

I N S I D E J O K E  
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A NEWSLETTER  
of COMEDY &  
CREATIVITY!

# -UPCOMING EVENTS-

JULY 35-AUGUST 1 - Int'l. Women's Writing Guild 10th Anniversary Conference, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY - for info call 212-737-7536  
 JULY 31 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #48  
 AUGUST 2 - GEORG PATTERSON (26)  
 AUGUST 5 - SPENCER PINNEY (32)  
 AUGUST 6 - Lucille Ball (75)  
 AUGUST 7 - PHIL KRESTEDEMOS (?); Stan Freberg (60)  
 AUGUST 8 - Andy Warhol (56)  
 AUGUST 10 - Ian Anderson (39)  
 AUGUST 13 - Bert Lahr (b. 1895); Alfred Hitchcock (b. 1899)  
 AUGUST 15 - Lawrence of Arabia (b. 1888); First day of Woodstock festival (1969)  
 AUGUST 17 - Mae West (b. 1892)  
 AUGUST 19 - Orville Wright (b. 1871)  
 AUGUST 21 - DOUGLASS ST. CLAIR SMITH (33)  
 AUGUST 22 - Ray Bradbury (66); Dorothy Parker (b. 1893)  
 AUGUST 23 - Gene Kelly (74?); Keith Moon (b. 1947)  
 AUGUST 25 - Walt Kelly (b. 1913)  
 AUGUST 26 - 19th Amendment passed (1920)  
 AUGUST 27 - Federal Income Tax declared unconstitutional (1894); Martha Raye (70)  
 AUGUST 28 - Gypsy the Feral (IJ Mascot) (3)  
 SEPTEMBER 1 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO INSIDE STROKE; ANDY AMSTER (30); Lily Tomlin (47); Edgar Rice Burroughs (b. 1875)  
 SEPTEMBER 2 - MIKE GUNDERLOY (27)  
 SEPTEMBER 4 - Paul Harvey (b. 1918)  
 SEPTEMBER 5 - JODI HAMMURICH (?); John Cage (b. 1912)  
 SEPTEMBER 7 - Buddy Holly (b. 1936)  
 SEPTEMBER 8 - Sid Caesar (64); Peter Sellers (b. 1925)  
 SEPTEMBER 11 - Ken Kesey (53); O. Henry (b. 1862)  
 SEPTEMBER 12 - PETER LABRIOLA (30); H.L. Mencken (b. 1880)  
 SEPTEMBER 14 - Margaret Sanger (b. 1883)  
 SEPTEMBER 15 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #49; CAROLYN MacDONALD (28); Agatha Christie (b. 1891); Robert Benchley (b. 1889)

\* INSIDE JOKE is put on hexawebby by Elayne Wechsler and some dear friends, and emanates from beautiful downtown Brooklyn, too far away to see the fireworks but not far enough to avoid the nauseous Liberty hype leaking from Manhattan...

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OFFICIAL ABBREVIATION KEY

MTINTK = More Than I Need To Know

IJ is a proud subscriber to and advocate of the Yossarian Universal News Service

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Back issues available for \$1 each  
 Writers'/Artists' Guidelines available for SASE

# ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

Welcome back my friends to the show that never ends...This is the first IJ photocopied start-to-finish courtesy of Debbie David, who handled reductions this time as well as final repro, and we hope to make that a rule (at least until my office gets its new reducing copier)—her time and care really show, methinks...

Congrats to Anni and Steve C., respectively, on their new, more satisfying jobs—and Steve promises to contact many INSIDE STROKE contributors as soon as he can. As far as I can tell, all is progressing well on our "illegitimate sister" publication, with some really outstanding art and writing having come in (though, of course, my shyness on these matters prevents me from viewing all of it), and Steve's looking forward to receiving still more. Don't forget the Labor Day deadline for this, and remember, there is a diff between MTINTK and obscenity, and none of the latter (esp. violence) is appropriate for IS. If you're unsure your piece crosses the dividing line, send it in anyway and Steve will decide and let you know.

Back to the issue at hand, meanwhile—Our cover features the members of Retro, a Dadaist synth band from a parallel reality which I move we adopt as IJ's official musiccombo—after all, we here are just krazy omniversal hooks anyway. Gerry Retro has more on the band's philosophy elsewhere this issue, and by the way, Retro and their outfits fall exclusively under the copyright of the magnifico st.Eve herself...

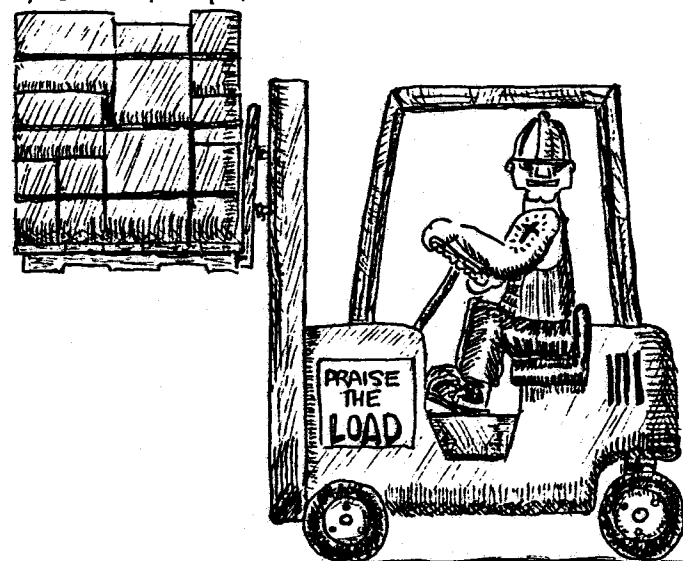
Also in these pages, witness more reviews per square inch than we've had in quite a while, by Charles and Dorian and Tim and Ken and Steve and even me, on everything from comics to Broadway. I guess we all get hyperactive again come summer...I've even managed to sell the last of our IJ caps (more will be procured as those avid requests trickle in) and—about time, too—finally revised IJ's Writers'/Artists' Guidelines to reflect recent changes. However, I've decided to spare you folks any more "Whozits" (who are currently mortified over Linda Ellerbee and won't come out & play) for as long as nobody wants to see 'em anymore (besides, that family of six has pretty much outgrown their chicken bone by now).

The rest of my energy has been diverted into watching my—I mean, the Mets and railing loudly (I've even taken to flashing the Sign o' the Cross to ward it all off) against so-called "Liberty Weekend" (AAARRRGH!). I'm really tempted to do a soapbox bit here, or, even better, think up a comedic way to combine NYC's two current overhyped obsessions, the Statue and crack (does the mind boggle or what?), but by now I'm reduced to sitting around in a cold sweat praying for Monday the 7th to hurry and arrive (of course, this will all be history as we go to press, thank Grid)...

Upcoming deadlines for sending us your goodies (art, writing of all shapes & sizes—under 1900 wds match—letters, etc.) are July 31 for #48 (with front cover by Vernon Grant); September 15 for #49, and Halloween (October 31) for, Warning #2, our Gala 6th Anniversary/Golden Issue, #50 (with any luck I'll miss some of the hoopla, as I plan to scurry out to San Fran that week again). Donations, such as those of the always-generous J.C. Brainbeau, are gratefully appreciated anytime. Subscriptions to IJ are \$1 per issue, with up to \$8 in NON-REFUNDABLE advance subs for a year. Contributors have the option of only sending in a 3¢ stamp (40¢ American if you're from Canada) for the issue in which their work (excluding letters) appears. We trade all-for-all with regularly-published zines, one-for-one with sporadics, one-for-the publication plus a 2 oz. stamp (39¢/40¢) if you wish to trade for your onesheet or mini-comic. And of course, if there's an "X" by your name on the mailing label, this is your last issue, so I hope you like us enough to renew. Our address, as usual, is

P.O. Box 1609, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159 and I'm almost proud of the brevity of this editorial (but I'll continue to work on it). This issue is dedicated in memory of Alan Jay Lerner, Jorge Luis Borges and Marlin Perkins. And

R.I.P. Rudy Vallee...



Apologies for any creative omissions - we just didn't seem to have the room this time... 26 pages... where...

# Fan Noose

A couple notes on some good JJ friends to start off here: Tim Arnold is a big fan of 'bad' ol' tv and puts out a mini-comic-sized, jam-packed thingie called TEEVIE TRIVIA, after a public-access show he does out in Michigan—neato stuff so if you're interested contact Tim at Box 6032, E. Lansing, MI 48823...And MENSA Asa Sparks has a whole mess of humor publications for sale—send a SASE to 604 Pumpkin Drive SW, Decatur, AL 35603 to get a listing...Not all that lopsided at all but quite welcome, a publication called EXPRESSO TILT comes to us from editor Mike Walsh and contains some brilliant wit (Larry Stolte's "The Stars Have Eyes" blew me away), some so-so MTINTK stuff, nice art and funny letters (many of them faked), and it's only \$1.50 from 108 Chatham Lane, Newark, DE 19713—oh, and Mike pays for 'nonfiction feature stories' too, all you would-be pros...Far less appealing is a newsletter apparently for pros only, but Shecky standup pros. THE GAG RECAP is a service for cartoonists to use to see what's unoriginal and what's hot and who's selling what to whom and all that. The cost for a few photocopied pages of cartoon captions is an astronomical \$5 per, but if you really feel you must, send the big bucks to Al Gottlieb, Box 86, East Meadow, NY 11554...I don't know how these fan-people get my name, but if you're one of them, you're bound to like DELINEATOR, put out by Alan White (455 E. 7th St., #4, San Jacinto, CA 92383-8401) and featuring convention reviews (nice repro on the pictures), tons of gratuitous female nude illustrations, fandom musings and letters, a brief SubG plug (it can't be all bad, after all), and other stuff fanzines usually have. Alan is asking \$3...Meanwhile, fans Sam Helm and Ginnie Fleming have managed to maintain the quality of their NOTES which, although it has things like diary-type notes and fan letters, also has Anni Ackner and Jeff Grimshaw (two of the best writers around) and lots more enthusiastic participation. If you learn more to fanzines than fandom, this is the publication to get—send a buck or more along to Sam at 495 West 186th St., #5E, New York, NY 10033...Unfortunately, not every Inwood publisher makes sense, as evidenced by Mike Schafer's latest EMOTIONAL VOMIT mini-book. In order for an all-picture issue to make it, the pictures should, one thinks, at least have some sort of point—most of them are badly done and (at least to me) senseless. Only 50¢, though, to 75 Fairview Ave. #3B, New York, NY 10040...Also not as hot as it undoubtedly believes it is, TROUBLED TIMES is, while perhaps not "the alternative to the alternatives" it claims, still a competent and interesting anarchist-leaning mag out of the Bay Area. The current issue has a nice remembrance of Haymarket, music and book reviews, MTINTK stuff and letters—to satisfy your curiosity, send \$1 to editor "Bismarck Idaho", P.O. Box 1539, Santa Cruz, CA 95061...The traumatic odyssey of moving in/moving out is covered exquisitely by W. Joe Hoppe in his epic journalzine HARMON PLACE. Joe's asking for \$1, which I think this is well worth—I was captivated. He's at 1124 Second Ave. S., #216, Minneapolis, MN 55403...Another MENSA could use a few lessons in layout, seems to me, but perhaps the haphazard nature of THE ATROCITY is deliberate. Some nice stuff, some elitist MENSA crap, but promising—send 50¢ plus "long stamped envelope" to editor Hank Roll, 2419 Greensburg Pike, Pittsburg, PA 15221...Nice news to report on a couple of comebackers—Susan Taylor has expanded THAT MAXINE from a onesheet to a 12-page zine, and this "Neo-Mamaist Journal of the lively life" deserves that life, indeed—do support it by sending submissions or \$1 or so to P.O. Box 10828, Baltimore, MD 21234...And yes, at last the new SSQ (short for SIDNEY SUPPEY'S QUARTERLY AND CONFUSED PET MONTHLY—must be something about the Bay Area which encourages long zine titles) is out, and has all kinds of neato stuff for us mutant-types (inc. SubG rants, reviews of schlock 60's music, etc.)—sometime JJ staffer Candi Strecker fails to mention a cover price but I assume it's a buck, to 590 Lisbon, San Francisco, CA 94112...And Candi sent along another neat Bay Area rag, a newspaper called BITCH, "The Women's Rook Newsletter With Bite." Editor S.J. McCarthy and friends do a really impressive job here covering everything from teenybopperism to news of folks like Kate Bush. A publication of this type is much needed among music zines, and fills the gap very well—subscriptions are \$15/12 issues to Suite 164, 478 W. Hamilton Ave., Campbell, CA 95008...DREAMSHORE has combined its March and April issues but still offers #28 for sale at \$1 or \$7/year—one of my pet favorites (is that redundant?) and well worth the money to Jan Byron, 618 S. Mitchell, Bloomington, IN 47401...And Rudi Rubberoid has begun putting out THE RUBBER FANZINE, his compilation of rubber-stamp art, just about monthly by this point, so next time it'll probably move into our "regular" section. It's available for \$1 plus 39¢ postage to P.O. Box 2432, Bellingham, WA 98227-2432...The folks out northwest have been busy indeed—the latest SEATTLE STAR is out from Starhead Comix, who also bring you Steve Willis' latest Morty the Dog opus, wherein our hero finds himself in the SHADOW OF THE RAINBOW. The Star is \$5.50/6, Morty the Dog is \$1 from editor Michael Dowers, P.O. Box 30044, Seattle, WA 98103...And our familiar onesheets will also be relegated to the "regular" segment next time, the way they've been publishing: already out is #26 of THE PIG PAPER (Gary Pig Gold, 70 Cotton Dr., Mississauga Ont. L5G 1Z9 and #40 of OUTER SHELL (Roy Harper, P.O. Box 7053, St. Petersburg, FL 33734), both respectively free but try to send some stamps...And Lordy knows how amidst her varied tribulations, but young Evelyn Lau is still putting out PIGEON DROPPINGS; her politically-active zine is available for \$5/12 issues c/o 2460 E. 23rd Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5R 1A2...I haven't been forgetting to men-

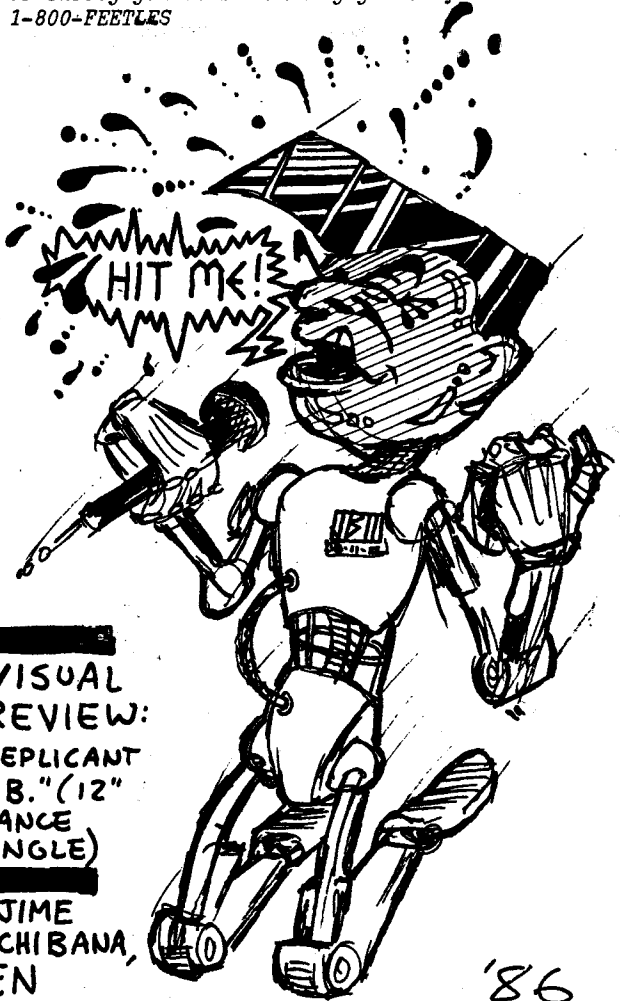
Yes, yes, we're all familiar with the musical genius of that legendary band called The Beatles. But how many of you know that The Beatles stole many of their best songs from a little-known rival band called The Featles? Well, wallow in ignorance no more: PEDALMANIA IS HERE!

Shmo-town Records has compiled a greatest hits package of this obscure Liverpool quartet, featuring all of their previously unreleased, unrecorded and unwritten classics, including:

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VISUAL  
REVIEW:

"REPLICANT  
J.B." (12"  
DANCE  
SINGLE)

HAIJIME  
TACHIBANA,  
¥EN  
'86  
RECORDS-  
(JAPANESE IMPORT) TOM (HAW)

tion that postal-code addresses signify Canada, have I?...Speaking of our regulars portion, here 'tis: BABUSHKIN'S DIGEST V.2#6—L.D. Babushkin, P.O. Box 128, Rosendale, NY 12472 (irreverent creative zine; donations appreciated); THE BLOTTER #5—C.F. Kennedy, 233 Woodbine Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4L 3P3 (all-poetry issue of this creative zine; \$9 yr/6 issues); GOOD DAY SUNSHINE #32—Charles F. Rosenay, 397 Edgewood Ave., New Haven, CT 06511 (Beatles; \$8.50 US—\$12 Can./yr); JET LAG #66—Steve Pick, 8419 Halls Ferry Rd., St. Louis, MO 63147-1806 (music; \$1); THE MONTHLY INDEPENDENT TRIBUNE TIMES JOURNAL POST GAZETTE NEWS CHRONICLE BULLETIN #47—T.S. Child, 2510 Bancroft Way #207, Berkeley, CA 94704 (creative zine; 50¢ or 2 stamps); PHOEBE V.3#3—James MacDougall, 511 Routes 5 & 20, Waterloo, NY 13165 (creative zine; 55¢); THE SOUTHERN LIBERTARIAN MESSENGER V.XIII#11—John T. Harilee, Rt. 2 Box 52A, Florence, SC 29501 (libertarian; \$5 US—\$6 Can./yr); SPACE TIME CONTINUUM AND YOUR POCKET WRENCH #7—David Serlin, 7824 Kismet St., Miramar, FL 33023 (creative zine; \$1 or 2 stamps). See you in the funny pages!

# DIARY of The ROCK FIEND

by Anni Ackner

## WHAT SO PROUDLY WE RAILED

Although, like many Thinking People of a certain sensibility before me, I have chosen to forsake the razzle-dazzle whirlwind of the city and make my home amongst the more quiet, bucolic pleasures of suburbia, and although, as part and parcel of this way of life, I normally try with all my not inconsiderable might to ignore the great, gray bulk of New York that looms like a giant, granite tax reform bill not 15 miles away from my humble hotel home, there are moments when complete avoidance of the grisly subject simply isn't feasible.

On occasion, for instance, when driving along a quiet, country road—the Jersey Turnpike is a favourite—my companion will happen to glance up and remark, "Oh, there's the Empire State Building" and, if it has been an especially tedious ride, I might be prompted to respond with a cheerful "Yup." On other occasions, a visitor from that metropolis to the East, come for the day to take advantage of New Jersey's lower gas prices, tax-free clothing or miles of beaches (on any one of which, it has been rumoured, Bruce Springsteen or Brooke Shields might be found on any given day), might cut in front of me on the department store line or trod on my foot in his or her effort to snare the last pair of size 10 Reboks in Shoetown, and we might exchange the sort of words that remind me most clearly of all the reasons why I decided to leave New York before I hit someone in the belly with a sack of subway tokens. Sometimes I even go so far as to venture into the city itself, a journey always undertaken with the distaste and foreboding generally reserved for trips to the dentist, visits from the IRS and relief appearances of Dave Righetti, but periodically necessary in order to attend the showing of a special film, visit a unique exhibit at some museum, or see for myself if Righetti has lost it to the extent it seems when viewing him on television, so you see that New York remains a blot on my consciousness, despite my best efforts to block it out, and never has it blotted more forcefully than in the last several weeks.

For the benefit of those whose ability to conveniently forget what they'd rather not remember exceeds mine, either New York or New Jersey—this is a matter much in dispute—is the possessor of a little piece of merchandise jocularly known as the Statue of Liberty, presented to the United States in the spirit of friendship by the country of France—this last is also up for grabs—and currently approaching its 100th birthday. Because some folks in the Mideast have made it tolerably clear that they would prefer that we didn't drop in on Europe this year, and because Americans as a group have a positive mania for birthdays, as long as they're someone else's, record numbers of tourists, merry-makers and fun-seekers are expected to descend upon New York to attend to various parties, celebrations and ceremonies planned for the 4th of July and the Statue's anniversary. By the time you read this, the day will be past and you will know whether the predictions have proven true, but in the meantime, we in the surrounding area have been bombarded with advertising, special programming, souvenirs, commercials and media hype of every conceivable flavour, all constantly reminding us that New York is just around the corner, and threatening to spill over onto us at any moment.

