



happy 4th
anniversary

INSIDE JOKE

#34

G. Michael Oliver - 17

A NEWSLETTER OF
COMEDY AND CREATIVITY

-UPCOMING EVENTS-

If you'd like your birthday listed below, or have any other event you'd like to see publicized, please send it to me by the deadline! NOTE: There will be crash space for 2 at Homebase 1J after our New Year's Eve Eve party, but it's first come first serve, so RSVP ASAP etc. REST OF 1984

- DECEMBER 1 - Woody Allen (50)
DECEMBER 2 - ME (27 but who's counting)
DECEMBER 5 - Joan Didion (50); Repeal of Prohibition (1933)
DECEMBER 6 - DAVID OSSMAN (48); Kahlil Gibran (b. 1883); Joyce Kilmer (b. 1886)
DECEMBER 8 - James Thurber (b. 1894); Jim Morrison (b. 1943)
DECEMBER 10 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO INSIDE JOKE #35; Emily Dickinson (b. 1830)
DECEMBER 13 - STEVEN CHAPUT (34)
DECEMBER 15 - Sitting Bull killed (1890)
DECEMBER 16 - 25th Anniversary of Second City; Jane Austen (b. 1775); Noël Coward (b. 1899)
DECEMBER 21 - Frank Zappa (44); Jane Fonda (47)
DECEMBER 25 - Rod Serling (b. 1924); Santa time so I hear...
DECEMBER 26 - Henry Miller (b. 1891)
DECEMBER 27 - "Howdy Doody" debuts on television (1947)
DECEMBER 30 - INSIDE JOKE NEW YEAR'S EVE EVE PARTY, beginning at 9pm or so; BYO liquor +/or drug-o-choice; munchies provided, including some hot stuff; blackmail pics to be taken

BEGINNING OF 1985

- JANUARY 1 - J.D. Salinger (b. 1919)
JANUARY 2 - Isaac Asimov (65)
JANUARY 3 - Victor Borge (76); J.R.R. Tolkien (b. 1892); Zasu Pitts (b. 1900)
JANUARY 4 - Carl Sandburg (b. 1878)
JANUARY 8 - STEVEN SCHARFF (23); Soupy Sales (59); Butterfly McQueen (b. 1911); Elvis Presley (b. 1935); David Bowie (38)
JANUARY 9 - Simone de Beauvoir (b. 1908); Carrie Catt (b. 1859)
JANUARY 10 - Donald Fagen (?)
JANUARY 17 - Benjamin Franklin (b. 1706); Al Capone (b. 1899)
JANUARY 18 - Danny Kaye (72); A.A. Milne (b. 1882)
JANUARY 19 - BRIAN CATANZARO (30); Edgar Allen Poe (b. 1809); Janis Joplin (b. 1943)
JANUARY 22 - D.W. Griffith (b. 1875)
JANUARY 23 - Ernie Kovacs (b. 1919)
JANUARY 24 - John Belushi (b. 1949)
JANUARY 25 - Larry Gelbart (59)
JANUARY 27 - DEBORAH BENEDICT (34); Lewis Carroll (b. 1832)
JANUARY 28 - Alan Alda (49)
JANUARY 29 - Thomas Paine (b. 1732); W.C. Fields (b. 1880)
JANUARY 31 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO INSIDE JOKE #36

* INSIDE JOKE is put on hexaweekly by Elayne "I Miss My Script Element Here At Work" Wechsler and dear friends and emanates from the wilds of beautiful downtown suburban Brooklyn, New York, where a tree may grow but it sure isn't a palm tree...

* EDITOR-IN-RESIDENCE.....ELAYNE WECHSLER
* HEAD XEROGRAPHER....."UNCLE WIGGLY"

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* ROLDO ----- CANDI STRECKER ----- KERRY THORNLEY - ROBERT WOLLARD
* FRONT COVER--GARRETT MICHAEL O'HARA//BACK P. FILLER--MICHAEL DOWERS

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* ADS PROVIDED BY BEATNIKS FROM SPACE, J.C. BRAINBEAU, FACTSHEET FIVE, JET LAG MAGAZINE, AND THE CHURCH OF THE SUBGENIUS

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* PRINTED BY AMERICAN SANIZDAT PRESS - "If it bites, it's an A.S.P.I"

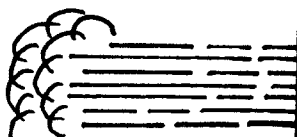
* WRITERS'/ARTISTS' GUIDELINES AVAILABLE FOR SASE

SECOND THOUGHTS

by Gedwillo

Figure 1.

Dorothy leaving
the Land of Oz
on a moped.



ACKNOWLEDITORIALETC.

I guess there's a first time for everything, but I'd rather it hadn't have been 1J being late, fanatical deadline devotee that I am. California will, of course, have to take most of the blame, with post-election depression—even though Papoon/Cheese really won, natch—being the rest of it. I suppose the one thing to which we can look forward (in anger?) now is the all but inevitable re-emergence of some sort of viable protest movement. Either that, or I'll see you all in the CIA's specially-constructed labor camps real soon now... Interestingly, a lot of other people, and Whozits, were feeling political this season (one couldn't really get away from it, to be sure), as this issue's submissions from folks like Mike Gunderloy, Michael Dobbs and our cover artist Garrett Michael O'Hara indicate. So, why not, I figured—I decided to balance out my own dreaded to revivooose with some politically-oriented entertainment notes this time. And of course there's the usual cartoon commentary courtesy Crawford, Kupperberg, etc...

During my vacation, I had the chance to ask many of you your opinions on our current subscription crisis, and I came to the conclusion that it's time I either shit or get off the pot, to coin a cliché, SO: I HEREBY ANNOUNCE THE INSTANTANEOUS STATEMENT OF AN ADVANCE SUBSCRIPTION POLICY. Listen up, though, 'cause I'll only say this once an issue—You may purchase advance subs to INSIDE JOKE now, which will be one dollar per issue-to-come (for contributors, stamps are not valid for advance subs, only for the current issue), PROVIDED YOU REALIZE THESE SUBS WILL NOT, IN THE EVENT INSIDE JOKE CEASES TO PUBLISH, BE REFUNDABLE!! At this point, I don't foresee that happening for another three years or so, but when I finally do announce it, I will probably not have the money to send everyone their two or three or four bucks back. Which reminds me, as well: If you want an advance sub, PLEASE try not to send me more than 5 or 6 bucks, ok? We only put out 8 issues a year (oh, okay, up to \$8, then), and anything beyond a year's subscription I'd rather count as donation. I am willing to figure out a personal system of keeping track of all this, but I can't guarantee my ability (or desire) to do so for more than a year at a time. Starting with 1J #35, your address label (or handwritten address) on the front will have an "X" next to it if this is the last issue for which you've paid, so you can keep track too. The way I see it, advance subs are probably the best way we can retain many of 1J's readers; I note enthusiasm for the publication but I also note that people just plain don't remember to write every 6 weeks sometimes, or may not have the time to do so. Now that much of the 1J process has become second-nature to me, it's time I count all these folks in, too. Sorry not to have taken a vote on this, but it's not mandatory or anything, and in fact may even be beneficial as far as our future content goes: with enough "regular" subscribers, we might be able to start things like serials again—but you didn't hear it from me.

The other big announcement is that we will again be having our annual NEW YEAR'S EVE EVE PARTY at Homebase Inside Joke, Apartment Third Eye here in Brooklyn, by which time I expect to have carpentering and everything! The party will be, as per the name, on December 30 (Steve Scharff please take note—and while we're at it where's your written submission this month and WHY didn't you say anything? end of nitpick), and if you need directions please write or call me as soon as possible. Guests are urged to bring their own alcoholic beverages and/or drugs of choice, and even munchies if you're so inclined, although I will attempt to pretty much stock the place (albeit a little less so than at last year's bash where I wound up with lunch for the next 2 weeks as a result of leftovers) and provide champagne. PLEASE R.S.V.P., IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND, BY THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT 1J—

Which will be DECEMBER 10, extended from the previously-set date of November 30—no sense penalizing you folks for my week-and-a-half long tardiness. Unfortunately, this means 1J #35 won't be out in time for the party, but attendees will be able to peruse it in rough form and perhaps we'll even have a 'gang layout' or something. By the way, also available at the party will be ANY 1J BACK ISSUES YOU MAY WANT AND HAVE NEVER GOTTEN, FREE. Gotta start getting rid of some boxes, after all.

Sincere thanks to all you friends out there in Lalaland, Santa Barb and San Fran for making this past vacation better than I'd ever dreamed possible, and since you deserve to at least see your names in print (yes, I took pictures as well, but they won't be developed by press time, so next issue we'll feature the faces), specific gratitude to: Roldo (by mail), Bob Armstrong (by phone), Mary I and Kris Gilpin, Dana Snow, A. Pavletich, Julie Logan and MONA, Kristin Proctor, Diane Davisson, Phil Proctor, Tim Rossovich, Peter Bergman, Michael Guymne, Phil and Oona Austin, Lanny Waggoner, Cynthia Cinque, David Rice, Buck Moon, Robert Wollard, David Ossman, Pete Labriola and especially my kind hosts for my stay out there—Alice Emlich/Glasspool, Chris Glasspool, Little Orion, Candi Strecker, Matt Householder, my brother Gene and my near-sis Valencia McDaniel. A time I'll not soon forget, dear people!...Also thanks, while we're on that subject, to the few who've contributed a couple extra bucks to help this issue along, namely J.C. Brainbeau, Luke McGuff and Joe Schnide—appreciated as always!

As stated above, please send all submissions—prose, poetry, artwork, letters for publication, and the slot's still open for a front cover—by December 10 to make the deadline for 1J #35. This'll wind up pushing back future issues as well, so deadlines-to-come are so far set as follows: JANUARY 31, 1985 for 1J #36 (cover by Roldo); The Idea of March (MARCH 75) for 1J #37; and APRIL 30 for 1J #38. Again, advance subs are \$1 each, not to exceed \$8.00; single issue/sample subs are \$1 or, for contributors, an optional 2 ounces worth of stamps (37¢ at present); donations are most welcome anytime. Send it all to: P.O. Box 1609, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159 This issue is dedicated in memory of Steve Goodman and Richard Brautigan. Also, affectionately, in memoriam Sadie Bond.

Fan Noose

Forgive me if this Italic type is hard to read, but my Script element here at work (where I frantically type up this column last-minute before rushing it to be reduced, 11/9/84) broke and a replacement has not yet arrived, and I did want to contrast my drivel with the important info re: addresses and the like, so without further ado (except to apologize to those new folks whose publications I'll skim-view because I haven't yet had time to sit down and read them)...A couple announcements from the Katlady, Katrina Fixx aka helen katz, from the SubGenius Church of the Latest Dazed Frenzy (LDF): "1985 will be the year of the KAT, and the LDFs would like to commemorate this grand occasion with the official KATlovers calendar. If you have praise, quandry, or revelation of who this Katlady really is, verbal or pictorial, send it to the LDFs...(this offer ends December 10, 1984)"; furthermore, Katlady informed me, explaining her bizarre MANIFESTO OF "BOB" IN E MINOR (sent for 50¢, from the place which brings you THE WHOLE SHNEER—P.O. Box 7742, Salt Lake City, UT 84107), "You don't have to be a SubGenius to know you're being fucked over by the Immoral Majority. If you have the chutzpah to read 'Manifesto of "Bob" in E Minor', you've got the power to ignore and, at some opportune time, overthrow the muddled masses yearning to be clones. The LDFs have first-hand knowledge of this struggle, and want to help you break free, even if only in spirit, of the hidden bonds and obscene injustice running rampant today."...Also from an original master of the SubG arts, Buck Naked, comes the HOUR OF SLACK, a one-page rant "message", advertised with "samples" (which I don't think I got) for \$1, from the First Naked Church of the SubG (as I said, one of the originals), P.O. Box 140026, Dallas, TX 75214...Of course, this brings us to what has come to be known as a now-yearly event (due to lack of funds, etc.), the release of the new STARK FIST OF REMOVAL! The FIST is the ultimately official word from the SubG Foundation, put out by scribe Doug Smith (P.O. Box 140306, Dallas, TX 75214), and is a bargain at a mere \$3 for over 100 pages of IJ-sized type. Doug gave us and our friends some nice plugs, and even reprood some of my report from a previous IJ on my activities at their last World Convention (except for the MOST IMPORTANT bit, the Throwing of Connie's Wig, but who's being picky). I can't say enough good things about these folks, as people and as Servants-O-"Bob", except PLEASE PLEASE send for the newsletter...Another SubG sympathizer, Michael Flores, publishes/edits a nicely slick newsletter on just about every aspect of modern culture of which I can think, called BIG MAG. The premiere issue features articles on First Comics (comic books that even I get into), ghost hunting, Chicago's Expo '84, John Ostrander and the planned American stage presentation of Dr. Who, and even a book excerpt from the sleazy Hollywood Babylon by Kenneth Anger. Not read as yet, but that alone is enough to peak my interest. \$2 or \$8/4 issues to P.O. Box 6288, Evanston, IL 60202...I'm never sure about any mail I happen to get from overseas, but I may have found the British equivalent of Roldo, at least in philosophy. Near as I can tell, his name is Chris Brasted, his address is 78 Oxford Ave., Southampton SO2 0DN, G.B., his prices are all in pounds and I have not the ability to convert, he runs something apparently called Oddmags through which he and his friends put out publications like BBC (BLURRING BUZZING CONFUSION) for 30p and MAD DOG for 70p, and he even seems to have his own Whozit-like creatures, albeit it MUCH better drawn. The artwork is stunning, the dogma is wonderful and this may be our first regular overseas IJ correspondent. Do write and inquire...Likewise, I don't know whence came the NOW/HERE HERALD, which lists its price for \$1 but gives no names nor address to which you can send your buck to get one. That's a shame, too, because it looks like a nice little pseudo-political, pseudo-philosophical, excellently put-together collage. magazine. If anyone knows who and where these people are, please let me know!...On the other hand, I do know who Tom Cornejo is—besides being one of our new contributors, he's also the man behind the SICK SYSTEM DIGEST, a monthly collage, humor and rant-type zine which looks deceptively simple but, well, you know the story. Available for 50¢ and a stamp from Tom at P.O. Box 2381, Redondo Beach, CA 90278...Two more highly recommended self-published magazines of prose and art and the same type of stuff you're likely to see here are circulating as well, giving me plenty of faith in the continued vitality of What We Do: NANCY'S MAGAZINE from Nancy Kangas (2269 Market St., Box 241, San Francisco, CA 94114) is a bargain at 50¢, while the previously-in-IJ-plugged OFF Journal, #3, is selling for \$3 from A. Pavletich and her De Nada Press (935 N. Vendome St., Los Angeles, CA 90026)—again, my friends, forgive me for not extolling your virtues more but I haven't had too much reading time yet...If you like IJ staffer Kerry Thornley's Zenarchy stories in this and future IJs, he's put together a whole collection of same in his latest SPARE CHANGE rantmag, which features, among other things, Kerry's own written-for-IJ autobio and some artwork from mutual friend Roldo. How much spare change it costs wasn't listed so send Kerry a buck at 2981 Lookout Place NE, Atlanta, GA 30305...If you've ever wondered how to put together a rock fanzine, you'll get plenty of advice from the "experts" in the Summer '84 edition of SON OF BIOHAZARD INFORME, put out by Fred Mills (1211 Green Oaks Lane #G, Charlotte, NC 28205) and available for \$1...Moving into the world of what's new in mini-comics (is 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 mini?), Michael Dowers, editor of the self-portrait (4 x 5 1/2) mini OUTSIDE IN, also sent me the latest 3 issues of the quite well-done collaboration STAR HEAD, featuring IJ friend Steve Willis as well as Michael and others. The issues sell for anywhere from \$1 to \$1.50, so do ask—3615 Phinney N., Seattle, WA 98103...Only 25¢ is, again, a bargain for the newest Galaxy Gang offering, EMERALD CITY COMICS. They also put out a gala 44-pager called ATOMIC POWERED WALLPAPER, which is available for a buck from editor Clayton Park, 3700 Densmore Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98103...Slicker but for some reason not as impressive to me—a bit on the gratuitous cartoon nudity side, but to be fair I haven't really finished reading it

Mad as Hell
by LARRY FIZZ



THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: ATHLETES, ON AND OFF THE FIELD

What is gravity? How does it work for the San Diego Padres?

— Doug McClure, Seattle, WA

In order to keep "airheads" in contact with the playing surface, there must exist a force between two particles that matter. Since Steve Garvey is not an attractive force, but more of a detached force, you must then have a strong current of hot air blowing over the diamond. This law of science is satisfied by Dick Williams. By the way, those initials on the Pod uniforms (RAK) really stand for "recycled animal knuckles", which are the filler used in McDonald burgers.

How many times has Dan Marino of the Miami Dolphins been intercepted?

— Dick Smothers, New York, NY

The former Panther of Pitt. University has yet to have a pass thrown, and thus has no interceptions. The guy never played from scrimmage until two weeks ago, and was killed instantly when he fell through the concealed pitching mound when the Dolphins visited the Steelers at Three Rivers Stadium. Services are pending.

Who holds the major league record for attempted steals in a nine-inning game?

— Harry Anderson, Burbank, CA

Two players share this distinction: Tyler "Scooter" Penway (N.Y. Giants, 1944-46) and the still active Bobby "Cubs Win" Dernier. Penway went from first to second twice, second to third twice, and third to home once (all safely) in a theft-filled contest back in June of 1944. Chicago's Dernier attempted five steals and made them all against the Astros this year. There would have been a third player to join them in the record books, but San Diego's Carmelo "Marshmallow" Martinez was denied this "feet" when he went from first to third by way of the infield. Actually, all of the San Diego players use cheap tactics to win ball games. Tim Lollar coats every ball with secret sauce. Terry Kennedy does animal voices to distract hitters. Coach Ozzie "Nelson" Virgil pays fans on the third base dugout level to get them to spill beer, dump french fries, McNuggets, McAnything, onto the heads of visiting teams. Did you know that all of the Padres players and coaches were former Campfire Girls? You read it here first.

RADIO SNOW?
WHAT
RADIO
SNOW?



yet—is DOMINO, the latest from the Dolphin-Moon Press. Publisher Margot Insley was nice enough to send it along (\$2.50, if you want to see for yourself) and threw in Dolphin-Moon's previous publications THE BLACK CARROT ("poster/comix" out of which I could make very little sense, I'm afraid—that's \$1.50) and INAHABA FUNNIES (an oversize impressive-looking one, although I'll admit I didn't get much of this either—that one is \$3). If art's your thing, you may want to take a chance, or just write Margot for info at P.O. Box 22262, Baltimore, MD 21203...The latest UTNE READER, the best excerpted-article-source for the 'alternate culture' I've ever seen, focuses with issue No. 6 on Politics and Religion and also on Vietnam and its aftermath. Some incredibly intelligent musings on the Cosmic Cowboy in the White House, guaranteed to put the fear o' God in y'all. A well-worth-it \$4 to assistant editor Julie Ristau at P.O. Box 1974, Marion, OH 43305... Now for the sparse collection of "regulars": AGAINST THE WALL V.12#10 —Bill George, P.O. Box 444, Westfield, NJ 07091 (libertarian, \$2); CONTACT #s 43 thru 45—Elliott Leighton, P.O. Box 9248, Berkeley, CA 94709 (singles, \$3); JET LAG #48—Tony Renner, 8419 Halls Ferry Road, St. Louis, MO 63147 (mostly music, \$1); THE MONKEES/BOYCE & HART PHOTO FAN CLUB #55—Jodi Hamrich, secy., 508 8th St. NE #4, Watertown, SD 57201 (N/B&H, \$50¢ + SASE or \$12/yr); THE MONTHLY INDEPENDENT TRIBUNE TIMES JOURNAL POST GAZETTE NEWS CHRONICLE BULLETIN #s 22, 23—T.S. Child, 2510 Bancroft Way #207, Berkeley, CA #204 (surreality, FREE); WALLPAPER V.3, #s 6, 7—Amy Sweeney, P.O. Box 3324, Trenton, NJ 06819 (surreality, poetry, art, and only 25¢)...Coming next time, if I remember—a look at parody papers, focusing on two recent arrivals, COSMO-PARODY and the hilarious POST NEW YORK POST!

