I hope will be many grateful tributes to Rhino Records, the madhouse merchandiser located at 11609 Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90064. While Rhino is busy further resurrecting P.P.&D's not-so-distant past—their two latest record offerings being a full-length version of the N.P.R.N. (National Public Radio Network) performance of "Anything You Want To" (RN LP 807, \$8.98) and "The Best of 1974-1982", featuring goodies from the NPRN 'Campaign Chronicles' (RN LP 806, \$8.98)—we celebrate this month the last release (1980) to emerge from that venerable company. Following is the

MODERATELY SUCCESSFUL BUT NONETHELESS WELL-MEANT "FIGHTING CLOWNS" QUIZ

All questions (except the two bonus ones at end) are taken from the above-mentioned LP, also still available from Rhino at \$8.98. Though this album is heavily musical, I've tried to keep away from the "fill in the lyrics" format as much as possible, since I want to use that gimmick in the future...

- 1) To whom did the "Hot Tub" belong?
- 2) What do "Violent Juvenile Freaks" love?
- 3) What is the name of the group tuning up (the sports car)?
- 4) What did the singer of "Oh, Afghanistan" change his name to?
- 5) What color is Reagan's hair according to "Hey, Reagan"?
- 6) How many bozos were left after one "joined the band"?
- 7) "Hey, don't any of you duds want to escape?"
- 8) What new video craze is introduced in the opening song?
- 9) What are the names of Guy's lawyers, and how did his divorce turn out?

- 10) Why can't Achmed use the Barishnikov weapons?
- 11) What is the sequence of 'Californianisms' in the "Hot Tub"?
- 12) What did the hair in that hot tub turn out to be?
- 13) What is the purpose of the show?

BONUS QUESTIONS:

- 14) The single released from "Fighting Clowns" features on its flip side a song not found on the album, dealing with Jimmy Carter. How does the chorus go?
- 15) There are a few marked differences between the "8 Shoes" version of "Hey, Reagan" (done in 1980) and the "6 Shoes" one (seen recently on Showtime's "Folk Music Reunion" show, but most likely taped in early '81). For instance, how did each complete the line, "Hey Reagan, you're not too grey, And it's never too late, To _____"?

Answers next month—Meanwhile, we present

COMBAT WEEK

— True patriots, please vote "no" and send in now! It's REAL.



"WHERE DO YOU STAND ON THESE VITAL ISSUES?"

Jerry Falwell
Old-Time Gospel Hour

Answer this

Patriot's Survey and Help

WAKE UP AMERICA!

Do you believe that PORNOGRAPHY, 1. CRIME, and DRUGS are destroying the moral values that made America great?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you believe that PROMISCUOUS 2. SEX and LEGALIZED ABORTION are damaging the traditional American family?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Are you against HOMOSEXUALITY 3. being taught in the public schools as an alternate lifestyle?

☐ YES ☐ NO

ANSWER AND RETURN TODAY.
YOUR OPINION URGENTLY NEEDED!

Your support is needed to help Wake Up America. In return for your answers to these vital questions, I will send you the Patriot's Packet. The packet includes:

- Great Freedom Documents printed on parchment
- America's greatest patriotic songs
- A folder with famous quotes by great Americans
- American flag lapel pin

Dear Jerry, I want to help WAKE UP AMERICA
☐ I have checked off my answers above.
(PLEASE RUSH ME MY FREE PATRIOT'S PACKET!)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Return entire questionnaire to:

JERRY FALWELL: OLD-TIME GOSPEL HOUR
LYNCHBURG, VA 24514

All contributions are greatly appreciated and are tax-deductible.



FNORA



THE BANK
by Mark Lamport

"Good morning, sir."
"Hi!" I say in my best nothing-strange-about-me voice. I'm expecting trouble; banks seem to always, somehow, confuse me with John Dillinger or Ed Gein. "I'd like to put some money in."
The plan is to deposit \$23 of a \$35 check, leaving me a little cigarette money. Just to be safe, I sign the check in front of her and give her that, the deposit slip, and my checkbook. This should be as simple as it is honest.