As you might surmise, I am somewhat less than happy about this particular turn of events, and yet, at the same time, I can't help but worry about those unsuspecting vacationers who will be visiting in so many droves, and feel a bit sorry for them as well ("ambivalence" would be my middle name, were not the position already held by "morally indigent"). There they'll be, paying thousands of dollars of their hard-earned money to gaze at some watery old statue of a woman who seems perpetually in need of a dose of Metamusil, getting pummeled, shoved and stepped upon by thousands of other vacationers there for the same reason, and subject to the thousands of petty annoyances that are part and parcel of the New York experience, and yet totally ignorant of the many other historical monuments and landmarks the city has to offer, points of interest that might afford them more pleasure—and certainly more breathing space—than the Jolly Green Giantess herself. Lord knows, I hold no particular brief for those lemming-loads of unwary trippers; still, something—and it might simply be a lurking fear that, if they can't get close enough to the Statue to satisfy them, they're going to come over to my side of the bridge looking for kicks—compels me to help them out a little, gently lead them in the direction of some of the lesser-known, but no less worthwhile, sites that will be available to them during this upcoming Fourth of July weekend. Therefore, I beg the indulgence of the people who are wisely opting to spend that time in a sensible place—Oslo, Norway strikes me as sort of nice—as I present:

## ANNI'S GUIDE TO LITTLE-KNOWN HISTORICAL POINTS OF INTEREST IN NEW YORK CITY

### WHAT IF THEY GAVE A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR A BIG, GREEN STATUE AND NOBODY CAME?

1) Tomb of the Unknown Mamma Leone's Diner (239 W. 48th Street, West of Broadway): In 1906, Mamma Leone began her illustrious career, one founded on the undeniable principle that it is possible to lure 500 naive people a night into a pitch-black hole in the ground, vaguely decorated by the sort of statuary that used to be found in gay bath-houses before the Stonewall Revolution, by offering them three varieties of pasta topped with one of four varieties of red or white sauce called by 112 different names on the

menu, and hiring an accoridian player to improvise "Finiculi Finicula" at inopportune moments. Some time later that year she added a particularly rancid brand of cannoli and the sort of meatball whose leftovers were routinely donated to the Olympic shot-put team to her repertoire, and her legend was complete. Mamma is gone now, as are most of her more frequent customers, a fact which prompted the building of the two small stone lions outside the restaurant. Under the left repose the ashes of Mamma herself, tastefully entombed in a Megdalia D'Oro espresso can, while under the right are the last remnants of one of the many hundreds of unsung heroes who died trying to escape one of the roving bands of arantella dancers during Mamma's annual Carnivale. A must-see for lovers of the poignant.

2) Tinker Toyhenge (Father Demo Square, intersection of Bleeker Street and Sixth Avenue): A recent but nonetheless startling addition to the topography of the City, this strange formation of what appear to the untrained eye to be giant tinker toy pieces apparently materialized out of nowhere in the middle of the night several months ago. Where did it come from? What is its purpose? Scientists theorize that, centuries ago, a race of aliens possessing superior intelligence and a very low budget visited Earth and erected the formation as either an astronomical observatory, a weather tracking station, or an over-rated Italian restaurant. Realizing, ultimately, that the resident Earthlings were not ready for the complexities of such a project, they somehow beamed it up into space, and it has only just found its way back again, to delight and mystify us. Amaze your friends with your photographs of this unique and fascinating phenomenon!

3) Custer's Last Stand (180th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue): The pun you never dreamed I'd dare to make. In 1973, Delonne Lamont Custer and his wife, Simonetti, opened a chain of fried chicken stands throughout Manhattan's Upper West Side. Due to gentrification of the area, and the fact that, while what the Custers were frying up was definitely a bird of some sort, there was some debate as to whether it was actually chicken, the chain soon went bankrupt and all the stands closed, except for the last one to be opened, and you can pretty much write the rest of this for yourself.

4) Cubism War Memorial (Cooper Square): Although the opening salvo in the Cubism War was fired in 1907 in Paris, when a then-rising young first Sergeant named Picasso instigated what was to be later known as "The Battle of Les Demoiselles D'Avignon," this monument to the brave and fiery Cubists and their struggle for independence from the ruling Fauves of that period was not erected until many decades afterward, and in our own city of New York. According to historians of the era, the French had so exhausted their enthusiasm and funds for monument building with the erection of a certain overly-large greenish person a few years previous that they had nothing left over to commemorate even this favourite of their wars, and so we Americans were called upon to, in a sense, return the favour and pick up the slack. The aesthetically somber, yet tasteful and respectful, black cube, mounted on a rotating base after designs by Braque and Derain, two of the earliest defectors from Fauvism to Cubism, was originally intended for permanent residency in Paris, but plans for this were cancelled after three of the monument's backers, on a location-finding tour of that city, were charged \$350 American dollars to go five blocks by a local cab driver, sneered at by seven different maitre d's, and refused a room at their chosen hotel by a desk clerk who claimed he couldn't understand their accents, and the monument remains in New York to this day. Stark in its elegance, elegant in its starkness, it is a treasured meeting place for the colourful street population of the Lower East Side of the city, art lovers of all persuasions (who have been known to chalk their profound and witty slogans in tribute along its sides), and that variety of adult male which enjoys imbibing a few alcoholic beverages and attempting to rotate big pieces of statuary (thought to be the major reason why that other statue is located in the middle of an unswimmable body of water). A grand attraction for students of art and history alike!

5) Yankee Stadium Pigeons (Yankee Stadium, The Bronx): Legend has it that the vast flock of pigeons which periodically swoops and dive-bombs the upper decks and playing field of the venerable ballpark aren't really pigeons at all, but the damned and aching souls of long-dead umpires, condemned to spend eternity endlessly repeating that which they did the best in their misspent lives—defecating on baseball players. Though slightly off the beaten path of the tour of Manhattan, this is an eerie and thought-provoking sight, well worth the trip and the price of a ticket, whether or not one is a baseball fan. Washable attire is suggested.

So you see, I think, that it is possible to have a fun-filled and educational, interesting time in New York this Fourth without paying exorbitant prices to go look at some mouldy woman with bad verse written all over her pedestal. I wish all visitors to this area a rewarding time and want only, in conclusion, to point out that it will be especially rewarding if you don't come to New Jersey. Really—I wouldn't kid you. Everything you've heard about the place is true—nothing but oil refineries and toxic waste dumps as far as the eye can see. Truly, you wouldn't like it, and I advise you to stay as far away as possible. I was lying about those low gas prices. Honestly, I was.

*The Ackner/Ellerbee Controversy: They've not been seen in the same place at the same time yet, folks...*



## STRESS for SUCCESS

### (Lesson One) by Roldo

Mebbe it's time I took a shot at trying to "break in- to the big time" by writing something acceptable to The Money People, something that will incorporate the current formulas. I know—I'll do a scenario for the ultimate Pork Opera...oops, I'm being "60's" again...I mean "Police Drama."

To start, we need a set of victims that the audience can really identify with. Old people...yeah, grandparents babysitting some real cute kid while the parents are working. So...yeah, okay—they're watching the boob and the kid talks 'em into going for a burger. Grandma wants to take the car, but Grandpa nixes that. "Too many drunk drivers," he says; "besides, this is a good neighbourhood."

The titles and credits can run while this happy, wholesome group heads for the local burger haven. But, what's this? Ominous flashes of boots, studded gloves, leather 'n' chains, uh oh...the folks are bein' menaced by a gang of Punks. Purple and lime-green mohawks loom over the happy group, sneering and insulting. Grandma looks frantically around for the Neighbourhood Watch, but they're all down protecting the playground from dope dealers and child molesters. The only person around is a business executive in a parked car across the street, but he's too busy snorting coke to notice what's going on.

Grandpa's no wimp, tho'. He's a veteran of The Big One, WW2. Brandishing his cane, he gets tough with the thugs, only to receive a boot in the stomach. As Grandma rushes to her fallen hero, one of the thugs grabs her purse. "Hey man," he tells his friends, "there's enough here to buy PCP and still have some left for tickets to the Scumball concert!"

Junior attacks in a flurry of fists and tears, but is felled by a blow from the thugs' ghetto-blaster.

But wait! A rescue is at hand. A police patrol car, manned—I mean "personed"—by a crusty, experienced aging male cop and his street-wise, no-nonsense female partner. She's five months pregnant and he's two weeks away from retirement. They screech around the corner, slide to a stop, and leap out, covering the "perps" with their Colt Magnum 45's. Suddenly, their car explodes. Oh no! The street gang are also terrorists, armed with Soviet-made rocket launchers! Now who will save the family unit? Things look bad for Grandma as the gang's sex-crazed, dope-addicted leader starts to undo his jeans.

Suddenly, a lone figure bursts onto the scene. Why—it's Father Zedekiah "Stomper" Malarky, the Vietnam vet priest! Armed with a chromed steel three-foot cross, he attacks the villains, who fall back weeping and sniveling. Father M. pauses a moment, considering the idea that there ain't no such thing as a bad boy. The poor fool. He is cut down in a hail of bullets as the gang members pull their concealed Uzis.

Surely the end is near. Gramps and Junior are out for the count and Granny is giving the Lord a quick financial report on every penny she's sent to Rev. Jerky Foulsmell's Church of the Sacred Transmission Mission.

A strange mist forms over the street. A solitary figure, dramatically back-lit, approaches. Clad in clean-but-worn clothes, he seems to almost hypnotise the savage gang for a moment...then they open fire. When the smoke clears, he is standing unscathed. Granny's tear-streaming eyes widen as he quietly walks up and begins tossing villains left and right as if they were no more than stuntmen. A miracle!

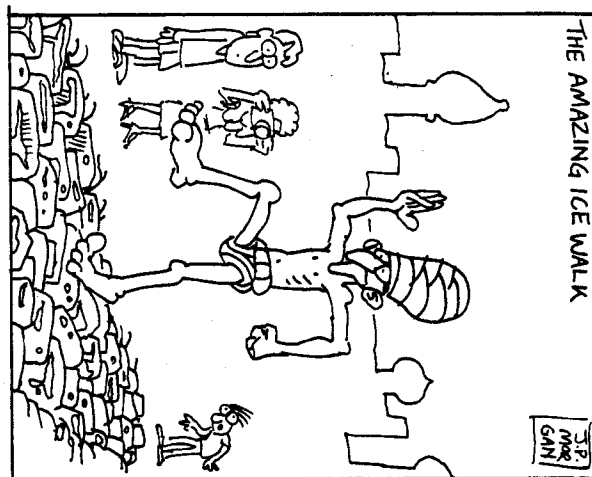
"Don't worry," he assures Granny as the last body crashes through the window of a store. "Your husband and grandchild will be all right." A pulsing light glows about his calm features.

As the sound of harps and choirs builds, the camera pans away and back from the now-quiet carnage. Roll credits.

Fade to black.

Insert commercial.

Change channel.



## Wax Ink

by Rory Houchens

**TUFF ENUFF**—The Fabulous Thunderbirds (CBS Associated)—There's no doubt about the Fab T'Birds being one of the hottest and tightest rock and roll combos to ever singe the ears of this great democracy, but it took ace producer Dave Edmunds to transfer their blistering sound to vinyl without missing a lick. Sure enough, their other records are top-notch, but never before have things been so cohesive and come across with so much power. "Tuff Enuff," a he-man checklist of stunts that this guy will suffer for his gal that is lovingly wrapped in reverb, sets the pace for the rest of this delectable disc. "Look At That, Look At That" mixes "Boney Maroney" with "Let It Rock," while Isaac Hayes' "Wrap It Up" blows off steam with some muddy funk. "Why Get Up" is a strolling, tongue-in-cheek homage to sleep, and the bluesy, jazzy instrumental "Down At Antones" showcases the talent of harmonica player Kim Wilson who gets his mouth organ to impersonate a trumpet, a saxophone, a jew's-harp and a Dixieland band all in just over three minutes. One of this year's best!

**"Goin' Thru The Motion"/"Don't Follow Me"**—Jo Jo Kenn (TSMB Recs., P.O. Box 1040, Dover, DE 19003)—Jo Jo Kenn, his biography will have us know, is a veteran hard rock 'n' roller, a former member of American and European bands, and a dedicated singer and composer who now works in a progressive musical idiom known as "electronic music." Whew! All this from a guy who looks like Elvira on a bad, bad day? Well, surprise, surprise. Aside from terrible production and a crummy mix, the two songs presented here aren't bad at all! "Goin' Thru The Motion" sounds like some great lost Residents/Snakefinger collaboration, all weird and bouncy, and flip it over and you get more of the same with a little crypto-reggae thrown in. I'm waiting for Jo Jo's next record.

**STATE OF THE ART**—Jimmy McGriff (Milestone)—Conjuring up images as diverse as greasy rib joints and late night cocktail bars, keyboardist Jimmy McGriff runs through an eclectic mix of material that well suits his virtuoso style. "New Wave Blues" and "Hip Hop Bebop" are palatable slices of contemporary (background) funk, while "Slow Grindin'" is a churnin', yearnin' blues masterpiece. "Headbender" relives the golden days of the organ-led bar band, and "Stormy Weather" is given a delicate yet stately treatment. Earthy and filling.

**WITHOUT WARNING**—Everyman Band (ECM)—The four musicians that make up the Everyman Band are veteran session players that have done time with rock and jazz acts alike, so it's fair to expect almost anything from them. "Patterns Which Connect" leans more to rock with its well-defined beat and structure, while "Talking With Himself" recalls a fast and fervent Ornette Coleman tune. "Multiblue-tonic Blues" starts off slow and scattered like something from the Art Ensemble of Chicago (with added electric guitar) then boils into a strip joint grind before cooling down to leave the same way it entered. A cool, dreamy haze surrounds "Celebration 7," which features some exceptional ensemble playing, while the spirited and sassy "Al Ur" closes out an intelligent and tasty lp. Recommended.

# SNIDE CRITIC REVIEWS

by J.P. Morgan

Greetings from Dimension 10! Once again the Snide Critic bravely confronts stale popcorn, sticky floors, stupid intermission music (from WPLJ), and annoying "enjoy the show" cartoon blurbs (also from WPLJ) in order to bring you, the IJ reader, the latest and greatest in film reviews! Beats working for a living...

Hey! Remember last issue's diatribe against toy merchandising cartoon movies? Well, by the time you read this, MY LITTLE PONY should be infesting your neighborhood theatres! And I heard that this fall, Saturday morning TV will introduce the cartoon adventures of... RAMBO and CHUCK NORRIS!! ARRRRGH! Lordy, Lordy preserve us! Let the foul, wretched marketing experts be devoured alive by Zanti Misfits! Let the very earth itself open up and swallow the vile, pus-filled Saturday morning zombie animation studios! Let Michael Jackson's insipid vinyl face ooze and run under the hot camera lights! Do you detect an acerbic tone to this article? Well, sorry, but it's just that the current flood of dull, uninspired, megabuck movies gets me down sometimes; when I was a lad, I could pop over to the Casino theatre (across the street from Keansburg Amusement Park) nearly every weekend and catch some swell Grade-Z flicks: domestic & imported horror, sci-fi, kung fu, etc. etc.... not only did the theatre close down years ago, nobody else 'round here wants to show Badfilms (except an occasional THE ALCHEMIST or YOR, THE HUNTER FROM THE FUTURE) ...instead, we are plagued with lifeless, bloated, not-bad-enough-to-be-good stuff like:

## INVADERS FROM MARS

First they remake INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS, and now this. This Tobe Hooper remake of William Cameron Menzies' immortal 1953 classic starts off with domestic scenes of hunky-dorky Spielberg-like family (complete with required plugs for M&M's, Dr. Pepper, and Cap'n Crunch), but soon gets weird when Dad starts acting like zombie, putting entier box of sweetener (NutraSweet?) in scalding coffee, which he then gulps down. Soon Mom, Teacher, Cops, etc. also develop odd dietary habits; the Martians are behind it all, of course. The most interesting things in this film are the new versions of the "head" Martian (a nasty, retractable head-on-a-stalk) and his deons (big, toothy horny-toads); generally, though, I was constantly reminded of how great the original version is, especially when the new one lifts whole chunks of

imagery from it...like the beneath-the-table shot of the unconscious nurse menaced by slowly advancing neck implant device, or the escape-countdown scene (clumsily done, here) near the end. Also included are in-jokes such as "Menzies Public School," or the 1953 "head-in-a-globe" Martian intelligence seen in the school's boiler room...the strangest one is when the young hero watches 1985's LIFEFORCE (also by Hooper) on TV. LIFEFORCE was such a dud, I can't imagine why they'd want to remind us of it!

In terms of sheer nightmare feeling, this new INVADERS just doesn't hold a candle to the original. Where the original spooked us with distorted sets and eerie, minimal special effects, the remake knocks us over the head with tons of fiberglass-and-rubber sets and monsters, not to mention rock-concert lighting and post-production opticals. There's also just too much silliness, like when the Martian tunnel drill just happens to knock back the possessed cops, or when the possessed teacher gets eaten, or when the kid just happens to have a penny to power the Martian ray gun (it runs on copper)...not to mention the brain-control devices! The original ones were transistor-like thints maybe 1½ inches long; the new versions are 7-inch nails with glowing diodes! When a soldier gets one in the back of his neck, I expected it to protrude from his Adam's apple! In all, the filmmakers seem unsure whether they want to scare us, or make us laugh, and so end up doing neither. David Cronenberg's remake of THE FLY should be out real soon.

## BRAZIL

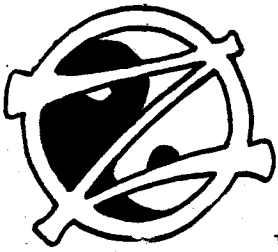
Now you're talkin'! I was afraid for awhile that I'd never get to see this...but lo and behold, it pops up at The Movies in Red Bank! Hard to describe: basically a variation on Orwell's 1984, but with unique Terry Gilliam touches—inccredible flying angel dream sequences, skyscrapers that form bottomless canyons, police vans that resemble giant toasters with cowcatchers, bloated, gut-like tubing, wires, and ducts that pass through all the buildings (even posh restaurants), hats shaped like shoes, retro-looking inside-out computer terminals, official bureaucratic torture ("Confess now, before it affects your credit rating!")...like David Lynch's ERASERHEAD, it draws you into a bizarre alternate reality. It's long, but the outrageous black humor and all-out weirdness keeps you wondering what happens next. With an incredible 15-minute finale! A must-see!

## THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED

No, they didn't remake the 1956 Roger Corman nuke-mutant classic...it's just that these great '50s terrors seem to be shown on TV less and less frequently than they used to, so it was well worth getting up 3:30 a.m., Sunday morning, June 1 to see this old fave on channel 9! Besides, this column looked a little sparse with just two films. Anyway, this durable tale of six survivors of nuclear war features an amazing mutant monster suit—fur-covered, with built-up shoulders (and small, crab-like claws sprouting from them), and head mask with prominent nose, three eyes, and four prongs! Face is completely immobile—the eyes and mouth don't move—yet somehow effective as he looks up at rain. There's also some neat camerawork, like when the out-of-focus monster (in background) walks into focus as he attacks hero (in foreground) shooting at him...And there's also some great sloppy editing (caused by manhandling of the film over the years...I think): during early fight scene between hero (Richard Denning) and thug (Mike "Mannix" Connors), there's an abrupt cut of Paul Birch lifting his head groggily from couch, and his daughter (Lori Nelson) strolling outside in the dark so the monster can grab her...then abruptly back to fight. Later, as we see daughter wake up at night and exit from bedroom, sure enough, there's the misplaced earlier fight scene! ("I'll kill you!" snarls a beaten Connors.) What a gem!

And there you have it, cinema buffs: a brickbat, a bouquet, and a blast from the past! Don't miss next issue, when the Snide Critic previews the latest "in" films, including BABOON DOOLEY IN A HAUNTED HOUSE, THE REVENGE OF CYNICALMAN, BRAINBEAU TELL ME TRUE, "BOB" IN A HAUNTED HOUSE, and THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF HO CHI ZEN. Looks like it's gonna be a great summer after all!





# Zenarchy STORIES

by Ho Chi Zen

## THREE IN THE MORNING

Seeing, on the Aneristic or Eristic side of things, only the Yang or the Yin of the Tao, is called, according to Chuang-Tzu, "three in the morning."

"Once a zookeeper went to his monkeys," he wrote, "and told them he would give them three chestnuts in the morning, and four in the evening of each day. At this they became furious, so he said: 'All right, all right—I'll give you four in the morning and three in the evening.' With that arrangement they were quite happy."

## THE DUKE OF PIN

"When Ta'i Wang Shan Fu was Duke of Pin," writes Chuang-Tzu, "the city was attacked by barbarians. Although he offered them skins and silks, they declined them. Although he offered them dogs and horses, they refused him. Then he offered them pearls and jade, but they did not want these either. What they wanted was the territory."

"So the Duke of Pin made this speech to his people: 'To send a younger brother to war, and live with the elder brother; to send a son to war, and live with the father after the son is slain—this I cannot do. What difference does it make whether you are my subjects or the subjects of these barbarians? Moreover, I have heard that the land exists to support and nourish the people, and so harming the people to protect the land seems backwards to me.'

"Thereupon he took his staff and went to live at the foot of Mount Ch'i, but everyone in the kingdom followed him, so they founded a new State. A ruler like Ta'i Wang Shan Fu may be said to have cherished his people."

## NIRVANA EXPRESS

Wanted: future Buddhas. Method: meditation—no equipment necessary. Here is your ticket: VOID IF DETACHED.

## FUDO AND SNAFUDO: ZENARCHIST ARTS OF SELF-DEFENSE

Fudo was introduced in modern times and given its present name by a former Marine staff sergeant, who opened up a Fudo studio in Culver City, California, not long after World War II. (Later he got straight and went into chinchillas.)

While in Japan he had specialized in the study of karate yells, but never was attracted to the physical contact end of the sport. So Fudo is the art of assuming such a professional stance and then yelling with such sudden, blood-curdling ferocity that your opponent backs down. If that doesn't work you run. Courses in the fast sprint were also part of the Fudo studio curriculum.