DIARY of The ROCK FIEND

by Anni Ackner

Stories My Mother Told Me

While I do not now, nor have I ever, nor do I ever expect to understand my mother, I will admit, under only small quantities of duress, that I do harbour a really incredible amount of respect for her. Now, I realize, of course, that it's a bit out of the fashion to respect one's mother - unless one's mother happens to be Dr. Ruth Westheimer, which my mother is not, and, furthermore, I don't believe anyone else's mother is, either - but you must understand that my mother, not unlike the Chicago Cubs, the people who periodically stage Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels reunion concerts, and Judge Wapner, is a sort of law unto herself and, as such, really is quite respectable, in the nicer sense of the word. Honestly, I'm sure if you knew her the way I know her, then you'd respect her too.

I mean, we're talking here about a woman who, having borne three daughters within the space of five years, watched them grow up to be me, The Sister To Whom I Do Not Speak, and My Other Sister (a psychiatric social worker given to secretly subjecting those nearest and dearest to her to the mental competency criteria generally used to measure her clients, and singing love songs to her car in the middle of traffic tie-ups on Route 4), and never once batted an eye at any of it, not even when My Other Sister became, for reasons she never did make clear to us, a Roman Catholic, and The Sister To Whom I Do Not Speak became, for reasons SHE never did make clear to us, the kind of person who frequents bars wherein the hanging plants outnumber the patrons by a ratio of at least three to one, and orders wine spritzers. My mother, moreover, is the only person I have ever met who is capable of turning out a vastly complicated and dicey Jewish dish called chal-upshes (more or less, I grew up speaking Yiddish, not spelling it) without even glancing at a recipe, but completely incapable of broiling a hamburger so that it tastes like anything other than filet of Michelin retread flambe; the only person I know who, while not certifiably schizophrenic (at least, I don't think she is, and I'm sure My Other Sister would have said something about it if she were. She's been following my mother around with a couch for years), has invented her own language, an amalgam of fractured English, Yiddish, German, and Polish far too arcane to even begin to explain, and which takes years to either understand or get over (to this day I have difficulty not referring to a pair of scissors as "Julius" in mixed company); and the only person in, I am certain, the universe as we know it, who could have contrived to live tolerantly with my father - a man with a minor reputation for stripping down to his size 54 boxer shorts and dancing to MADAME BUTTERFLY at all manner of inopportune moments - for nigh on to thirty-three years now. My mother is, in short, a wonder on a par with the monuments at Stonehenge and the Geraldine Ferraro campaign, and I can't stress strenuously enough the degree of respect I have for her.

Having, then, this tremendous amount of respect for my mother, it stands to reason, therefore, that I believe implicitly the things she tells me. I have, in fact, the sort of trust in her and faith in her veracity that right wing Republicans cherish for Ronald Reagan, and the rest of us normally reserve for Walter Cronkite. I have, not to put too fine a point on it, believed the stories my mother has told me even when they flew in the face of evidence so hardcore and unshakable that any sane person would have had no choice but to capitulate to it (though, on the other hand, I think we've probably established long before this that I am not any sane person). I believed my mother, for instance, when she told me, in answer to my youthful questions about reproduction, that babies collected under the furniture like so many rolls of dust, even though it caused me to spend the better part of what many would consider to be the best years of my life lying stomach-down on the bedroom floor, clutching a feather duster and peering under the bureau in an attempt to both get a glimpse of the Miracle of Life and put a stop to it before it brought me another Sister, a form of abortion which I don't think is covered by the Hyde Amendment. I believed my mother when she told me that if you swallowed watermelon seeds, vines would grow in your intestines (a Dali-esque image that kept me from eating watermelon until I was eighteen years old and experimenting with L.S.D. to the point that I thought vines were ALREADY growing in my intestines, and therefore I had nothing to lose), that if you ate an apple without washing it first (fruit looms large in my mother's Pantheon of Horrors), you'd get some kind of mysterious tree disease in your mouth, and that if you took a hot shower during That Time of the Month, it would make the flow heavier (I hereby admit, with all due embarrassment, that I still believe this one, which is to say that I do take hot showers during That Time of the Month - I would take a hot shower during the outbreak of all-out nuclear war if I could find a fallout shelter with hot running water - but I always worry about it afterwards). I even believed my mother when she told me that pre-marital sex was wrong because no man would buy the cow if he could get the milk for free (please don't write me letters. These are her words, not mine. If you want to talk sexism with somebody, write to her. Her name is Lucille and I'm sure she'd adore to hear from you), until I happened to notice that an awful lot of slightly used cows of my acquaintance seemed to be getting bought, as it were. So you see, I should think, that I really am willing to spot my mother quite a bit in the way of credibility, however, having said that, I wish to make it perfectly clear right now that even I have my limits.

In fact, thinking the matter over, let me strengthen that disclaimer even more: I did not believe this story when my mother told it to me (it was about two weeks ago, as I recall, when we chanced upon each other in the kitchen. I was going in search of a cup of coffee, and she was doing something something amusing to a veal chop, and one way or another we fell into a sort of conversation, or as close to a

conversation as it's possible to get when dealing with my mother), and I don't believe it now, and I present it solely because, try as I might, I don't understand how she managed to come up with it. To the best of my knowledge, my mother has never read anything I have written since the time when, at an extremely curious thirteen or so, I showed her a rather detailed and thought-provoking poem, cribbed mainly from the KAMA SUTRA and dedicated to George Harrison, and asked her opinion (her opinion was that she ought to have a valium), so I am reasonably certain that it is not a strategically planned and skillfully executed bit of sarcasm; and I honestly don't think this sort of thing runs in the family - besides, she's never shown any signs of it before - so how did she happen upon it? I know she made it up - among other things, I also refuse to believe that we're in telepathic communication with each other - but the question is how. If, after reading it, anyone has any thoughts on the subject whatsoever, I would be both grateful and delighted to hear them.

This, then, is the story:

"I dreamed last night", (my mother told me calmly, as I spilled milk down the front of a perfectly good wool sweater), "That I was sitting with the NBC News Team, watching the first of the Presidential debates unfold."

"Now, wait a minute...", I said, mopping.

"The funny thing about it, though", she said, pointedly ignoring me, "was that it wasn't like a normal presidential debate at all - I mean, if you want to grant that there is such a thing as a normal presidential debate, which I personally feel is like granting that there's such as 'One Size Fits All', especially when it comes to pantyhose. Do you remember..."

"You're babbling, Mom," I interjected sweetly. "Did you remember to take your medication today?"

"Lousy kid", she answered. "Anyway, the point is that it was being run like the Miss America Pageant. It was coming to you live from Atlantic City, and sponsored by someone like Cover Girl Makeup or Alba the Skinny Girls' Drink - incidentally, you know why that's the Skinny Girls' Drink, don't you? It's because it tastes so awful that you can't possibly eat anything else for the rest of the day" (a pause while she had a choking fit over the intensity of her own wit, and I tried to casually sneak out of the kitchen to the sanctuary of another room - one in Lebanon, say), "and" (when she could speak again) "it wasn't being reported by Tom Brokaw and Connie Chung and Gabe Pressman and that bunch, but by Bert Parks, Jerry Van Dyke, and three guys from GENERAL HOSPITAL."

"Bert Parks doesn't do Miss America anymore. They kicked him out because he was too old." I can be downright cruel when I'm desperate. She glared at me.

"Whose dream is this, anyway?"

"God knows", I muttered.

"So, if I may be allowed to go on, there I was with Bert and Jerry and these three soap opera guys, and we're talking about how marvelous the decor is - it was autumn gold with avocado accents, very charming, I thought, though Jerry thought it was a little conga-patchad - and what a great example of our country's democratic process it all was, when the band started to play HAIL TO THE CHIEF and Ronald Reagan and Walter Mondale came out on stage. Ronnie was wearing a cowboy outfit and a gold sash that said "Mr. California", and Fritz was wearing a gray suit and a gray sash that said "Mr. Minnesota"; they had on tap dancing shoes, and they both looked very handsome. They smiled at the audience, and then they did a nice duet to FAME. I thought Ronnie looked a little winded by the end of it, and once he forgot a step and danced right into the clarinet section, but mostly it went pretty well, all things considered."

"I'm sure it did", I said, choking. I had the definite impression that I knew what was coming. Unfortunately, I was not wrong.

"After that there was a commercial, and then Jimmy Carter came out - he was wearing overalls and a gorgeous zircon tiara - and talked about what a wonderful time he'd had during his reign as president, and all the places he got to go and people he got to meet while he was representing this great nation of ours - they played AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL in the background, which I thought was a good touch - and how he was going on to finish his education with all his prize money, and then they had the talent competition."

"Talent competition", I said briefly.

"Well, sure. Ronnie gave an inspirational speech - he wrote it all by himself, they said - about how the sun was once again shining on our glorious country, and God loved us, and together we were all going to go forth into a great new day..."

"That's not a talent. That's a bar mitzvah speech."

"Okay, but he did it while he was on horseback, just like John Wayne. Try that one, Miss Smart-Ass Liberal."

"All right. All right."

"And then Fritz came on and did Hubert Humphrey imitations. They were terribly funny, naturally, but I started to get a little nervous then, though I couldn't really think why."

"I can."

"Following that we had swimsuits, and that really was, well, unfortunate. I mean, Fritz didn't look too bad, even though he sagged a bit in the front and I thought they should have built a better bra into his - the three guys from GENERAL HOSPITAL did, too - but Ronnie looked just awful. Imagine - he's got gray hair all over his shoulders, and this sad little pot belly just hanging there with no support, if you know what I mean, and I truly felt sorry for him."

"I would have truly felt sorry for Nancy, under the circumstances."

"You would. Finally, it was the evening gowns, and I really got myself worked up into a snit then, because Ronnie fell right off his high heels, just like you did at that B'nai Brith dance in junior high..."

"I did not!"

"Oh yes you did. You had a big bruise on your hip for weeks after-

cont'd from previous page

wards, and I bet Ronnie did, too, and Fritz just stood there and laughed at him, the poor man. Bert and Jerry got into a fight over whether Fritz had actually made his gown - it was peach chiffon, by the way, with a darling bow on the left shoulder. You would have looked good in it - the way he was supposed to, or bought it at Penney's, and the three soap opera guys made some marvelously catty remarks about the sort of girdle Ronnie was wearing, and personally I thought Fritz had won - Ronnie was Miss Congeniality, and you know they never win - but just as they were getting ready to announce the winner, a flashbulb went off in my face and I woke up, all in a cold sweat. Isn't that something?"

"Yeah. Something", I mumbled, and left the room.

And, in fact, it is indeed something, but I promise you most faithfully that I haven't any idea what. If, as I said, you do, please let me in on the secret. I haven't been able to look my mother in the eye since it happened and, given my constant need to drink coffee, and my occasional craving for a toasted cheese sandwich, it's beginning to get a trifle uncomfortable staying out of the kitchen.

TALK SHOW HOST

CONFIDENTIAL by Michael Dobbs

With the elections just a few weeks away, I find writing something humorous somewhat difficult. Oh, I suppose I could do something snotty about the idiot actor who has a very good chance of becoming the leader of the free world once again...but I won't...

In presidential elections journalists are frequently supposed to go out and find America...all the major magazines have people out on the road searching often vainly for the pulse and thought of the nation. I'm sure you've read their reports or seen the stories on the network newscasts. The pieces often originate from obscure country villages in Idaho or Maine, as New York-based editors have a guilt reaction to secretly feeling the hub of the universe is in Manhattan. To compensate, they send their reporters to the countryside, the "real" heartland.

The problem with all this is that talking to a corn farmer up to his neck in debt, with a bumper crop in the field and a shitty price at the market, is just as valid as knocking on a housewife's door in Queens. America is made up of 50 states which are often as diverse as fifty nations.

Reporters in the field know this but, for reasons that totally escape my understanding, editors don't. Of course, most news editors deal in clichéd reactions to any kind of story, so perhaps it's obvious why they want a "heartland" piece in the first place.

If you want to know what's happening, you've got to hit the streets. There's no way around actually getting your hands dirty by involving yourself in a little part of this country. I'd like to tell you what's going on in mine...

There's more street people around...I'm not sure why, but you can bet every time you ride the bus, the chances are good someone who hasn't taken a bath in a year will be sitting next to you. The Massachusetts Division of Employment Security reports that unemployment is down to about 4 percent a year, one of the lowest in the nation. Signs are out all over advertising jobs. Yet, I see so many more down-and-outers.

There's a lot of kids hanging out all over, too. They never seem to work much in my neighborhood and yet they always have the trendy clothes and the newest tapes blaring out of their oversized radios. I keep seeing these programs on television about how kids are scared of nuclear weapons and are either working for a freeze or committing suicide or just becoming total hedonists. There doesn't seem to be much concern about that here...Oh, in the college town of Amherst, home of UMass, Amherst and Hampshire colleges, there are high school students who participate in the candlelight vigils, and the marches, and the street corner demonstrations. But they are outnumbered by the 15-year-olds with the purple hair or the kids in designer clothes scouting out everyone else's outfits.

The people on my radio show either love Reagan or hate him...no one seems to even like Mondale. The Reagan lovers are irrational in their orgiastic approval of the President. He has made America proud again, I'm told...He has made America secure in the world...No country has fallen to Communism under his administration...The economy is stable...We're no longer wimps...

The Reagan haters revile his family and his career as an actor...they despise his heated rhetoric and his passive actions towards the Soviets...they fear the next four years and the weighty but abstract problems of the deficit and job flight and foreign trade...they are scared for their lives and the lives of their children.

The reactions to all this admiration and fear are identical, though. I really shouldn't wonder why the younger generation...a label people used to apply to my generation...are into idiot consumerism; their parents are. If you've got it to spend, people spend it these days. The Reagan lovers do it out of sheer confidence. The Reagan haters out of sheer fear. Since the roof is about to cave in, why not have a good time before it does? Right?

The people who have given up looking for work or the people on relief or the people just scraping by aren't involved in any of this. They have no money to spend and no one cares for their opinion. They've always relied on the conscience of the middle class, who are today just too busy spending their money to listen or to care.

The mood in America is to spend, spend, spend on all those lovely things we see on tv or hear about on the radio or notice in the yard next door. Spend and be patriotic...spend and don't give a shit.

Just keep on spending...if you're lucky, you'll die before the real payments begin.

"LET'S GET SUSHI AND NOT PAY FOR IT" one week on the silver screen

by rodny k dioxin

I know, I know, every-fuckin'-body here writes about da movies but georg copped my latest magnum opus and i ain't bought enuf new records recently ta get a good column outta that...but i has seen a coupla interesting flicks so here's goes a lot less dan the proverbial nuffin'. wot we're talkin' here are three movies in a period of seven days, da films being' STRYKER, BACHELOR PARTY and REPO MAN. yer mind numbs, no? mine almost did. alla dese are worth seein' for different reasons. STRYKER appears ta have been made by a cast made up of many non-english speakers (oodles of really bad lip-synching). we in serious grade z ripoff country here folks. this time it's ROAD WARRIOR except they're all hot for water. the plot holes are so big ya could easily drive the tanks (yes!! we got tanks) thru 'em. there's an ex-play-mate of the year in shoulder pads and a bow 'n' arrow who drives around on a sort of honda atc cum dump buggy, a bad buy wif a hook (peter pan meets metalstorm), everyone seems to live on some spam-like substance (beastly!!), scenes change from dark to light...not the worst must-see of the summer alas (it lacks the stunningly wasteful prod-values of STREETS OF FIRE or the utter incompetence of SPLATTER UNIVERSTY) but if ya find it ya should definitely check it out -it beats INDIANA CLONES AND THE TEMPLE OF PAPOON all ta hell. it's an altogether different kinda fun we're talkin' wif BACHELOR PARTY. this is a comedy but i gotta tell ya that STRYKER has more yoks per celluloid inch. but BACH-PARTY does carry on the tradition of lunthead comedy. and it's got Tom Hanks. da boy's got talent and more good lines than ya can shake a stick at ("thank you all for being catholic and for choosing the st. gabriel school bus"). yeah his buddies are mainly prats and wallies of a high degree of asshole-ishness but hanks plays a mean game of tennis and even tho it's often borderline offensive a lot of the business here works. not a must-see but worth a discount matinee. a side note or two—for lunthead comedy fans, the event of the fall will have to be WILD LIFE ("it's casual"—and a buzzword is born) which not only looks 50 times stoopider than FAST TIMES AT RIDGEMONT HIGH but also has Lee Ving, the best thing about STREETS OAF FIRE. i dunno 'bout 'chall but i for one is glad ta see that there's work for da man who gave us such immortal lines as "but the suburban scumbags they don't care, just get fat and dye their hair" and "seen an old man have a heart attack in manhattan, well we just stood there lookin' at him—ain't he cute?". which is not as good a segue as yer gonna get 'round dese parts for the best of da lot REPO MAN. dis is a good flick kids. find it. see it. i ain't responsible for the consequences otherwise. da stars here are Emilio Estevez, as Otto, a self-described "white suburban punk" turned repo man; Harry Dean Stanton as Bud, a sort of gone-to-seed patron saint of repo men and one very weird 57 Malibu. no way i can explain any of dis shit. see it. the best "punk" movie since SUBURBIA (which you should all also go out and see) and funny as anything i've seen this year (that was trying at least). ole over-plugged himself mike nesmith had a finger in this, as well. i also wanna put out a notice of thanks to whoever came out wif the idea for the generic nitemare that is the commercial landscape of so much of REPO MAN. it's all quite brill from start to weirded-out finish. all you old 60's types can cringe in horror at Otto's parents (the sum total of their wisdom—it tastes better on a plate...and...we're sending bibles to el salvador). more metal bands here as well and a killer soundtrack. well dat's gonna kill it off for now cos dat's alla da flicks i seen. but it looks like a good fall film season lies in store for all us trash fiends. along with WILD LIFE there's the sure-to-be-a-classic ZOMBIE ISLAND MASSACRE (or whatever they're calling it now), TOXIC AVENGER, SUPERGIRL (already trashed over in Anglia), any number of unknown hack jobs, and what's virtually guaranteed ta be a good number of major money flea-bearers (what will be late 84's SEARCH FOR SCHLOCK?). nuffa dis shit. next time—outta the arts and back into the realms of the bizarre. remember dat 4 nov is 'lection day and ta vote for me as a staffer and not that wuss georg (help me out—the man liked gizmo). or in da words of mike muir, "all i wanted was a pepsi, just one pepsi and she wouldn't give it to me."

they BLINDED me with VIDEO

by CANDI STRECKER

CHAPTER XIII: THE UTILITY OF MUSIC

The one thing about MTV that never fails to amaze me is that it's available ALL DAY! ALL NIGHT! Why, it's the living embodiment of the phrase "rock around the clock": seamless, timeless, perpetual musical motion. People often say, "Oh, MTV is so bad," which almost misses the point. I don't expect it to be good, I expect it to be there. "Good" and "bad" are terms that make sense in relation to conventional shows, but they can't be applied as easily to MTV, which is more of a music-video utility, a wired-in necessity of life just like water or electricity or phone service. With a utility, reliability and consistency are what count. MTV's product may tend to be a bit monotonous, a bit tailored to mediocrity, but these qualities are what make it possible for you to tune in at 7 a.m. or 5 p.m. or 2 a.m. and find them still playing rockvideos, not fudging by showing old Tarzan movies or "PTL Club." You might compare it to the water that's provided to your kitchen tap. You don't demand Perrier from the water company; all you expect is a steady delivery of a serviceable product. (On the other hand, you don't want the product to contain toxic wastes either. When I see women in chains and cages, I start to wonder if someone's been poisoning the community well.)