"I'm sorry, sir, but I can't do this."
"Why not?"
"You only have .88c in your checking account. You have to deposit the whole check." I'm beginning to suspect she's enjoying this.

"But I only want to put in \$23; that'll make \$23.88. OK?"
"I'm sorry, but you must deposit the whole check."
Some part of her reasoning just has to be missing. I'm wanting to thrash about like a swarm of demons in righteous outrage. Visions of chainsaws are skittering across my eyes.
Breathe deep. "I'm not overdrawn or anything. Why can't I put in just so much?"

"Because the check has to clear, and you only have .88c in your checking account."
That skittering is settling down into a slow caress; buzzzzzzzz! All I know is that this prim bitch is protecting my ass off. These people must think those little place cards they have in their teller's window which say "Sorry for the inconvenience—this is for your protection as well as ours" give them the right to make all sorts of slanderous insinuations, against me AND whoever wrote me this check.

Never mind the ridiculously criminal over-draft charges, those sneaky monthly check charges, your conniving sucker accounts that are so much more convenient and easier to use than last year's model. I can take the fact that year after year I come in here and every time you make a call to see if I have an account here, all the while looking at me like I was a deranged maniac who's broken into your downstairs living room. I understand why you want to check my signature in your goddamn computer to see if it matches what's on file (or maybe you're checking to see if I belong to any subversive organizations—"Bob" knows who you're plugged into). Even after all this, I can be civil when you imply, "How DARE I to be offended by this treatment!" when at this moment YOU are the biggest asshole in my life.

But this time you greedy bastards are really low. I just want to put some of MY money in YOUR stupid bank (for you to scheme with as you please), and you don't even want me to keep 12 fucking dollars for myself? Tell me how come you want it so bad. Now just take it easy, Mark; keep your wits about you. You want that \$12.

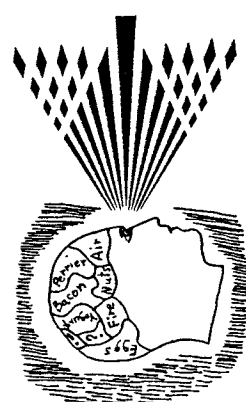
"Sorry, but I don't get it. I just want to put in \$23. \$23. Wouldn't that cover the \$12 I'm keeping back? I'm not taking anything out." At this point I'm not even sure MY reasoning has anything to do with it.

"I'm sorry, but you must deposit the whole check."
Let's try another tactic. "OK. If I deposit the whole \$35, can I then turn around and withdraw a part of that—say, \$12?"

"No, sir."
"Why?"
"Because right now you only have .88c in your account."



"AS A
MAN IS
SO HE
SEES"



—WILLIAM BLAKE

© 1982
JULIAN ROSS

Points in Common

by Ralph Roberts

Ambassador Herman Hotbreath fussily adjusted his yellow and mauve plastic jumpsuit, brushed some more trash from the large ornately carved table in front of him, and once more directed his fisheyed gaze to the chief Tethdun negotiator.

"Now, Sir Niplix, let us get down to cases again..."
"All right!" the dwarfish Niplix responded with enthusiasm.
"Let's do another case of Old Star Polish. You Earthies got good drinking stuff." He belched appreciatively.

The ambassador shrugged in disgust. Niplix spoke Terran with an accent but was easily understandable. Hotbreath turned to Bobby, a luscious blonde who served as his chief 'aide'. "Drag another case in from the launch. These guys have..." He paused as his mind searched for the proper descriptive phrase. "Hollow motive appendages," he finished lamely.

"Watch the racial slurs, fatbottom, and makewith the joy juice."
"Sure, coming right up," Hotbreath said in his best soothing manner. "Glad our metabolisms are so close." And aside to Bobby. "Hurry it up."

"Ah, chiefie," she whispered, "do I gotta go back out. There's garbage on the ground and the junk in the air stings my eyes."

"Yes!" the Ambassador whispered back. "And don't say anything about their pollution problem, Tethdun is going through their industrial revolution. Make allowances."

"Smells more like they're rotting," Bobby said and sniffed delicately. But, she got up and kicked her way through the assorted litter toward the door. When she opened it to pass through, greasy tendrils of black, foul-smelling smoke poked into the room.