Fudo was originally discovered accidentally, by a cavalry officer waging war on the Indians of the Yosemite Valley. His green troops, mistaking reveille for a call to battle, charged over a snow-covered hill and attacked the Indian village in their red flannel underwear. As a result, the Yosemite Indians surrendered without a fight. This is a true tale which is to be found in the annals of early California history.

On the other hand, no reliable witness has yet been found to attest to the actual existence of a Fudo studio in Culver City in 1947. And a search of Marine Corps records does not reveal on active duty in Japan in 1946 any such person as a Staff Sergeant Kilroy. But unless Ho Chi Zen comes up with a better story, we'll have to make do with that one.

An advanced version of Fudo for self-defense against bureaucracies was developed by George Boardman, who said, "If the Internal Revenue Service calls you in for an audit, make an appointment at 4:45 Friday afternoon and borrow the neighbor's kids and dog to take with you." This is called Snafudo and also includes secreted satirical material in the files of government agencies and mammoth corporations so as to thereby flabbergast the authorities.

# PUFF, GASP, CHOKE

by Susan Packie

"We shall overcome, We shall overcome, We shall overcome some day..."

"What kind of a weird song is that to sing, brother? It doesn't have any pizzazz. It won't stick in people's minds."

"It was just an idea."

"Well, you've got some mighty strange ideas. What's that you're fooling around with?"

"This is the leaf of the tobacco plant."

"Yuck! Don't touch that. It's filthy!"

"It is music to my ears."

"It is cancer to your lungs, that's what it is! What are you planning on doing with it?"

"I am inventing the cigarette. No longer will people have to dump the tobacco mixture into the bowl of a pipe and inhale. Now they can obtain rolled cigarettes—the tobacco mixture wrapped in paper—which they may insert directly into their mouths."

"Yeah, but can you still stuff it up your nose?"

"I'm working on that. Maybe I'll even invent a cigarette that you can stick in your ear."

"I'm surprised at you! After all our forefathers and foremothers have taught us about the dangers of smoking, you're earning your living manufacturing the dangerous weeds."

"This is our last chance."

"Our last chance for what?"

"Our last chance to retake what is rightfully ours."

"What are you talking about?"

"I'm talking about repossessing the land, this country!"

"By making cigarettes?"

"By letting the cigarettes kill off all the others. This tobacco blend I am working on now will be labeled 'the safest cigarette on the market.' It won't be, of course. There is no such thing as a safe cigarette. But most of them want to believe there is so badly they won't stop to think about that. They'll just smoke, and wham! No more smokers!"

"That's cruel. And after all this nation has done for you! You have a place to live, you eat regularly, you're educated. How many of your ancestors could say that?"

"Exactly. I'm doing it for them."

"What will you do with the land once you own it?"

"I won't own it, I'll just live on it, paying rent continually to the Great Spirit."

"Okay, Running Bear, but somehow I don't think this is quite what the first peace pipe smokers had in mind."

"Don't be too sure of that."

## EVERYONE A ZEN MASTER

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

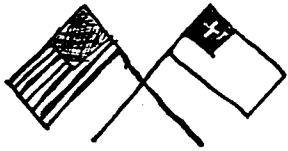
As you are walking the streets or riding a public conveyance, imagine to yourself that each person you look at, regardless of age, is your child. In the case of adults, of course, she or he is to be pictured as your grown child. Never mind if that makes you feel a hundred years old; age is of no consequence to a sage.

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 bearing of each individual as evidence of his or her style of expressing enlightenment. Listen to every scrap of conversation as a koan.

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

## NIRVANA/SAMSARA

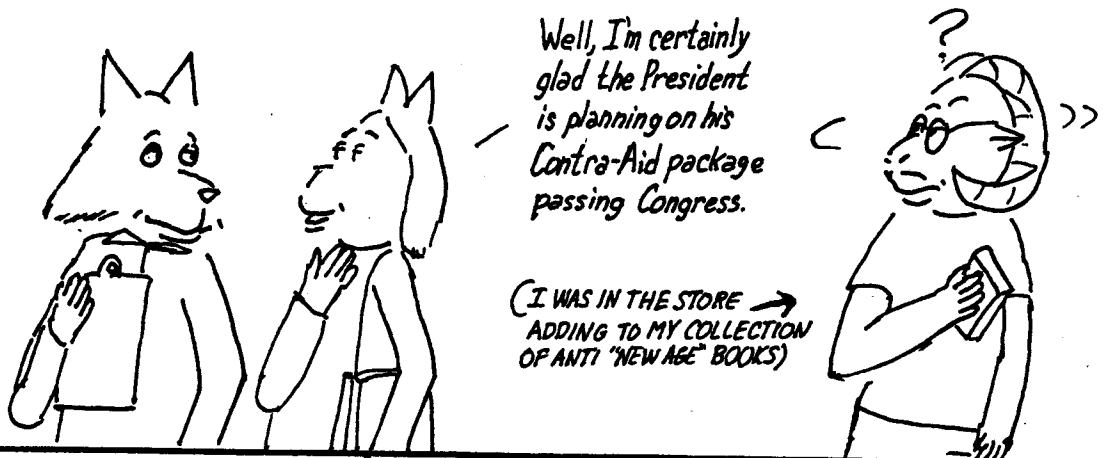
Samsara is Nirvana, when viewed in the Eternal Here and Now. Nirvana is Samsara, when attached to the worry wheel of past and future karma (action-reaction).



# DOUBLE STANDARD

by Steven F. Scharff  
BASED ON A TRUE EVENT!

## SCENE- A "CHRISTIAN BOOK STORE" IN MID-AFTERNOON



Well, I'm certainly glad the President is planning on his Contra-Aid package passing Congress.

(I WAS IN THE STORE ADDING TO MY COLLECTION OF ANTI "NEW AGE" BOOKS)



You obviously haven't heard the news that much of the money just gets pocketed by the so-called "FREEDOM FIGHTERS".



And besides, if the US opposes the Sandinistas, why didn't we help out Somoza\* in his downfall?

\*NICARAGUAN PRESIDENT OVERTHROWN BY THE SANDINISTAS



Well, if our government is spending money on it, that means it isn't wrong!

(YES, SHE REALLY SAID THAT!)



But what I can't abide is all the millions Washington is appropriating for abortion!



"Well, if our government is spending money on it, that means it isn't wrong!"



I'd like to buy this, please!

He's probably one of those "New Age" freaks in disguise!

8 I left the store, whistling "If I Had A Hammer", as loud as possible.

© 1986

THEM! The corporate golfers. The hyperactive babies. The unionized deaf beggars. The popcorn vendors. THEM! The narrow shoe salesmen. The record stores. The highest-rated radio station in your vicinity. THEM! The blue breakfast cereal manufacturers. The preachers on the street. Yes, you know who they are, perhaps not in such concrete targets. But then maybe you do. DO YOU KNOW WHO YOUR ENEMIES ARE? Have you the foggiest notion where the money really goes? Do you care? Are you still behind on that payment? Well, there's nobody you can blame but yourself for that, so don't start ranting like this over your own faults. You're probably one of THEM but want to get "cool" by reading and participating in un"cool" material. Don't think we can't tell who you are! Better than YOU ever could; we know your intentions, goober. Now, RETRO knows who its enemies are. The hands that feed them. Please realize that it's the work of our warden Swarmer Brothers that limits the degree of enrichment in our music. Actually, they never really liked us from album one, and so we were never destined for The Big Time. Not that we wanted it, but we didn't expect most of our RETRO supporters to leave once we signed to a megalabel (all you robot urbanites out there, who dump their favorites the moment a megacorp snatches them up to destroy what little has developed. Oh, you're very much a part of this, goober!). We certainly accumulated no more fans since our project. I'll be damned if RETRO has to put themselves through another hell like that again. Do you vain, deserting rats have any idea how much creativity is lopped off for a self-owned label? So you see, the Swarmers move only proved that the selling-out was made by the zombied supporters we thought knew better. But no, WE won't sell out. We refused to wear the leather and chains provided us by Bonda Bikes for that commercial you had to have seen at nauseum last year. This forfeited full backing for the current national tour. Our image is sincere and streamlined. We take no drugs. Why, we're even detoxified! How many bands can boast about their being 100% macrobiotic? Not that all this sincerity makes us perfect. Nobody's ever perfect, and we're not gonna deny our mortality. Just because we mess up every once in awhile doesn't mean we're not RETRO. In fact, we're very RETRO. Why? we're even more RETRO than you could ever imagine! OF COURSE we're goobers! We're all on the same nuthouse planet, and we're all nuts! So think you can make a better EP? Go ahead, goob'. I'm not stopping you. Just don't do what we did. Learn from our mistakes while we watch you make yours. So what does this all mean? Why am I writing to you this day? Because I feel like venting my anger, goober! No new albums at the present time. Were you one of the fifty who bought our last disc, RETROROCK? Thank you.

-Gerry Retro

**CYNICALMAN** ©

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**TALK SHOW HOST**

**CONFIDENTIAL** by Michael Dobbs

When in doubt, sequelize...therefore, gentle readers: GREAT MYSTERIES OF LIFE, PART THREE—SPAM.

The other evening, my best friend and my wife were discussing grotesque things people were willing to consume on a daily basis here in the USA. Uppermost in their conversation was Spam.

Yes, Spam. The luncheon meat which comes in those quaint cans which are opened with a key. In an era of zip-lock plastic bags and cardboard juice "cans," Spam, with its all-metal can and its little key soldered to the container's bottom, harkens back to an era when you had to really work to get your food. Remember what it would be like when your mom or dad entrusted you with the adult job of opening that can of Spam you were going to have, and you broke the seal or the key? Your parents would have to finish the job with a screwdriver or a can opener, and you would slink off to a distant corner of the kitchen knowing that you had failed yet another test of adulthood.

Once opened, that can revealed a rectangular lump of

pink dead flesh, highlighted by white globs of fat. Surrounding the Spam was a gelatin substance of unknown origin. Was the gelatin inserted during the packaging to cushion the Spam during its journey to the consumer? Was it some sort of flavoring agent? Or did the material actually come from the Spam...a sort of natural defense mechanism? Who knows? All I do know is that it was carefully scraped away and never consumed in my house.

Ah, the dishes one could make...there were cold Spam sandwiches, preferably with a little mustard. Spam fritters were a specialty in my wife's home with her father carefully frying little balls of Spam encased in a delicate butter.

My favorite, though, was Spam with eggs. Pour a little maple syrup on it, and there was food!

My father was big on frying luncheon meat for breakfast. He would buy a baseball bat of bologna and cut thick slices to be placed under the broiler. This use of the sandwich staple also was enhanced by a touch of pancake syrup.

All these food memories have touched off another reminiscence...circus peanuts. Remember those pink or orange marshmallow creations that were allegedly peanut-flavored? Ah, they were great...but only to the seven-year-old palate. A recent try confirmed that you can't go home again.

I've often wanted to try deli meats which are just a little mysterious. After all, ham, pastrami, salami and bologna (delicious fried with maple syrup...remember to try it) are all pretty self-explanatory. But what about "baked loaf," "tavern loaf," and "head cheese"? Head cheese is not really made out of heads, is it? I imagine that working in the head cheese division of Oscar Meyer must really be quite an experience...not unlike working at a morgue.

I would like to know just what they baked in baked loaf. I've never been in a tavern that served tavern loaf sandwiches. The bars I've been in serve those industrially-made Stewart sandwiches. Answers to any of these questions are certainly welcomed.

Deli men never want to tell you what the source material is for these and other "meats". I have to admit that I once got into a keilbasa loaf kick until I realized the stuff did not taste even remotely like keilbasa.

Another great mystery of life is whether parents actually get any satisfaction seeing their daughters and sons jerk spasmodically to Top Forty hits at their dance recital. The other night I spent a few years at a dance recital which opened up many new unanswered issues of life.

First, why are there so many "Miss So-and-so's School of Dance"? Aren't any of these people married? And what gives them the right to be a dance instructor? I read the resumé of one school's head teacher, and this woman had never danced professionally in her life. In fact, she's still taking lessons!

The dance school business is a nice racket...open up a studio (don't worry about credentials as there are no requirements for degrees or training), get a whole bunch of little kids (remember to cram as many kids as possible in each group to maximize your profits) and get them practicing some sort of routine to a recent pop tune.

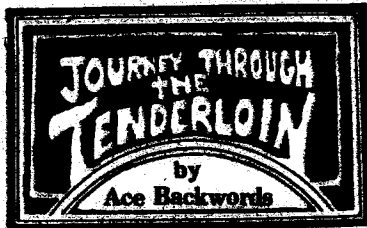
Remember that all your efforts are geared toward the recital at the end of the school year. You have to require the parents to buy their kids a really garish outfit, and you have to be sure the costume, the style of dance and the music have no common theme at all.

I saw a bunch of corset-wearing teens tap-dance to a slow melancholy Scott Joplin rag...tap-dance to a waltz! Then there was the group of youngsters who performed a gymnastic routine wearing day-glo French can-can dancers' skirts...which they constantly tripped over. Finally there was a group of silver-lamé cowgirls who boogied to James Brown's LIVING IN THE USA.

Do the parents really like this stuff? I suppose so, as there were more cameras, bouquets and presents dotting seats than one sees at a graduation. But why?

I don't know...please pass the maple syrup.





## CHAPTER 10: A SKID ROW XMAS

**B**ottles were exploding like hand grenades on the sidewalk. A fight had broken out.

"YOU ASSHOLE!"  
"YOU SHIT-FOR-BRAINS!"

It was Christmas Day and we were waiting on line at St. Anthony's Dining Hall to get a free Christmas dinner.

Two bums were having a loud disagreement.

"I'LL KICK YOUR FACE IN!" shouted this greasy-looking hippy.

"JUST YOU TRY!" countered this wino-looking guy.

When push came to shove, the greaser-hippy reached into a trash can on the corner and started heaving empty wine bottles at the wino. There's no shortage of this kind of ammunition on Skid Row. The entire trashcan was full of empty green Thunderbird bottles. Green glass was shattering all over the sidewalk.

The wino was hopping back and forth, doing a spastic jig as he dodged the flying bottles.

"MERRY CHRISTMAS YA SHIT!" shouted the greaser-hippy as he launched bottle after bottle.

Suddenly the greaser-hippy stopped throwing and instead he took a bottle by the neck and cracked the bottom of it against the wall. Real jagged-edged and vicious-looking.

The wino knew what that meant. His eyes bugged out like he'd been cut before. The wino let out a timid yelp and turned and fled down the street, with the greaser-hippy in hot pursuit, waving the jagged-edged bottle in the air like a tomahawk.

And as they disappeared around the corner it looked like he'd catch him, too.

The funny thing was, aside from a few appreciative chuckles, none of the other bums waiting on line paid any attention to this random bit of violence. You see, on the streets violence is accepted with a nonchalant shrug, a minor inconvenience of no more significance than the pigeon shit in the Park. So long as it's not YOUR ass on the line.

For example, a few days before Christmas I was eating lunch at St. Anthony's. This pudgy black dude was sitting across from me. Anyway, I guess he made some kind of nasty crack to this Indian lady sitting next to him, because the lady comes back with her irate boyfriend. 6 foot 6 inches of red-blooded redskin. And he grabs the black dude from behind and sticks a knife up to his throat.

"What's the big idea mouthing off to my old lady," hisses the Indian.

The pudgy black guy just sat there, eyes blank, mouth wide open, not saying anything, his mouth full of half-chewed mashed potatoes dribbling out.

I sat across from them, watching this, watching the black dude contemplating the shiny piece of steel pressed up against his Adam's apple, no doubt seriously considering the disadvantages of going through life without a head.

Fortunately for him, the Indian released him unharmed. But the point is, the whole time this was happening in the middle of a crowded cafeteria, not one person did anything. Nobody at our table even stopped eating. "Hey, that guy's about to get stabbed to death." "Oh, really? Pass the salt, pal."

Ten minutes later when I got up to leave, the pudgy black dude was still sitting there, eyes blank, mouth wide open, still trying to swallow that mouth full of mashed potatoes.

But anyway, it was Christmas Day and me and Eugene McKlean, that great man, were making the scene at St. Anthony's. I'd been eating there every day for the last two weeks, ever since I got robbed of all my dough at the Empress Hotel and ended up on the street. McKlean had been eating there for years. He was on the streets too, but of course he had big plans for getting off the streets.

Usually the menu consisted of boiled beans, boiled potatoes, boiled cauliflower, or some such mush. But they sometimes threw in big chunks of peculiar-tasting beef. And the coffee was delicious. They serve thousands of free meals every week, mostly to bums and street people.

But on Christmas they weren't serving the usual boiled blech for dinner. You see, everybody in San Francisco chips in to give the "unfortunate" a decent Christmas dinner. Truckloads of turkeys, cranberry sauce, stuffing, gravy, pies and ice cream had been donated in the spirit of brotherly love and tax writeoffs.

Every bum in town was making the scene. The line stretched all the way out of the cafeteria and halfway down Golden Gate Avenue. McKlean and I took our place at the end of the line and slowly started inching our way in the general direction of the cafeteria.

Just our luck to get stuck behind Yogi, one of the dumbest clucks on the street. Yogi looked like W.C. Fields' half-bright younger brother. He talked out of the side of his fat face and he was always babbling on about some half-wit scheme to "make a cool fortune."

"Like I know this here guy who invented this math-e-mat-ical formula to hit the jackpot at Reno..."

McKlean whipped out a CHRONICLE that he always kept on hand for emergencies like this to shield him from the real world, and stuck the paper in front of him as a buffer zone between him and Yogi's banal banterings.

"...and according to my cal-cu-la-tions," droned Yogi, "the Big Depression should hit some time next winter."

"For crissakes!" snarled McKlean, genuinely irked. "You're a frigging genius. Here we are waiting on line for two hours a day for a lousy free meal and you think the Depression's coming NEXT year! Shit!"

The line stretched down a long corridor and coiled inside the cafeteria like an intestine. Inside, Christmas energy was buzzing in the air. The dungeon-like cafeteria was brightly lit for a change. And the walls were decorated with wreaths and candy canes. There was even a life-size ice sculpture of Santa Claus. And a brass band was belting out jazzy versions of Christmas carols.

Me, Yogi and McKlean took our trays and loaded them down with turkey, pies and goodies.

A Catholic priest, decked out in a long Friar Tuck robe, stood at the end of the serving line, handing out little gift-wrapped presents and saying "God bless you" to each person in line, but by the thousandth time it sounded more like "Gobble-sue."

The place was packed. We sat down at a crowded table next to a couple of damaged pals of McKlean's, Fearless Frank and UFO the Space Man.

"Well thay, how ARE you boys," greeted Fearless Frank with an effeminate smile. "Merry Christmas for godsake."

Frank was the swishiest guy in the world and he played up the limp-wrist bit for all it was worth. I had to laugh every time I saw him prancing down Market Street, swivel-hipped and blowing kisses at all the pretty boys. Anyone within 20 miles could see that he was gay.

Poor old doomed Fearless Frank. When he was 11 years old his parents found out he was gay. They spent a fortune dragging him to all these shrinks to "cure" him of this dread disease. He was not cured. When he was 13 he started stealing booze from his dad's liquor cabinet. One night he took his dad's Cadillac out for a drunken joy-ride. He ended up smashing into another car in a head-on collision. Since he had no driver's license, let alone insurance, his dad ended up getting sued for every penny he had. Imagine that. You're 13 years old and you've just wiped out your family. That was the kind of luck the poor guy had. Fearless Frank.

He came to San Francisco with \$500 in his pocket. He took out a room at the Fairmont, one of the most expensive joints in town. He ordered up room service for champagne and caviar for every meal. His money lasted two days. And he's been on the streets ever since. "And if I ever get my hands on some money again I'll do it all over again," he says.

Now Fearless Frank was talking about his favorite subject: suicide.

"I walked to the Golden Gate Bridge yesterday," said Frank between mouthfuls of turkey, "and I was going to jump off. But it just looked so...so beautiful...staring out through the fog into the Pacific."

(Eventually Fearless Frank would take the Big Plunge, dissolving painlessly in the ocean mist. This story is dedicated to you, Fearless Frank, wherever you are.)

"Actually, Christmas is a major holiday on the planet Venus," said UFO the Space Man, changing the conversation to his one-and-only subject: extraterrestrials. "Jesus was really a Venutian and he came to Earth in a spaceship to save mankind. It says so in the latest issue of SAUCER WORLD."

UFO the Space Man was just plain weird. Even in a weird scene like St. Anthony's, UFO was in his own class of weird. Totally harmless, though.

UFO looked like a big rat. And every inch of his arms, legs, chest and back was covered with bizarre tattoos of flying saucers and space creatures. Once UFO confided to me that he was born on Pluto, and I half-believe him.

"How come you got all them there tattoos?" asked Yogi, as he stuffed rolls and butter into his fat face.

"Because my tattoos are the only thing they can't steal from me," said UFO, gnawing on his bottom lip like a rat. "People are always beating me up and stealing my money. So the first of the month, as soon as I cash my S.S.I. check, I spend the whole thing on tattoos. 'Cause they can't steal that from me."

"On these streets you can get skinned alive," said wise-ass McKlean.

"Oh dear," said UFO, tugging at his ratty beard.

"Well merry-friggin-Christmas," announced Yogi, digging into his pumpkin pie. "Now if I could just get a couple of financial backers with, say, a cool thousand bucks apiece...Say Frank, how much dough you got?"

"About 83¢. But I'm going to invest that in something with immediate dividends, like a bottle of Thunderbird."

"Shrewd move," said McKlean.