The word "utility" also implies "usefulness," which leads one to consider just what it's useful for. Okay, it can't run your toaster or fill your bathtub or help you chat with Mom back in Spokane. But it can fill in (just like Dent-U-Grip?) certain odd gaps and corners of time in one's life, strange loose-ends moments when you want something neither too hard to get involved with nor too hard to break away from. Sometimes that's exactly what one needs, and on such occasions I'm usually glad to have MTV around.

MTV does tend to be as inherently bad as any medium is that caters to a mass public's taste; but, expecting the worst, I'm often surprised and delighted at how good it can sometimes, briefly, be. In analyzing the world of rockvideos, I've had to constantly balance the need to be critical with an awareness that the whole thing shouldn't be taken all that seriously. This kind of attitude isn't a bad one for the everyday video viewer to adopt. Enjoy 'em but keep your wits about you, cheer 'em when they're good, but don't be surprised to find that Sturgeon's Law operates in rockvideo as it does everywhere else: 96% of everything is bullshit.

TRIVIAL PURSUIT IN OVERDRIVE: AN MTV QUIZ FOR OLD-CAR FANATICS

Which are appears in which video?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. 1955 Chevrolet | 5. 1957 Chevy BelAir |
| 2. 1955 Buick Roadmaster | 6. 1959 Cadillac (black) |
| 3. 1956 Buick | 7. 1959 Cadillac (pink) |
| 4. 1956 Cadillac (pink) | 8. 1960 Buick |
| A. "Church of the Poison Mind," Culture Club. | |
| B. "Cry Cry Cry," Neil Young. | |
| C. "Wonderin'," Neil Young. | |
| D. "Brass in Pocket," Pretenders. | |
| E. "Take the L," the Motels. | |
| F. "Big Log," Robert Plant. | |
| G. "Our Lips Are Sealed," the Go-Gos. | |
| H. "I Love L.A.," Randy Newman. | |

[ANSWERS: 1-F, 2-H, 3-E, 4-C, 5-B, 6-A, 7-D, 8-G.]

ADDENDUM: This is my last column on rockvideos and MTV. Next issue I'll have the first column in my new series, "My Job and Welcome To It."

SPECTACLE PRESUMED:
I what is
Is what
I consumed
What I is
Is I
I what
succumbed
Is I what
What I
I is
is doomed
I is what
What is
I exhumed?
DEBACLE RESUMED
- G. Michael O'Hara

LIFE IS A GIFT BUT HOW DO YOU WRAP IT?

by David Rice

Life begins at birth.

But a birthday
is too important
to be taken seriously
So forget the candles
wrap the presents
in newspaper
and sing out of tune.

Life begins at conception.

Better to tie each present
with a ribbon
sing in tune
and hope the cake's moist.

Life begins after the kids leave home.

Better yet
eat breakfast out
and make love on the couch
after lunch.

WHAT IS A HOME?

by Audrey Parente

A house, a grand mansion,
a condo, a flat,
a lodging, a dwelling,
where hangs the old hat,
a temple to money,
one's spacious abode,
the place where one dwells
with the precious COMMODE!

"AUDIO IT"
COMING YOUR
WAY - IN
'85??

ZENARCHY
STORIES

STRAW BUDDHAS by Ho Chi Zen

A young man came to Ho Chi Zen and asked to be instructed in worshipping the Buddha.

"Come back tomorrow," Ho instructed.

When the seeker returned the next day, Ho Chi Zen took him to a great statue of the Buddha made entirely of straw, and began at once relating the formalities about clapping hands, bowing, chanting and burning incense to the image.

"But," objected the young man, "this Buddha is made of straw!"

"Ah, yes!" Ho replied. "And it would be more instructive if they all were. For Sakyamuni Buddha himself would never have sat still for such bowing by one being to another as this. All Buddhas that do might just as well be made likewise of straw."

"How then may I pay my respects to the true image of the Buddha?"

"Every morning when you shave, wink at yourself in the mirror."

WISDOM OF THE EAST

"A true Zenarch of Zenarchy," said Ho Chi Zen, "does not trouble himself with such nonsense as miracles. His miracle is that he drinks when he's tired, sleeps when he's hungry and eats when he's thirsty."

EVERYONE A ZEN MASTER

Here is a spiritual exercise that will help you apply Laughing Buddha Jesus' advice about loving one another.

As you are walking the streets or riding a public conveyance imagine yourself the father or mother of each person you look at—regardless of age. See all adults as your grown children, contemplating them one at a time, even if that makes you feel a hundred years old.

Or imagine that every man or woman you pass or encounter is a Zen master—each with her or his own method of teaching. Sometimes they will sense your respect for them and will glance at you and grin. Take the dress and posture of each individual as evidence of his or her style of expressing enlightenment. Hear every scrap of conversation as a Zen riddle.

And never forget the saying, "Tao is your everyday mind."

SATORI STORY

One of Ho Chi Zen's students asked him, "What was the occasion of your enlightenment?"

Ho replied, "I forget."

PAPOON IN '84/84

RABBIT RAPS WITH GEORGE PAPOON

by Ed Woolf

(The interview below was submitted by staff writer Robert Wollard, to whom I am quite grateful for providing for this column during the hustle and bustle of my vacation and the subsequent Erektion Daze. Papoon won, of course, and the media covered it up again, of course; we'll have a full wrap-up next issue, and a pre-Inaug party during our annual New Year's Eve Eve bash at Apartment Third Eye here.)

My mother Red has asked me to write the column this time because of some Campeon business our friend Rabbit seems to have been following. Red still swears that Rabbit is in jail, and yet here is this tape of a recent interview with George, which I am trying to transcribe—and with some difficulty because it's a rather hard-to-find tape. Hopefully, however, what follows is what has been regarded as the genuine article:

RABBIT: What strategy are you taking with the opposition this time, George?

GEORGE: I'm glad you put it that way, because the opposition is just what it is. Basically, our nation has two parties: our party, which (though it is much larger, or perhaps because of that) is much harder to see. A little background on their approach to things is perhaps all we need here...They are people who believe that dogshit should be slept in, and their platform is essentially an attempt to see that it is placed in everyone's beds. Right now they are pushing for The Dogshit Amendment, which would make this mandatory for every American. Absurd as it sounds, they believe in it. I quote from their charter:

You already know why you believe in sleeping in dogshit, but here is the reason you must strive constantly to make others do so as well: While the obvious disadvantage of this practice is that it smells bad, is uncomfortable, and spreads disease, the fact of the matter is that some dogshit is worse to sleep in than others...and therefore, some of it is not so bad. In addition, it has the advantage of sometimes being soft and warm. Let's keep our streets free of animal sin!

The best strategy I can think of against this misfire of the human mechanism is to try to get people to spend some time each day looking into a mirror, at least metaphorically, asking themselves if they really, really believe they deserve it. Most of them would never stand in front of a mirror naked, but getting the face naked is a start.

R: Perhaps you could respond regarding some of the major issues. What about the deficit, for example?

G: You mean defecation? Laddie, they've got money going in one pocket and out the other in Washington! If things keep going this way the Republicans and Democrats will be hunting more than Easter Eggs in the White House lawn next spring. You know, I'm always expecting a bigger show from those guys than they finally produce. Couldn't we have Kennedy and Nixon next time?

R: I'm with you, George, but listen: just what is it that is so bad about this deficit business, besides how just plain awful it is?

G: It's funny that nobody ever talks about that, isn't it!

R: George?

G: Huh?!

R: Uh...uh George, uh, just what do you think your chances are?

G: Oh, about the same I guess, and yourself?

R: Oh, I'm doing fine too George, uh, say, uh, now let me ask you this: just how would you deal with the Soviets if elected?

G: So-be-it...what? Ah, oh, Soviets, yeah. Hey, those poor old guys, shit, they can't keep a stiff warm long enough to get him on TV, let alone get him into office. I mean they've got coffins waiting in line knee deep for those guys, and there's lines of 'em waiting to get in line. Brezhnev must have been the last guy in line, poor old dog.

But what to do about them, hmmm...well...look: This is all just a story, see? Now I know there are those of you "out there" who would call that wishful thinking—and you are right! That's exactly my point—that is what you must look at: it is all one enormous story we are telling each other here. Actually, it's rather like a script. It's amazing, simply amazing how many people have been following a script that says they can't write their own script—and they write the same script for others to follow, or underwrite it. And they live their lives in a state of hysteria over what is simply utter nonsense that doesn't even exist. I know it's absurd, but they act on it as if their death depended on it. And you know, just one person writing an original script—which is actually the easiest, most natural, healthiest thing to do—can make up for millions who are not...Let me give you an example: Most people believe Ronald Reagan is alive, right? But did you ever stop to think, when you're up in an airplane looking down at how teenie weensie all the little people are down there, that, jeez you know, the people in the next state would be so far away you wouldn't even be able to see 'em at all. So how do you know they exist? You see, except for the media images, somebody like Reagan is so far away from the broad mass of most of us that it really doesn't matter if he's alive or dead. Think of him as one of those little specs down there: does it matter? No, it doesn't, because from that distance you can't even tell! It's a sort of natural occurrence that allows us to bomb people to dogfood that we don't even know. What if those warplanes had TVs in them so they could watch close up what their weapons were doing to people? Just an instant look at an expression on someone's face can tell you their whole life's story, you know. Well, we'd never get any damn war accomplished at all, that's what.

The only way to accept it would be to become so insane that you can't function—war is not what it used to be...So with somebody like Reagan, it's the story you get on the TV that you more or less "believe." What the guy ought to do is fake a bunch of live appearances in the studio,

with actors playing the part of the press and the whole submarine—and work 'em up on tape to be released a little at a time after his death, like a rock star. Now, some people believe that that is what we are actually seeing right now. That fellow Hinckley who killed him, for example, he believed all sorts of weird things—and that's fine. The trouble was that he acted on those beliefs...and they were really very selfish, self-circumnavigating beliefs actually, that weren't doing any of us any good. But he knows that now, why torture the poor devil... especially since many people believe that we would all be better off today if Reagan had not survived. At least I heard people saying that at the time...But to get back to your question about the Soviets, you don't need to ask a surrealist for the answer to that one: we all know the answer. You start communicating, right? And I'm not speaking out of turn about being a surrealist—internal surrealism is merely a statement of intent. Naturally some of us have sharpened our intent more than others, but it's something we do for ourselves, isn't it? It's a competitive world. I mean, if I have to call myself something, why not pick something that doesn't mean anything?

R: Well, I hardly know what to say, George—I'm not much of a conversationalist, you know. But I have a couple more questions here, and the next one is to ask you for your comment on the Church-State controversy.

G: Church and State, huh? Hmmm...let's see...I guess being in a church would partly determine the state you're in, and vice-versa (?). For example, the Byzantines believed that things appeared larger and larger the farther away they were, for proper Byzantines of course. And that would shoot the hell out of my theory about the shooting of Reagan with cameras in an airplane...and there were no airplanes until Leonardo, so either the Byzantines didn't know any better (because they did have cameras), or else I'm plain wrong...I believe in the separation of Church and State: I believe they should both be as separate from me as possible (laughing)...I'll give you a little sermon here: a long time ago the artists or magicians or whatever you want to call them—the image makers, you know, made images of deities and so-vereigns, and people responded by submitting to both. And so that became the job of the image maker. The Church and the State and the Image Maker all wanted more than people's applause for the power of the image maker. And now we have the image makers (nowadays called "the media") giving us this Church-State controversy business (which we thought had been settled with the framing of the U.S. Constitution, right?), when what it actually is is a Church-State-Media controversy. Pretty clever, huh?...Laurel and Hardy made images, didn't they? But has any nation ever been exterminated because of them? Has anyone ever been lashed down to their knees to grovel and whine and pee their damn ass because of them? When TV first came out after the war, Laurel and Hardy were on every Saturday. Now you never, never, never, never, never see 'em. And we all know why, don't we!

R: Well, uh, yeah, uh, yeah I guess so...

G: Is Laughing Gravy any lesser a work than The Medicci Tombs? I think not!

R: Uh, George, uh, we have another question here—it has to do with the abortion issue.

G: Yes! You know, a point nobody ever brings out about that is that in a starving world such as we have here, the aborted feti would make an excellent source of protein. Now of course normal people are not going to go down to the local pizza place and order a fetus special—for obvious reasons—but I know a lot of nice little doggies who wouldn't mind a bit. If dogs were fully franchised, how do you think they'd vote on that issue? I heard some guy calling up the radio about the lab torture issue, saying that all you have to do is walk through ward after ward of hopeless, dying human children to realize that human beings have a soul and dogs do not and that the deaths of a million dogs is not too much to ask to save one child. Well, I'm only human myself—I could see the guy's point—but I did have to ask myself what the dogs would think of that if it could be conveyed to them. And what about the rats?

R: ...but the abortion issue in current politics is a Church and State issue...

G: ...and I don't think any one individual can be held responsible for it—certainly not!! It's the same as...uh...mmmm...

R: George?

G: Huh?

R: The question?

G: The question! Yes! No, you see, I am making a point here—I'm trying to look directly at the issue as it really is, as a mainstream politician cannot. And the point I am making is that the key feature of the issue today is the obvious difference in people's attitudes toward death by abortion and death by war, starvation, etc., as I will make clear in a moment. Abortion stirs the passions to levels of out-rate beyond what people can reason. War, on the other hand, is considered normal and basically OK as long as it happens to someone else...of any age. As Daniel Ellsberg pointed out, the Viet Nam war was carried out in this country by decent, good-hearted people who put in their day's work at the Pentagon, then went home and were kind to their dogs...You know, Rabbit, it's a tough one. And it's one of the reasons I'm glad I'm not running this year. It's become a very divisive issue that, in a way, has brought people closer to it the more they've been cut off from it. You know, life is a bloody business. And this whole idea has been made more complex recently by the entry into the political arena of the concept of the soul. There are people who believe it enters the body at the moment of conception. Don Juan Matus sees that to be true, for example. And there are those who believe it enters with the first breath and leaves with the last. El Greco seems to have seen it that way. Meanwhile, the latest figures from the scientific community indicate that the blessed event occurs, on the average, at 33 years of age...So let's say that at 33, either your soul has finally gotten squeezed in, in which case you become

line of transcription inadvertently omitted

some sort of world leader, or it hasn't, and you become a zombie. Now men have always controlled (destroyed) population by means of war. And since most people killed in a war are under the age of 33, war can be viewed as a kind of abortion, the kind the existing power structure seeks to maintain so that it can use mass murder as an instrument to oppose what Reagan has called, in his argument in favor of nuclear war, "attitudes not compatible with western values." Now, I don't mean to be scary—Reagan is certainly not going to kick off a nuclear war—I'm just pointing out something about his attitude. A baby brings into the house the light and power of the unknown, the promise of the survival of joy, and the final answer to the meaning of all our desires. A lot nicer to think about than a pile of dead soldiers rotting away in a ditch somewhere, isn't it! It's supposed to fill our hearts with patriotic pride! Has any dead president ever given thanks for the courage of the brave souls of those buried at the National Cemetery of the Unborn for not entering the world so we can guiltily enjoy the precious freedoms we hold so dear? It's not as if Reagan was giving those dead folks at Arlington a chance to change their minds. Well, the real reason people more or less stopped making images of The Bleeding Head a long time ago is that people got bloody sick of it...The great collective pool of the power of all living things just wants to putter about, snooping for a bit more slack here and there, as it has for the last two billion years. But just look at the bad press lkhnaton has gotten for daring to cross the line! All the straight people characterize him as some kind of nut, like Timothy Leary or Jimmy Carter who let his military go to hell. The people, they say, would have none of it—they wanted a real king with balls!

R: What about Thatcher?

G: Ha ha! I'm glad I'm not running against her! Say, do you have anything to drink? And god damn, Rabbit, we're sitting in the hottest fuckin' room in the house! Can't we, uh, move out to the front lawn or something?

R: (in the foreground) As a matter of fact I do have something, I'll go get it and join you in a minute. I have a bottle of—just a minute: Burgess 1977 Napa Valley Chardonnay from Winery Lake Vineyards. There were only 790 cases of it bottled. It was given to me 5 years ago by Zippo Klein, remember old Toadie! I've been waiting all this time for that sucker to come help me drink it, and it has to be drunk before 1985 or it'll start back downhill. Just a second, let me catch the tape...

G: (in the background, apparently wandering outside)...ah, the power and dignity and majesty of it all, oh the sheer marvelousness! Rabbit, you gotta come get a load of this moo-oo-hoo-oon! Oh let's go cry under the stars! Let's go get some ice! Let's wash the car! Ah the vastness of it all!...

ED'S NOTE: The tape ran out at this point. When we tried to turn it over to transcribe the other side, we found that we could not. Apparently the tape has only one side, which may add a new twist to this year's Campoon. As yet, we've been unable to straighten it out.

"Sometimes it is an appropriate response to reality to go insane."

Ever wonder about the nature of evil?
What demonic forces created Reagan & Thatcher?
Why Captain Video isn't on the air any more?
WHAT THE HELL'S WRONG?

GARDEN FRESH FEAR (A Tale of the Times) by ROLDIO

THERE WAS NOTHING IN PARTICULAR THAT HAROLD ERIC BOUTON WANTED THAT FINE MAY MORNING, WHICH IS JUST AS WELL SINCE HE WOULDN'T HAVE GREEN IT ANYWAY.

WHILE HE WAITED FOR THE BUS, HE WHISTLED A SIMPLE TUNE & LET HIS MIND WANDER, PERHAPS A LITTLE BEYOND HIS USUAL LENGTH-LENGTH. WHEN ^{THE BUS} CAME, HE BOUNDED IT WITH A CHEERFUL LITTLE SPRING TO HIS STEP & SANK INTO HIS SEAT IN A PLEASANT REVERIE.

AS HE OPENED HIS DAILY PAPER, HE BELCHED QUIETLY. IT TASTED VAGUELY OF RADISHES. WHAT WAS IT, HE WONDERED IDLY, HE'D HEARD ONCE ABOUT RADISHES? SOMETHING HIS GRANDMOTHER ON HIS MOTHER'S SIDE HAD SAID, YEARS AGO.....

"THEY ALWAYS REPEAT ON A DYING MAN" SAID AN OLD WOMAN'S VOICE BEHIND HIM.

HE TURNED IN SUDDEN PANIC. IN THE SEAT BEHIND HIM, TWO ELDERLY WOMEN CEASED THEIR CONVERSATION & REGARDED HIM WITH A COMBINATION OF INDIGNATION & FEAR.