Niplix scratched absently at a scaling patch of skin on his arm, small chunks of his hide fell to the table. "Hoowee!" he said.
"Your woman bouncy and soft like our females."

"Hmmpf," the Ambassador replied with frost in his grunt. "She is an accredited diplomat and my valued assistant."

"Ho, ho. Have to remember that. Call my companion...secretary. Not nearly so imaginative."

Hotbreath decided to change the subject quick. "Something wrong with your arm?" he asked the still scratching Niplix.

"Yeah, new nuclear power plant near home have small leak. No big thing. Not as bad as old war wounds. Been in twenty wars this year," he finished and puffed up in pride.

"Ah, yes," Hotbreath said.
"Also making super good living as politician. Lots of graft. Good money. But, back to business at hand. Forget, what is purpose of meeting?"

Ambassador Hotbreath groaned and wiped the perspiration from his forehead. "We, of the Terran Federation," he said in his most pompous manner, "are here to determine whether your race and ours have enough points in common for your membership in said federation."

"Hoowee! You talk pretty. Well, do we?"

Wrinkling his nose at the pervasive smell of sulphur dioxide in the air, Ambassador Hotbreath considered for a moment. Visions of the war-ravaged and pollution-torn landscape of this planet passed through his mind. The lechery and corruptness evinced by the boozy local politicians were again noted. He sighed. He took a final look around the trash and pest infested conference room.

"Yes," he said with a shrug, "If anything, you're more human than us."

Time Capsule

by Julian Ross

A popular custom is to place items in a new building's cornerstone or inside a concrete cache buried in a city plaza.

A hundred years later, the "time capsule" is opened and everyone has a good laugh.

Assuming this tradition will continue, let's look ahead to 1999 and imagine what things might be placed in the time capsule for people to look at in 2099:

The only remaining all-cotton shirt in existence.
The gold record of "Buzz Bomb Babies" by David Cassidy Jr.
A videodisc of the hit TV sitcom, "The New Adventures of I Love Lucy."

A Texas Instruments pinkie ring/computer/videophone/SOMA dispenser.

A film print of the third remake of "The Elvis Presley Story."

A bound copy of the musical comedy script, "Reminiscences, Remorse and Remuneration" by Spiro Agnew.

A giant economy size box of Purina Clone Chow.

A videochip recording of the first photos sent back from Pluto by the Chinese space explorer, Lao-tzu I.

An autographed copy of the best-selling self help book, "The Positiveness of Power Thinking," by Tatum O'Neal.

The car keys to the 1999 Rolls-Royce Silver Laser, priced at a respectable \$869,400 (dealer prep extra).

A VARIETY headline: "Gone With The Wind Remake Tops \$16.3 Billion Gross."

A copy of Pope Ringo George I's Encyclical, first released to the public from his home town of Duluth, MN.

The \$1.17 commemorative stamp honoring the discoverer of LSD, Dr. Albert Hoffman.

A copy of the recently formulated Camp Malibu Arab-Israeli Peace Accord.

Two ticket stubs from the sold-out Shea Stadium concert of Crosby, Stills, Jagger and Stewart.

A silver engraved invitation to Zsa Zsa Gabor's 25th wedding.

THOUGHTS FROM A CULTIST

by Dan E. Brenner

"If a man can bridge the gap between life and death. I mean, if he can live on after he's died, then maybe he was a great man."
-- James Dean

I once saw a James Dean movie back in 1973. It didn't make much of an impression on me.

On September 30, 1979 I met a brooding young man named Al Meonis. A junior at a private Midwest university, he seemed anxious, looking for some place to go, yet rebelling in his actions wherever he went. Meonis was different, almost as if he were trying on two identities, one of the confused college kid, the other...well, I couldn't pinpoint it.

The day had passed for everyone like any other day on campus, everyone that is but Meonis. He remembered James Dean on the 24th anniversary of his death.