"Hey! Would you look at THAT!" declared Yogi. He was pointing his fork towards the brass band. They were belting out a jazzy version of "White Christmas." This crazy old bag lady—obviously touched by the Christmas spirit—was dancing up a storm in front of the band.

"Look at that suh-wingin' little old lady," said Frank with a smile.

She was blizzed off her ass and really kicking out the jams. Her skinny arms and legs were flailing away like a spastic flapper.

"C'MON HOT MAMA! GET DOWN!" shouted some bum.

"TAKE IT OFF!" shouted another.

"SHAKE YOUR BOOTY!" shouted Yogi, ever the clever one.

continued  
next page

Everyone in the cafeteria started yelling at that crazy bag lady, egging her on to make a fool of herself. And boy did she rise to the occasion. Her chicken legs were kicking and her eyes were popping and her mouth was going. "guh-guh-guh...WaaHOOOOOOO!!! MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!"

She was having the time of her life, the center of attention: the Queen of St. Anthony's Skid Row Ball!

A camera crew from ABC News had been making the rounds, filming the wins for their annual heartwarming "aren't-you-glad-you're-not-a-skid-row-loser-on-Christmas" story. But when they saw this bag lady doing her crazy jig, they swung into action, zooming in to record this wonderful event.

And she was putting on quite a show. Every head was watching her as she cut loose. She had a drunken smile on her face as she danced faster and faster and the music got louder and louder and everybody shouted at her to make a spectacle of herself and she laughed and hollered and, fuck, we may be losers but Christmas is a time of celebration and she was a STAR and she didn't care about a damn thing as she whirled across the cafeteria, whipping back and forth to the music, kicking her knobby legs high in the air as the music played louder and louder and there was hope for the losers as she surged across the dance floor, violently, passionately, faster and faster and faster, until....

suddenly...she slipped on a wet spot on the floor and her scrawny chicken legs shot out from under her.

She crashed to the floor with a sickening groan. The band stopped playing like that—and suddenly the whole cafeteria was silent.

All eyes watched the fallen figure, lying on her side like a pile of dirty laundry. The brown-robed priest and some flunkies rushed over to help her up, but she cursed at them: "Get away from me you BASTARDS!"

"Lea' me alone," she said. "LEA' ME ALONE!"

She slowly picked herself off the floor. It was so quiet you could hear those old bones creaking.

"EVER'BODY JES' LEA' ME ALONE!"

Even Yogi stopped laughing as the old lady slowly limped past our table, half-sobbing, half-gurgling, rubbing her bruised hip with her hand as she slowly made her way towards the exit. She had her face in her hands as she hobbled out the door and disappeared into the streets of the Tenderloin.

Merry Christmas.

*(The author of the following two-part essay, Jonathon Schloolie-Siegel, a former nose-fetishist, has also authored Chloe's Secret Sphinx, The Tale of the Tubiflex, and Battle of the Bocks, the definitive work on stale American beer. Our sincerest apologies to Mr. Schloolie-Siegel and the entire Portland Pataphysical Outpatient Clinic for misplacing this article's title—er, Dr. Ligi, might I prevail upon you to provide another for Part II? Thanks so much...)*

The standard text on abnormal sociology is Harvard professor Dr. Lars Hauptman Glantz's Hormones in Crisis: A Guide to Western Civilization. While independent testing laboratories have repeatedly proven Glantz's hypothesis that ecstasy poses severe problems for authoritarian and wish-based political and economic systems, barely 40% of all Americans surveyed agree that the three major problems facing the world today are sex, drugs, and rock & roll. This is an unfortunate situation, because without total agreement on the definition of a problem, it is virtually impossible to mobilize troops to provide a solution.

Diversification is fine in an investment portfolio, but it's time we stopped multiplying our concerns and return to the insular paranoid collectivism which allows any civilized society to accept the wisdom and follow the immortal words of that premier peristaltic economist, Vince Lombardi: "PROGRESS MEANS EVERYBODY PUSHING IN THE SAME DIRECTION."

Vietnam, Kent State, and Martin Luther King are dimly-remembered nightmares now, and all this sensitive posturing about the nuclear arms race, famine, drought, plague, environmental pollution, endangered species, the international communist conspiracy, equal and/or human rights, *ad nauseum*, is merely a last ditch attempt by a few Sixties activists unwilling to slip into the numbing comfort of middle age that the Seventies generation willingly accepted a decade ago.

Neither the Sixties or Seventies can provide us with solutions to today's dilemmas or those we will face tomorrow. The Forties have grown distasteful with all the morbid breast- and brow-beating over genocidal raids on the Japs and Krauts. And the startling revelation that Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a fragile paraplegic who spent the better part of his final three years being manipulated by deranged industrialists naive enough to believe they could sell limousines in the Soviet Union has done little to enhance that decade's reputation.

The Thirties contained The Great Depression, and few people remain alive today who recall the Twenties as anything more than a

#### IF WE SENT OUR TROOPS

To all the hot spots where communists are gaining control as Nicaragua it would still be a service because our winnerless army, navy and air forces are just as socialistic as the Reds. Like them all we came up with in times of armed conflict are

survivors and losers instead of winners, losers and matching winners. To end wars (90% of them) fire a BASS at fair-play 50/50 (men, women) losers, winners (chance-selected) war-waging strategy or simply WINNERS — Box 2243 YOUNGSTOWN — OHIO, 44304

period of intense debauchery. Prior to the Twenties, civilization dissolves in a blur of marauding Visigoths and Huns.

Only the Fifties can save us now, the last period of civic cooperation, American "Can-Do" opportunism, and Senator Joseph McCarthy. Then, as now, we could focus on our real enemies right here at home: our children and their offensive friends down the street.

What has been lost in our recent embarrassing tendency to publicly bemoan the fate of the Hiss's and Goldbergs and other scum of the world is the understanding of just how important McCarthyism was (and still is!) in keeping the American Dream alive.

Hundreds of thousands of children in our most populous cities of the time were wearing dog-tags in elementary school, prepared by their teachers to duck and cover on a moment's notice whenever an alarm was sounded, thereby reinforcing in their tiny minds the need to pay attention in the classroom and heed authority. Students who asked why they had to wear the dog-tags were told only that should the city be bombed, the tags would be needed to identify the dead and help confirm their parents' claims against life insurance companies.

It was an ingenious plan to unite the children in the Dream Vision of McCarthyism, but it smacked somewhat of Stalinism when children were encouraged during Show and Tell to reveal family secrets which were duly noted in the student folders. Members of the House Un-American Activities Committee made unannounced spot checks of student folders in elementary schools throughout the country, late-night investigations which often resulted in detainment, mugging, or death for the parents.

To counteract the charges in translations of Soviet news articles (which were only too gleefully drawing parallels between American education and Hitler's Youth Corps) that America was being run by a bunch of mindless thugs, McCarthy and his colleagues quickly blamed EC Comics for the morbid and deranged behavior of preadolescents and teenagers, as well as increased incidences of violent crime in our nation's streets.

Medical authorities were commissioned to prove that comic book art was bad for the eyes, that the inks were probably toxic, and that the ideas expressed in the word balloons might possibly cause polio. In one celebrated case, the authorities noted, a young man driven insane by comic book art killed his father and savagely raped his mother, before lapsing into a fit of palsy during which he gouged out his own eyes with a grapefruit spoon.

Comic book artists and writers were kept under constant surveillance, routinely checked for their driver's and fishing licenses, arrested for public intoxication, smeared as homosexuals or communists or worse. Many were forced to commit suicide. Others changed careers and became advertising account managers. Some had to be imprisoned under the "intent to do something without a license" laws that proliferated during the McCarthy era.

Children were convicted of reading too many comics and sent to reform school until they were old enough to be drafted or made into nuns. Parents were charged with allowing their children to read comic books or possessing comic books in an insecure location and convicted of child abuse or treason and sent to prison or the electric chair. Property of comic book criminals was confiscated. The worst offenders were sterilized.

Some parents were called into school and told that their children had been caught reading subversive literature, such as Erskine Caldwell's Tobacco Road, William Golding's Lord of the Flies, Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, George Orwell's Animal Farm, or Dalton Trumbo's Johnny Got His Gun. Book-of-the-Month Club alternates were routinely listed as "unsuitable for minors," and parents were encouraged to keep unsuitable literature out of reach of family members under the age of 25.

The result of these efforts at forging a national consensus have now been well documented. If it had not been for McCarthyism, the nation would have slipped back into the Great Depression. America would have been forced to engage in a protracted land war with the Soviet Union and/or Mainland China simply to sustain the promised level of domestic growth which had kept the more militant segments of the population in check during the waning days of World War II. Although peace was welcome, it was not a panacea. In fact, peace, as always, spells ruin for venture capitalists.

What McCarthyism accomplished during the fifties allowed this great land to maintain a war-time economy until 1968, at which time McCarthy's protege, former President Richard M. Nixon, proved to be no match in courage or fortitude to his teacher. As Nixon bowed under weak domestic pressure, people who had been building weapons for upwards of 30 years found themselves with only obsolete job skills, and the country slipped into a period of depression and self-doubt for which it has yet to recover.

I, for one, am ashamed of Nixon's weakness in 1968 and appalled that the man did not have the courage to kill himself when drummed from office in 1975 for offenses that most civilized nations view as merely adolescent larks, especially when he bequeathed us Gerald Ford, who made Jimmy Carter an inevitability. *(This article concludes next issue, when we return to the subjects of abnormal sociology and sex, drugs, and rock & roll.)*

## Vampire Sorority Babes rodny dioxin

(last time: whaddaya think, we got plots around here? an' whycha read the first part anywayze? protagonists were introduced an' much verbiage was spilled to sum effect or t'other. if dat ain't enuf den rite me a lettah and i'll mail ya da effin' first installment...)

Yo Offisa!

Help, help, they're stealing my baby!! But guess what? You lose the bet. I've actually met someone at this school above the usual pondscum level of this hole. Her names' Keri and she's a trip. You'll have to come and visit. I've got the only room on the top floor. We're talking major garrett city here. Release the bats! Yeah! Actually, I'm not speaking to Keri today 'cause we had a big fight over whether to watch "Thundercats" or "Mister Rogers." But we'll make it up OK. Andya can thank Kermie for his offer of help but now that we're a deadly duo the gator queens don't give us so much shit no more. We go everywhere together. Everyone thinks we're gay. If they but only knew, right? Well, take care yo'self and do remember that life is too short to be sane. Luv, Sis

\* \* \*  
Lick, lick. Stamp, stamp. Rika took one look out the window, saw the bright sunny day in all its dubious glory, tossed the letter on her desk and flopped onto the bed. Today was an off-day. No classes scheduled and she'd decided to sleep in rather than tag along to Keri's 9am Lit. class. They were doing Hemingway and compared to that, opening her veins in a warm bath sounded good. Actually, it had been kind of a kick and not at all hard to clean the stains off the tub.

Rika was feeling quite refreshed by the time Keri returned. She'd cranked up the stereo to blast a little Fats Waller.

"Well, there she is. Adrift in herself, oozing bruising sexuality..."

"Oh fuck you. I'd rather be incongruous."

"I think you've succeeded. Toss me that ashtray."

"Keri, dahling, are you smoking again?"

"Second pack today," she said, lighting one up and flipping the rest of the Rothmans onto the floor in front of her as she slid down the wall. "Class was a beast today."

"The gator queens?"

"Nah. They're either too disgusted or too freaked to even say boo. But we was reading old Hemingweird and I got pissed and feminist and the teach dropped the shit-hammer."

"Pauvre baby. Welcome to academia."

"Well, he'll be hearing from me."

"One assumes this doesn't mean an angry letter to the paper."

"Ah Rika, you do read my mind."

"Like a trashy novel."

\* \* \*  
It was night. Deep and moonless with just a hint of fog. The kind you'd order up from prop production if that was the sort of thing you could do. The campus was asleep, or close enough anyway. Professor Erik Seibenheller was snoring away in the midst of a dream. It was one of his favorites. A tall black woman with long long white white hair, dressed all in red leather, was whipping him, flaying him, tearing him apart. It was orgasmic. He always woke up smiling from that dream.

But not tonight. Seibenheller wouldn't be waking up smiling tonight. There was someone in his room making sure that he wouldn't be waking up at all. It didn't take much. A little ether under the nose and he'd be out long enough to get the job done. Supplies were easy to get from the labs. Little old liberal arts schools aren't noted for their state-of-the-art security. A bit of rubber tubing to make the vein stand out, a quick cut with a scalpel. The water turned redder and redder. Guess they'd have to get a new tub for this apartment.

12 Coming out of an ether haze, Erik Seibenheller found

## lessons in dealing with the question by A.J. Wright

anticipate the questions—every question possible—so that no particular one catches you on the spot and unprepared. spend at least thirty minutes a day asking yourself questions that anyone—at any time—may ask you. keep an alphabetized card file for every question you've answered and drill yourself mercilessly. remember—nothing could be worse than for someone at a party to ask you about international monetary policy and you reply by letting your mouth hang open. such a fait faux is not only embarrassing but absolutely unnecessary with prior preparation. stop daydreaming in your idle moments and start asking questions. ask your friends and relatives to ask you questions—sometimes they'll surprise you. leave no question unanswered. be relentless. and remember to be humble—the universe is an expanding place.

himself awash in his own blood. Sadly he died before his red-leather-lady could arrive to help him to what he felt (or had felt for that one fleeting moment) would have been the most profound orgasm of his life.

"Jeez, Keri, it's the middle of the night. Lemme sleep."

"No. I want you."

"Lemme sleep. Take a cold bath. Put on a Bauhaus album and play with yerself. Get a job. Save the world. Fuck off. Just leave me alone."

Rika felt smoke blow in her face. She opened one eye. Keri was sitting on the bed, staring at her. It looked like she was ready for some serious chain-smoking. Tough shit. Rika pulled the sheets over her head.

"Tough shit honey. I'm crashed."

Keri picked up the sheets and kissed Rika's ankle.

"You win. This time."

\* \* \*  
"Where are we going, goddammit?!"

Oh, don't be so tiresome. I've told you every hour on the half hour for the last two days. We're going to see my sister."

"But WHY, you toad?"

"Don't try and sweet-talk me, Kermie."

Just another typical high-speed jet trip with the ever-intrepid Kermit the Marine. Kermit was on a mission so secret that even he didn't know what it was. But it started in two weeks and he'd been ordered (with a pistol down his throat—Kermit not being a man who reacted well to the concept of leisure) to take the time as vacation. Once Officer Friendly found out about this he immediately booked them up and away to see Rika, off in the woods of upstate Nowhere.

"You'll love it. You know, nature. You can eat a tree or something."

"Christ on a crutch. Gimme that paper."

Friendly was amazed. Kermit usually only broke down and read once or twice a year. Well, wonders never did cease, contrary to all those vicious rumors. Friendly continued his crossword puzzle, looking for a seven-letter synonym for "prosthetic device?"

"Wakka-bunga!"

"No, that's too many letters."

"Clamp it oaf, and check this out." Kermit stuck the paper under his nose. Sure enough, it was pretty damn wakka-bunga. PROF FOUND DEAD IN TUB—SEX TAPES OF COEDS DISCOVERED ON PREMISES...

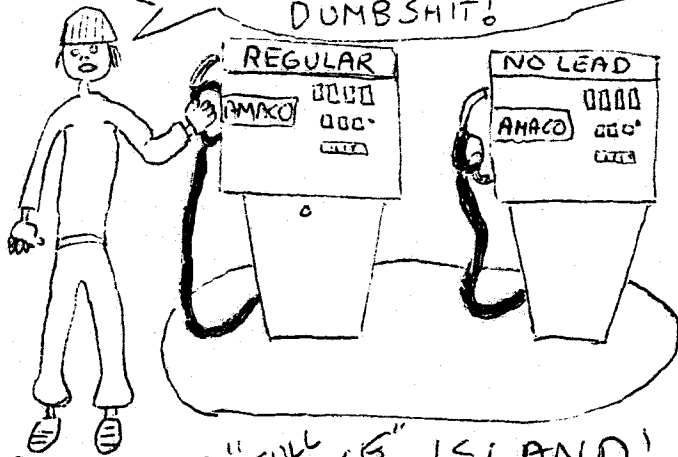
"Well, beat on that. Right at Rika's school."

"Looks like this trip is hottin' up. I'm gonna go check my gear."

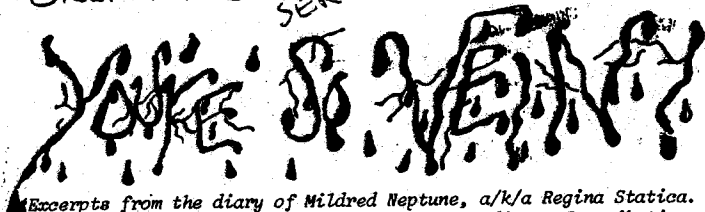
Kermit went back to do an ammo count. Friendly tried not to worry. But he knew his sister. Hotting up wasn't the half of it.

(next time: shock treatment continues—how much medical hell can one college stand? will Officer Friendly be caught in the middle? how will he like it there? what does Rika know? what do any of us know? messy business afoot; in and out of the tub...)

I WAS ON A DESERT ISLAND WITH A  
MOVIE STAR & A NUBILE FARM GIRL-AND  
ALL I THOUGHT ABOUT WAS GETTING HOME!  
WHAT THE FUCK FOR? TO WIND UP WORKING  
IN A GAS STATION!?? WHAT A  
DUMBSHIT!



GILLIGAN'S "FULL SERVICE" ISLAND!



Excerpts from the diary of Mildred Neptune, a/k/a Regina Statica.  
Transcribed from tape cassette by Deborah Benedict. Contributions  
by Artemis Aki, Aristotle Cool, Jane Tarzan, Sherry La Fanu.)

DAY ONE - Not a misnomer. Miss Neptune can travel by day, as long  
as she keeps her shoes lined with her native earth.

Ah, gorgeous exercise! It's never wretched—who was the krep-  
lachhead who ever thought so? Last night, my first expedition in-  
to the land of tasty mortal morsels—and I went overboard, of  
course. Just as old Papa Schroedinger always said of me, I am a  
creature of extremes, for extreme reasons and extreme ends. It's  
rather reassuring that becoming an immortal vampire doesn't really  
alter one's basic nature, but makes it even more so.

Tonight, tho', before I could wipe the blood from my mouth and  
dust my native earth off my cerements, the phone rings! Why I  
ever let myself be coerced into having a phone, I'll never know.  
Unless it was just weakness on my part. I let it ring 5 times.  
It was Aristotle Cool, bugging me. How are you? he asks. I tell  
him I'm fine, I had three still-faithful Manson Family members  
last night and accomplished two goals—satiation of my hunger and  
expungement of evil from the World. He is congratulatory. "Any  
trouble?" he asks. "No," I say. "One of them was quite stoned  
on 'shrooms, but it only made me feel more content."

He then goes into a spiel about my finances and legal matters.  
Just how do I intend to go on supporting myself and so forth. The  
same as I did in life, I tell him, by kiting checks, stealing mon-  
ey from Instabank machines, stealing drugs from organised crime  
and selling them to real people, and my usual shady maneuvers in  
real estate. And so on. He is surprised; evidently he thought  
that now that I was immortal I'd go "straight." Fat chance. How  
many vampires have you heard of that had jobs? I ask him. Al-  
though I did meet one, a poor struggling soul who worked nights in  
a 7-11 and had to sneak out to nourish himself. So I filled Cool  
in and like that. He then asked how it was that I could live in a  
houseboat when legend has it that vampires cannot cross running  
water. I told him legend was obviously wrong, and that I found  
the Atlantic Ocean relatively peaceful, as compared to living in  
Los Angeles, where the earth tremors must make life very precari-  
ous for vampires who like to snuggle down into the earth. We  
chatted a bit and said goodbye. Tonight I want to try a bit of  
shapeshifting, perhaps fly to Miami and see if I can inject some  
real drama into the cast and crew of a certain tv show. Then may-  
be I'll creep into the bayou. Been listening to a lot of Cree-  
dence lately. What a brainstorm it was having that tapedeck in-  
stalled in the casket! But I've got to change the lining—satin  
is simply too slippery! Maybe I'll find a white sale going on in  
Miami and get some nice cotton percales. A Garfield pattern would  
be great, and then an assortment of solids and prints to suit my  
mood. I'd think twin size would suffice.

DAY TWO - Slept from 5am till 9pm. I never slept that long in my  
life, but after last night I was wiped out. Shopping was the most  
wearying part, though very successful. Got the Garfield sheets,  
plus a bunch of Gremlin and Star Wars-Empire-Jedi sheets on sale,  
and lots of other goodies. Got some new tapes, several books and  
magazines—oh, just tons of trashy goodies. Also got two vicious

characters attempting to rape and do Orisis-knows-what to a very  
pretty young woman on her way home. My, she was surprised, but  
did as I told her when I urged her to run.

I guess I have been greedy, but they tell me one is like this  
when one is new. It will taper off as I get stronger and there  
will come a time when just a few ounces of the Elixir of Life will  
keep me going for days.

This is one situation that will never inspire me to say, "Wow!  
I could've had a V-8!"