BOUTON TURNED AWAY QUICKLY, BUT NOT BEFORE ONE OF THE LADIES TUGGED ON THE BELL SIGNALING THE DRIVER TO STOP. THEY EXITED AT THE NEXT CORNER. SEVERAL PASSENGERS AFFORDED HIM BRIEF GLANCES OF CONTEMPT.

HE GOT OFF THE BUS AS WELL, TWO STOPS LATER.

AS THE BUS PULLED AWAY, IT'S EXHAUST FUMES ENVELOPED HIM.

THEY SMELT VAGUELY OF RADISHES.

YEAR OF THE SLOTH

by Mike Gunderloy

All right, kids, you can relax now. 1984 is almost over, Big Brother is not watching you, the Thought Police are not rewriting history, Ronald Reagan does not eat dead babies for lunch and your government never lies to you. In fact, things are more like they are now than they ever have been before. Taken as a whole, MittelAmerika is not a real exciting place. Conformity is the name of the game these days, and most of us are pretty good at playing it.

But wait. What's gone wrong? It's been 40 years since Hofmann went on that first LSD trip, 25 since good old Tim Leary brought it to this country. By now the entire country was supposed to have turned on, tuned in, and dropped out. The younger generation was going to be running things, the folks who understood that mammalian power-politics was a thing of the past, the visionaries, the seers. Maybe it wouldn't be quite as funky as it was portrayed in "Wild in the Streets," but that was the idea. No more old white men in charge of our poor souls. Disband the army, plant lots of flowers, and live happily ever after. That's what was being promised when I was growing up. The Yippies were supposed to have everything under lack of control by now.

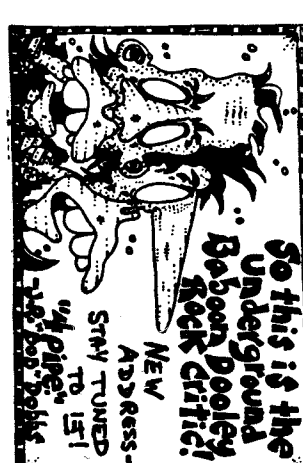
Well, the psychedelic revolution fizzled. It's damned difficult to buy anything even purporting to be LSD any more, and when you do find some it's probably just PCP cut with rat poison. And all the other alphabet soup—STP, DMT, MDA—it's all just legends. Pot is safe and accepted now. But who wants to experiment with their own brain anymore? Grow up. Become a stockbroker. It worked for Jerry Rubin. Mind expansion? Not a chance, kiddo—here, snort some more coke. It's fashionable, it's expensive, and it'll do you almost as much damage as alcohol. Acid is for folks from the stone age.

And youthful rebellion: they tell me it died at Kent State, when the Establishment proved that they wouldn't hesitate to gun us down to preserve their position. Or maybe it was blown across Jackie's suit along with Jack Kennedy's brains. I dunno. But now? You can march to end the arms race, if you want. Marching is so much more mellow than rioting, after all. Or if you're an anarchist and want to make A Statement, you can refuse to vote, thus depriving The System of your endorsement. As if they wanted your endorsement in the first place. C'mon, guys. If you really wanted to deprive the system, you'd refuse to pay taxes. But then you might land in jail - and how would you keep up payments on the car?

Oh, I'm not pretending to be any different. I get up in the morning and dutifully shave, put on a tie and go off to the bowels of corporate Amerika. They take taxes out of my paycheck and I file each year to get back the few crumbs I'm permitted to reclaim. It's that conformity I was talking about above. But I like to think it's conformity with a difference: protective camouflage, if you will. I come home and drop acid or crank up the old printing-press to put out a few more anarchist pamphlets. I'm not off at a party with the guys in the three-piece suits, anyhow. Maybe some of it makes a difference, maybe not, but I try not to become completely roboticized.

But to what point? I don't dare advertise my non-conformity too openly, not with the tenor of the times being what it is. Prison is no fun, even if you're making A Statement and Standing Up For Your Rights and Refusing to Endorse the System. I don't relish the thought of making license plates or whatever they do on the inside these days. So I lie low. Hell, make no bones about it, I hide. For all I know there are thousands, even millions, of others doing exactly the same thing. But none of us wants to be the first martyr. So we just go on writing letters to a few like-minded friends, sweating each time we buy hallucinogens, afraid that our neighbors will turn us in, and wait for the Establishment to get around to wiping us out. Activism gets a lot of lip-service, but I haven't left the house to do anything lately and neither have most of the people I know in similar situations.

The counter-culture isn't dead, but it sure seems to be on the way, not with blood in the streets but quietly, softly, and without anyone noticing.



THE CAFE NEAR THE PARK

by Cynthia Cinque

The cafe near the park is owned by a couple who also own an alarm and lock company. They own many things: four stores adjoining their own, a Mercedes, a large house with many locks and alarms, a guard dog and each other. I can see he is an asshole and she could see he is an asshole, but she prefers not to see he is an asshole because he has a lot of money and she is secure. He is short and stout and has curly hair and he runs back and forth and back and forth in the cafe. I like to and I do not like to talk to her. She has very little to say, but looks at me patiently and lethargically like a chained dog and would like to be free but she knows the world is full of men who are short and stout and who run back and forth and who own everything. She used to drink a lot but now she doesn't because he helps her bury her feelings by keeping busy and sometimes she runs back and forth and back and forth in the cafe. Once she looked real sad and told me she left her bird under the sprinkler and his lungs filled up with water and he died and she said, "I was bummed out," but her husband rushed over and looked at her nervously and kept his back to me and she looked at him sadly and shut her mouth. He was afraid I'd take her away from his locks and alarms but I don't have anyplace to take her except maybe the desert. I don't know why I keep going back to her and back to her, maybe because I love the buried pilgrim in her and I walked in there one evening and sat in the corner and she was making potato salad and he was strumming on a guitar and singing, "Frankie and Johnny were Sweethearts," and I burst out laughing. Frankie and Johnny weren't short and stout and they did not run back and forth nervously and they did not own a guard dog and they died from a disease called passion. Some call it freedom. I was not fooled. Their guard dog is not fooled either because my friend David reached over their chain fence and patted the dog who licked him and slobbered all over his hand. He was supposed to be an alarm system too, but he couldn't control himself.

Frankie and Johnny went into the cafe by the park one evening to get a hamburger and french fries and the owner did not like the look of them and thought they might hold up his cafe so he ran back and forth and back and forth slamming doors and opening them and slamming them until Frankie and Johnny got the message and left. The wife said, "My husband is very perceptive and knows when someone is going to hold up our cafe." I looked at her blankly because I did not want to be a hypocrite and say, "Your husband is very perceptive," yet I was not brave enough to tell her he was an asshole.



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Wax Ink

by Rory Houchens

THREE OF A PERFECT PAIR—King Crimson (Warner Bros.)—This third lp from King Crimson's latest and most volatile line-up should just about be running up both the radio airplay and record sales charts and hanging around somewhere near the top, but instead of being welcomed with open arms and a pat on the back, THREE OF A PERFECT PAIR seems to be getting a universal "thumbs down." The problem arises from the presence of four challenging instrumentals the combo performs without a net, and which some crybabies have been prompted to call "disturbing" and "upsetting." Heavy on improvisation and full of scatter-shot drumming, stick thumps and guitar metallics, such exercises as "Industry" and "Larks' Tongues In Aspic Part III" relay aural attacks that are something like receiving a ten-inch sliver of ice right behind the eyes. Balancing out the wordless experiments are the more commercial "songs" (most notably the title track and "Man With An Open Heart") spruced up with Adrian Belew's beat poetry/romantic lyrics and Robert Fripp's technically exact guitar patterns. Dig 'em, but don't bury 'em!

LEGEND—Bob Marley & The Wailers (Island)—All greatest hits albums should be this good—strikingly packed with beautiful photos and coherent liner notes (by Timothy White?) and containing fourteen top Marley songs, LEGEND is a masterpiece. Starting with CATCH A FIRE's "Stir It Up," it traces Marley & The Wailers' involvement with Island Records through classics like "I Shot The Sheriff," "No Woman No Cry" and "Exodus" right on up to "Buffalo Soldier" taken from last year's posthumous CONFRONTATION album. Essential to any modern music collection, LEGEND is a fitting tribute to reggae's most beloved spokesman.

THE FLAME—Annabel Lamb (A&M)—Lamb's second album is a provocative mix of styles, sounds and feelings that requires a bit of listening, but gradually becomes irresistible. "Sacraments of Love" starts out like a bouncy Go Go's tune, but Annabel's telling of a sordid love affair gives this little number something other than a PG rating. "Things That I Fear," a high-tech tale of paranoia, and "The Flame" could hold their own with anything from Bowie's masterful LODGER album, while "Inside Of My Head" features some Andy Summers-inspired guitar work and the album's brightest chorus. "Dream Boy," THE FLAME's most easily digested track, relies upon a melody reminiscent of Christine McVie and music that recalls Kate Bush's THE DREAMING, and gets points for the beautiful bass and trumpet arrangements. THE FLAME is not 100% successful, but the tiny handful of clunkers does little to diminish the strength of the rest.

ALL OVER THE PLACE—The Bangles (CBS)—Fond memories of the Byrds, the Left Banke, mid-period Beatles, and a dozen great garage bands pop up while listening to The Bangles' second record. The Byrdsian "Dover Beach" and "He's Got A Secret" (shades of Mary Hopkin) are highlighted by Susanna Hoffs' nearly breathless vocals, while Debbi Peterson's rendition of the hazy, lazy "Going Down To Liverpool" will keep you humming for days. "Silent Treatment" nicely mixes Seeds and R.E.M. ingredients, and "More Than Meets The Eye," with its autumn afternoon harmonies and strings, ends the album on a bittersweet note. File ALL OVER THE PLACE alongside those worn-out records by Big Star, the dB's and Sneakers.

SAINT VITUS (SST Recs., P.O. Box 1, Lawndale, CA 90260)—Anyone still trying to recapture the blood-freezing effects brought on by playing records of the original Black Sabbath are advised to look up a copy of the newest Saint Vitus disc. On it you'll find enough molten lava guitar, foundation-rumbling bass, and enamel-shattering drums to please the most die-hard Sabophile, not to mention a vocalist every bit as good as (and a lot more expressive than) the Ozzy of old. "Zombie Winger" and "The Psychopath" make Judas Priest, Def Leppard and the rest sound like a Lawrence Welk revival.

A THING IS NOT
Necessarily true because badly
uttered nor false because
spoken magnificently —
Saint Augustine.
We're both thinking of the same
guy. Send S.A.S.E. to:
BRAINBEAUNOMICS

ADDRESS
LISTED
THROUGHOUT

Filmviews

by Ken Filar

What's all this fuss about 'the New York Film Festival? I mean, if Ronald Regan is reelected (not to imply that "Mushy" Mondale and "Fire-breath" Ferraro will be any better for the film industry) and we're all blown to Kingdom Come before the end of the decade, will all this hoopla over a passel of notably mediocre movies (granted one or two are genuine gems) contribute, in any way, to making the left(overs) more palatable for those few smart and/or fortunate (though not, I assure you, fashionable, for the exceedingly trendy will be first to fry) enough to survive? Or is this a purely rhetorical question? (Is there, in fact, any question with regard to el presidente that is not rhetorical -- I mean -- really?) And how did I really manage to begin my column of musings re: the film festival with political diatribes and how will I deftly write my way out of this punishing dead-end zone without resorting to violence or threat of financial retribution (which for most of us amount to little less than violence)?

What? You didn't wonder? You don't give a rat's WHAT!!!!?? Well, I'll be damned (political exile for me hombres) -- if only for beginning this column with no less than seven questions. Suffice it to say "everything is political". From the selection of the opening and closing films, to all the ones inbetween (inbetween: Now there's a word I don't get to use very often since I discovered the "black 'n' white" world and began treating "everything" in that fashion (DEATH TO FASHISTS! Death to capitalist doggy-do!!), when viewed as an entire "program(ing)", are hardly representative (of world cinema) as much as they are repressive (because of all that's been omitted). So, do you want to hear about the movies? Probably not ... but do you think I care? After all, I had to pay to sleep through these horrors and you can just turn the page and read something else.

Once Upon A Time In America. Sergio Leone, the Italian drector [sic] of spaghetti westerns and the classicist fable Once Upon A Time In The West has delivered a genuine winner. Once Upon A Time In America is a grandiose and dreamy expression of at least one foreigner's conception of a sliver of Americana, in this case the rise and demise of hoodlums-cum-gangsters in Williamsburg in the Roaring 20's and Depressing 30's. This movie begins and ends (in nearly four hours) ambiguously despite the arresting cinematic images Leone frames, or rather uses to frame all of the intermediate action of the film, which takes place both backward in time as "Noodles" (Robert DeNiro) and his pals "Cockeye", "Patsy" and one other (whose "name" has escaped me, though it hardly matters as he is corked early on), appear to torch a newsstand (for a dollar or the opportunity to roll a drunk) and then quickly (and often hilariously) rise above their squalid surroundings (once they are joined and masterminded by (James Woods' chilling) "Max") to lives of relative ease and excess (if even at the cost of violence and that violence's correspondent heavy toll), and forward into the early 1970's when Noodles comes out of retirement and revisits some of the haunts of his youth and re-members those scenes from his past that make up the rest of the film. And this is film -- not a movie -- for the story is not a straight narrative tale, but an epic enterweaving love, blood and kindredness in such a way as to draw the viewers in and make them part and partner to the events unfolding. Once Upon A Time In America is not a thriller or a cops and robbers shoot 'em up, nor is it a morality tale or a simple film to categorize or forget. So run, don't walk, because Once Upon A Time In America is the most lyric films to reach our shore in some time (and it's in English, so you don't even have to be bothered with messy subtitles).

Class Relations, a black and white rendering of Franz Kafka's unfinished opus to our country (will these huddled masses never tire of teeming our shores?): Amerika. It is ponderously slow and 'tring to be, for once with good cause, "Kafkaesque", though it fails for lack of direction. Young Karl Rossman (played brilliantine iciness by Christian Henisch) is cast adrift and wanders hither and yon. From moment to moment it's hard to care what might happen next. Alas, I fear, on reading the novel and re-viewing the film I might be forced to different conclusions -- but those are the real-politiks of K(en)-ima).

Country. I haven't seen this (yet), and though I have great respect for the talent and ambitions of both Jessica Lange and Sam Sheppard, everyone who has seen Country either at the festival or in its

subsequent theatrical release, has expressed nothing less than disappointment ... and nothing more. My guess is -- need I say -- that Country is a disappointment.

A Sunday In The Country. Winner of the Best Director Award for Bertrand Tavernier at this year's Canne's Film Festival, this movie is an oft slow-paced examination of familial duties and dodges on an autumn afternoon in the outskirts of Paris. The patriarch, masterfully underplayed by Louis Decreux, is an artist (of some renown) trying his best to be a gracious host to his s(t)olid son, his son's silly wife, their two over-rambunctious sons and their (at best) timid daughter, as they ficker and bidget and the old man obviously longs for simpler sanity. That that grace should arrive in a touring car driven by his distracted daughter who is never so much there as everywhere (at once). However, this presents (an) about to take flight is the (dellight of her father's life. Through the visit we are introduced to and allowed to laugh or frown at (more than with) all the characters as they are come in to play in varietal sets and settings at the "very pretty, like a picture" place Tavernier has chosen to display [much as the paintings of this epoch captured their subjects in two (other) dimensions (of otherness)]. A Sunday In The Country actually says a lot about the nature of human relations and also about the preciousness of that instance that sparks the creative process, and for that alone anyone in any way involved in the arts (and IJ readers, too) should see this film, but be forewarned that unlike most contemporary movies which scream and shout their ideas and ideologies, it whispers.

Memoirs of Prison, a Brazilian film by Nelson Pereira dos Santos, is an overlong look at the rarefied tribulations of an academic and writer who is imprisoned in the late 1930's without ever having charges brought against him. The screenplay is based upon the hero's own writings regarding the experience, and so we are witness to a lot of genuinely depicted penal life: (1) The contempt some prisoners hold their fellows in, (2) the many frustrations inherent in day to day living with this brutality, and (3) the camaraderie that can develop for the most inexplicable reason among persons who might, on the outside, only hold each other in contempt (see (1) above). Aside from its long and its sometime too grim depiction of the horror(s) of prison (and though this is Brazil [then], you can't help but think that there must be some marked similarities to our own institutional system (now)), the film's major flaw is in the portrayal of Graciliano Ramos (by Carlos Vazera), as the protagonist who, it would seem, is recording the story even as it happens. His most prevalent emotions seem to be either distress or amusement at being interrupted from his writing, little else. Aside from this apparent character(istic) flaw, the film is engrossing and awe(ful)some.

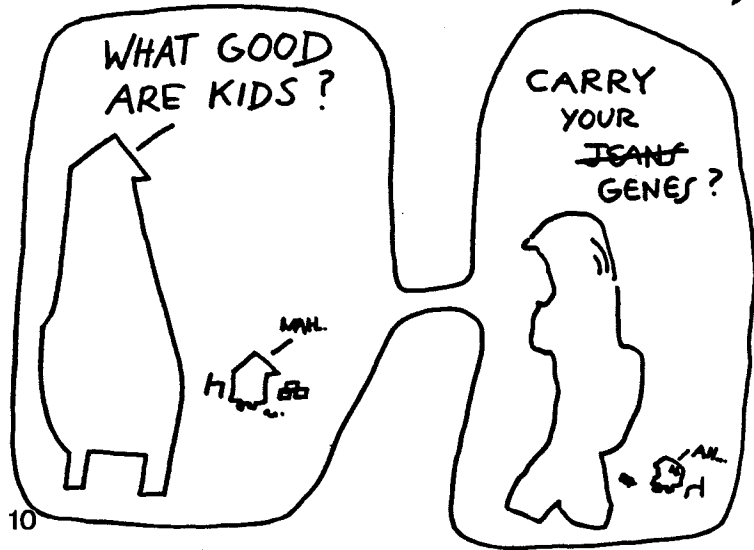
But let's have done with politics (and film festivals) and review at some other recent films that are worth a look:

All of Me -- Steve Martin romps in the realm of the metaphysical (or, maybe the preposterastrophysical). In any case, this is one more attempt for Martin to display his spasmodic blend of physical and nonsequitorial (s)C(t)IC(k)H (???) to the rest of us (reasonable, rational, sane ... just keep repeating that to yourself ... reasonable, rational, sane ... if you hear it often enough you might begin to believe that the concepts ... reasonable, rational, sane ... exist in the "real" world ... reasonable, rational, sane ... apart from the spasmodic blend of zany physical and verbal mayhem (which) to the rest of us (reasonable, rational, sane ... just keep repeating that [SCREETCHHHH!!!!] SORRY! Where was I? Oh yes, Martin's movie. Well, Lily Tomlin's in it -- sort of ... and sort of disembodied. See, she's a rich *!C! [I can't say it, but Barbara (bless her purse(d lips)) Bush says it rhymes with Geraldine), who plans to deposit her consciousness into the body of a beautiful young woman and, through a series of mishaps, mistakenly ends up in Martin's left side. So, after she's passed on and pissed off you don't see her that much, but she's still present as half of his conscience (audibly) and visible (amusingly) in the mirror. The premise quickly strains, but for the certifiable lunacy of its two misfit leads, All of Me is one of the jolliest comedies to come out of Hollywood(lawn) in three weeks or a month.