On September 30, 1955, a young movie star named James Dean died when his Porsche Spyder rammed into a turning Plymouth limousine. Dean had starred in three films—"East of Eden", "Rebel Without A Cause", and "Giant." Only "East of Eden" had been released at the time of his death. Yet he was already a cult hero. "James Dean was very young when he died; I believe 24. He was destined though. I mean, he knew he was going to die. He talked about it all the time," said Meonis.

Although Dean died four years before Meonis' birth, the image of adolescents and their search for truth, which Dean portrayed masterfully, still existed for Meonis. "He had a powerful figure on the screen, one that spoke of the problems of youth just by gesture. I try to imitate Dean; I experience what he felt in the '50s. He really inspires me at times," said Meonis.

The more I became acquainted with Meonis the more I realized the same life patterns. Insomnia, the constant cup of coffee, the hyperactivity, the depression over a nearing death. Even Meonis' physical features resembled Dean. Both stood the same height, 5 feet 8 inches, and carried the same weight of 150 pounds.

Both Dean and Meonis spent their boyhoods growing up under Indiana's white laws. Both left the state because of a father's transferral to a coastal city. College left both disillusioned with life and confused about their future.

It became easily apparent that Meonis had taken on a second life. Still something about Meonis didn't click with me. He didn't seem real.

He claimed his allegiance to Dean began in 1974 when only a sophomore in high school. "I was looking for a book in the public library about acting and I ran into his biography. I was turned on to Dean's way of thinking right away," said an inexhaustible Meonis after 63 hours without sleep. He liked to talk about Dean at all hours no matter what else anyone had to do.

Through the years he had collected nine books about the actor but still searched for what he termed "the prize"—William Bast's biography of Dean. Bast was Dean's close friend and roommate.

"I've spent close to \$200 on posters, pictures, books, and seeing reruns of his films at theaters. It's rare to see his films on television, usually they aren't worth watching after all of the editing and commercials. The theaters usually run all three flicks when they have a filmfest. I'll go every night they show them," said Meonis.

A true cultist, Meonis tried to handle everyday situations as he thought Dean would have. "Say I'm studying for a test and I just can't get into it. I close my notes and forget about it. I like Dean's idea. Grades aren't important—it's what you learn and can use. Most people never think in that way. They try to memorize; I try to make things practical and useful."

"I sometimes wonder if Dean wasn't a genius. He never made it through college, at least not long enough to get a degree, but he made it big without the letters after his name. I guess that's the way I look at it too. I doubt I'll make it through four years."

Soon after Meonis made this statement he tried to drop out of college. Fortunately a teacher wouldn't let him. He finished with his bachelors degree and an outstanding journalism award in 1981.

Back in 1979 Meonis still held a reserve for alternatives. He said, "I don't make out to be James Dean. I only agree with the way the man thought. He wasn't perfect. If he had been he wouldn't have killed himself going 85 miles per hour. But that was his way, he drove like he acted—rebelliously."

Meonis lived like James Dean. His life included the same generation gap and identity search young Dean felt at 18 years of age, but this late blooming cultist hoped not to find his hero's fate. "If I do, I won't be the first to die young. I only hope I'll be remembered for something that people can relate to. For the struggle of the young and rebellious," he ended.

Then it hit me. Sal Mineo, an actor who played opposite Dean in "Rebel Without A Cause." Al Meonis, a Dean cultist. The two names had identical letters. Now I knew. I mean, Al Meonis died in May, 1981. Or did I?

—Jasper P. Ferdbunger

WRITER STUDYING effects of lobotomy seeks survey respondents among those attending John Denver concerts. World Theories. Box 2267. Berkeley 94702.

IS
NEXT-2
"CRAZY!"