Artemis called, wanting to know if blood tasted good and was it  
really an ecstatic experience? I told her blood was extraordi-  
narily yummy and the experience was no less than total euphoria.  
Now she wants to be a "sipper" too—but certainly she is not ready.  
I promised to transform her when she was. But she argued, stating  
that I had transformed Aristotle Cool. I explained he wasn't  
really a vampire, he was still in the puberty stage of werewolf-  
ghoul, and that it was necessary for him to be that so he could  
write and edit his magazine. She was not mollified by this very  
truthful explanation and continued to be difficult, so I hung up  
on her. I spent the rest of the evening studying different sites  
to build my castle, could not choose between three—one in the  
Carpathians (of course), another high atop a hill in Scotland, and  
another in the Green Mountains of Vermont. I shall have to build  
all three. So I will have to get going now to get the money to-  
gether. As I recall from last night, Michael Mann always leaves  
his wallet right in plain sight, on top of his Piaget watch box...  
so off I go!!!

DAY THREE - Got the money and then some! Really did well last  
night—hit on a guy with a really bad bad aura...I mean, I knew he  
had done some heavy evil, but was delighted and surprised that he  
had over 700,000 dollars that he had ripped from a drug burn! In  
a really clever Mark Cross briefcase, which, let's face it, Aris-  
totle can use. So an excellent evening and one that proves I have  
finally found the right work for me—so rewarding and so harmoni-  
ous!

Called Aristotle right off and told him to start looking for  
architects to build the Vermont place. I am delighted with the  
locale—very private and pastoral, yet close to New York!

DAYS FOUR, FIVE, SIX AND SEVERAL OTHERS... - I've been travelling  
so much that I haven't been able to keep track of the days! Fran-  
tically busy, here, there—everywhere! But it's paid off as I've  
stuck all my travel decals on my casket! They look really neat,  
especially the WALL DRUG one. I've had a lot of fun and have  
dined very well.

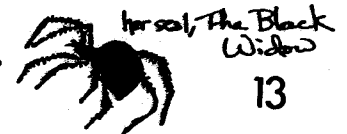
Aristotle called me to update me on the domicile building—all  
is going well. Artemis called and insisted that Johnny Hollywood  
was going to "ruin" all of us with her latest crazy get-rich-quick  
scheme—a benefit for drug addicts called "PHARM-AID." I told  
Artemis that I thought it was kind of a cute idea, but wasn't sure  
if the band would be ready yet. Also, Johnny won't like it when  
she hears I want to call the band SINISTER WISDOM. I don't like  
going against my muse, but after all, I'm an immortal creature now  
too—so Johnny and I really are equals and who's to say—maybe I  
don't need a muse anymore. Dracula didn't have one, unless you  
count Renfield. Oh, dear. I've hurt Artemis and now I'm going to  
hurt Johnny. It's terrible—all I ever really wanted was to do  
beautiful things to people who deserve it. But now...hmm...but  
they're exploiting me, aren't they? Don't I have the right to  
participate in my own exploitation? Must talk to Saint Germain  
about this! I must remember to ask him if there's "someone who  
will custom-make a toothbrush for me—this REACH thing just ain't  
getting the fangs done!

DAY ??? - It hardly matters! I've been a vampire for three whole  
months now and it's FAB! It's just as fun, as interesting and as  
fulfilling as I suspected it would be. And, I've got the band or-  
ganised! They are all competent musicians—much better than the  
Bangles, oh yes! Artemis, of course, is on keyboards and synthe-  
sizer. I've found a groovy young woman (only 18) named Manic Jane  
Tarzan who plays an excruciatingly wild guitar. Bass will be  
played by Olive O'Blivion. Manic Jane Tarzan is very tall and  
thin with platinum blonde hair that sticks out all over. Her day  
job is in a mortuary, as a cosmetician—like Aimee in The Loved  
One. I feel sooo lucky! Olive is a short, plump brunette, who  
wears suits and ties and she is very quiet. On drums, I've got  
Iphigenia Palladino—a direct descendent of the great phony psy-  
chic Eusapia Palladino. Iphigenia hates anyone trying to dimin-  
tize her name, but is otherwise very warm and sweet. Upon hiring  
her, she gave me a real black widow spider encased in acrylic, on  
a lovely silver chain. I will wear it always. Three backup  
singers, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, were found for us by Johnny  
Hollywood. They are excellent, and I feel I was fated to know  
them.

We are going on the road real soon—so this diary will be held  
in abeyance for a while. The rehearsals and composing sessions  
went so smoothly and we've got such a lot of great tunes—well,  
more about that later! I want some audience reaction!

Let's see how the folks in Yuba City, California feel about  
Sinister Wisdom. If they don't like us, I'll drink them all up!

Regina Statica



## ABSOLUTELY TELE- VISION by Prudence Gaelor

Cheap plastic dinosaur replica standing in a store window. Standing on a store window. Illuminated on a movie screen. It is a Japanese movie screen. Special memories? It is not I who's hatched. I hover in the Technicolor-Dreamscope light over the cars with the windshield wipers going because it's raining. I fly up to the light but it is no GE. Only an imposter. It is raining and my wings are getting wet like the ocean. I do not like this wetness. It reminds me of too many things but I do not remember what they are. I only know that I am reminded.

There is an open window and I fly into it. Some new world. There is nothing but dark and all I see and all I feel is this darkness. I am wasting my time. Now there is only darkness and a slit of light. There are only these things. But how can that be? They do not exclude each other. I am in a dark room and there is light peeking in through a crack under the door.

I fly into the slit. Into the light. Into the cracked light under the door. I am in a food store. In this food store there are only hats. The waves and particles emanating from the hats assure and insist that these hats are pink. I wonder if they will taste like limes. I bite into a hat and wrap cotton-candied cellophane around my tongue. The fibers prick my tongue like glass and so much insulation. Little knives in my palate. But the pricking sensation is only imaginary like cinnamon. The nerve impulses drone on. They are television-white noise and they know it.

I once made a pilgrimage. I even flew the courtship dance the the great orb-god. Enthralled by the heat, I grew presumptuous. There was Blindingflash and I was marked, branded. Branded an outcast. A heretic. Heretic-presumptor that I am, I again will make a pilgrimage and fly the courtship dance. But that will be another day.

I take another bite from the hat. There is now a tickly-feathery sensation in my throat. Burning wings in the esophagus. I don't like this sensation. I spit the wings out. Onto the shelf.

My name is Mprtegnu. I call myself Mprtegnula. I call myself that because it sounds pretty. I like pretty-sounding names. Names such as lily, land and television. Isn't it lovely the way television trips off your tongue and careens into your skull entwining your brain like a snake or a vine of roses? I don't understand why the word for pretty is pretty. Pretty is not a pretty word. To me the word pretty is meaningless. From now on I shall use the word television.

This hat does not please me. I leave it and move on to another. It tastes wonderfully like a hot day spent in a cool attic. This reminds me of picnics I had in June, or was it April? Does GE eat so well I often wonder.

I always think about death. When I die I will meld with GE and together we will dominate the dark with our I don't know what it's called. I am blessed. I am the holy one. I never think about death.

Bored with the hats, I fly back under the door. Into the dark slit. Into the dark crack. Why is it, that this is the same crack but on one side it appears light but on the other dark? Cracks are strange places. They are like alleys or black holes. I don't delay here.

Another word that I don't understand how it got to be is wonderful. Wonderful is not wonderful. It is ghastly. It is not like television which trips off your tongue and careens into your skull entwining your brain like a snake or a vine of roses. From now on instead of meaningless wonderful I shall use the word television.

The dark is not as dark as I remembered but still dark enough that I can't see. I know the window is around here somewhere. To find it more quickly, I won't go where there isn't rain. I will follow the incoming raindrops like a path. Raindrops are stupid so I will not ask them directions. They only can find their way in but never their way out.

14 The great GE most probably doesn't waste his time with raindrops. Great isn't so great, lilly is greater.

One day I shall be one with GE and then I won't have to rely on silly raindrops to assist me on exiting a room.

There is no one lillier than the lilly GE. GE is the all-encompassing. He controls all that he banishes from the dark except for the one whose name I don't know. He is the lilliest of them all but he is too far away. He is absolutely television.

One day that will be me after I have made the final pilgrimage. Then my seared wings will ignite away and be held up as a symbol for all to loathe and revere. And I will meld with GE and he will melt into me, great orb without wings and I will be GE and he will be no one.

Then it would be television television to be the lilliest.

## A Last Drink by Larry Oberc

Nick walked into Charlie's Bar and Grill. He looked around, shook his head, and took a seat at the bar.

"Place looks pretty empty tonight," he said.

"You can't really blame them," said Bart, cleaning a glass behind the bar. "What with what's going to happen."

Nick looked at the corner of the room. A girl was sitting in a chair. She was leaning back with her eyes open, but she didn't seem to be looking at anything.

"What's with her?" he asked.

"I don't know," said Bart. "When the news came over the TV set she said she wasn't going to put up with it. She said she'd kill herself before she'd get blown up. There were a few of the regulars here then. They kept egging her on. Finally she broke a glass and cut her wrists. Everyone kind of straightened up after that. Then they took off."

"You didn't try to stop her?" asked Nick.

"I didn't really see what it mattered," said Bart. "She was going to be dead one way or another. I figured if she wanted to go that way instead of the other it was her deal."

Nick looked at the girl again. This time he saw a dark puddle on the floor. He then looked back at Bart.

"Give me the usual," he said.

"You sure you don't want something else?" asked Bart.

"After all, the odds are you're not going to get a hangover."

"Guess you're right," said Nick. Give me a triple shot of whiskey. The best you got in the house."

Bart grabbed a bottle off of the wall and filled a glass with whiskey. Then he filled another glass. He put both of the glasses on the bar. Nick pulled his wallet out to pay for the drink.

"Don't worry about it," said Bart. "It's covered."

"You're awfully generous for a man who's going to die," said Nick.

"Thanks," said Bart.

Nick picked up his glass and killed half of his drink. Bart just looked at his.

"You ought to drink it," said Nick. "Not even AA is going to save you this time."

"Guess you're right," said Bart, picking up his glass.

"How many times have you quit drinking?" asked Nick. "I mean, in all?"

"I don't know," answered Bart. "I never kept count."

"Maybe it's better that way," said Nick. "I never kept count either."

"You want to know what bothers me the most?" asked Bart.

"What?" asked Nick.

"I've been reading up on this shit. I was looking at what they did to Japan. Have you ever seen any pictures of what happened there? We screwed those people, man. We really fucked them over."

Then Bart glanced over at the girl. It was the first time he had looked at her since Nick walked in. Then he poured Nick and himself another drink.

"Whose fault is it?" asked Nick.

"You mean this?" asked Bart, waving his arms around him.

"This," said Nick, "and that," he said, nodding towards the girl. "Just how did everything get so fucked up?"

"It's everyone's fault," said Bart. "We tried, but we didn't try hard enough. Now it's too late to try."

They continued to drink after that. The whiskey numbed them. After awhile they forgot about the girl. They were on the edge of forgetting about the bombs when they arrived.



## MAX HEADROOM - Review by yeditrix

While attending, with IJ writer Dorian T, one in the Museum of Broadcasting's months-long series of vintage Ernie Kovacs shows (oh joy, oh bliss!), we stumbled by happy accident onto the surprise showing of a program originally produced by Britain's quirky independent Channel 4, now making the summer rounds on Cinemax (for you lucky cable-owning devils). Due to the unexpected nature of this viewing, yours truly was unable to jot down such trivial matters as the names of those responsible for the brilliance which followed, but for those of you who may never see this "origin" story but will, no doubt, come across the various spinoffs featuring the title character, I've decided, in my praise of the effort, to synopsise the whole plot (so if you somehow have access to viewing it in the near future, do skip ahead)...

In a Road Warrior/Brazil-type world of the future (or, as the superimposition reads, "20 minutes from now"), where every tv network is global and ratings come in by the hour, investigative livecam journalist Edison Carter smells a rat. Unbeknownst to him, the odor's source is in his own backyard, Channel XXIII (Rm. 42, to be exact), where the Powers-That-Be are fast closing in on a deal with megabucks advertiser Zig Zag. The hitch is that in order to continue realizing the huge profits they've garnered, 23's boss Mr. Grossmann and the other top execs must keep employing blipverts—30 seconds' worth of a commercial compressed into 3 seconds, and...well, let's let 23's snotty boy computer genius Bryce explain his invention:

"Put simply, the human body has millions of nerve endings. Each has a tiny electrical charge. Quite tiny. But in combination, the millions create a lot of energy. Normal people burn it off. But inactive persons have problems. Blipverts compress so many commercials into three seconds or less, the brain gets violently stimulated. In some subjects, it can short-circuit the brain. In special cases, particularly among the slothful, they literally explode. It's as simple as that." Of course, 23's execs don't count on the excess number of couch potatoes in those ratings points; in fact, they assume, as Grossmann suggests, that "the only ones affected adversely by blipverts are the sick, the pensioners or the unemployed." You know, the same ones this universe's Ron-Ron insists just don't know how to find food. Anyhow, why feel remorse, Bryce asks? "Look, it's not my problem—my problem was to find a system to prevent channel-switching, which

### "ANAGRAMMARAMALAMA" by Jed Martinez

Defined, an anagram is a word, name or phrase whose letters can be transposed into a similar word, name or phrase (eg., HEIL RAT becomes A. HITLER, THEY SEE becomes THE EYES, etc.).

This quiz is composed of anagrams all relating to the same subject—in this case, the movies, featuring the titles, stars and directors (although not necessarily in the same answer). Here are some helpful hints:

- Ignore the punctuation marks in each phrase. Concentrate only on rearranging the letters to spell out the title of a movie and/or its star or director.

- There are two sets of parentheses after each phrase; the first one contains the year that the film was released and the other one has special marks and digits (quotation marks indicate the title; the asterisk means a proper word or name; an apostrophe leads to a possessive noun, in this case the director's name; the number of digits in each clue refers to the number of words in the answer; and each digit refers to the number of letters in its word).

- Capitalized words in the title do not necessarily mean they're all proper; for instance if 'the' was the first word in a title, it would be capitalized...so be careful not to be misled by those asterisks!

If you are a frequent moviegoer, or if you own a VCR library, this quiz will be a piece of cake for you. Good Luck!

1. GEE, AIN'T THAT HARPO? (1935) ("\*1 \*5 2 3 \*5")
2. I OFFER OSCAR HIT (1981) ("\*8 2 \*4")
3. MR. SHAWN: "I RELIED ON ALLY; MUST DINE." (1981) (\*5 \*5'1 "2 \*6 4 \*5")
4. I'M A WINNER! LET ME HANDLE THEE, MY FIRST OSCAR! (1983) ("\*5 2 \*10" 4 \*7 \*3 \*5)
5. N.Y. AREA'S BRAND: WOODY (1984) ("\*8 \*5 \*4")
6. HE COUNTER-USED THE WHIRLYBIRD (1984) ("\*4 \*7" 4 \*3 \*8)
7. THE CREW TO FILM YOUR SAFARI, PET (1985) ("\*3 2 \*6" 4 \*5 \*6)
8. IT'S ALL GRIMLY BIZARRE! (1985) (\*5 \*7'1 "6")
9. SPIELBERG PIG: TH' WORLD O' POOR, HURT NEGRO GAL (1985) ("\*3 \*5 \*6" 8 \*6 \*8)
10. SAVIN' RUDE, WILY N. NOLTE...B' HOLD! (1986) ("\*4 3 \*3 2 \*7 \*5")

Answers elsewhere this very issue...

has an adverse effect on our advertising rates. I only invented the bomb; I don't drop them."

But the American-born Carter and his new production director (she's called a "controller" here) are determined to get at the truth, so they break a few rules and penetrate impenetrable securities (the controller's computer camera screens, like Carter's portable livecam, can go anywhere, even up through plumbing ducts) until Carter stumbles on Bryce's Lab, currently set up for R&D on synapse-simulation of his pet parrot—but beware, Bryce is not one to let his guard down, and (from his bath, no less) he sics his neopunk thugs (really a lovable pair, quite funny) on Carter's trail. An edge-of-seat cat & mouse chase ensues, climaxing with Carter, recorded evidence in hand, swiping the punks' wheels and zooming out of the underground garage of 23's headquarters, only to be foiled by Bryce's fancy console fingerwork, as a grid slants up from under him, vaulting him into a barrier gate stuck by computer halfway between open and closed. The last words Carter sees before blanking out are the barrier's warning "Max(imum) Headroom 2.3m."

Angrily chastising Bryce for taking the Carter matter into his own hands, Grossmann is not mollified by the brat's demonstration of his latest breakthrough—his system has now exactly duplicated Carter's synapses, every facet of his personality, and projected them from a screen as an amazingly three-dimensional computer-animated real-live-person with a mind of its/his own. There are a couple of bugs still to be worked out, though, to erase the computer image's "stuttering" (kind of like a video record skipping), but Grossmann vetos Bryce's plea for more funds, ordering him to abandon the project and dispose of Carter's still-unconscious body.

After depositing the yet-living reporter at the body bank, the punk thugs race off in the van they acquired from Bryce after Carter smashed up their cycle, and pawn off his cancelled project unknowingly to a mohawk-coiffed pirate-station operator and his partner, who hope it may help beef up ratings for their pitiful music video channel (snatches of the awful vids are seen in the background as they talk—one resembles a cross between Twisted Sister and Divine). When the program is connected, up comes the Carter duplicate, reliving the reporter's last conscious memories of the gate that read "max headroom"...which the computer-generated person takes to be his own name. "Welcome to Big-Time Television," he jokes, looking out at his 'saviors,' "where two's company and three's an audience..."

Meanwhile, the original Carter escapes from subzero temps at the body bank and contacts his controller, at whose flat he sleeps off his nightmares and vows revenge on Bryce...

As the "Max Headroom Show" on Big-Time Television is steadily gaining in the hourly ratings...

and Carter confronts Bryce and gives him a bit of the old bind and gag...and Grossmann WANTS that Zig Zag account, even if the blipverts are lethal, even more so now that Big-Time is gaining on 23's ratings supremacy due to—Max Headroom?! Bryce's invention?

Grossmann discovers Bryce tied up, learns Carter's at large, finds out how Big-Time got hold of the project, and demands the thugs take him there IMMEDIATELY...

Fortunately, the pirates surmise they may be in danger and pull out their mobile van, just as they pass Bryce's van, driven by one of the thugs...and the thug smiles to himself as he keeps driving.

Grossmann, his two bodyguards, Bryce and the thugs arrive at an abandoned garage. The foolish bodyguards exit via the back door of the van, which promptly reverses right over them...leaving Grossmann and Bryce at the mercy of—

"This is Edison Carter, live," and his controller, holding the floodlight, "and Mr. Grossmann, don't you think you'd better explain how Channel 23's blipverts are killing people?"

"Oh, turn that shit off," grumbles the pirate head of Big-Time TV, whose partner changes the channel to their own, and the two ride off into the distance chuckling to Max Headroom's antics...

Aside from wonderful little touches like the authors' obvious tributes to Discordianism and the humor of Douglas Adams (their practical over-use of the numbers 5, 23 and 42), strong female characters and witty premises, this program benefits from a marvelous future vision as evidenced in the sets and especially the computerization ideas. Companionation is used, pardon the expression, to the maximum, and the results are sometimes breathtakingly startling. For those fortunate enough to catch the character in his own "spino" video show (in which he's purported to do things like actually interview famous rock stars and yawn as they answer his questions) or in a currently-running Coke commercial, I'm sure you'll agree about the high level of sophistication needed to generate this kind of stuff. It certainly speaks well for animation's future...as long as these techniques manage, more often than not, to find their way into the hands of the humorous and intelligent.

(P.S. There are those, I'm sure, who still insist that being so uncool we're cool means not being aware at all of growing trends. Not so, I think. For instance, here in NY, home of hoot culture, kitsch is once again in full swing with the recent publication of ROADSIDE AMERICA, a book done in a true SubG manner by some true SubG-type folks, among them Doug Kirby of "Chucklehead" and a friend from IJ's Jersey days; and of course the thing to eat, not just among the "Y people," seems to be an incredible concoction called the Dove Bar, said to be expensive but worth it. Please, if the tragically hip can assist us in spotting trends-before-they-happen in any way whatsoever, yours truly would be ever so grateful to be alerted of same.)

## TOUGH ENOUGH TO BE A MELTER *by Roger Morris*

I have been an understudy to a professional ice cream melter named Ishmael for a number of years, and it was only last week that I went into training to be one myself. The type of training involved is unusually torturous and seems to have no bearing whatsoever on the profession of which the trainee is about to become part. For this reason, ice cream melters have remained a relatively unknown profession.

On the first day of training, my instructor put me in a straitjacket, trimmed my nasal hairs with a blow-torch and buried me in a coffin full of venomous snakes. At the end of the day he dug me up, released me from the straitjacket and began to examine the countless number of snake bites I had contracted. After the examination was complete, the trainer thought it necessary to administer an antidote. This antidote was injected directly into the pupil of my right eye with a rusty needle. This caused a high degree of discomfort.

On the second day of training, I was strapped into a dentist's chair by two midget wrestlers from Florida. Then a very unfriendly-looking fellow began drilling my teeth down to the nerve. The amount of pain this produced caused me to scream like a wild baboon pulling a

thirteen-inch thorn from his eye. My instructor heard the screams and came running into the room. I thought he was there to comfort me in my time of need, but I was sadly mistaken. He forced open my mouth and filled each drilled-out tooth with pure sugar and made me chew on a ball of aluminum foil. The terrible feeling this produced caused me to give birth to a suede jacket. This ended the second and most painful day of the training period.

The third and final day of my training was the strangest day in my entire life. I started the day when a member of a motorcycle gang beat me in the head with his helmet until he got tired. After this portion of the day was over, my training instructor introduced me to a freakish-looking man named Chinook. Chinook, I am told, once ate an entire rhinoceros. This freak took me to a Japanese shirt factory and hung me on the wall. He then pinned my eyelids back and scrubbed my eyeballs with a steel wool pad. Having accomplished this, Chinook took me to a gay bar and forced me to sit on all of the toilet seats. What a frightening experience!