Tightrope -- This was great! Period! I'm not a Clint Eastwood fan, I couldn't even tell you the name of the last movie I saw him in, but here, he is perfectly suited to the role of single-parent vice-cop who hand-cuffs hookers and pumps them out after information as he tries to track down a psychopath who is actually stalking him and offing the very ladies Clint is so questionably engaged with. So, first he begins to appear suspicious and then he begins to act suspicious, and finally poor macho Clint begins to doubt his own sanity. The gritty New Orleans setting and the mostly night-time action lit by carnival (and carnal) neon adds to the perversity the audience is sure to notice while waiting for the well-deserved climax. When I saw it I could only hope they get it to late night TV quick because a movie this sexy and scary is hard to come by. Yeah, Clint! Ride 'em cow-poke!!!

Full Moon Over Paris -- This movie is about a young woman who is torn between the comfortable "suburban" life she can share with a man she's very much attracted to ... and her desire to spread her wings and see just how high she can fly. Only when she finally takes the leap from the nest (and into another man's arms) she doesn't like it and comes running home ... only it's no longer what she thought it was ... for he's taken up another woman and finds her more to his satisfaction ... so she loses ... and loses (though nobody can fault her for playing the game). In fact, I later thought it marvelous that the French are so adept at pointing up our most grievous humanities (i.e., foibles and follies) without making one party the heavy! No one in this film was presented as "bad" or "wrong". Everybody was just okay the way they were. Like there was nothing more they needed to do to master their perfection. And so it ended, just. Not a happy ending ... not sad ... yet one of unlimited possibility.

(Now, EW, can I have anni CHACTNER over-writing award this issue?)



let's get Political...

reviews by elayne wechsler

Escapism in the Year-O-Drwell has been a tricky matter for some of us, and sometimes it seems best to escape into the fray of things, getting lost in the crowd, as it were. Actually, the crowd with which I've hung out is a little, shall we say, left of center—well, truth to tell, most of 'em aren't even on the map—so I've gone for the more offbeat, and so, in the spirit of *It Should Only Happen Every Four Years*, I feel it a fitting public service to—right, okay, I'll shut up, on with the reviews:

DOONESBURY/RAP MASTER RONNIE—Book/Lyrics by Garry Trudeau, Music by Elizabeth Swados—I never got to see *Doonesbury The Play* when it was on Broadway, ticket prices being what they are, but I caught it in Los Angeles at the Wilshire Theatre, along with a pitifully small audience. Attendance was so bad, in fact, that the play, originally scheduled to run for about a month, closed after two weeks, and I caught it the day before the last. I can more or less understand why, and the reasons aren't entirely due to the conservative mood of the country nor the fact that Los Angelenos aren't known for theatre-going. I hate to say this, in light of the fact that I've become a fervent collector, even through California, of Trudeau's comic strip of the same name for each day since its return—but I was a tad disappointed. On the one hand, it was nice to see the characters come to life, and the actors were quite good at it (notably Paul Kandel as Uncle Duke and Stuart Bloom as Mark), but there was—well, something missing. Perhaps it was the expected biting political satire, the blame for which can't entirely be put on Trudeau. After all, the play never promised to be commentary but only a look into Walden Commune and graduation. It did help, to be sure, to have a copy of *Life Magazine's* recent cover story of "what happened" to the characters after the play ends and before the strip resumes, and while I'm not saying I didn't have fun and there weren't a few laughs, I guess I've become a bit spoiled by the printed word...

And by Trudeau's smash follow-up, *Rap Master Ronnie*, easily the most effective play I've seen in years. Seeing *RMR* before *Doonesbury* was probably the single most biasing factor in my opinion of the earlier play, because *RMR* is truly superb. Swados (who, by the way, did excellent music for both works) outdoes herself in style-switching as the lyrical mood demands (a samba-like rhythm for "O, Grenada", for instance), and the songs themselves (the play has no real dialogue to speak of, only occasional intros in the form of "Ronnie's voice") are sometimes poignant, sometimes hilarious, but always of the highest quality and potency. Subjects range from the Maribel Morgan/Nancy Reagan anti-humanism/feminism movement ("You're Not Ready") to nuclear war and its effect on everyday life ("Thinking the Unthinkable") to Ronnie's administration's handling of the problems of the poor and homeless ("Cheese", "Self-Made Man"). Trudeau uses some of his most catchy lines—in describing Yuppie-ism in "The Class of 1984" the grads sing, "We don't just sell out, we buy in!"; also appearing is the soon-to-be-classic-though-overdone-by-Garry line in "Facts" that goes, "If you're right 90% of the time, why quibble over the other 3%?"—and tugs at some real grassroots emotions. There's even an audience participation bit of sorts in the end, in the guise of a fixed bingo game ("Something For Nothing"), and of course the hilarious Reagan Rap which has been captured on EP. Unfortunately, as far as I know, the cast has not released an album of the songs, which, although they are quite topical to be sure, is a real shame—I would have recommended it highly and taped it for most of my friends. The show was scheduled to run at The Village Gate through Election Day, but I'll keep an ear out for any word on whether it'll resurrect, or at least record...

RODNEY ROBB FOR PRESIDENT (Bellweather Records)—I've mentioned Bellweather and Jim Neustrom & Don Fisher, the perpetrators of this album, in not-so-glowing terms in a previous "Fan Noose" column. Unfortunately, my negative suspicions were confirmed. This EP came complete with a press kit chock full of overhype, a poster, and even several glossies, just in case you want to know what Robblooks like. Plus I got the now-expected form letter thanking "to whom it may concern", that sort of thing. Still, I wouldn't have minded any of this had the record at least been good. It sucked, and it breaks my heart to say that of a so-called comedy album. Apparently Neustrom and Fisher are unaware that in an election year filled with over 100 offbeat and registered candidates (and some unregistered, like our own Papoon), any additional gimmick must consist at least of new stuff. Instead, I forced myself to sit through unfunny, uncreative drivel.

Maybe I'm being too harsh, being as I am a Firesign Theatre aficionado. I mean, once you've heard the recording quality and the expert production on TFT's albums, you get spoiled. So I tried not to compare. I tried, really hard, to judge it on its own merits. I didn't find any. The two performers sound like they've never been in front of a microphone before—okay if you're an admitted amateur, but the way these guys are pushing the record, they ought to have been more professional. Instead, the voices are annoyingly grating and not even clever nor disguised. One guy attempts, for a segment that drags on at least 5 minutes, a Carl Sagan impression. Which is all right if you can do it, which he can't. I can do a better Carl Sagan, and believe me, that's not saying much. There are no really interesting production effects to speak of, and it seems sometimes that sounds are thrown in gratuitously, as if these guys thought we'd delight in hearing a dog bark or a typewriter clack or soda fizz when nothing else is going on. It's not as if they even bothered to integrate these usually-background noises into any sort of whole. This shoddy. There aren't even any really funny lines; JJ staffers have come up with far better stuff without even trying.

There's even a short bit involving television channel-switching. I wonder if these men have heard of *The Firesign Theatre*. Probably not—even something that obviously derivative might have worked better had they ever heard a TFT record. And if you're going to do recorded comedy, I mean, come on, if for no other purpose than research alone...

ILLUSIONS OF THE DOUBLE

by A.J. Wright

We know the neighbors have entered the house, spreading dust and wearing down our shoes. We suspect their fingerprints are everywhere. I am certain they have photographed us both as we sleep; my twin is curled like a fetus and I am stretched out with my hands crossed over my chest like a corpse in the casket of the bed. I dream often of bright, flashing lights.

My twin and I have never betrayed, not even to each other, our knowledge of what is happening. We talk at breakfast as usual, discussing the same topics and smiling at the same places in the conversation. In the background radio news stories report other people's misfortunes, but not ours. Never ours.

During the day we take turns keeping watch. For the short term we have binoculars downstairs; and for long range paranoia there is a telescope in a bedroom upstairs. The yards front and back are mined with hidden cameras and microphones. I keep one ear to the groundswells; my twin keeps a third eye open.

At night we speak in the tongues of secrecy, keeping a heart close to the chest. As we view the tapes, vague bodies and ghostly voices rise from the magnetism. We strain to find the images of our neighbors or even ourselves. Each night we finally do. We are all there, seeking one another.

THERE IS NO HELL
Like being young unless it's
BEING OLD.
I've experienced both.
To make matters worse this hell
on earth must be endured
ETERNALLY.
For a 20th century religion that
has yet to catch on, spirit a
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This album was so bad I'm glad it was free, because otherwise I would have felt extremely gypped. If you see it in record stores, boycott. **BUCKAROO BONZAI: ACROSS THE EIGHTH DIMENSION** (20th Century Fox)—In light of my not having seen *Repo Man* yet—despite almost-fanatical recommendations from friends—I'm labelling this the "IJ Movie of the Year" for 1984. I don't know if there's technically such a thing as low-key camp, but these guys have it down pat. This is one of those movies that yields something new every time you see it. I adored it. NO exposition to speak of; the audience has to work on understanding what's going on. A wonderful challenge, and well worth it. Some of the finest, and subtlest, throwaway lines I've ever heard. Jeff Goldblum, John (significant name) Lithgow and Christopher Lloyd all shine. The only complaint I might have would be with the lack of character development, but the movie made it very clear that wasn't the point. Besides, I guess that's what sequels are for...SEE IT! 11

But what if you can't do that? What happens then? You live sad stunted days filled with false hopes and failure and then you die.

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Uh...hello?

Hi! This is the Star-Ledger Newspaper! We were...

uh... I don't...

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I don't think you understand! This is our company's...

Great! We have an offer for businesses that...

Our company's computer link!

OH! SORRY! Uh...I didn't know!

That's okay!

Uh...sorry!

It's okay!

I should have asked her what number she dialed!

CL-UNK!

progression - digression
by G. Michael O'Hara

oppression
engaged
aggression,
transgression
wed
regression,
suppression
fucked
repression,
giving birth
to
infinite
depression.




MR. FIX


I WILL HAVE A YACHT AND A CONDO AND A GOLD CHAIN OR TWO AND A BIG CHAINSAW AND A BARBIE DOLL WIFE AND AN OIL WELL AND, AND..

IF IT'S A KENMORE

I SOUND SOOO INTELLIGENT AND VERY GOAL-ORIENTED EVEN THOUGH THERE IS NOTHING IN MY HEAD....



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END OF HIS L'IL
PROGRAM. BEST
TO UNPLUG HIM
AND LET THE
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THE LAST WORD

smartass remarks by Deborah Benedict
(Mildred Neptune is on assignment in THE MERRY OLD LAND OF OZ. She will return when she damn well pleases.)

I like to read. I like to read books of quotes by famous people. And then I like to write my comments after the quotes by famous people. So I have done and here they is. I OWE EVERY WOMAN IN AMERICA AN APOLOGY—Larry Flynt
...and we're still waiting for it.

WOMEN ARE A PROBLEM, BUT IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY GUESSED, THEY'RE THE KIND OF PROBLEM I ENJOY WRESTLING WITH—

Warren Beatty
...whatsamatter Warren baby? Most of 'em too strong for ya?
FOR A WOMAN TO BE LOVED, SHE USUALLY OUGHT TO BE NAKED—
Pierre Cardin

...no matter how cold it is?
THERE ARE ONLY TWO KINDS OF WOMEN - GODDESSES AND DOORMATS—
Picasso

...there are only two kinds of men - smart ones and Picasso-like ones.

WOMEN? I GUESS THEY OUGHT TO EXERCISE PUSSY POWER—
Eldridge Cleaver
...if we did, all you guys would be dead of exhaustion.
A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE BEDROOM AND THE KITCHEN, IN THAT ORDER—
Bobby Riggs

...is she allowed to go to the bathroom?
A WOMAN'S PLACE...IS IN THE BED OR AT THE SINK, AND THE EXTENT OF HER TRAVELS SHOULD BE FROM ONE TO THE OTHER AND BACK—
Caitlin Thomas
...as long as the bed is in New York and the sink is in L.A., ok by me...

FOR A MAN THERE ARE THREE CERTAINTIES IN LIFE: DEATH, TAXES AND WOMEN. IT IS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO SAY WHICH IS THE WORST—
Dr. Albert Ellis

...Gee, women might be worse than being dead and owing money? THANKS FOR THE POWER!

WHY CAN'T A WOMAN BE MORE LIKE A MAN?— Henry Higgins
...because she has too much self-esteem...
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH GOING TO BED WITH SOMEONE OF YOUR OWN SEX - PEOPLE SHOULD BE VERY FREE WITH SEX - THEY SHOULD DRAW THE LINE AT GOATS—
Elton John
...and goats should draw the line at what?
MANHOOD AT THE MOST BASIC LEVEL CAN BE VALIDATED AND EXPRESSED ONLY IN ACTION—
George Gilder
...like turning on the tv or opening a can of beer...
HONEY, WHATEVER WOMEN DO, THEY DO BEST AFTER DARK—
John Lindsay

...It's true. Controlling air traffic is tougher at night. WOMEN ARE MORE PATIENT IN WORKING AT UNEXCITING, REPETITIVE TASKS—
Dr. Benjamin Spock

...like dealing with men...
THE ONLY ALLIANCE I WOULD MAKE WITH THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT IS IN BED—
Abbie Hoffman
...all of 'em at once? You should only live so long.
LOVE MEANS NEVER HAVING TO SAY YOU'RE SORRY—
Erich Segal

...so does being dead...
MY MOST FERVENT WISH IS THAT I MEET A MAN WHO LOVES ME FOR MYSELF AND NOT MY MONEY—
Christina Onassis
...my most fervent wish is that I meet a man who has your money, Christina...

HOMOSEXUALS MAKE THE BEST FRIENDS BECAUSE THEY CARE ABOUT YOU AS A WOMAN AND ARE NOT JEALOUS. THEY LOVE YOU BUT DON'T TRY TO SCREW UP YOUR HEAD—
Bianca Jagger
...or anything else, dammit.

SOMETIMES I WONDER IF MEN AND WOMEN REALLY SUIT EACH OTHER. PERHAPS THEY SHOULD LIVE NEXT DOOR AND JUST VISIT NOW AND THEN—
Katherine Hepburn

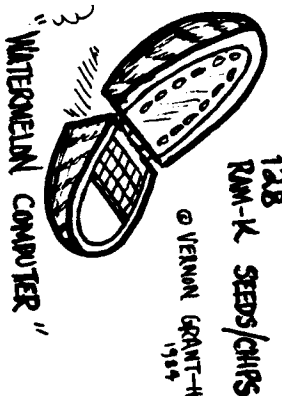
...and not without telephoning first, either.
MARRIAGE IS THE BEST MAGICIAN THERE IS. IN FRONT OF YOUR EYES IT CAN CHANGE AN EXCITING CUTE LITTLE DISH INTO A BORING DISHWASHER—
Ryan O'Neal
...and a studly guy into a useless asshole...

EVEN THOUGH A GIRL MAY LOATHE COOKING, SHE SHOULD MAKE AN EFFORT TO CATER TO HER HUSBAND'S LIKES AND DISLIKES AND TO MAKE MEALS APPETIZING AND INTERESTING—Emily Post
...or poisonous.

I HATE TO BE A FAILURE. I HATE AND REGRET THE FAILURE OF MY MARRIAGES. I WOULD GLADLY GIVE ALL MY MILLIONS FOR



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JUST ONE LASTING MARITAL SUCCESS.— J. Paul Getty
...and I'd be glad to take 'em...

TO CATCH A HUSBAND IS AN ART; TO HOLD HIM IS A JOB—
Simone de Beauvoir

...but to live with him is ridiculous!
LOVE IN MARRIAGE IS COMMITMENT. COMMITMENT INVOLVES A WOMAN'S FULL SURRENDER TO HER MAN—
Maribel Morgan
...does she have to iron the white flag, too?

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MAKEUP OF A WOMAN IS PASSION. BUT COSMETICS ARE EASIER TO BUY—
Yves St. Laurent
Right; also, when was the last time you saw a "Clearance Sale" on passion?

THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT MAN IN A WOMAN'S LIFE IS HER HAIRDRESSER—
Letitia Baldridge
...and the first is her pimp, right?
A GOOD NEWSPAPER IS A NATION TALKING TO ITSELF—
Arthur Miller

...first sign of insanity, ain't it?
THERE'S AN INNATE KILLER INSTINCT IN ME—Jimmy Connors
...so use it - commit suicide.
THE ONLY TIME SEX HAS BOTHERED ME IS WHEN I DO IT DURING THE COMPETITION—
Bruce Jenner
...yeah, it can be nerve-wracking with all those people watching.

WHAT'S YOUR ROAD MAN? HOLYBOY ROAD, MADMAN ROAD, RAINBOW ROAD, GUPPY ROAD, ANY ROAD. IT'S AN ANYWHERE ROAD FOR ANYBODY ANYHOW—
Jack Kerouac
...hit the road, Jack...

WHY MUST WE HAVE SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO? WHY CAN'T WE JUST LOOK AT NOW?—
Jerry Rubin

...because now is BORING, that's why.
HOW MANY ROADS MUST A MAN WALK DOWN BEFORE YOU CALL HIM A MAN?—
Bob Dylan

...depends on how many detours there are...
EVERYBODY ELSE IS TALKING ABOUT HOW HARD LIFE IS, AND HERE I AM SINGING ABOUT HOW GOOD IT IS TO BE ALIVE—
John Denver

...that's 'cause you're stupid, John.
YOU ARE PERFECT EXACTLY THE WAY YOU ARE—Werner Erhard
...thanks, Werner. You're an asshole.
SUPERMARKETS ARE ALL RIGHT, BUT IT'S MUCH MORE FUN TO SHOP FOR FOOD IN NATURE—
Euell Gibbons
...and the aisles aren't as crowded, and there are no impulse items!

IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO EXPLAIN THE LAWS OF PHYSICS TO A BARMAID—
Albert Einstein
...and how to make a decent whiskey sour to a physicist...
EVERY SOUL SPEAKS THE SAME LANGUAGE. KNOW THAT LANGUAGE OF LOVE WHICH SWELLS WITHIN THE HUMAN TEMPLE—
Maharishi Ji

...and make a profit from it!

...or not TV by ye editrix

TV? Who has time to drag through it? Sorry—okay, puns aside, let us get this over with as painlessly as possible, starting with kidvid wasteland (which, if you think about it, often exceeds the adult version of same!):

SATURDAY MORNING

Jim Henson's Muppet Babies—Yes, I know Henson can buy his own planet. I'm aware that his weekly dose of cuteness has featured such dubious luminaries as Brooke Shields and Elke Sommer—on the other hand, to be fair, it has also guested the likes of Spike Milligan. That said, I heartily recommend this fun foray into the world of children's imaginations (albeit Muppet kids). Lots of surprising folks on voices, and some really clever throwaway lines too.***

Nighty Onbats—In New York, this airs opposite Muppet Babies, and more's the pity. It's an unfortunate choice between dialogue and animation—e'en so, I lean towards the magnificent art in this Japanese-American collaboration. Turn off the sound if the 'plots' get too much—it's a mighty pretty sight.***

Dungeons & Dragons—This is into its second year with apparently plenty of storylines to go and pleasant enough animation.***

Alvin & the Chipmunks—Also a returnee, and is worth it to me, if for nostalgic reasons alone.***

Also of note are a couple of shows which are by no means great but are the kind you watch when there's nothing else on and you're puttering about the house, right? **Mr. T**, for vocal reasons above all; **Spider-Man** minus the Hulk, still narrated by Stan "Hey, true believers!" Lee; and most importantly, a real them that's still/again syndicating, **Rocky & Bullwinkle**—by the way, a behind-the-scenes look-back piece on Jay Ward courtesy of Dana Snow for next issue! I can't really think of anything novel to comment on in any of the other pap, except to say, of Wolf Rock TV, Love him, hated it.