LOVE POEM

Sex and passion
Are in fashion
So is gore and
I want more
There's lots of room
For still more gloom
A glass of Rhine
Would put me fine
And add a beer—
I'll give a cheer
Friday night
Can be all right
Though I get punchy
And the munchies
Give me booze
And let me snooze
A nice big kiss
Would sure be bliss
Let's leave the ground—
Another round
I love vice

1967 in 1982 by Khaaryn Goertzel

Music so mellow it grates
Etching lines of boredom across my soul
The crowd here clings to shreds of a
culture that
Atrophied and died
When Rip van Winkle Flower Children
suddenly awoke in terror,
Walking the wrong way
Down a rush-hour one-way street of change
Where self-improvement wears short hair
and drives a Mercedes.
Brimming with philosophy,
They spew forth an oily river perfumed with
burnt-out joss sticks and
smoky hashish.
They want to change the world with
"inner peace"

Wrapped in Indian gauze and faded denim.
 Thus cocooned against the challenge of
 microchips,
 They dance through a life
 Where Beatles never die
 And organic fruit cannot wither or bruise.
 Bob Dylan tells them what to think.
 Joni Mitchell tells them how to feel.
 Cross-legged, they contemplate it all,
 Sipping herb tea,
 And thumbing one more time through the
 torn, dirty pages
 Of "Be Here Now".
 The sun never sets on Flower Children.
 They float down their timeless stream of
 mellow, moaning music
 On barges of sightless anachronism...
 Untouched
 As the motor-boat of violent change
 splashes spray in their faces.

THE TIMES THEY AIN'T A-CHANGIN'

tune: The times They Are A-Changin'
 by Tuli Kupferberg
 Come gather 'round people wherever you rent
 And admit that the waters around you are spent
 And accept it that soon you'll be dry as a bone
 If your Life to you is worth Savin'
 Then you better start Prayin'/Or you'll sink like a stone
 For the times they ain't a-changin'.

Come writers and critics who profit with your pen
And keep your eyes wide, the chance won't come again
And don't speak too late for the wheel's stopped its spin
And there's no deny'n who that it's namin'
For the loser now/Will never ever win
For the times they ain't a-changin'.

Come hippies, musicians, please heed the call
Don't stand in the rectory, don't block the Bingo hall
For he that gets hurt will be he who has stalled
There's a Devil outside and he's ragin'
He'll soon shake the stained glass/And rattle the walls
But the times they ain't a-changin'.

Come mothers and fathers throughout the land
You must criticize what you can't understand
Your sons and your daughters await your command
The old road is rapidly gainin'
Please get off the new one/You can lend your hand
For the times they ain't a-changin'.

The line it is muddy, the curse it is cast
The low one now will later be last
As the present now will also be past
The Rebellion is rapidly fadin'
And the last one now/Will still later be last
For the times they ain't a-changin'.

CROWDING THE RAILS OF THE LAST SUMMER

by Cannon Barclay
Beholder of orange and yellow swimsuits
wind whistling my green jacket collar
and Ray Stevens sings of
America the beautiful.

Why are some bodies all basic brown and others indoor white? Answers of unrestricted time cover all vainness in cocoa butter light.

Little children close to ages of mine
play to win their hide and seek man
inside tall grasses of channeled beach s

Two wandering girls pass my picnic table
and giggle out their summer days
"Why waste the sun with pen and paper?"
they ask

It can only be explained to the Pepsi youth while shrugging the gaff with a smile.

Once carried a plastic pail with tiny shells
and so did my little girl
they live so far away from sandy castle
address

she wouldn't need any bright beach toys.
Should hesitate counting everyone in sig
paired off
until that clipper wind
blows another way.

paCity, U.S.A.

by Peggy Tully
capacity for wonder
g to be disturbed
relative disturbance.
tting to the taking-under
capacity
strong that
hing can
turb your
ce of mind.

n't we all kill what's making us
 what's building us.

ties, and all cities
s, members all, please step forward.
ntation time. AN EVENING OUT W

ward
back now
its near at hand
tentential exit

got one
got one
to bow out

NT REUNIONS WITH YESTERDAY

by Cannon E. Barclay
my daughter and you
forget about both of you
at a time
when wake-up
pick up
the panic
the shame
the pain

Grand new experiences happen
 their joys or wounds
 discoveries don't reach
 they would
 ere we.

1142

...but it never continues. 538

reasons
unexpected
ears
and am sad.

TEEN PAIN F

These fools
unseeing fa
I'd like to
in the slat
open their

CONCESSION SPEECH
by Cannon Barr
Politicians turn into
bridge builders with p
about their loss
knowing crying in your
won't bring the publi

1c1ter column concluded
below this poem...