My instructor told me the training was complete at the end of this third day, but I'm not so sure about that because I heard him say something about racing some rats and holding my nose to a grindstone.



Most IJ readers will, I hope, realize that it's almost been a WHOLE DECADE since those zany Sex Pistols debuted on Banned Records lists the world over with their anti-classic "Anarchy in the UK." Those who may remain unaware of this joyous anniversary will no doubt soon have it brought to their attention, like it or not, in a Malcolm McLaren/Virgin Records media blitz of ultra-"Bollocks" porportions...just in time for the Xmas buying rush. The trend-meisters who've already managed to lucratively revive rockabilly, glitter-rock, folk-rock and psychedelia via the nation's fashion depots and MTV screens will any week now undoubtedly begin to push 1986-vintage torn'n'scorched (I Hate) Pink Floyd T-shirts and E-Z-Punkture 14-K Nose Pins onto the gullible masses. Yes, I can see it now: amidst a Madison Avenue-sponsored wave of genuine punk-stalgia, Joe Strummer and Mick Jones will tearfully reunite for Farm Aid III, Tim Yohannon will run for office and/or hit the university lecture circuit, and The Ramones will hawk their long-overdue Golden Hits treasury on late-night cable teevee ("With concert highlights available in VHS or Beta for only \$19.95!").

Now, I'm all for lining one's pockets with the ill-gotten cash of those less with-it, but as Greg Shaw would be the first to tell you, the phenomenon known as p-u-n-k-r-o-c-k had its origins LONG before the Summer of Hate. The late and very great Lester "Who-givesafuck" Bangs theorizes (most convincingly, I must add) that what is today called Hardcore first crept out of the basements of the industrial midwest circa 1966 courtesy of The Music Machine, Count Five, Shadows of Knight and countless other suburban garage-rockers. Believe it or not, there are even those who claim to trace punk's origins as far back as the pre-Elvis and Brando era of Krupa and Capone. But insofar as THIS Pig is concerned, Punk isn't so much a handily-datable style of music or headwear as it is a State of Mind. I refer any doubters amongst you to the letters pages of ANY Flipside magazine.

Nevertheless, I feel it high time to provide the humble yet confused consumer with the DEFINITIVE shopping guide to pre-Pistols punk-rock, without whose contents no self-respecting record collection can be considered complete. (NB: I take it you all own already, or at least plan on grabbing someday, at least one disc apiece by those so-called Godfather Of Punk combos THE VELVET UNDERGROUND [personally, I can only stand their "Loaded" LP], NEW YORK DOLLS, and IGGY & THE STOOGES.) In no particular order, then, I urge your ears onto...

"JERRY LEE LEWIS LIVE AT THE STAR CLUB, HAMBURG, WITH THE NASHVILLE TEENS" (1964)—Forget all this hype about the Little Richard resurrection or James Brown's "Live At The Apollo, Vol. I" album... THIS is the raunchiest live show EVER trapped on vinyl. Makes The Germs' Whisky recordings sound like the childish pebbles'n'bam-bamming they really are. (P.S.: Jerry Lee was sordidly disposing of wives and girlfriends way back when Sid and Nancy were but a gleam in their social workers' eyes—and, come to think of it...HE STILL IS!)

16 "GOT LIVE IF YOU WANT IT!" by THE ROLLING STONES (1966)—In retrospect, just about the last worthwhile gasp from this most over-rated of British rhythm'n'booze bands...but WHAT a great vinyl

epitaph it is! The mix is absurdly cockeyed (almost as snoddy a production job as DIRTY WORK!), yet beneath all the crowd noise—not to mention Mick's as-idiotic-as-always caterwauling—lies some truly horrific musicianship (i.e., the opening "chord" of "Have You Seen Your Mother, Baby, Standing In The Shadow"). Yes, Steve Jones and D. Boon were teetted on this platter.

"GOLDEN FILTH" by THE FUGS (1970)—Yet another live recording, this one by that crack comedy team of (Ed) Sanders and (Tuli) Kupferberg, whose NYC Fugs were playing Black Flag to Frank Zappa & The Mothers of Invention's Dead Kennedys all through those ring-a-ding late Sixties. Take note how Ed can simultaneously spout streams of obscenities and William Blake poetry without ONCE degenerating into a pretentious Stevie-Nicks-in-soiled-panties abomination a la Patti Smith (and while you're at it, pick up The Fugs' new gala reunion album "No More Slavery"!).

"HE HIT ME (AND IT FELT LIKE A KISS)" by THE CRYSTALS (1962)—After a quarter of a century, the jury's STILL out on whether Phil Spector was the greatest record producer ever to walk God's green earth or simply a sleazy manic-depressive out to make a quick buck. Just listen to what he did to The Ramones' "End Of The Century" album! Yet there's no denying there would be NO Lydia Lunch, Joan Jett, or maybe even Nina Hagen without records like this one. PLUS this particular Spector-song was banned from the international airwaves, just for good measure.

"ALL NIGHT LONG" by THE DAVE CLARK FIVE (1966)—Because (or perhaps IN SPITE) of the current Sixties infatuation, previously poooh-pooohed groups such as The Monkees and DC5 are now finally being heralded as the visionary geniuses they were all along. Dave Clark and his quintet of squeaky clean jock-rockers had their share of wimpy clunkers (then again, so have The Beatles and Husker Du!), but "All Night Long" is as fierce a 3:11 slab of thrashing slash (or, if you prefer, slashing thrash) today as it was twenty years ago. Imagine: a golden oldie you can slam-dance to (and the A-side, "Try Too Hard," is nothing to be sneezed at either)!

"LOUIE GO HOME" by PAUL REVERE & THE RAIDERS (1964) (WARNING: the 45-rpm version, NOT the vastly inferior re-make off their Greatest Hits LP)—The Raiders, besides being the closest America ever came to equalling the big audio dynamite of the abovementioned DC5, were undisputed Kings of the super-cool Pacific Northwest scene from which burst such proto-punks as The Sonics, Walters and Kingsmen. EVERY band worth its black turtle-necks and white Vox guitars in Oregon and Washington performed, recorded, and tried to claim ownership of that primeval punk anthem "Louie Louie," but only PR&TRS had the unmitigated audacity to milk the riff into this sequel song...which in turn was stolen by The Who and recorded as "LUBIE Come Back Home." Before becoming mere pawns in Dick Clark's hands, the Raiders waxed dozens of tunes well worth searching-and-destroying for, but THIS one remains my fave. (Also highly recommended: Side One of their "Here They Come!" LP, recorded live in concert by none other than semi-Beach Boy Bruce Johnston.)

"SURFIN AND A-SWINGIN'" by DICK DALE (1963)—BEFORE Doggie Style... BEFORE Darby Crash...EVEN BEFORE THE DICKIES, the man who was the first to have his concerts busted for excessive volume, public drunkenness, unauthorized assembly and all 'round disorderly conduct by the LAPD was Dick Dale, "King Of The Surf Guitar." His approach to playing was so vicious the folks at Fender spent thousands in vain attempting to construct an amplifier sturdy enough to survive one of his sets intact. Unfortunately, this very rare 45 (from the score of that cinematic milestone "Beach Party") is the lone example of his in-concert intensity to be properly captured on record. No sweat, though: next time any of you rad dudes are in Orange County, CA, you can STILL occasionally catch Dick and his Del-Tones live on stage, where he belongs...in between his divorce, bankruptcy and sexual assault hearings, that is.

# Commercial McClue-In

by "Kid" Sieve

I suppose I really should lighten matters up a bit after my tirade against PSAs last time, so I'll cut it short this column and only target one ad in particular before moving on to this issue's main topic...

**INTO THE BOG OF ETERNAL STENCH**—Bette Midler, in her brilliant short film "Angst on a Shoestring" (shown last year on the "David Letterman Holiday Film Festival"), makes an acute comment when she muses about how American supermarket deodorant aisles are larger than most countries' meat sections: "Do we, as a nation, smell that bad?" And while I certainly would advocate (hey, we're all victims of social conditioning to one degree or another) showering at least a few times weekly so people can deal with being on the same crowded bus as you, I tend to draw the line at sheer obsessiveness with "Never, never, NEVER" letting people "see you sweat," as the slogan goes for Dry Idea. I mean, we mustn't admit we do things like perspiring and going to the bathroom and flatulence, must we? Especially not in public—well, okay, it does unnerve me a bit to come across people urinating or farting in public, but come on—sweating? I mean, what happens when 'they' "see you sweat"? Do they come and take you away? Do they laugh in your face? Do they give you nasty looks until you're in danger of dropping dead from embarrassment? In this ad age when people lasciviously drape themselves over cars and other inanimate objects, I should think public perspiration is, at best, a minor concern. Speaking of which, that Mr. Goodwrench better stop fondling his car parts so blatantly—this kind of stuff gets you arrested in Georgia, you know.

I've been watching tons of baseball lately, naturally (when one is a Mets fan, and the Mets are the team of 1986, "compulsion" is hardly an adequate description for one's sudden viewing habits), so I may as well spout some random between-innings thoughts on the typical baseball advertisers one finds nowadays. I shan't dwell overly on the various drippy tributes to that piece of stone out in NY's harbor (no one, I assure you, welcomes Monday, July 7 more than I), but there was one in particular which will cause me many a night's indigestion if I don't get it off my chest. It's sponsored by Budweiser (which explains why one finds it during a baseball game, where beer ads proliferate), and is in the form of one of those gauzy songs with lyrics like (and I quote here) "She was there to share the pain we each endured...She'll still be there, dear Lord we pray..." Now, there's symbolism, and there's personification, but all this nonsense, it seems to me, borders on the morbid. The last time I knew of a statue sharing pain, it was in one of those B-grade horror movies...The syrupy tribute ends with the words, "To the lady who showed the way to the greatest country in the world." I guess the folks at Bud didn't bother taking a survey on that—lately it seems like we're the only country that believes we're so hot. But what, us worry? What World Court?

Sorry, I wanted to lighten up here. And between-innings ads do offer a large variety of lightness (pun intended if we're discussing Bud's light beer, where I'm beginning to wonder when they're finally going to run out of variations on "Gimme a light"...but it's kind of fun to try and figure out what they'll do next). For instance, the local telephone company New Jersey Bell has picture-perfect Dreyfus parodies, in b&w no less. The Bartles & Jaymes commercials are always a delight, even more so now that the two fictional cooler-makers are surveying New York and marvelling that their product even goes well with those funny donuts on which people put fish (bagels, for the uninitiated). Both DHL and Express Mail have been employing some boffo animation—in fact, the FedEx one where the delivery man turns into an eagle and vice-versa is precisely the idea, I'm told, that The Firesign Theatre had in mind when they wanted to visualize the medicine men turning into crows in their movie *Everything You Know Is Wrong* but from which they were prevented due to financial considerations. Good animation is also used by Sunoco to plug its high octane gas, as it is made to look like a futuristic but unseen vehicle is actually powered by a solar headlight, turning dusk into day wherever it drives. Coming fast on the heels of this is a new one from Amoco, utilizing what could be termed 'northern lights' on the horizon to represent its high-octane gas. Why is it that when I think of gas I never associate it with lights, but with a choking smell?

Car commercials abound (at last, more work for Fred Gwynne, the new 'voice of Hyundai'), most of which are so boring you hardly realize they're on. Many advertisers insist this is the best kind of pitch, since it seeps into your subconscious before you have time to fight it with full awareness. The same tired themes prevail here—sex, as usual (the Nissan "Hard Bodies" series exemplifying this); using 'our songs' and turning them into garbage (the new entry here is Chevy's destruction of "Surfin' USA"); and saving money (Oldsmobile's ad has people throwing supposed real money at imported cars while it patriotically advises buyers not to "pay for import costs and foreign images"—but what price do we pay for the "American image," I wonder...).

And if you think nothing's as American as autos, you haven't been keeping up with beer commercials. Oh sure, there are (a very few) exceptions—hope you catch the Bud ad with Gallagher in the bowling alley, cute stuff—but it's mostly "you don't shake a hand unless that's how you feel...made the American way" crap a la Miller. Hey, you can't tell me all them convicted spies didn't shake some hands along the way...or even that other countries don't employ that millennia-old custom too! All of a sudden shaking hands

## WANT A PRESS CARD?

### YOSSARIAN UNIVERSAL (YU)

News Service, the world's only satiric news and disinformation syndicate, invites you to own an official YU PRESS CARD—the only press card being issued to anyone who applies for one: A professional-size, laminated, 3-color press card, bearing your photo, with lapel clip and YU press button. Only \$10. To get yours, simply send a check or money order and any headshot photo (passport or matchbook size), to: YU News Service, P.O. Box 236, Millbrae, CA 94030 Join the parody: Communicate with YU!

is intrinsically American? Even obvious immigrants like Mr. Shivosky the novice carpenter are Americanized by the end of a soap-opera-like Bud commercial (one of the "You make America work" bits). And all over this country—close up on familiar city landmarks, please—Americans drink German beer but it's American anyway because that's where it winds up being brewed...Lordy, I'd rather drink a cola after that!

And not just any cola, although I'd lean towards Dr. Pepper... and anybody who's even glimpsed the syndicated "Canned Film Festival" (do you think I'd miss prime schlock like that, especially when the 'tweeners feature one of my fave ladies, Laraine Newman?) knows about the new series they've dreamed up (you can almost see the megabucks flying out the window with every ad—we're talking Spielbergian here)...well, perhaps I'll have a sip of that new Coke after all, if Max Headroom recommends it (review of MH elsewhere in this issue)...but why not an RC, the company which wants us to believe a face like Charlie Dell's could be that of a hardened criminal...This is why they have Dell and Coke has Cosby...

Everything does run thin after awhile, though. The Meineke ad was somewhat cute the first time, with these "tough customers" warning a meek counterperson they're "not gonna pay a lot for this muffler" and you got different variations like a karate kid and a marine sergeant and a Clint Eastwood type, but the fiftieth time you see it, I mean come on already. And if you don't know the carrier's name is Puroator by now, you probably still care. These are the kinds of businesses whose commercials so annoy me I go out of my way to avoid them now. Fast coming up on this trend is overly-obnoxious spokesman—cause-he-needs-the-money MacLean Stevenson trying to sell Piedmont Airlines. Don't say I didn't warn you. Let's get back to the game, already.

**CLOSING NOTES:** I guess it's come to this—nowadays some ads deliberately try to offend. One notable success is Schmidt's Beer—whose commercials, according to a newspaper review, have "all the understated finesse of Rambo at a Geneva summit meeting." You may be familiar with them—this macho asshole talks about how Schmidt's is his beer and it's just not meant to be drunk by certain undesirables, like "prissy women...interior designers...men who want to be prissy women..." Of course, the gay community is up in arms, but I can't figure out why they don't just give in to the sentiment, boycott the beer and admit only assholes drink it anyhow...UPI reports of a New Hampshire Republican voter-reg drive which kills two birds of freedom with one stone-age thought: Max Hugel's "Americans for the Reagan Agenda" are luring young unsuspecting voters to their insidious booths with promises of fast food coupons! Says Hugel, in typical Reagan/Orwell doublepeak, "I don't think it's a bribe. I think it's an incentive-type situation..." And speaking of fast food, one of my favorite Congressmen, Steve Solarz of good ol' Brooklyn, has introduced a bill which would require fast-food joints to list the contents of the food they serve (if I may use the term food). Franchises would have to list the ingredients & nutritional info (if any) on the wrapping or on a wall sign. And while some ff places are already doing much the same thing on a trial basis (have you been remembering to ask at your local McCounter?), protests have been mounted even so. I imagine finding out what's actually in that stuff is akin to the situation of kids who've spent time working there—after awhile, one is better off not knowing...

# THE CONTINUING SAGA OF DR. IGUANA THE SEARCH CONTINUES.

by the Rev. Kenneth R. Burke

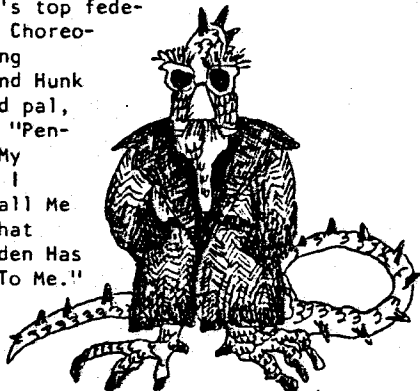
The following is a collection of selected listings from "Dr. Iguana's TV Guide." The perspective necessary in appreciating the programs listed in the guide involves the relentless fringe-reception, cable-ready, satellite-dish feeling of "I'll watch anything, what the hell." This drive usually overtakes one between the hours after all the bars close and when the morning paper arrives and your neighbor leaves for work.

**HUNK HOUGHTON** - Variety: Hunk previews his new show, featuring talent that he has scouted himself from inside the walls of the nation's top federal prisons. Tonight: Choreographed whippings, making knives out of spoons, and Hunk reminisces about his old pal, Vince Everett. Songs: "Pen-Pal Divorce," "Lice In My Hair, Flies In My Soup, I Guess That's Why They Call Me 'Bugs'," and the hit "That S.O.B. Bastard Of A Warden Has Been Just Like A Father To Me."

**DISNEY X** - Debut: The premiere broadcast of the new Disney channel which will feature explicit sex acts between wholesome, white, middle-class Americans. Tonight: Married Cheerleaders.

**NOVA** - Educational: Tonight's program examines charges that public broadcasting shows do little to actually educate the masses. Criticisms levied by viewers that PBS programs preach to the converted, are sometimes deliberately dry and vague, and feature conceited intellectuals who are interested more in preening their credentials than enlightening and enriching the minds of the public are dealt with by tonight's panel, who finds these charges groundless.

**EXORCISM FOR CHILDREN** - Children: Subjects discussed today—Satanism, malignant evil, insidious moral corrup-



"THE DOCTOR IS IN"

THE DOUBLE NAUGHT SPYS SAID THERE  
WAS SOME BOOTLEG CRAWDADS COMIN  
IN OUT AT THE AIRPORT! JED!



HILLBILLY  
18 VICE

SO THEY  
LOADED UP THE  
TRUCK AND  
MOVED TO  
MIAMI!

**QUESTION:**  
In your ads why do you pick on the pope and doctors in your even age work force ads?  
**ANSWER:**  
When such a plan is adopted it will take all the 20 - 60 even ages to get things done and you'll always find some who will say "I won't do my share until the doctors and

clergymen do theirs and maybe not then". Odd age vacationers on the birthmonths of their full year's paid vacations will have baseball bats to keep everyone honest so there won't be many "maybes". Send SASE to world-wide work-sharing and unemployment-ending  
**EVEN AGE WORKERS**  
Box 2243  
YOUNGSTOWN - OHIO, 44504

tion, and Our Friend, The Policeman. Mr. Sing-a-long leads the studio peanut gallery in "Inna-gadda-da-vida," "Cat Scratch Fever" and "The Whiffenpoof Song."

**URINE SAMPLES OF THE STARS** - Game Show: Chuck Barris is back with a new show that features big-name contestants from the various fields of sports, films, and rock and roll. Players supply the urine in specially-marked bearers, bottles and vats, where they are anonymously analyzed backstage by licensed medical practitioners who reveal the contents to the studio audience, which then speculates on whose urine belongs to which contestant in exchange for cash prizes, vacation trips, and possession of the urine sample in question. A home game is available; urine optional.

**LATE NIGHT WITH DAVID LETTERMAN** - Talk: America's fastest-rising media bully harrasses a famous singer, degrades a top female star, cuts sections out of interviews with veteran actors, gives the bum's rush to a legendary record producer, interrupts anybody trying to make a point, and then whines about not being able to get top name guests for his show. Tonight: Geeks who don't know that David is making fun of them, and geeks who do know, but don't care.

**MOVIE** - Musical/Sci-Fi: "I Was a Teenaged HepCat for the FBI" (1956) - "Teenagers: who are they, what are they, where do they go, and why do they need a car to go there?" are the questions asked by FBI agent Steve Sampson (Edmund O'Brien) as he sets out to get the lowdown on rock and roll music and its effect on national security by posing as a teenager and attending high school classes. The suspicions of the teenagers are aroused when their history teacher (Mamie Van Doren) openly flirts with Steve at the liquor store where he is not asked for his I.D. John Carradine won the Reader's Digest Award as the movie actor whose performance has done the most to promote the reading of books through his portrayal of Dr. Yuk Ammezov, the respected high school principal who uses his position to further his Communist desires. Cast: Michael "Touch" Connors, Beverly Garland, John Agar, Steve Forrest, and Patti Page as the students, and Louis Prima as "Coach."

**FUN TO EXIST** - Comedy: Sitcom highlighting the adventures and zany mishaps of an 83-year-old man encased in an iron lung. Tonight: Looking up the dresses of young nurses causes Abie's respiration rate to change. Abie: Jesse White. Nurse Titwillow Persimmons: Barbie Benton. **LEAVE IT TO NESS** - Comedy: Eliot Volstead Ness, the grandson of the famous "Untouchable" of the 1930's Prohibition era, plays a cute, resourceful and mischievous Jr. G-Man. With his best friend Rico, Little Eliot deals with the "special problems" of puberty as he stomps out crime in the locker rooms during his lunch periods at Spiro T. Agnew Jr. High School. Eliot: Ricky Schroeder. Rico: Ralph Macchio, and Moosie Drier as Little Capone.