The prime-time schedule has, as usual, gotten me confused. So many of shows are off the air already, due to silliness or bad ratings or untimely-and-in-bad-taste-to-joke-about death. Others have shifted days, even as I write, so don't rely too heavily on the reviews below as your television guide. These, for the most part, represent only the shows I figured might be worth peeking at, and ones I watch already, so bear in mind I don't go for most action-type or cop shows, I've never seen nighttime soap/trash, and the 'reality' of most news shows only makes me shake my head incredulously. Therefore, onward:

SATURDAY

Finder of Lost Loves (ABC)—Until this show, I never suspected how much Tony Franciosa is not only beginning to sound like Ray Walston, but is beginning to lose his questionable acting talents. Makes me feel better about him doing this drivel; it appears they're made for each other. I also never suspected how much I'd miss *Tattoo*. Zero *s
Partners in Crime (NBC) I have not seen it yet, but I'll give one star for the costumes in the ads anyway. It's supposed to be funny, eh?
Saturday Night Live (NBC)—Yay! No unbiased view here; not when I can delight in seeing Harry Shearer, Martin Short, Chris Guest, etc.****

SUNDAY

Murder, She Wrote (CBS)—Angela Lansbury can raise the quality level of anything she does, and that isn't always easy when you have the occasional guest star like Tom Bosley and Claude Akins. I'm not too up on the mystery genre, but I suspect this is a bit simplistic, albeit a treat just the same.***

MONDAY

Kate & Allie (CBS)—But you could have probably predicted that. The best "This is what life's like" show since they took *Square Pegs* off their air. A must, gals, and you others too (heh heh). Good acting, and the kids aren't even obnoxious. A pleasure.****

Cagney & Lacey (CBS)—A cop show, and the cops are women. If I liked cop shows more, I could probably be more objective about the merits of this one over any others. They do handle some nice topics now and then though, many from a necessarily different viewpoint, and I like the characters. This I watch when the tv happens to be on.***

TUESDAY—I haven't even bothered with the turgid-sounding newies:

THE A-TEAM (NBC)—Still one of the best semi-intentional comedy/cartoon violence (ne'er a scratch on the good guys!) programmes around. Since the demise of *Cannell's Greatest American Hero*, *Murdoch's* about his only character that I like. I do not yet watch *Riptide* nor *Hardcastle & McCormick*, both of which have been somewhat praised by people I know, but one hour a week from Steven J. is about my quota.***

REMINGTON STEELE (NBC)—I liked to describe this is reminding me of an old Hepburn or Bogart movie, because it was played so well and written so sprightly, even retaining my interest in an otherwise action-plot. Unfortunately, someone thought it necessary to keep changing things around, like "beefing up" the wardrobe of Stephanie Zimbalist (probably my favorite actress) and putting in Doris Roberts as Mildred Krebs, a pretty self-explanatory name as far as the character goes. Still, even she gets to do something besides comedy relief now and then, but it does seem as if the writers are running out of angles. And Zimbalist and Pierce Brosnan don't seem to be getting it on nearly as much as they were when they all but declared undying love for each other last year—how like this are real relationships? Yeah, well, I know...***

WEDNESDAY

Charles in Charge (CBS)—A cute comedy if one is under 16.***
E/R (CBS)—My favorite of the new shows, I must confess. Not only is it well-represented racially without making you feel like tokenism is being played out (I mean, you won't find a Japanese actress in a major role anywhere else on the primes, and I think Akune is now the only Oriental actress period with the departure of Rosalind Chao and After-*M*A*S*H*, but her character isn't played as "Japanese receptionist," it's simply "receptionist"). There is a black woman and a black man, and they aren't involved with each other at all—just like people in real

life! (In fact, the black guy dotes on the receptionist, so there.) Best of all, there's Conchata Ferrell. Yeah, there's Elliot Gould (always nice to see—and again, he plays a doctor who just happens to be Jewish, not a Jewish doctor) and Mary McDonnell, but I've been a Conchata Ferrell fan since the days of *Hot L Baltimore*. What a top actress, and how she carries herself! A welcome change from a Shirley Hempill "fat woman type"—again, a character who just happens to be zaftig. And what a delight the banter is—good ensemble work.****
Facts of Life (NBC)—A perennial personal favorite of mine—I just like the characters, and it's nice to see how the women have grown along with their roles. Many episodes are quite touching as well. Recommended family viewing.***

Highway To Heaven (NBC)—With this one as a lead-in, though, your family will already be asleep. Michael Landon plays an angel on-screen and God off-screen. Zero *s

It's Your Move (NBC)—This spam completes the unsavory sandwich for poor *F.O.L.* Dumb. Zero *s

THURSDAY

The Cosby Show (NBC)—Nice killer sitcom lineup this night, which starts off well with this show that plays on Cosby's talents to the fullest. And the kids are only semi-obnoxious. It's no *I, Spy*, but what is these days?***

Family Ties (NBC)—Another oldie that has me hooked, but I know I'm getting old when I identify more with the parental characters than with the kids.***

Cheers (NBC)—Many people couldn't figure out how they'd keep things going with Ted Danson's and Shelly Hack's characters having broken up. But they do. Great as usual.***

Night Court (NBC)—They've added Ellen Foley—a woman I've admired for a long time—instead of Shelley Hack, as rumored, to the cast, so I guess there's something to say for Barney Miller veteran Reinhold Weege after all. Every now and then this sparkles.***

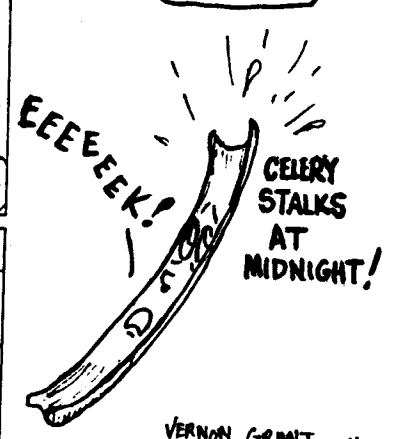
FRIDAY

V (NBC)—V has an identity crisis. Is it an action drama? One show started off with a car chase. Is it a nighttime soap? The alien commanders—commanders—Diane and Lydia remind me more of Joan Collins than Gerry Ferraro. Meow! Is it science fiction? They've certainly spent enough money on spfx. Maybe it's a "magical child" fantasy story, underneath it all, as the development of a super-kid would seem to indicate. Not much different than the series, but how many of us sat through the series anyway?***

I understand that the overall ratings war is being won by NBC, and judging by how many shows listed above are from them, I can pretty much understand, especially in light of the fact that cable, PBS and even VCR are stealing much of the network audience away. Television is as far from dead as it's ever been, but it's also as far from alive and vital. Still, there are things to look forward to, like the emergence of Michael Neamith's *Television Parts*, when the powers-that-be finally decide to air it. Stay tuned!

WHAT PRINCIPLE
DO YOU THINK KIDS
FOLLOW IN PICKING
TV-SHOWS?

IF IT MOVES
WATCH IT



VERNON GRANT—H

AN OPEN-AND-SHUTTERED CASE

by Susan Packie

He got a twenty-year, all-expenses-paid vacation at the license plate factory. He deserved it. He was the lowest form of criminal. Some men commit rape, some burn down churches, some even murder their sisters, but George C. Doughty did them all one better. He should have been burned alive. Afterwards, members of his immediate family were given new identities and told to resettle in Australia. The Doughty family tree was unceremoniously chopped down.

George was a free-lance photographer. He began his career with a local newspaper. After winning several awards for his coverage of regional football games, he was hired by a New York newspaper.

But New York was not Burgerville. The editors did not appreciate his garlic breath, dirty sweat shirts, and, most of all, the Doberman pinscher he took to the office with him. George soon decided that free-lancing had many advantages.

The following Monday, a well-dressed young man with a large satchel confidently took his place in the White House visitors' line. He smiled and chatted with the guards, offering to share his peanuts with them. One guard joked about a bomb being in the bulky satchel, and they all laughed. George had completely won their confidence.

What transpired during the next twenty-four hours is anyone's guess. The line marched into the columned building in orderly fashion and out again before the noon chimes rang. But George was not with them. He was still inside.

The first clue as to what happened appeared in a small underground magazine - a photograph of the President and First Lady's toilet bowl. No Ajax used here! Very few saw it.

The next piece of evidence was a close-up of the President's false teeth. This picture made a Georgetown newspaper. It was received with self-conscious giggles by a small number of Senators and Representatives.

Then came a snap of the First Family in bed with no clothes on - nothing! He held a rusty chain in his hand and she had her teeth sunk into his lower regions. This gem made the first page of a major D.C. newspaper. Now a reporter wanted to interview the photographer.

George wore his seediest clothes and brought along his dog. People were jumping out of windows trying to get away from him. A stern-looking police officer approached George cautiously and put handcuffs on him. Orders from above. The reporter faded from the scene.

Twenty years may seem like a long time, but when George entered the federal prison, he was carrying an unwieldy satchel. Where there is life...

END DEATH:

This living hell was
FIRST EXPERIENCED YEARS AGO.
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An Atlanta Boy in the Big Apple

orientation by Michael K.

bowery equal third/fifth goes all the way
It is the main divider/broadway is onway

Shaved head and a sleeveless Clockwork Orange t-shirt; his companion was an oaf. He carried two cantaloupes and looked over his shoulder to shout, "what the fuck are you looking at?" Skinheads out for a new wave breakfast. Harass the curious. Shatter the illusion. New York wasn't hip. The East Village wasn't cool. Fuck that bastard.

We stopped at Mary's: lingerie, sportswear, and jewelry. John was looking at bras. I was looking at the man sitting in front of the store. Decrepit old bastard; bloodshot eyes and needed a shave. Probably stank too, but I didn't get close enough to let him further ruin my day. He was staring at me, but only for a second. You don't stare in the city. Bug-eyes will get you.

Sign on street outside next store: "Littering is filthy and self-ish, so don't do it." O.K., so we looked at dresses. A black one was especially flattering, but we couldn't get the man to tell us how much it cost. He didn't like the idea of boys looking at bras and buying dresses. Probably didn't let his kid watch Boy George on the tube either. Fuck him.

The lady on the corner told us about an apartment for rent. "I been in this neighborhood for forty years. People don't ask me about renting apartments, they ask me where they can buy them." She related to us that she had "beat up her landlord," she had raised children in "this neighborhood," and her grandchildren "was growin' up in the park." She had had her "store" for four years, right there on a corner in the East Village, outside a dilapidated storefront of a building that had just been sold. Used clothes, trinkets, and junk. You can buy anything on a New York City street.

pink bicycle. we didn't stab the owner. she was a little girl. her mother died. and left her. I wrote this in Central Park; right

after walking back and forth past the spot where John Lennon died. It is sort of my impression on NYC before my five-and-a-half day stay there. Where were those mean-looking security types, posted at the front of the Dakota, who gave me the twice over, on that fateful day? sick killer on the steps. he hides his tears. will never smile again. An Atlanta boy in the Big Apple for the first time.

I was in town with Ru Paul and entourage to experience his show at the Pyramid Club. It was Atlanta Week at the club and Ru was headlining. Ru Paul is a celebrity. If you have not heard of him, you will soon. Ru has done what he had to in Atlanta. We know him down there. After the Pyramid gig, Ru decided to stay in New York. He carries himself (and not much else) with him wherever he goes and now you have him. Anyway (and enough on Ru; you make your own impressions), it's like early afternoon on the second day of our stay and most of the gang is still asleep. But I'm awake and so is one of my friends, whom I'll call Mr. X, so we decide to head out to Times Square. Mr. X wants to check out the porno houses and maybe take a peek at one thing or another. He also wants to go to Central Park to spy on men having sex in the bushes. Seems he'd encountered some of it before when in New York and he was curious to see if the scene was still hap. It's my first time experiencing the city as it is. You know, no tour bus, no trip to the Empire State Building, no trip to the Statue of Liberty, no mother's hand. Just a walk on the wild side to see things how they really are. I got my notebook in tow and I'm trying to scribble some poetry. the bench. there was a bench. it sat there. we sat on it. baby. baby you scared. about some punk rocker. you scared some fag gonna grab your dick. gee, that guy dresses kind of funny. honey you ain't never gonna understand.

When the cabbie dropped us off in the East Village he had warned us about how dangerous the neighborhood was. Said we better know how to defend ourselves. Said the cops had been cracking down on the drugs. Drugs and danger. That was what the cabbie told us that the East Village was all about. He didn't tell us about Augustine. He didn't tell us about all the artists hanging out and doing their own thing. He didn't tell us about the "punk rockers" and "hippies" and "gays" and "straights" all living in the same area and getting along just as well as people in "straight" society do.

Augustine was this little copper-colored kid I ran into in Thompson Square Park. I was out in the park trying to take pictures. I wanted to get pictures of the pigeons and some playground shots with no children around. Just like the cabbie said; filthy pigeons and the desolate image of a swing swinging with no kid in it: the real New York City. Only this kid named Augustine comes up and ruins it all.

"Is that a camera?"

"Yeah, it's a camera."

"How does it work?"

I don't really want to be bothered, but before I know it Augustine has got my camera around his neck and is asking me which button takes the picture. I show him, he snaps a few, and the next thing I know he wants to take the camera to his father. An elaborate scam and I am the victim. If this was Vietnam, the kid would have just pulled the cork on this wine bottle called life. Still, I'm a sucker, so I fall for the rap. I follow the kid over to get mugged. A voice shouts out: "Augustine, where did you get that camera? Don't drop that camera."

"It's alright," I say, "it's my camera," and actually, by now, Augustine knows how to use it better than I do. Augustine's father smiles. His mother kind of half-waves. They feel as awkward as I do. We don't know each other, but their son has brought us together.

"Can I take a picture of my dad?" Augustine asks me.

"Sure," I say, "go ahead and take a picture of your whole family." I get the family's address so I can send them a picture, and then Augustine snaps a few of me. I don't know much about kids, but Augustine couldn't have been much more than five or six. As I leave him he asks me if I'm going to work, just like I imagine he asks his father every time he leaves home. No I'm not Augustine, I've been working, and you are part of my story, and you are so friggin beautiful.

Mr. X didn't find any men having sex in the park. The closest he came was to catch some guy taking a piss in the bushes. He thought it was funny. I thought it was funny how every time we had to go to the bathroom, we had to look for a McDonald's. Only once in five-and-a-half days did we not have to wait in line to use the toilet at McDonald's. I guess everybody in New York uses McDonald's to relieve themselves. things done today/urinated in a public men's room at grand central/pissed in the park/went to the bathroom in a McDonald's/saw where J. Lennon died.

I also think that it is funny, now that the incident is several weeks behind me, that it was on the night that I got back to Atlanta that I experienced my first mugging. I had stopped in to say hello to my next door neighbor and to pick up my cat. My neighbor had run out of cigarettes and was lamenting that a full strength cigarette would sure taste good (better than the light one I had to offer). He had done me a favor, so I did him one and headed back onto the same old streets that I had been heading out onto for the past two years. MY FIRST TIME back on my Atlanta streets after my stay in New York.

I cross one of those streets and see one dude across the street from me. Something doesn't feel right. I walk maybe the length of two cars and I see another fellow and he's got what I perceive to be a long sheath at his side. There is a guy next to him with his hands in the air. The guy with the sheath looks over at me and screams, "you too, come over here." He's still across the street from me. I look at him, think quickly, scream "fuck you," and run. It can happen in New York. It can happen in Atlanta. What ain't happening in Atlanta is the East Village and you're probably going to see me there in the spring!!

that you are/interesting enough

cut your hair/stand in line

just like the other/heh wait a minute

cabbie cries fuckin' puerto ricans/eighty-five

cents for pizza/doom in a city street.

COOKING ON DA ROAD

by "Rick da Beast"

Once again, it is time to release a new 'how to' book from the wilds of Florida. This one is a collection of easy recipes for those of you who travel (extremely cheaply) a lot with little time or proper place to cook in order to feed your face. So, I bring to you excerpts from the latest, nonseller The Beast's Guide To Cooking On Da Road, or How To Fry An Egg With A 12-Volt Cigar Lighter.

Soup is pretty simple and ya really gotta work at screwing that up, so here's a few soups hot off the lighter.

SIMPLE CHICKEN SOUP

1. Procure one (1) pot of water
2. Catch one (1) chicken
3. Find one (1) string
4. Tie the string around the chicken and dip in pot of water twice. (Do not let chicken shit.)
5. Boil water.
6. If chicken shits (I said don't let it), dip it out and serve in empty beer cans.

NOTE: Keep chicken for next time if ya didn't drown it.

OXTAIL SOUP SIMPLY

1. Primarily the same as chicken soup, only ya whack off the asshole of an ox with an axe and tie a string around that.
2. Proceed with step 4 of Chicken Soup, only ya won't have no trouble with the oxtail maybe shittin' 'cuz it's supposed to be dead.
3. Forget about the note on chicken soup unless ya got a deep freeze and yer supposed to be on da road, fool.

MUSHROOM SOUP

1. Get handful of mushrooms
2. Toss in boiling water

3. ...Wait...this may not be how to make mushroom soup... Well, maybe all that stuff is too hard to remember, so let's try a sandwich made simple...and try not to screw it up.

SMOKED SPAM SANDWICHES

1. Locate one (1) can of SPAM
2. Open can (don't fuck up the key twist or ya might as well toss the can out)
3. Remove the spam lump and smoke it (NOTE: it is often hard to light and comes unfiltered)
4. Put smoked Spam on two pieces of stale bread (come on, look good, there's always a piece of bread around somewhere)
5. Spread with whatever ya got; if ya don't got nothing, then don't spread

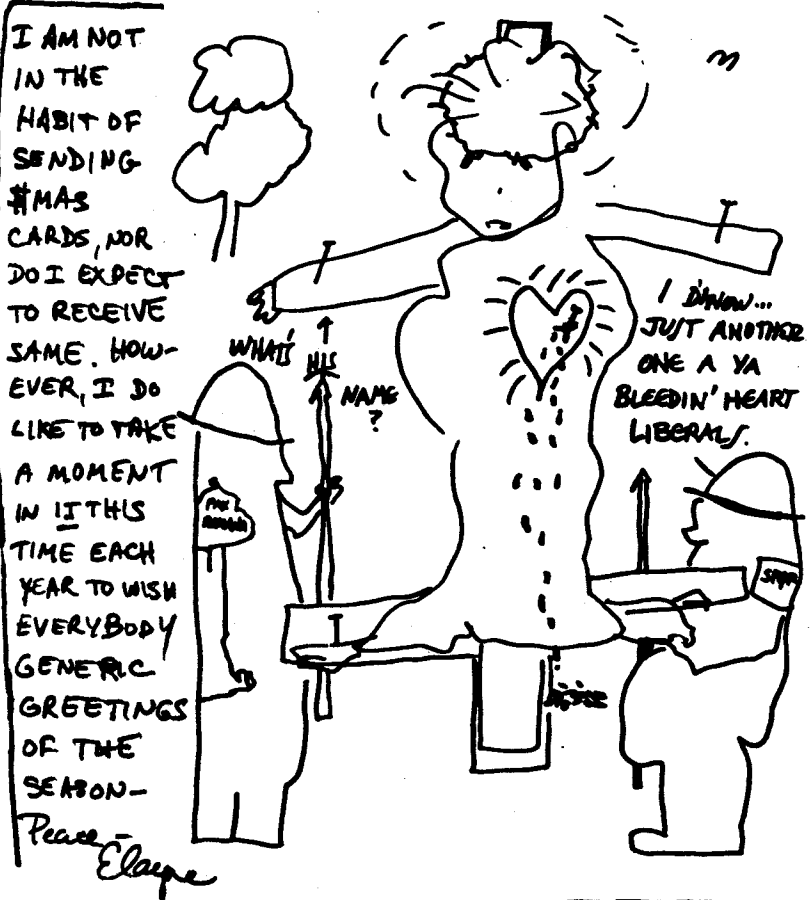
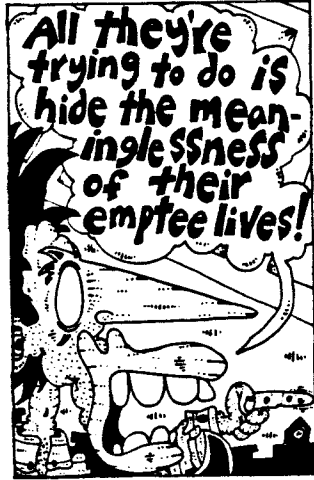
All this stuff might seem kinda hard to swallow, but I guess you can always revert to an old standby that always works for me:

HOW TO MAKE TOAST

1. Find two (2) cans of beer
2. Locate one (1) other person
3. Pull tabs offa beer cans and each person take one (1) (NOTE: Beer, not tabs, asshole)
4. Now tap cans together. A few words can be said on the tappin' part, like "Here's to inside toilets" or "up yours too"; the choice is yours, of course.
5. Suck down contents of cans.