BROKEN GLASS OF THE CABIN WINDOW

by Gary Ishler

The sharp pieces of glass
Looked at me
With only eyes
I could see.
They were wet with despair,
Saying I didn't care;
A single tear fell from an eye,
Upon a cheek,
And onto the frame.
Some pieces on the ground
Tried to speak; but words--
Like cohesion, were gone..
B R O K E N G L A S S
Left my cabin cold;
The howling winds of winter
Charged through the open frame,
And I shivered, not from
The cold; from the thought of the glass
That used to hold our the
Cold
On wintry nights.

KURTZ:

I'm like Ig... people will pay for it! I'd use it...I'd use it full covers like Valentino's, put your story on the inside last page and make room by scarping the fluke from the cares what someone thinks of films, books or records? No fucking to be "comedy & creativity" you waste so much space on opinions? Every dumb fanline has those--you got Kerry, Tuli Kupferberg, suggest promotion... Things work out if ya don't screw 'em up by trying...*[RL]*

Eg...folks think about the possible change in format mentioned here...to move everything from lead story to Fan House back one page

Elayne: You've probably tried various grants, fellowships, etc., have you kidding? They are set up to destroy creativity.

Aldough I can recall reading one issue of LJ, I liked what it offered. I can recall seeing Flourishing publications that started from such a format, and they seem around a long time. I'd like to hear how things work out there.

Claire: NO...STOP...I can't take it anymore! SOB---SMIFFLE---SOB
Eg...do anything---Just no more letters like that one! Please!

Dear Elaine, Naturally I want to jump into the stream of contributors to keep LJ aliveat...Pretty shortly I guess, you'll be able to set up the LJ Foundation to spawn myriads of little insinuations every hamlet of the land. - EG

(And finally.)

That's funny, I was going to say...

AN EVENING OUT WITH MS. KURTZ

by Deborah Golden
Out for the evening
with Miriam Kurtz
and assembled collection
of possible flirts.
She drinks Jack Daniels
and scratches with pen,
the physiques and faces
of most handsome men.
They draw close,
curious over her shoulder,
a bit too pushy,
a trifle too shovey.
She glances up
from her laborious sketching
to mention exactly
what it is she is drinking,
thinking - god what bores.
After a few, probably more,
she swaggers indelicately
towards the door,
feeling so much better
than she did before -
having gathered a list
of desirable models,
those with whom
she'll hopefully cuddle.

ROAD TO RUIN

by Macedonio M. Garcia
upon the trek of my ways
ill fated, indeternately
walking,
running from the man
past a landing
darkies standing
hovering about
prowling
numbing pain
shoots through my spine
crumbling
neath the weight
above me
below
lying in a pool
of my own
blood
pleading, receding
fading,
darkness, lights a blurring
pitch black cold
gasping
breath,
timely spurts of
life, going, gone.

POETRY: SONGS*

Jesus is
the light
for dim
bulbs..

The Punishment

by Craig Childress

I didn't mean to throw the brick at Marty Peak. It was an accident, honest, it just slipped from my hand. Besides, it wasn't a very big brick.

Rationality goes out the window when the belt starts to come out of its loops. Fathers never give their kids enough credit for their ability to lie.

Punishment in my family was an art form. It was a performance, bordering on the theatrical.

My father would burst into my bedroom, holding his belt stretched between his hands, snapping it taut with small quick jerks.

"So, you've been throwing bricks at people again."

I'd lie on my bed pretending to read my comic books.

"I want to see you in the den in five minutes," he said.

"Gee Dad, I'd really like to, but it's a school night and I think I'll hit the sack early..."

"Five minutes!" he shouted again, then slammed the door.

Five minutes; just enough time for a seven-year-old to have a nervous breakdown. I don't know why I threw bricks at people. It was just a natural reflex. Every kid has his quirks.

I ran to my older brother pleading for help. He smiled reassuringly and the performance began. He emptied out both our underwear drawers and told me to take off my pants.

Fifteen pairs of underwear later, I turned to my brother and said, "I can't breathe."

"It doesn't matter," he said.