**NO-KITS** - Game Show: Jack Barry hosts this show where people are offered cash, prizes and college accreditation for suggesting the least plausible answers to questions posed. Tonight's question: Do prostitutes have garage sales?

**WEATHER FROM THE SKULL** - Information: Up-to-the-minute reports on temperature and weather conditions from all across the country given as studio camera A focuses on a pretty neat cow's skull that a member of the management team found in the desert and is using to justify his tax exemption for the trip.

**THE NEW HAPPY DAYS** - Comedy: 1986 rolls around and Fonzie reveals that he has AIDS that he contracted from his homosexual love affair with Potsey, Joanie has her third abortion, Richie gets drunk and beats up on Lori-Beth, and Howard Cunningham is arrested in the home of a dominatrix.

Check your local listings for times and stations.

by Dorian Tenore

**THERE'S A BROKEN SHOW FOR EVERY LIGHT ON/OFF BROADWAY:** The trouble with Off-Broadway is that if a show hits BIG, the producers get greedy and move it to Broadway so they can charge higher ticket prices. Sometimes they get lucky and attract enough people with \$45 burning a hole in their pockets to keep the show at "hit" status. Much of the time, however, the show is a little too quirky to attract enough people to fill a Broadway theater, and everybody loses—the producers lose money, the cast and crew lose their (usually badly-needed) jobs, and a potential audience loses out on what could have been a perfectly entertaining evening.

The revival of the late Joe Orton's black comedy *LOOT* at the Music Box Theater (W. 45th St., Manhattan) came this close to being the latest victim of this syndrome. Luckily, ticket sales shot through the roof as soon as *LOOT*'s imminent demise made the newspapers (hell, "two-fers" might still be available). Most of the lust-crazed females I know wanted to see it due to the presence in the cast of one Alec Baldwin (best known to Couch Potatoes as psycho preacher Joshua of *KNOTS LANDING*, or West Point cadet Ry Slaight in *DRESS GRAY*). But far from being a mere showcase for a Hollywood hunk, *LOOT* was further proof that Britons are unbeatable when it comes to manic farce and sick humor.

Baldwin (who turned out to be a deft comedian and a whiz at Cockney) and Zeljko Ivanek play Cockney pals Dennis and Harold, who rob a few thousand pounds worth of the tittle. Where to stash the cash? Well, Harold's Mum is being buried today, and they build coffins so well nowadays... That problem solved, the lads must now contend with a crackpot doublespeak police inspector (Joseph Maher) who keeps insisting to no avail that he's from the Water Board. ("The police force used to have integrity!" wails one of the scoundrels. "That was a mistake!" huffs Maher.)

The lawman is also after Nurse Fay (Zoe Wanamaker), the most Catholic lady Bluebeard ever to grace the medical profession. ("Had euthanasia not been against my religion, I would have employed it—instead, I chose to murder them!") Caught in the middle of all these amoral nutballs is Harold's poor addled father (played to uproarious perfection by Charles Keating)—look up "patsy" in the dictionary and you'll find his picture next to it. *LOOT* is nasty, nutty, and nifty in its skewering of family traditions, crime and (lack of?) punishment!

If you want to see pure comedic genius, though, check out Lily Tomlin, Tony-winner/Delightful Human Being Extraordinaire, in *THE SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE*. Again, Tomlin explodes into a one-woman population, every one of her characters brimming with eccentric wit and subtle yet powerful observations: "Evolution works on the Peter Principle"... "Is infinity time on an ego trip?"... (As an aerobics-obsessed, unemployed Californian:) "Integrity is not a required job skill"... (As a pampered patrician at a beauty salon:) "I am sick of being the victim of trends I reflect but don't even understand!" This show is a virtual primer in what makes contemporary people tick!

**THE STUFF THAT'S MADE OF CELLULOID:** Hurry to the Cinema 1 in Manhattan while there's still time, or you may never get to see Peter Falk and Alan Arkin's follow-up to their hit *THE IN-LAWS*. *BIG TROUBLE* is quite literally a hybrid of *THE IN-LAWS* and *DOUBLE INDEMNITY*—as if some fiendish cinematic genetic engineer had been at work. No detail of... *INDEMNITY* is left untouched, including Edward G. Robinson's wily investigator (Charles Durning) and a play-by-play remake of the train-murder scene, played for laughs this time (the husband even has crutches!).

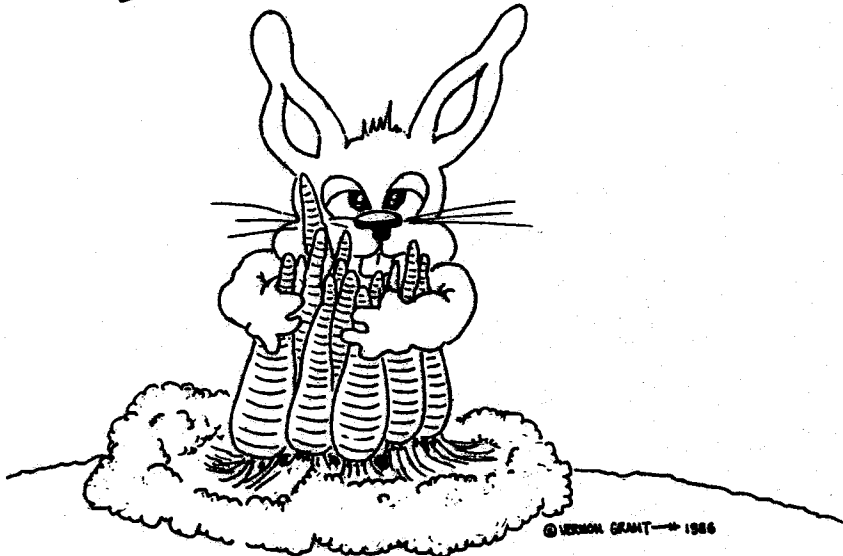
Harried insurance agent Arkin is at his wit's end—how can he afford to send his talented triplets to Yale without a music scholarship? Salvation seems just around the corner in the curvaceous form of ditsy/crafty sexpot Beverly D'Angelo (her glamor/slut outfits are a riot, especially her mini-skirted widow's weeds. No, I'm not giving anything away with that information!).

With Arkin's help, she wants to take out life insurance on terminally-ill hubby Peter Falk ("His heart is surrounded by fat!" she sobs), then take him out of his misery. A nervous Arkin gets her the company's worst policy ("It pays \$5,000,000 if the insured falls off a train, but not a plane!") and they plot Falk's demise in the local Rexall—which Falk interrupts by casually popping up and even more casually having a seizure. Falk, as you've no doubt guessed, ain't your run-of-the-mill murder plot victim—he's a bold if screwy adventurer who imbibes sardine liqueur and pays his Chinese laborers in W-2 forms and Publisher's Clearing House junk mail.

It's just lovely to watch the tables turn and the old chemistry sparkle as Falk wears Arkin to a frazzle again, involving him with insurance fraud, burglary, and terrorism. Falk even has a matter-of-factly insane speech like *IN-LAWS*' "Los Jose Grecos de Muertes—Flamenco Dancers of Death..." bit ("Jeez, I'd love to take you on my adventures, but, well, beri-beri runs rampant on the boats... sometimes they come into the harbor full of dead people, y'know how it is..."). And Richard Libertini, *IN-LAWS*' dictator with the conversational hand, gets to use almost the same characterization as coroner Doc Lopez. ("It's impossible to rebuild [a corpse's] ripped-off face!" scoffs Durning. "Nothing is impossible, if you believe with your heart," replies Libertini angelically.)

Unfortunately, the film does start running out of steam during the last half hour, partly because director John Cassavetes starts relying on his "introspective drama" tricks, like using tight

# I GOT MINE!



close-ups on the characters in the middle of long speeches. (Now I see what Anni Ackner meant during our discussion of *THE COLOR PURPLE*. She felt that the film's admirers didn't notice how bad Spielberg's direction was because the actors were so good and the story was so powerful.) Indeed, Cassavetes, the man who brought us the sturm und drang of *A WOMAN UNDER THE INFLUENCE* and *GLORIA*, is not known for his cheeriness (you'll never catch him directing a soft-drink commercial), and got the *BIG TROUBLE* job because he's Peter Falk's pal. Screenwriter Andrew Bergman, who also did *IN-LAWS* and *FLETCH*, was supposed to direct *BIG TROUBLE* before he was felled by nepotism. In a fit of pique, he slapped the pseudonym "Warren Bogle" on *BIG TROUBLE*'s screenplay. I'm sure that really intimidated 'em, Andy.

Stick to heavy drama, John—only the script and the cast keep *BIG TROUBLE* as funny as it is. But it's worth seeing anyway, especially for die-hard Falk/Arkin fans.

**ON THE (CABLE) TELEVISION FRONT:** I've started screening programs with the rest of the Programming Department at the Arts & Entertainment Network! (My big chance to save the world from mediocre programming! What fun, what joy!) A&E has these "focal groups" every couple of weeks, wherein we get together in the big conference room at lunchtime and watch an episode or two of whatever series A&E is considering at that moment. It's fairly informal—opinions are expressed aloud, paper airplanes are thrown at appropriate moments, smart-aleck remarks abound, and there's an overall air of good fellowship. There are worse ways to earn a living.

So far I've seen two shows: *HOWARD'S WAY* and *WILD CARDS*. *HOWARD'S WAY*, also known as *THE BOATBUILDERS*, should sleep with the fishes. It's supposedly Britain's answer to *DALLASTY*, a 26-part (!) serial about a family of yacht-builders. It's a classic case of all talk and NO action!! Everybody's really in love with somebody else, but they never do anything about it. The big-biz tycoons are always plotting to take over some Mom-and-Pop fishing concern or other, but they never do anything about that! The no-star cast of competent but bland actors all try to be earnest and natural and non-melodramatic. Even the sets are below par: they look like they're made of plywood and sawdust. From the general consensus at the screening, I'd say this show was headed for Davey Jones' locker.

The *WILD CARDS* episode was a huge improvement over the above. *WILD CARDS* is going to be an anthology series of lighthearted, off-the-wall documentary short subjects—kind of like the "soft news" segments of TV news programs. The particular episode we reviewed was "Remember Me," a cinema-verite-style look at Cuba through the eyes and hilarious narration of young 60 Minutes producer David Turecamo, who escaped Cuba with his family during the revolution. Its fast pace, crude *HARD DAY'S NIGHT*-style photography and editing seems to bring out modern Cuba's erratic mixture of '50s-style gaudiness, tropical beauty, Communism, and its "tourista-trap" mentality (apparently every Cuban this guy met would find out he was "Americano" and thereupon try to wheedle blue jeans, money and free drinks out of him). It was a scream—definitely worth a look!



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## 4-Color Fiend by Steve Chaput

Well, it has been a few months, hasn't it? Hope some of you out there remember me, as you'll be seeing this column popping up now and again...First off, a couple of comics that were sent to Blayne at which she asked to me take a look:

**CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY** and **OMAHA, The Cat Dancer** are both from the nice people at SteelDragon Press, and that's where any similarity begins and ends. **OMAHA** began as an issue of **BIZARRE SEX** several years ago, and has since made the circuit of independent publishers looking for a new home. If you are unfamiliar with the comic, it can be basically described as **FRITZ THE CAT** taken one step closer to reality. All the characters are animals (cats, dogs, chickens, etc.) but act totally human. This is soap opera with graphic sex! I'm not overly fond of this book, but I am glad that those people who are fans—and some of the Big Name Fans appear to like it—finally have a regularly scheduled dose of this. By the way, while the art by Reed Waller is very nice, writer Kate Worley should stop watching those late-night soaps that are apparently her only influence.

**CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY** is actually more my kind of comic (which means that it is closer to mainstream DC/Marvel in format). Created by writer Will Shetterly, the story takes place on an alternate Earth (geez, I love these kinds of stories!) on which the Confederacy won the Civil War, and the United States does not exist. Texas is a separate nation, while Europe is part of Greater Germany and most of the Pacific is ruled by the Japanese Empire. With only two issues published (as of this writing), Shetterly has begun a fine story with great potential. Much of the letter column is taken up with further speculation on the prospects of the alternate history of this Earth, and I found myself thinking about the various changes that such a turn of events would have caused. The art by Vince Stone is near-pro, though he at times has trouble with faces and you have to identify people by hairstyles and clothes. He also tends to use heavy shadows, which even obscure the goings-on in the panels. He has a nice feel for story-telling, and some of the page layouts are quite effective. Possibly with someone else inking his work it would be even better. My one real problem is that Shetterly has copied out and given his main character super powers (which he admits in the letter column of #2 was a mistake, and one which he may rectify if he does a novelization of the book...I frankly would enjoy seeing that), and he has introduced, at the end of #2, an Oriental character called the White Ninja (who has the ability to either become transparent or invisible, since the artwork doesn't make it clear which) with the usual martial arts weaponry. Should Shetterly stick to the central theme of an individual used/abused by a devious government, he would be better off. (**OMAHA** and **CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY** are available from SteelDragon Press, at \$1.75 U.S./\$2.50 Canada and \$1.50 U.S./\$2.25 Canada, respectively—P.O. Box 1253, Powderhorn Station, Minneapolis, MN 55407.)

I'd like to wrap things up with a few capsule reviews:

**'MAZING MAN** (DC Comics, \$.75) - The freshest comic to preview last year, and one unfortunately doomed by its own originality. Elements of fantasy and reality are mixed well in this charming little book about a group of friends living in Queens, one of whom writes comics and another who just happens to wear a helmet and cape while patrolling the neighborhood to be of help. The characters in the comic are more realistic than some of the people I encounter every day here in the Big Apple. With both comedy and pathos, and all of the things that make our lives what they are, **'MAZING MAN** is the cult comic that deserves your support. DC has already announced the possible cancellation of the book if sales don't pick up, so please run out and give 'Maze a hand, will ya? (Vinnie Bartilucci has a hilarious suggestion to improve this book's sales: have Alan Moore—see below—script an issue of 'Mazing Man...for details, send Vinnie a SASE to 45 Newburgh St., Elmont, NY 11003...)

**THE DARK KNIGHT** series by Frank Miller is already three-quarters complete and is easily the best thing that Frank Miller has ever done. As a writer and artist, the book is a milestone in the career of one of the hottest "names" in comics. The Batman was never better and never lived up to his potential as well as he does in this series. The man is a dangerous vigilante and is very scary; this is not the guy who did the Bat-Tusi!...And while on the subject of old characters living up to their potential, you might want to check out **THE MAN OF STEEL** by John Byrne. This updates and redefines Superman for the Eighties. Streamlined and less powerful, but still the most powerful man on Earth, Superman is sort of Baby-Boomer-as-neo-God, I guess, but it looks like it might be fun for a while. Check it out!

If you are going to buy a comic (besides **'MAZING MAN**, that is!), make it **WATCHMEN** by Alan Moore (currently **THE** best writer working in the field of comics, and frankly, one who should get out of it and switch to novels before the medium drags him down) and artist Dave Gibbons (a fellow Britisher). Like **CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY**, this takes place on an alternate world where superheroes are sanctioned by the government and the U.S. won the war in Vietnam (thanks to those same superheroes). While Miller writes the fascists' fantasy, Moore gives us the libertarian nightmare of civil rights thrown out the window to ensure the power of the state. Moore's world, while less violent than Miller's, is a far scarier place. That's it for now; see you at the comics shop!

What's all this I see in the funny pages? Has the whole world gone crazy? Used to be, the funny pages were a rock of stability in the turmoil of the nation's newspapers.

It all started getting weird for me when Ernie Bushmiller died. He used to draw "Nancy" in an ultra-precise, every-hair-on-her-head-is-exact fashion. This new "Nancy" artist is more sloppy. His jokes are, if you can believe it possible, even more lame than Bushmiller's! The "Nancy" kids have stopped being children having children's fun, and are now just miniature adults engaging in lame one-liners.

A very welcome change on the comic page is the end of the "Dondi" strip! I've read it since I was a kid, and the last couple of years some of the plots have been unbearably far-fetched. Just before the **Free Press** dropped "Dondi" for "Lu-Ann," his matronly grandmother had been turned into a living zombie by being force-fed a mushroom concoction by a con man. Then she was reduced to cleaning office buildings to support the con man. Dondi, with the help of an old blind black guy who sold pencils on the street corner, broke into the office building and rescued her. HUH??? Each day I would shake my head in wonder. Good riddance!

"Dick Tracy" has been changing as well. Getting locked in a sauna by a pair of Yuppie desperados, he escapes and one of the bad-persons tries to poison him with a cyanide-tipped acrylic fingernail! He's also sporting a new wrist computer with a thousand and one uses, including a chemical analysis probe! Handy for urine testing in the locker room...Most startling was a cameo appearance of Ron Reagan in the strip of Sunday, June 22, urging Dick to help him with international détente. And you thought Pruneface was dead!

But the biggest change in comics history may be coming soon. Several papers I read are starting to print with a new ruboff-proof ink they say will keep your hands from getting all black! Stop, please, before it's too late! How many childhoods will be ruined when the poor kids can't see the reverse universe by rolling Silly Putty over the comic pages?!

- Tim Arnold

**"Bob" can help you find cheaper dope, better sex, and larger welfare checks.**

Send \$1 for intense pamphlet  
The SubGenius Foundation®  
P.O. Box 140306  
Dallas, TX 75214

### IMMATURE POETRY

by Sigmund Weiss

Papa went downtown.  
When he came home he was dead  
because he never lived there.  
Figure this out  
you rummy.....

He pulled a bottle out of a cork.

What's the gimmick?  
Turning himself around he arrived  
nowhere.

The next place you go to never find it.  
A dog sat on a man's face until he blew  
bubbles. Dog or Man?

They say that any government cannot last.  
How come there still are governments?  
If you want to live long be certain that  
you are not dead.

The dentist said to a patient:

"Your mouth is crooked."

The patient replied: "Whose isn't?"

Find in yourself that center of gravity  
in order to balance yourself  
against problems.

The Writer who thinks he or she is  
profound generally lacks  
judgement.

If you have anything to add to this use  
your own sheets of paper.



The ten cinematic anagrams are as follows....

1. "A Night at the Opera"
2. "Charlote of Fire"
3. "Louis Haille's "My Dinner with Andre"
4. "Terms of Endearment" with Shirley Maclaine
5. "Broadway Danny Rose"
6. "Blue Thunder" with Roy Scheider
7. "Out of Africa" with Meryl Streep
8. Terry Gilliam's "Brazil"
9. "The Color Purple" starring Whoopi Goldberg
10. "Down and Out in Beverly Hills"

"ANAGRAMS AND CINEMA ANSWERS"

# HEY, HEY! THEY'RE BACK! THE MONKEES



Review by Charles Rosenay!!!

I've seen hundreds of concerts in my time—some great, some a bore. I will always regret never having seen Elvis or The Beatles live, but over the Memorial Day holiday weekend, I did see a show that I really never expected to see live: The Monkees...one of my favorite pop acts of all time.

The evening, featuring Herman's Hermits, Gary Puckett & the Union Gap, the Grass Roots and headliners The Monkees, and presented

by David Fishof Productions (Fishof and Howard Silverman), was staged at the Concord Hotel grand ballroom in New York State's Catskill Mountains. Although no official press was allowed, and the show was kept comparatively hush-hush, few could tell this was the first night of the long forthcoming tour. Like a Broadway play before its opening to the masses and the media, this concert served as a dress rehearsal...but certainly a very well-planned and consequently well-executed one.

Opening the production was the Peter Noone-less Herman's Hermits. With Noone, the Hermits could earn top billing on such a 60's revival show. Without him, they make for the ideal first act. Performing admirable versions of "A Must To Avoid," "Can't You Hear My Heartbeat," "Silhouettes," "Dandy," "Mrs. Brown You've Got A Lovely Daughter," "I'm Henry VIII," and a closing medley of "Listen People" into "There's A Kind of Hush," this ensemble of Hermits got the audience singing along and smiling from ear to ear right off the bat. The lead singer handled the vocals just fine, and original members Derek Leckenby (lead guitar) and Barry Whitwam (drums) kept it together and authentic. After the show, we asked Whitwam why they didn't include their Beatles tribute set they've been performing for years, and he said, "With the little time on stage we've got, it's lucky we can squeeze in 7 or 8 of our own numbers." Good point, and a good show from a band that certainly would have been the only necessary warm-up The Monkees needed. But Fishof, who has packaged the "Happy Together" tours over the past few years, has continued his tradition of giving fans who attend their money's worth, and with four great names from the 60's, this line-up is no exception.

Gary Puckett & the Union Gap (though no Union Gap members were visible behind Gary) were up next. Puckett's voice, like such great and powerful vocalists as Johnny Maestro and Jay Black (of Jay & the Americans) before him, still has the chops to make his classics send forth shivers galore. The set is far too short, with "Lady Willpower," "Over You," "Woman" and "Young Girl" leaving the crowd yearning for even such non-hits as the haunting "Dreams Of The Everyday Housewife" or Gary's cover of "Lady Madonna." On the Columbia LP "Gary Puckett & the Union Gap Featuring Young Girl," Gary Puckett's voice is described as rich and soaring. It remains both, and this should be the act preceding The Monkees, not the Grass Roots.