NOTE: Two people are really not needed if ya got a good imagination.

Please go out and buy this book so I can quit trying to eat this shit and can afford to buy some yummy big macs. A copy can be had for twenty-five dollars or a coupon for a free big mac from P.O. Box 839, St. Cloud, FL 32769. Keep that cigar lighter hot.



MAY THE LAST WORD WIN
by David Rice
You're like a unicorn.

I realize you like to shoot with words but a unicorn?

You know why?

I couldn't care less. I'm taking lessons in chameleon. Soon I'll be invisible.

You're unreal.

That's the nicest thing you ever said to me.

DON'T BE TOO CRITICAL

Of people who are just doing what you would be doing in a similar situation for which you are as much to blame as anyone- maybe more. — Send SASE to:

4 WRONGS RIGHTED

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4-Color Fiend

by Steve Chaput

As I pointed out last time, fandom (comics fandom, that is; my experience with sf/fantasy fandom is limited, to say the least) doesn't have a great sense of humor when it comes to self-parody. Those books/characters which take on the Sacred Cows of Comics are generally marginal sellers at best, despite usually good critical reviews. (It wasn't always so, as Jack Cole's PLASTIC MAN and several of the funny-animal super-heroes of the so-called "Golden Age" lasted for years.)

Magazines like MAD, CRAZY and SICK often did take-offs of the genre, as well as numerous of the Undergrounds of the sixties (Wonder Warthog, Captain Guts, etc.), but little was to be found in the mainstream books themselves. But on occasion...

Probably the best known of the attempts at poke-fun-at-themselves creations of the big companies is, of course, the Bizarro. Originally a one-shot villain of the Frankenstein mold in a SUPERMAN comic, the character proved so popular that eventually he, and the entire world he created, became a regular part of the DC Universe. The concept was pretty simple. A creature almost as powerful as Superman, but with the intelligence of a simpleton (or a Reagan supporter, whichever you consider a clearer case of brain-damage). Everything we (supposedly normal people) do, the Bizarros do just the opposite. The most endearing trait of this group had to be the language that the DC writers dreamt up (i.e., "Crowds yell insults at me, and throw stuff to show they love me. Me am still bit hero!").

Poor Bizarro has dropped out of sight for a few years now, and except for a few very recent appearances (fill-in stories thrown in between the usual boring multi-issue saga/epics that have become the standard in most comics from DC and Marvel), he and his brethren seem exiled to the more innocent times from which they sprang.

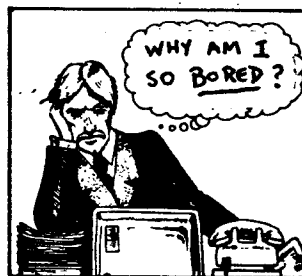
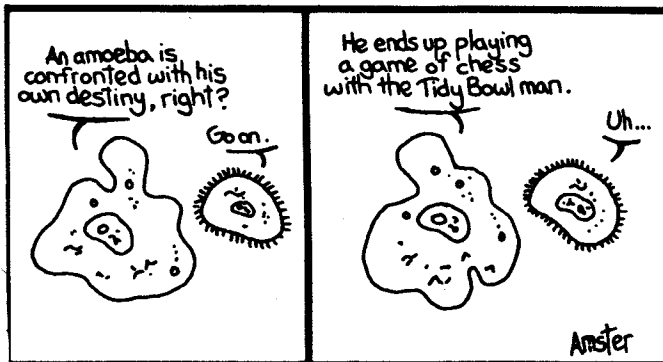
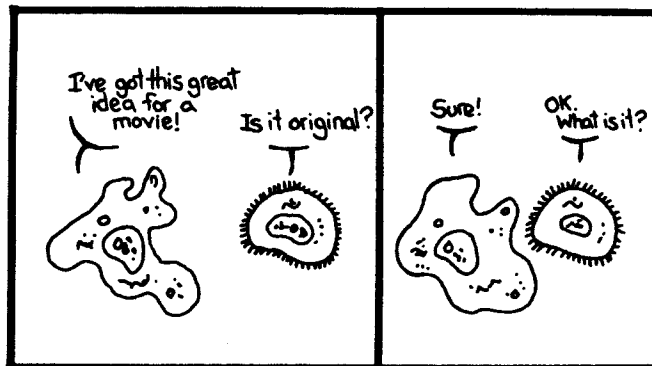
In the last couple of years DC has made an attempt to revive that sort of madcap insanity with the introduction of AMBUSH BUG. Again begun as a one-shot villain to torment the (nowadays) very strait-laced Man of Steel, Ambush Bug proved so popular that he is popping up (kind of an inside joke for those who read the comic) in several of the SUPERMAN family of books. Plans call for a mini-series, which if sales prove good enough may spin off into a regular series (don't count on it!). AB happens to be an introverted genius who discovers the secret of short-distance teleportation using tiny insect-shaped devices (hence the name). Mad as a hatter, and a real delight in that he causes trouble more out of an unthinking attempt to be helpful than any malicious intent. Like Bizarro, AB stories are something to check out in the discount bins as they aren't really "hot" books.

Last, and by no means least, is E-MAN. Created in the early '70s by fans-turned-pros Joe Staton and Nick Cuti, E-Man was from the outset a rapid-fire, no-holds-barred parody of the super-hero genre, particularly as practised by DC and Marvel at the time. A being of pure energy finds its way to earth and is befriended by a beautiful woman. Cliché, huh? Not the way Staton and Cuti handled it. (The comic is now being written and drawn by Staton and Rick Burchett.) E-MAN can turn himself into anything he desires (from an operating fire hydrant to a large orange mouse) and "sleeps" in kitchen appliances by turning himself back into electric current. His woman companion is a part-time college student who is putting herself through school by working as an "exotic dancer," and lately as the Hostess (a la Elvira) of a kiddies' sf/horror film show. They are accompanied along the way by a large teddy/koala bear-type creature, known as Teddy Q. (he is mute but whistles, and fantasizes about an affair with Amy Irving). E-MAN has taken the clichés of the genre and turned them inward to the point of lampooning itself/Elf-Quest/Smurfs/X-Man and just about every superhero/comic book style one can name. Highly recommended.

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THE REVOLUTION PORTRAYED...

by G. Michael O'Hara

I Escaped
The Guillotine
Only Through
Suicide,
(Only) To Be
Robbed
Of My
Birth Rite; By
Losing
My Head
Over
Decapitation
Of My
Death Right...
Equality (as always)
Eventually Lost
Liberty (forever)
The
Loser.

...THE REVOLUTION BETRAYED

ZEKE the GEEK by MAXSON



BORED? TIRED? DEPRESSED? SUICIDAL?
Before you blow your brains out, send \$1 to The SubGenius Foundation, P.O. Box 140306, Dallas, TX 75214. You might change your mind.



This song is dedicated to Jan Smithers, Pam Dawber, Stephanie Zimbalist and Thelma Todd. It's called—
A LOVESONG TO SHELLY LONG by Dana Snow

I am not a pervert.
I want to calm your fears.
So what if I am naked
Every time I tune in "Cheers"?
You melted hearts in "Caveman";
We all loved you in "Night Shift".
To save you lots of shopping,
I'll suggest my birthday gift.
Yes, I know you're married,
But I promise I'll keep quiet.
If you've had no affairs before,
Don't knock it 'til you try it.

I won't tell a living soul,
Because I have some tact,
But if you don't, I'll do this song
Each time I do my act.

You can name the time and place.
Any time! Let's go!
Except Thursday 9:00
'Cause I'd never miss your show.

Are You Disgusted?
Are you ready to be
Amused?

Send \$1 for Intense Pamphlet

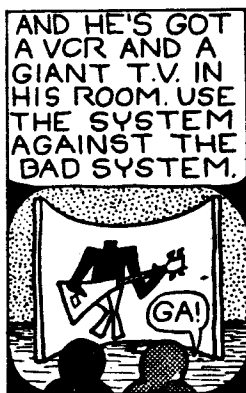
PERSPECTIVE

by Susan Packie
On the outside
Looking in
Vietnamese
And Indian
First and last
Are second class
Ain't it great
We don't discriminate?

Fantasies Fulfilled

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THE MEETING

by Alice Ermlich

A waitress, slightly annoyed, looks at my hand. Suddenly I'm aware I've been reading into the coke glass and have spilled coke and ice on the table. My face must look pig-gish, too; I can feel the melted ice crunching between my teeth dripping down the sides of my mouth. Quickly I withdraw my offending hand. Rob continues his explanation.

"I was silent because I was afraid you'd stop...coming to me. I thought you were like a goddess. I..." Rob laughs and rolls his eyes. "I thought you made love to me because you felt sorry for me."

I wipe my mouth. Rob has always had that effect on me—I get sloppy, obsessed with him, unaware of what I'm doing.

"I loved you. Admired you." I look into his eyes. "You know I admired your intelligence. Silly things...like how you could say the names of Russian characters in novels, how you read and remembered plots to the smallest details." I push an ice cube around on the table. "Not silly...it's just that I think...I hope I admire men for more important things than that, these days."

"Like what?"

"Kindness...compassion..."

Rob laughs the laugh I've always liked. "But you don't admire them for those things. That's just you."

"I can change," I protest.

"No...don't change."

There is a bulky silence filling the space between us. I still have passionate feelings for Rob and they fight me like they are live animals inside of me. When I agreed to meet Rob again I knew those feelings would be revived, and now I feel foolish...

"I didn't choose to be attracted to you," I say defensively.

"You mean tonight?" he asks. "I wondered too. How I felt, I mean." He glances over to another table where people are happily talking. "I'm going to get married."

"When?"

"Next week."

"Do I know her?"

"No."

Jealousy stirs—I fight it down. I've always fought feelings over Rob.

"Then that makes us 'even'." I swallow another gulp of coke. "I don't know what I mean by that," I say confusedly. "What I think I meant is that thinking of me must be, or will be, as threatening to you as thinking of you is threatening to me."

Rob sighs and takes another sip of beer. "Do you love your husband? What's he like?"

"Kind...compassionate...artistic..."

"And you..."

"Love him? Yes. I've never had a better friend. I can tell him almost anything."

The 'almost' stings like a slap. No, I won't tell him about seeing Rob tonight. I don't need to evoke hurt feelings...and I'm afraid he'll ask if I still love Rob, and I do. I love Rob, too.

"I...love her," says Rob. "But...why didn't we, why didn't we say what we felt when we knew each other?"

"Too attracted...young, I guess."

"I'll always love you."

I smile. "You really do talk now, Mr. Silence-of-the-Past, and I hope she appreciates it."

"She does."

Again, the sting of jealousy. "Rob, just...just love her as much. Love hurts sometimes, doesn't it?"

"I think we taught each other that." Rob takes my hand and gives it a quick squeeze.

"When we're old," I say, "let's get divorced and live together."

"Let's keep in touch, for sure."

"But...not too close," I say, worriedly.

"How about a date for three years from now, and we'll compare notes again?"

"Okay."

We end the conversation that started at sundown, and we walk out to see the moon rising. A quick embrace marks our reunion for this year.

"Good night," I say.

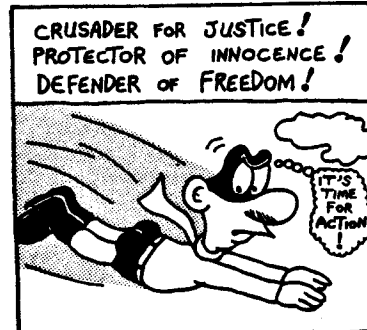
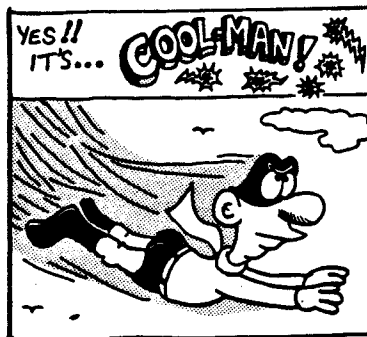
"Good night," he replies.

Studies On Myself by Prudence Gaelor

Have you ever felt like you were being watched? "Of course I have. Everybody has felt like they were being watched at some time or other," you say. "If you dine alone in a restaurant, you most certainly feel watched. And with good reason—you will be!" I don't mean that kind of watched, I mean watch-watched. Like someone was following you around or studying you. I can't imagine anyone wanting to study me, I'm just a normal everyday person. Who would want to study normal everyday people? So I decided to find out who was following me and ask him. The last time I felt I was being followed, I dodged around a corner and waited for him to come around. I waited and waited. I waited a long time and he never came, as if he knew I was onto him or something. Just as if he could read my mind, or maybe he saw it in my eyes. All the same I've been trying to avoid him. I sneak around, dodge corners which I peek around to see if anyone's watching me. When I'm in my room I use a study lamp instead of the overhead at night so he won't think I'm in there, and I try to be really quiet so he or she, whoever he or she may be, won't hear me. Normally, I stay in my room. It's the usual college dorm room. There is a bed, a dresser, a closet and a light. Posters on the wall...My posters watch me. When I walk around the room their eyes follow me. I know they talk about me after I've left the room. They used to be discreet and talk in whispers, but now I can hear them laughing all the way down the hall. My Siouxsie poster is the worst. She used to smile at me, but now at me she just stares balefully. Oh, she's smiling now, and her eyes are rounded trying to pretend innocence. But that is only because she knows I'm writing about her and she wants me to say something nice. She must have read what I've written, she's got this hurt look on her face and has begun to pout. But that is okay, 'cause I know that she and all the others hate me. I can't imagine why. I don't know what I could have done or said to make them feel that way. I would never consciously antagonize them. I must have done something in my sleep. So I put black paper over the windows and drew the blinds and it gets really dark so they can't see me when I'm asleep. But the next day they still laughed. Pink Bunny pointed out to me that the clock casts a little light in the room and that might be why. So I turned the face of the clock down so that the room got really, really dark and so that they really can't see me but that didn't work either. Bunny said that maybe I talk in my sleep or something, so I turned the fan on high thinking that that might please them because they won't hear me. But they still laugh! And it bothers me. When I go out I hear them. It's not even as if they wait long enough for me to get out of hearing range. No, they can't wait. Just as soon as I open the door to go out they start to talk about me. The same as if when my back is turned they exchange glances and make faces. And once I'm gone, my stuffed animals run around the room hiding things. How do I know? Bunny tells me. They act as if I'm not even a human being. Did you ever feel that you weren't human, but were made of plastic and came from another planet? I had this dream that these zombies came and ate everybody up. I could feel telepathically the pain that everybody felt while they were being eaten alive, just as if it were happening to me, but not just my pain but everybody's pain at once. So it must be true, I'm not human. I don't know what I am, but I don't think I'm a zombie. My posters are getting more daring. They call me on the telephone, and they say that they have the wrong number and hang up. But I know it is them. I recognize their voices. And I'm afraid. But Pink Bunny, he looks after me and I know he will never let them get me. Reverend Hiawatha told me in a dream he was sent down from Grom, the great god in the sky, as protector of the world and the next king of the galaxy. Which makes me sort of a prophet I guess, because I can see it coming. But my friends laugh at Pink Bunny and hang him in the shower. He died, but Reverend Hiawatha descended and deathanated Pink Bunny. So the world was saved from the ire of Grom. Reverend Hiawatha and I are sort of protectors of the sacred Bunny—even though he's my friend and says that he'll star, in my movie "Attack of the Giant Mutant Corpaphogous Leper-Bunnies from Planet X" which we're going to film on location in the D.C. metro—and if I fail Grom will be angry and let my posters get me.

Excuse me. I must answer the phone. Please don't let it be them again.

COOLMAN by Peter Backwords and Bruce N. Duncan



HOW IT'S DONE

by Remington Murphy

Have you ever wondered how the gods, enthroned on thunder in the clouds, ensure their reelection when their term is done in heaven? They hurtle hail and levin for angelic television, drop their drawers and rain on earth and all her pain, then choked with godly piety thus hail their fleshly proxy: "Almighty President, O mind unbent, to You we turn that by Your grace and double-face You thrill the slobs and spare our jobs and send more souls to burn. Amen."



pretty tough future.

Get ready for a



Sayz-U! (Letters)

Elayne -

Thanks for IJ #33...I especially enjoyed Thornley's "Finding Freedom", Gunderloy's "Morning Person", Scharff's "Cold Summer Night" and all the 'Dooley's'.

I also thought Eberly had it coming after I read that letter. Blunt deserves blunt.

I still haven't seen a "Mr. Fix" by Stevens that I have liked even a little. Just not for me, I guess.

I do have a question. If Seaman Chaput is on the USS Butte, how can he be a Production Assistant as listed on the masthead? (Does being your beau carry a title, Madam Editor? Nudge, nudge...wink, eh?)

Till later,

JOHN R. SCHARFF

P.O. Box 502

Holloman AFB, NM 88330

(Steve is still serving on the USS Butte, which is now somewhere in the Mediterranean, but the Butte had been stationed at the US Naval Base in Earle, NJ beforehand, making travel to and from New York relatively easy. The Butte's probable port upon return will be the Brooklyn Navy Yards, making things obviously much more convenient all 'round. And in answer to your legitimate question, John, no, being my beau does not automatically make one a Production Assistant—helping out with IJ production, as Steve did on #32 and #33, makes one a P.A. I have, of course, had P.A.s in the past who were not beaus, like Ackner, Zimmerman, Catanzaro, going back all the way to Kuczynski in the 'old days'.) Dear Elayne and Inside Jokers,

Did you know that Omnicorp is now forcing people who were born with black tape over their eyes to star in porno movies? Isn't that terrible? Yes.