He sat me down on the bed and pulled a pair of his extra large jeans over my bulging butt. He rolled up the pant legs and pulled me to a standing position. I waddled out the door and into the den, my brother following close behind.

"Wish me good luck," I said.

"Do you remember what I told you to say?"

I nodded my head to reassure him.

My father was sitting in the overstuffed brown upholstered chair, belt in hand. We approached cautiously.

"Come here," he said. I walked over to his side. My brother thrust his body between us.

"Don't do it!" he yelled. "He's too young! Here, take me instead!" He crawled onto my father's lap, his tennis shoes digging into his pant leg.

"Jesus, do we have to go through this again?" my father said. I pulled my brother away. With head low, my shoulders drooping, I carefully placed my body across my father's legs. I looked up at him with blurry eyes.

"Go ahead. Hit me, beat me. Nail me to your cross and flog me."

My father pulled back his belt and gave me a hard whack across the butt. It sounded like he had hit a two foot waffle.

"Go ahead, hit me!" I shouted.

"Take off your pants," he said.

My brother and I stared down at the pile of red, blue and green underwear resting on the floor. My knees were starting to shake and I could feel those tiny little bumps forming on the inside of my legs.

"I'm afraid this is the end my brother," I said as I placed my hand on his shoulder. He knelt down and made a cross on his chest with his forefinger.

"Would you two cut it out" shouted my father. I drooped my bare bottom over my father's knee. He raised his arm and came down hard with the belt, making a stinging slap against my skin.

"Have mercy!" my brother yelled.

He raised his belt and hit me again. Tears were running down my cheeks and into my mouth, as another sting crossed my butt.

"Oh, if I only had a brick," I mumbled under my breath.

"What did you say?"

"Nothing Dad, nothing."

After one more swat I lay spreadeagle across my father's knee. My body was perfectly limp, my arms and legs dangling freely to the floor and my head bobbing loosely over the armrest of the chair. "Please Lord forgive him," I moaned, "For he knows not what he has done."

My father looked down at me with a worried look across his face, and after only three swats he gave up. "I think you've had enough," he said as he gently pushed me off his legs. He stood up, put his belt back through his pant loops and walked out the door; shaking his head and mumbling to himself as he went.

My brother came to my side. He patted me across the back. "Well done," he said. "The tears were a great effect."

"You didn't do too bad yourself," I said. We both smiled, gathered the underwear off the floor and headed back to the bedroom.

ACRIMONY AT THE CHECK-OUT COUNTER

by Gary R. Ward

Today's subsistence ethics really seem to have gone to pot—and not the cooking pot. Face facts. The neo-consumer adores bringing the hammer of retribution down with spiteful blows at every convenience. Regrettably, but certainly not without cause, we all sit and wallow in our own little pools of vengeance, awaiting that one facet of the economy that will take a solid shot square in the gut and remain lying down.

Words of vengeance, teamed with the frustrations of self-pity, are what the neo-consumer thrives on—and it is fit-to-a-tee as well as being absolutely necessary that the persona be fed with every available morsel lest we all find our own niches on the wall. Be it so, it cannot be argued that the right—or chance—to remonstrate is the real food of the consumer.

Winging our way over the most inexorable of necessities—clothing, utilities for warmth and comfort, and (cringe) gasoline—there comes to be generated a negative attitude amongst all of us even at their most modest mention. Clothing... well it goes without saying that the clothes we wear are a reflection of our desire to impress others (a very dialectical relationship and always a real money grabber to boot). Utilities we all need to perform daily activities in relative comfort (just reading the words "public utilities" is *per se* enough to trigger an extra squirt of adrenalin into the system of those easily agitated). And although we all get snooty at the gas pump, we nevertheless need it and buy it (whether it be so we can go make money or go spend it). It's like deodorant—the more active we are, the more of it we're going to use and no matter how much it costs, we're going to buy it.