Also, have you ever noticed that in all the pictures there are of Jesus (Christ), his hands are perfectly manicured? Did Mary Magdalene do this for him? I wonder. She did a lot of stuff to his feet, so why not his hands, eh?

The thing that made me laugh the most in IJ #33 was: The deadline for IJ 34.

That's all I got to say right now.

Still on the periphery of all you guyses minds -

DEBORAH BENEDICT

peripheryville

the sombrero galaxy, coochi coo

Dear Elayne:

Got the "Never Let Your Alter-Ego Out of the House Without a Leash" issue before me, and here are more of my ever-so-charming comments.

A million kudos to Anni Ackner, who has produced by far her best work to date. The "IJ Writers Quick Weight Loss Programme" is the best treatment of the skinniness mystique anywhere. And as someone who has taken this massive issue on as my own personal cause, I've read a lot on the subject. This of course ties in nicely with Michael Dobbs' "unsolved mysteries of life"—especially the one about women who are beautiful with clothes on and undesirable naked. This is too long to answer here (unless your readers are clamoring for my thoughts on this), so I'll answer Mr. Dobbs personally on that. Otherwise, here are some answers:

- 1) Sex experts are short and dumpy so as not to be threatening and to show that even short, dumpy people can get laid.
- 2) California orange juice has more cocaine residue.
- 3) Why do most anything (included Twisted Sister) fans resemble Herbie Popnecker's?
- 4) All those shitty movies are on Cinemax after 11:00 on Friday nights. But I digress.

In a class by itself is the Ever-Popular's letter. This woman is a laff riot and doesn't even know it. Let's lobby in D.C. for her to write a sitcom.

How does Candi Strecker keep that same chicken leg feeding a family of six for so long? And how can she sit and watch enough videos to write about them? By the way, the guy in the "She-Bop" video is Cyndi Lauper's boyfriend—and agent, no matter what Rowdy Roddy Piper says.

That's all—grunt work calls.

Live from Somewhere in Dreamland,

The ever-deluded JILL ZIMMERMAN

96 Johnson Ave.

Hackensack, NJ 07601

P.S. Better tell "Kid" Sieve to lay off the plagiarism of Tom Robbins. I don't know how Mr. Robbins feels about "imitation being the highest form of flattery," but I doubt his publisher would appreciate it.

(Is that who she was doing? I'd wondered; I never did get around to reading any of the Tom Robbins books in my collection...think they're still loaned out, but can't remember to whom...by the way, he will have a new one out, *Jitterbug Perfume*, the advance poster for which hangs in my office at work [as my company printed the covers and posters for the publisher, Bantam].)

Dear Elayne,

I was shocked to learn that I'm a father! I have one question for Carolyn Lee Boyd: Can he sing? I suppose now that you'll like, uh, push for those A.D.C. payments, right? Wait until Pamela gets wind of this one. She'll kill me. Shit!

I took a trip down to L'America to trade some beads for a pint of gold. Then I came back here to France. Know what? The face in the mirror won't stop. The Ever-Popular girl in the window won't drop. I'm losin' it, man.

We were gonna call the L.A. WOMAN album something like "Thriller" or "Beat It". But we were all white guys with dark visions and I was

20

drunk every morning and living with Helen Reddy.

I can't make it anymore. The man is at the door.

JIM MORRISON

Somewhere under Pere LaChaise

Paris, France

Elayne,

Every album mentioned in Mildred's column is available on compact disc. Thought your readers would like to know that.

Anni, you sweet darling, thanks for your praises about my box score idea. I agree that Sid Vicious will go in the first-round draft. It was indeed the last season for Presley. He was not only throwing junk, but shooting it!

Andy Amster's "Celebrity Home Computers" were very clever. And please keep giving us more Randy Maxson cartoons. This man is dangerous around ink and pen.

Jill Zee: Please, please, oh please, do something soon. IJ just hasn't been the same since your departure.

We need more people like Miss Neptune to show us the way. Her Universal Seminars on the Purpose of Life are worth every cent of the \$250 you pay. I'll see you all at the next one in Fargo come this January.

Two final questions: What happened to Tom Sanders? How did Reggie Jackson ever make it to a broadcast booth?

From the Big Red City,

TOM GEDWILLO

Street Without Numbers

Lincoln, NE 68506

(To answer the second? first and the first? second? Perhaps things happened that way because Howard's duties have been cut back?; and Tom Sanders wrote me saying he'd be dropping out of IJ because he didn't feel his stuff was up to the same level of quality as other staffers [to which I did reply 'nonsense', to no avail]. Perhaps you might want to write him and see if he's changed his mind yet?) hi elayne,

very glad to read how happy you are to be in love. congratulations, I think; or is that "best wishes"?...anyway, I was so impressed in one way or another with your past two IJs—32 + 33—I just had to tell you about it. Love Mildred Neptune (do you think she'd be free for dinner sometime in December? Can you ask her?) and Anni's column, always. I was very disappointed, though, to read in Anni's letter that San Francisco really isn't/wasn't the fairy land I wanted it to be. *ED.*, about to make a crude joke: Well, she never said it wasn't a fairy land...*ED.*, watching her gay friends abandon her... Good thing I found out, though, because all my unearthly possessions are stuffed in my VW ready to make the trip and if I had actually made the move it would have been a *bitch* moving back (ask me sometime about the "moving day blues", preferably when we're near a piano)...Oh now, where was I? OK, Michael Dobbs and his mysteries of life tickled me purple. He really hit home with the gourmet aisle question, only because I have had the sad misfortune of having actually worked in a whole store full of that stuff ("gourmet shop" they call it), so, if you would, please let him know that those shoppers can be found by the hundreds at least in Princeton, New Jersey, all of them dressing funny and most of them being too-wealthy Republican creatures...

Peace and love from both of me, Rev. AMY SWEENEY

P.O. Box 3324

Trenton, NJ 08619

(Rev. Amy, as many know, puts out the excellent 25¢ surreality mag *WALLPAPER*, which is always looking for interested contributors and interesting subscribers...)

My Dear E.W.,

Here I sit in my new office at WFVL, channel 23, "The cream of Wisconsin television." The latest issue of JOKE was read, in its entirety, over the air from 1 a.m. until 2:30 a.m. and was supplemented with slides from my vacation in Green Bay. I had walked over to the local Dairy Duck for a quick order of Fillet-O-Swan with malted mallard and had not been gone for more than five minutes when something crazier than Rossi and Allen occurred. Gleason Filcher, host of our Sunday morning color-radar show, was reading page 17 (Papoon report) while pictures of the Bart Starr Mobile Pigskin Museum came into view. Just then, a motorcade of six Datsuns arrived at the studio. From vehicle number three emerged the once great veteran of Wisconsin vivisection schools, Mr. Chuck E. Cheese. Why did he appear upset? Who was that man with a bag over his head? Why did our ratings jump six points from that moment on?

Next time you're in our fair city, drop by and visit WFVL. We just purchased a syndicated package of hit shows, including "Daktari" and "Family Affair." I'll have free Sebastian Cabot posters for the first fifty people to tour our facilities.

That's channel 23 news for now, a full report at 10:00,

LARRY FIZZ

Avenue of the Cheddars

Packer Broadcast House

Footville, WI 53537

Dear Elayne,

I received IJ this morning, devoured it on the bus on the way to work, and I'm whipping off my loc and column in an effort to win back my editor's favor after my slovenly performance the last issue.

First, a word of thanks to those who mentioned my last column in their letters. Gawd, I love fame...

Next, an unpleasant word...for some reason, IJ 33 was lacking in the usual sparkling writing and thought. I'm not sure what was wrong, but I just seemed to find less to chuckle about.

From a graphic sense, though, IJ 33 had some very nice stuff...

Amster's computer jokes were appreciated as naturally the excellent Baboon Dooley strips...Crawford deserves an underground comic all to himself...Roaldo's contributions were also good, and I think Randy Maxson's strips are getting sharper. Who did the Kitty Pal ad...it

was super! (That was given to me by C.F. Kennedy; I believe he found it on a telephone pole somewhere in Canada.)

Back to the prose...Steven Scharff's A COLD SUMMER NIGHT was good as far as it went...the ending seemed a bit choppy. (My fault—I cut the column, with Steve's agreement, as I thought his four or five subsequent paragraphs were a tad redundant. Guess I may have been wrong.) Kris Gilpin's SCRIPT FOR A \$40 HORRORSHOW neatly dissected the current clichés in the slice and dice genre, although the piece, like many scripts, was a little difficult to read. Because of my physical closeness to the insurance capitol of the world, Hartford, CT, I enjoyed Audrey Parente's piece on friendship among consumers; although the story seemed just too pat...get weird, Audrey! Heavens knows Hartford is...

Continuing these petite reviews...I like the THE FAN CLUB PRESIDENTS' CONVENTION by A.J. Wright and Steven Chaput's FOUR COLOR FIEND was appreciated. John Eberly's GARAGE SALE was a trifle stale...what was the point? Oh, by the way, John, if you're going to write, get used to typos...that's part of the turf...and learn not to sweat the small shit.

I wanted more from Alice Ermlich's AFTER THE LETTERS...the emotional premise was involving, and for a moment of nice uneasiness, Rick McCann's FIVE O'CLOCK SHADOW.

Anni Ackner's column was good as usual, although her long paragraphs coupled with the reduced type make it difficult to follow her sometimes...Slack,

MICHAEL DOBBS
24 Hampden Street
Indian Orchard, MA 01151

dear elayne et alia...

hey yow whoopee i'm a star (class 5 now appearing in better telescopes everywhere). like what i've had time to read of IJ33. wanted to race this off even tho the deadline is gone already.

- 1) good stuff especially by ackner, amster, mccann, scharff, gilpin
- 2) hey...how 'bout those letters
- 3) but this gunderloy guy: man i wouldn't be caught dead at one of yer parties...i mean you wake up!! in the morning!! how sick can ya get. plus, what the fuck kinda standard is it to set yourself up as the arbiter of what is and ain't permissible in IJ? like, 'scuse me...not alla us been here since the start. i liked encino fer yer info (not that i'm sayin you gotta like it). my point? i don't give a wet slap for da "History of IJ". what i care 'bout is writing i like. if ya don't like something then say it!! don't wuss out wif... "ooh laddim, it's been done to death cuz i know all about inside yolk." fuck that. how am i supposed to assimilate date into a critical dialectic? look, this gundermike guy obviously knows his shit if he wants to so i hope he cuts us all some SLACK here.
- 4) worst thing about 33: the cover. sorry.
- 5) thanx tom and jill and where can i get some of whatever eberly is on...holy psychoactive, batman!

this rant is now considered officially closed. watch these pages for the definitive history of desolate ariel and the schizoids. the band many have called bigger than the sid presley experience and twice as funny as midline granuloma.

swiss bars from hell,

RODNY K DIOXIN
c/o 3280 Amboy Rd.
Staten Island, NY 10306

Dear Elayne,

Well, here it is my birthday and everything (and a rather pleasant birthday at that, as these things go. I have no real idea why it is, but, somehow, 31 seems so very much younger than 30 that I feel rather as if I'd gotten a whole new outlook on life, and I am giving serious consideration to staying 31 for the next few years, if it can possibly be arranged at all), and here I was about to sit down and write you a nice long letter all about it, and comment on last month's IJ, and all that good stuff, when I realized, with some little bit of shock, that I can't comment on last month's IJ because, not to put too fine a point on it, I haven't yet received last month's IJ, a fine how-do-you-do if ever there was one.

I mean, really, what is going on here? Has my copy been sacrificed to Yog Xipkode by some hapless postal worker down on his or her luck and willing to try anything to bring it up again, or is this a subtle hint that my Services, such as they are, are no longer needed at this publication? Was it something I said? Did someone inadvertently strangle on one of my parentheticals? Do you really, truly want to get rid of tiny me? If that's the case, I wish you'd stand up and tell me like an Editor. I can take it. I've been thrown out of better joints than this, you know. Alfonse, saddle my duck!

Please, dear Editor, do advise. I'm willing to pack my run-ons and dangling participles and go quietly, if that's the way the wind is blowing, but I beg you not to cut off my subscription. I don't know what I'd do without Deborah and Tom and Rolando and Randy and the gang (though I must admit that I have the feeling that I could somehow struggle through without Robert). Have pity on a helpless writer... Yours in martyrdom,

ANNI ACKNER
10 Hillside Ave., #8
Englewood, NJ 07631

P.S. Having said all that, I will confess that I caught a brief glimpse of part of the masters while Uncle Wiggly had them, and I did think that your remarks re: Mary Tyler Moore and the Betty Ford Clinic were tasteless and uncalled for. I'm sorry if that sounds a bit harsh, but as someone who was addicted to drugs and alcohol for fourteen years, and who has now been three years in a programme, cleaning it up, I can tell you with assurance that, yes, some people can't handle it, and it isn't funny when you're one of them, and it takes a very brave and strong person to admit it and undergo treatment. I think Ms. Moore deserves nothing but praise for her efforts - I assume it must have been all the harder for her to go through, after being considered "America's Sweetheart" for so long - and I wish you'd rethink your remarks. I believe they were probably thoughtless rather than callous—

after knowing me for two years, I would certainly hope so—and I have faith that you'll retract them. (Absolutely and without question, Anni; I'm afraid my rather lame attempt to comment on the Stars Against Drugs mentality fell quite short even in final. My criticism was originally intended to satirize the sensationalist nature of the often hypocritical "enquiring minds" which shove these titillating tidbits in our faces almost daily, rather than a slur on those celebs and non-celebs who have these problems and are admirably doing something positive about them. However, this is just an explanation—and a pretty weak one, at that—and not an excuse, and I profusely apologize...By the way, if anybody is wondering, Anni did eventually get her IJ, and future issues will find their way to her via the postal orifice rather than second- or third-person messengers...) Hello Elayne!

Thanks for the IJ!! Wow! It's like there's a whole 'nother world that I didn't know about before & it's neat & it seems like it's been going on for a while. You're kind of doing, regularity-wise, what I think I'd like to do, and also having-staff-writer-wise. Nice variety. Nice things to read, etc...

Sincerely,

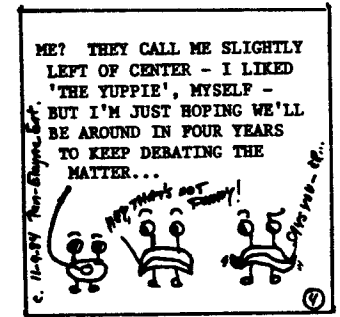
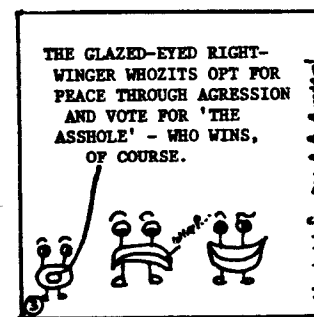
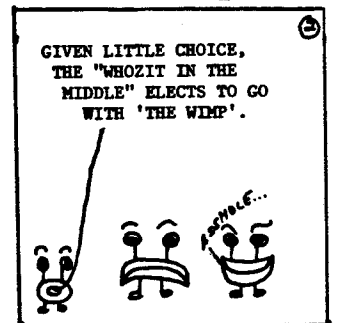
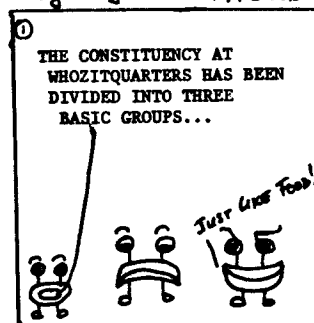
NANCY KANGAS
2269 Market St., Box 241
San Francisco, CA 94114

(Nancy also has a rather spiffy mag, previously—or concurrently, I forget—plugged in IJ, appropriately entitled Nancy's Magazine.)

WHOZITS

by Elayne

"TYPECASTING THE POLLS" (heavy, man)



MAN HAS NO NEED TO SLAUGHTER ANIMALS FOR FOOD, WE CAN GET JUST AS MUCH PROTEIN FROM PLANTS!



SILENT SCREAM

The Great The Grand Rock & Roll Penguin

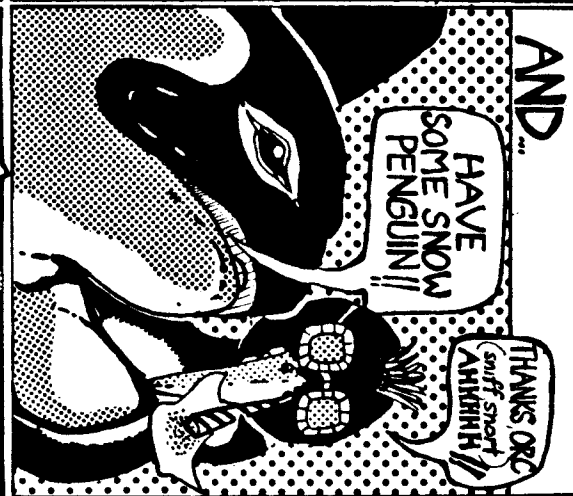
story & art © m. dowers
lettered by j. friedman

THE STAGE WAS SET. THIS WAS ELVIS' BIG NIGHT. HE'D PLAYED FOR YEARS IN FRONT OF BIG CROWDS, BUT TONIGHT WAS CARIBBEAN HALL. IT WAS FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE CURTAIN GOES UP AND ELVIS WAS FILLING HIS HEAD WITH AS MANY STIMULANTS AS HE COULD GET HIS HANDS ON.



THANKS
FALL I REALLY
NEED IT THIS
GIG HAS ME
UPTIGHT!!

BACKSTAGE
HEY NON!! HAVE A
HIT ON DE JOINT!!



HAVE
SOME SNOW
PENGUIN!!

THANKS ORC
(sniff sniff)
AHHHHH!!

AND...

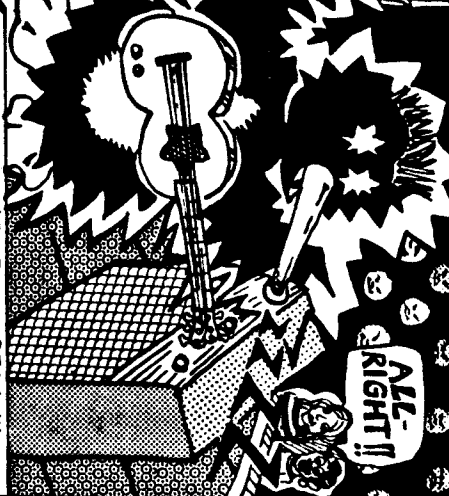


TEN
SECONDS!
LET'S GO!!

GUESS
I'LL DO
THESE
PILLS TOO!

AND...

SURE ENOUGH BY THIS TIME ELVIS WAS SO
LOADED THAT WHEN HE WALKED OUT ON
STAGE HE TRIPPED ON THE BASS
PLAYERS FOOT SWITCH...



ALL-
RIGHT!!

...FIRMLY IMPLANTING HIS BEAK IN
THE INPUT JACK ON HIS AMPLIFIER, FRY-
ING HIMSELF IN FRONT OF THOUSANDS
OF FANS. NEEDLESS TO SAY IT WAS AN
ELECTRICITY PERFORMANCE!!
SO LONG ELVIS!!

INSIDE JOKE
c/o Elayne Wechsler
P.O. Box 1609
Madison Square Station
New York, NY 10159

"If nominated, I will not run;
if elected, I will not serve,"
or my name isn't



"WIT HAS TRUTH IN IT;
Wisecracking is simply callis-
thentics with words." —
Dorothy Parker, author
(1893 - 1967).