More often than not, however, people either cannot or will not voice the gripes that writhen in them with the dwindling of every paycheck. But when it comes to food prices... stop the world! The electronic mechanism that swings the supermarket door open for incoming customers *must* act doubly as a "Hyde-changer." As it goes, the most economically incompetent jellyhead transposes into... the prudent buyer. This "person" who just yesterday had his money whisked away at Off Track Betting and later that night fueled up on enough Schmidt's beer that he had to be put to bed with a shovel—well, the upswing of his finicky nature climaxes in the local supermarket. It prowls up one aisle and down the next, scanning the shelves for an item, any item, be it corn flakes or cuttlefish in its own ink... that's mismatched in price against its unit sticker. Let your frustrations out in the supermarket each payday! Kindie yourself into a hissy over a few cents. Okay, whatever. But anyone who thinks he's justified (a big word) by going to pieces over food prices (what isn't going up?) is leaning on a feeble crutch of nincompoopery. Maybe it is good for the soul. So hooray. Let's try to break the habit of opening our mouths just to change feet.

Highbrow explanations on the large scale economics of rising food prices just aren't complete enough—especially on the human, everyday level—to satisfy most tired minds. There are, in fact, certain circumstances created by the consumers themselves that drastically add to the regular price hikes.

Who has ever stopped to think twice when they wheeled their weekly groceries home in the shopping cart? And how many carts actually make it back to the store? Really, they sure are convenient! I've seen shopping carts become such permanent fixtures in the home that they're used for everything from rabbit cages to baby cradles. And they make the newspaper carrier's job a hell of a lot easier, too. Most carts cost about a hundred big ones... indirectly payable through the consumer's pocket.

What about pitching perishables? So, so many people change their minds and chuck the chicken down behind the Charmin... assuming it'll get up and walk back to the cold case in good time.

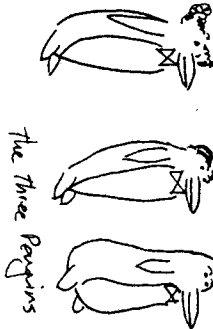
Shoplifting—well, it speaks for itself. Things like frozen king crab meat, razor blades and strawberry douche... these things just aren't bought, argal, for a variety of reasons. And the guy who decides he'll abscond with a London broil because "they" owe him... (sigh) he's just paving the way for still higher prices. Then, of course, there are those who delight themselves with a free, complimentary bunch of grapes to suck down while browsing the aisles.

Sooner or later, we'll be buying our meat and groceries on time. Calling a day in advance will be the only way to secure an appointment to come in and see the roasts and discuss terms. "I think we'll be able to work something out..."

The lashing mouth of destructive criticism is as much suicidal for the consumer as it is satisfying. Indeed, we all share our gripes, but ponder the point a little more intensely the next time your newspaper is delivered out of a shopping cart.



L'Arc de Boggi



(Jilly - ↑
What does
this remind
you of?)



PETER
PRINCIPLE
DEPT.

LISA M. RESNICK

136 Main Street
Metuchen, New Jersey 08840
(201) 549-5533

RESUMES
- DONE RIGHT

OBJECTIVE

To make as much money I can while doing as little as humanly possible and to enjoy every minute of it.

EDUCATION

Institute For The Creatively Profound and the Profoundly Creative, Hohokus, New Jersey
Degree: E.I.E.I.O.

Acme Charm School, Piscataway, New Jersey
Degree: M.R.S.

Relevant courses: Grace and Poise in Society, Introduction to Witticism, Emergency Nail Repair, Charge Account Theory, Engagement Practicum

EXPERIENCE

Date, Self-employed.

Professional date, experienced in witty and intellectual conversation, saying "no" in several languages, dressing to the hilt, acting naive. Responsibilities included very little.

Seance Medium, Madame Ovary's Institute of Psychics, Belmar, N.J.
Aided clients in communicating to their deceased relatives, providing an essential service and making a mint off the suckers.

Sales Representative, Inflatables Anonymous, New York, New York
Sold and serviced inflatable plastic objects to very old men.

ACTIVITIES

Underwater Wrestling Club
Society for the Criminally Cute
Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band
Morale Director for The New York Giants
Mormon Tabernacle Choir

PERSONAL

That's right! IT'S PERSONAL!

REFERENCES

My mother thinks I'm wonderful.