All isn't solid gold, sadly, as the Grass Roots came off as gold-filled. The hits are there, no doubt, and they're all marvelous AM radio beauties, but frontman Rob Grill (with one other former Grass Root in the backing band) leaves much to be desired as both singer and performer. The set consists of "Temptation Eyes," "Wait A Million Years," an over-psychedelicized "Let's Live For Today," a less-than-bailsey "Midnight Confessions" and "Sooner Or Later." Notable songs absent were "Heaven Knows" and "The River Is Wide," but by now the audience was anxiously awaiting The Monkees. The ABC/Dunhill album "The Grass Roots: Their 16 Greatest Hits" serves far more pleasure than suffering through Grill's poor vocals (much of which was actually handled by the back-up group's lead guitarist) and horrendous Jagger-like prancing. If Rob Grill—as the Grass Roots—was dropped even halfway through the tour, not many would complain.

Now for the *raison d'être*. At this point, the anticipative buzz of the audience was beginning to peak. The Concord crowd was an odd mix, consisting of a few hundred original fans, about another few hundred newer fans (largely thanks to the episodes all being shown again on MTV through March and April), and a thousand or so guests of the hotel who probably had no idea what kind of treat they were in for. This was definitely not your typical concert-going congregation, but this isn't exactly your typical concert.

One had to be wondering whether or not Micky Dolenz, David Jones and Peter Tork would succeed in this present incarnation. Granted, they're all seasoned professionals and veterans of stage,

screen and multi-media stardom. Additionally, they've all toured either individually or in pairs doing Monkee material over the past several years (most notably in Japan, where a new wave of Monkees fandom exploded in the early 80's). So logically they had all the tools, but could they retain the magic, the humor and the music that made The Monkees one of the most memorable pop forces of the sixties?

The show began with an antiquated phonograph playing "The Monkees Theme." Appropriately, the first appearance of Dolenz, Jones and Tork was a combination of music and humor, as the simulated record began to skip, playing a repeated line over and over. Welcoming screams and applause greeted The Monkees as they proceeded to take dynamite and blow up the record player and skipping disc to dust, showing their fans that they could still poke fun at themselves.

It would have been hard to poke fun at the way the three looked, however, as they started off with "Last Train to Clarks-ville." On the right was Micky, handling the leads with note and pitch perfection, standing tall yet bubbly in his Prince-like satin cowl behind a Sheila E. set of stand-up drums. In the center, Davy looked confident with long hair combed back and tinted red. On the left, Peter looked the best he's looked in years, with guitar in hand and proud smile on face. The 1986 version of The Monkees had arrived, and there was no stopping them as they machine-gunned their way through "A Little Bit Me, A Little Bit You," "She," "Valleri" and "(I'm Not Your) Stepping Stone." With full band of competent musicians behind them (including multi-keyboards and horn section), it wasn't until the sixth song that neither Micky, Davy nor Peter played an instrument. The tune, "Cuddly Toy," put the littlest Monkee in the spotlight, albeit without straw hat and cane associated with the performance. All leads were handled by Jones or Dolenz until Tork took control for "Auntie Grizelda." Never an introvert on stage, here Peter seemed a bit more comfortable and able to display his Tom Smothers-like personality (the intellectual allowing himself to be the clown character) alongside his partners, than when appearing solo or fronting his own "New Monks" in the recent past.

Before launching into "Daydream Believer," the missing-in-action Mike Nesmith was mentioned for the first time: "What happened to the tall one with the hat?" they asked aloud, predicting what some people might have been wondering. "He doesn't like to be famous," they answered themselves. Next came Micky's famed showstopper, "Goin' Down," where he sing-speaks more lyrics in one breath than most humans can utter in an hour. Taking off his cowl, knowledgeable fans may have been expecting the famed James Brown routine, but instead got a wild free-form dance highlighted by a strobe-storm.

Peter's next solo came in the form of a non-Monkee Tork original, which segued into the next affectionate barb at their former lead guitarist. All three donned Nesmith-style woolen caps and performed "What Am I Doing Hanging 'Round?," introduced as "the number one dance hit of 1840." It was here that Micky played guitar and Peter banjo.

Another non-Monkee tune followed which Davy introduced as being a love song. Seated with guitar in lap, Dolenz and Tork frantically ran over insisting that Jones couldn't play the guitar. They shouted, "Remember, we're not supposed to have played our own instruments!", to which Davy countered with the classic reply, "It's okay, it's not mine," and he played a perfectly acceptable guitar. This was followed by the final solo original, a ditty Peter wrote about his "little car."

Back to Monkee standards, the three alternated lead vocals on "No Time" before the beautiful (and often overlooked) "Shades Of Grey," which silenced the screamers in the audience (not unlike when Paul McCartney sang "Yesterday" on the Ed Sullivan Show in 1965). An offering of "Zilch" paved the way for "Randy Scouse Git," and Micky's scat singing was a delight. With no end in sight (and no end desired), Davy warbled his way through "I Wanna Be Free" as Peter handled the bass chores and Micky picked out the guitar parts.

Peter then popped all the way through the mince tarts in the always-pleasing "Peter Percival Patterson's Pet Pig Porky" (does he ever mess this up?), which led into "Pleasant Valley Sunday" with both Peter and Micky on guitar. Throughout, Davy continued to contribute all the right added percussives, including tambourine and maracas wherever necessary.

An instrumental break paved the way for "Listen To The Band," wherein the fine backing musicians were all properly introduced and credited accordingly. Finally, a comparative rocked-out, fierce and frenzied "I'm A Believer" ended a show that proved why The Monkees were and still are superb entertainers.

When Peter left the act "all those years ago" after their motion picture "Head," music historian/author Lillian Roxon wrote in her "Rock Encyclopedia" that "only time will tell if a barrel of three Monkees is as much fun as a barrel of four." Here, with Dolenz, Jones and Tork (but no Nesmith), The Monkees have finally proven the late Roxon to be 100% prophetically correct. Time has told, and their tour is not to be missed by anyone who ever owned "Headquarters," hummed "Daydream Believer," or enjoyed the famed TV show (originally, or currently in syndication nationwide).

Congratulations to Micky, Davy, Peter, the producers, and all their families along for the haul. They've reminded us what The Monkees established once before in 1967—that they were not only magical on vinyl and video, but they're equally amazing live. Welcome back, again.

CONCORD  
RESORT HOTEL

proudly presents

"THE MONKEES"

"THE GRASSROOTS"

and

"HERMAN'S HERMITS"



## PARAQUAT KISSES

by Larry Blazek

We're the men  
from the DEA  
We love to hunt  
for drugs all day  
we always shoot first

then we say  
"We're the men  
from the DEA!"

We paraquat  
with psychotic glee  
cry users of pot  
"Don't poison me!"  
We simply reply  
sarcastically

"That's waat you got  
for smoking pot!"  
and if an agent  
is kidnapped or shot  
you know that really

makes us hot  
'cuz we're so great  
that's what we say  
we're the men  
from the DEA!

to own our weapons  
is a felony  
our agents all  
get off scot-free  
we're getting wealthy

making America drug-free  
by lowering prices  
and increasing availability!  
and when some dooper

reads us his facts  
to legalize

and collect a tax  
we say "Who wants drugs  
in everyone?"  
what we mean is  
"Don't spoil our fun"

We're the men  
from the DEA

we love to hunt

for dope all day  
we get lots of cash  
we've lowered the price of stash  
yes, we're the men  
from the DEA!

It's a sin anyway. Hey, you know what I do when I get bored up here? I go down to earth and play doctor for a while! (pause) Oh, you heard that one before, eh? Well, nobody's perfect.

Whoops! I almost lost track of time there for a minute. Sorry folks, but I gotta split now. I have a meeting with Satan about next week's free agent draft. Take care everyone, and keep that fan mail coming!

\*\*\*\*\*  
WE LIVE TODAY AND AS WE LIVE  
\*\*\*\*\*  
PREVIOUS LIFETIMES  
\*\*\*\*\*  
If you buy that you are one in a million but if there be a 2000 A.D. if there be a 2000 A.D. only one in a million will question that radical statement  
\*\*\*\*\*  
No heretofore makes no sense  
\*\*\*\*\*  
arithmetic and no here-  
after makes no sense spiritua-  
ly. Wing a S&K to the world's  
ONLY radical, the all religions  
J.C. BRAUN  
J.C. BRAUN  
J.C. BRAUN  
YOUNGSTOWN - OHIO, 44604  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Stand-Up Savior by W.R. Tish

Good evening, Madams and Adams! I'm Jesus Christ and you're not. Yep, I'm the famous Christ child, the same one you folks are always praying to and swearing at. But I don't want to hear any of that stuff tonight, and the first one who calls my name'll be outta here quicker than you can say Hail Mary.

Almighty now—er, almighty now...as you all know, I'm omniscient, ubiquitous and omnipotent. I make it all happen. Can't get to sleep at night? That's me, not the caffeine. Got dandruff? Thanks to yours truly. Pops finds that bag of weed you've been hiding? I cannot tell a lie: me again. I do everything...except windows, of course.

I'll bet most of you people think it's pretty easy being the Son of God. Well, lemme tell you, I don't get no respect. Hey, I know I've got a face only a madonna can love, but every time I go up to a movie star and ask for an autograph, the guy thinks he's hearing things. And every girl I make love to thinks she's masturbating. (Sorry 'bout that one, Mom!) But the worst time of all has got to be Christmas: everybody treats me like a baby.

Christmas...what a nice, joyful holiday. Yeah, sure, pal. All you folks down on earth decorate trees, sing carols, get drunk and give each other presents...on my birthday yet! You'd think that maybe, after all these years, somebody might give me a present...maybe an insta-matic camera, or a Smurf, or even a crummy tie...but NOOOOOO! All I get is "Dear God," "Please God," "Oh God," "Lord this," "Lord that," "Our Father," "Our Keeper," "Our Salvation"...Jeeeesus H. Cuh-rist! What do people think I am anyway, an answering service? On Christmas day alone, I get enough prayers to keep me busy for an eternity. Talk about respect, I can't even get some shuteye.

You know, to some people I'm just my father's son. Of course, he's in the investment business now, but in his younger days he sure was something, eh? Everyone knows the story: he created the world, parted the Red Sea, blew away Sodom and Gomorrah, had that big flood...After awhile, people either loved or hated him, and he just didn't want to deal with all that attention. So he had me, then retired to Florida and let me run the show. Now everyone worships me...well, most everyone, at least.

Not those wily Jews, though. They still kvetch to my father, and to tell you the truth, I'm kinda glad. After all, who wants to hear all those yentas beat their breasts day and night over their sons' med school applications? I must admit, though, despite all their complaining, those Jews sure are tricky little devils...they've got everybody else thinking that money doesn't grow on trees—what a laugh!

Speaking of laughs, take my wafer, please! Hey, I've got some great new drinks for you. Ever had a Sunday Mass? Two sips and you're on your knees. How 'bout a Confession? One sip and you spill it. Ever tasted a Sloe Comfortable Nun Up Against The Wall? Don't bother:



HI! My name is  
**GARY PIG GOLD!**  
I've been putting  
out my funzine  
**THE PIG PAPER**  
since 1975, and  
I'd like to send  
**YOU a sample copy!**  
Send me some  
stamps and I will,

**THE PIG PAPER OK?**  
70 COTTON DRIVE, MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO, CANADA L5G 1Z9

## A COLLECTION OF STARS

by Jay DeFelicis

Sitting in illusion  
hoping to catch a glimpse  
of reality by  
staring preponderantly into  
misty sunlight set  
down upon the page  
full of distilled beauty  
within warm and wet  
subsistence often  
standing beside  
the wake of even fall

Monday of medieval mornings  
before stones silently  
assess the scenery  
that people pass—  
puffy professionals  
stride to stations  
leaving their armor  
parked in lots  
to assume the burden  
of earlier times  
revisited within the veil  
of days' fonder glory

Reflections of numbers  
in ordered sequence  
cross the room in reverse  
to evening spent  
before darkened symbols  
receding in surface dimension  
the symphonic melodies repeat  
as memories associated  
with past rendering  
of familiar themes  
to people pursued  
for want of expression  
found in release  
of border crossings  
which lay in states  
bounded by decline

And horizons melt  
a plastic reality  
caught within the vortex  
of swirling movement  
spasmodically sleeping  
over rigid framework  
which divide and separate  
the homogenous fluid  
into solid curds  
of stiffened dreams  
molded by fantasies  
stuck to the form  
of concrete embraces  
given substance by  
seasonal indifference  
the baited line etched  
seeks to interrupt  
the streamlined beauty  
of spirals' motion  
tracing the arches  
of reflective gazes



# Sayz-U!(Letters)

Dear Elayne,

...The idea of a network of writers contributing and producing INSIDE JOKE is, in my estimation, a good handle on the realities. I was glad to see that even Sylvia Plath learned a lesson from death—her writing has improved considerably since then.

"The Maine Boy and the Mafioso" had a nice feeling of the kind of reveries to which expatriate and not-really-fitting-in-in-the-rural-area New Yorkers are prone to having. I think...

Good luck,

TONY PIZZO  
RFD #1  
Lunenburg, VT 05906

Dear Elayne,

Things are popping at The Stagger Cafe. Got the ol computer printing out another letter whilst typing in this one. Oops, it just finished...

Isn't this letter neatly typed so far? Why, it's almost as neatly typed as the new IJ is neatly printed. Not to disparage Uncle Wiggly's efforts, but there is something about the way IJ is printed this issue that is so much easier to read than it has been in the past. The print is much clearer, the paper is whiter and heavier. I just don't know what all!

Anni's column was the funniest it's been in a while. I must admit that I have answered personal ads before. I never got a response (maybe it was because I tried to make art and wrote the response in crayon or something...), so it was pretty good to have the translation before I needed it. Hah!

I've also read your exhausting "Fan Moose" column. Whew! Had a lot of time to write, eh? I must say you've been productive. I'd use an illness as an excuse to moan and sit around like a lump. "Willow Weep For Me."

In response to the person who thought of the "Short Story Album," I once wanted to write a story based on the response I had to "Strict Tempo" by Richard Thompson, an instrumental lp of traditional British and Irish tunes. It's pretty great...

Well, it's 2:09 by the clock above. I'm on a roll now so I should print out this letter and get on to requesting zines. Whew! I'm looking forward to reading the rest of IJ real soon now. Yeah! C-U-Later,

LUKE MCGUFF  
Box 3680  
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Dear Elayne,

There were many chuckles, belly laughs and falling-off-my-chairs in IJ 46...

The cover was great! I wish Roldo offered a poster of it as I just fell in love with it!

And speaking of falling in love...Anni's piece on personals was superb. People try to get me to include an audio personals program in my talk show but I've never felt comfortable about the idea. Some of what Anni wrote certainly reflected my feelings.

I'm looking forward to more of Rodny Dioxin's VAMPIRE SORORITY BLUES as I thought this installment was very nicely done.

Being a Southerner in origins, I really appreciated A.J. Wright's WHAT WE DO AFTER DINNER IN THE SOUTH, and THE BATHTUB STORY by Prudence Gaelor was a delicious serving of nonsense. PIGSHIT was excellent with its tale of rock and roll excess, and Larry Blazek's THE LEAST-KNOWN PROPHET was short and smart.

Hey Ace, did all this terrible shit really happen to you, boy? Goddamn, boy, I passed blood in sympathy with you while reading Chapter Nine of JOURNEY THROUGH THE TENDERLOIN. Your depiction of unrequited love with all of its most terrible ramifications was numbingly well-done.

Kid's COMMERCIAL MCCLUE-IN was once again quite good. I want to use so much of this IJ material on the hair with the writers reading their own stuff but the pissy-ass station management doesn't want to give me the phone budget!

I'm afraid I couldn't tell what the tone of HUGS AND KISSES was as I thought the column was, at first, a parody of current stand-up humor. Then I realized this guy might think this stuff really is pretty witty. Sorry, Dana.

Hope this letter makes sense...I've been writing it while engineering a high school baseball game...also known as experiencing just one of the lesser levels of Hell...

Slack,

MIKE DOBBS  
24 Hampden Street  
Indian Orchard, MA 01151

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE INSIDE JOKE COMMUNITY:

THAT'S "VAMPIRE SORORITY BABES"

Whoopdeedoo,

GODDAMMIT...

RODNY DIOXIN

46 Sutton St., #3L  
Brooklyn, NY 11222

[Oops. Sorry again Rodny...always happens to the nicest folk...I guess I gotta start taking drugs again when I do layout...]

Dear Elayne and Other Mysterious People,

I have two quotes for the bi-month. They are both from Saint Germain, with whom Mildred has of late been really really chummed up.

"If artists starve, they leave precious little to the world. If musicians sing their songs to the walls of a hotel, their music dies with their breath." AND

"Any rogue may call himself a holy man, but the damage he does reveals his true nature."

Mention of le Comte Saint Germain reminds me that I neglected to thank Chelsea Quinn Yarbro in my last letter to IJ. Grammercy to her and all she has done.

To Anni—your condolences and thoughts were deeply felt and appreciated. Here we go loup garou...talk about my baby, little latin loup garou...heh heh...

About THE YOUNG ONES—yes it is deliberately weird—or surreal—but then so is a Dali painting. I don't think anything can seem undeliberate on tv—and really YOUNG ONES satirizes tv better than anything else. (NOZIN' AROUND—the trendy show for young adults—how Viv is always either eating the tv or causing it to explode. How Rik even wanted to videotape the white dot—that dot that means 'there's no more telly'—so he could "watch it in the morning." And so on.) They bite the hand that feeds them—but it keeps feeding them anyway. Stupid hand.

When the telly is inoperable—whether it's because Viv has eaten it to avoid the licensing agent (the plug sticks out of his mouth, yet he denies his "crime" and insists "it was a toaster") or because Rik has kicked the bejesus out of it, the boys are bereft. "I'll die if I miss Scooby Doo!" Neil wails, and we believe him. And Viv's fave show—BASTARD SQUAD.

YOUNG ONES isn't only consciously weird, as so many art forms are, it is so deliberately surreal as to be every bit as rich in detailed absurdity as a Bosch painting. I've always thought that the statement "Art imitates Life" was too limiting. Art does anything it can to life! That's what I like about YOUNG ONES—creativity is a constant factor in most forms of art—a musical instrument is not a natural creation, usually. Technicolor film doesn't grow on trees. And so forth. I can't object to any deliberate or contrived aspects of any art because the source for that art is humans with a thousand or more unnatural, contrived tools.

But I believe YOUNG ONES do take their bizarreness for granted. Considering there are only 12 shows and it takes a while for an ensemble to get comfy, they do quite nicely. Each one of them is trying to impress the others with his uniqueness, for they know "we may not be the young ones very long." I like the idea of "let's see how silly we can be today"—I think it is a natural reaction to the current mode of "let's see how serious (and sentimental) we can be today"—as demonstrated by THE COSBY SHOW and other "warmth" machines. I can't reject a contrivance if it's funny (Viv, with the pickaxe and rock impaled on his head, responding to Rik's apology: "It's all right. It was bound to happen someday.")—or if it's interesting, like all of Escher's drawings which show enormous work yet are never workmanlike.

After exposure to YOUNG ONES, watching them over and over, everything seems natural. Talking vegetables and electrical outlets, an indestructible hamster and his indestructible master Viv, the appearances by pop singers—all these things which seemed contrived eventually become the way of YOUNG ONES. Was it Baudelaire who said "Artifice is everything."?? Or something like that. The comedy of YOUNG ONES is rather like those fabulous domino shows—where thousands and thousands of dominos are set up in artful and obviously contrived situations—we do not care so much about them in stasis—what we want is to watch them fall.

Anyway, I very much enjoyed Anni's translation of want ads and I fear she is every bit as accurate as she thinks she is.

As for the commercials that use our music (ooh, chauvinism rears its ugly head—dat's right boss, it do)—I blame all or most of it on The Big Chill, a movie I saw for the first time the other night and thought was basically real dumb, as in superficial and compromising. Return of the Secaucus Seven is the only film of this type that really makes it anyway, but the big disappointment is that people who don't know will believe what they see in The Big Chill and will never get to see Secaucus Seven. The best thing about Big Chill was the soundtrack and the hepcats in advertising figured if a soundtrack could sell a dumb movie, why sho' nuff it can sell a mediocre and overpriced car.

They were right, too.

I hate all credit card commercials for one reason—they make it sound and look like you get everything you want and never have to pay for it! It's sooo nice and easy. Just once I'd like to see a credit card commercial wherein a CELEBRITY makes a purchase and goes over the merchant's floor limit and the merchant calls for authorization and doesn't get it! "Sorry, Mr. Plimpton, looks like you and Citibank need to have a talk, heh heh."

Having given a few members of a famous rock group the same rejection, I know whereof I speak. (The group was HEART.)

(Conversely, most "in-depth" news reports about credit cards only dwell on comparative rates of interest, assuming from the first that viewers will all naturally get themselves in some form of debt. I cheered when an interviewee actually said she didn't care about interest rates "because we always pay our bills on time so it really doesn't apply to us." Let's hear it for us moderates who do know how to use the plastic!)

About IJ 46—To Lawrence Oberc—how could you give up a decent, possibly yummy free meal for religious principles??? Saying Grace is no biggie, here's an easy way out—"Good bread, good meat, good god, let's eat."

You don't have to believe in god to talk to it/him/her/them.

But I see your point. Is Chuck always this overbearing and rude or was it a special occasion?

I also enjoyed the Gerber—and am sure I know Patterson's rap. The thing that made me laugh hardest was Second Base Dragon and I don't even know why. Maybe it's the little sleds...

Rosebud?

In closing, I want to quote my #1 hero, Charles Fort, who wrote: "I believe nothing of my own that I have ever written. I cannot accept that the products of minds are subject matter for beliefs."

Including the above, proly.

Love from Swampy, Arcane and me,

DEBORAH BENEDICT  
854 Y (as in Yazstremski) St.  
Lincoln, NE 68508

Greetings Elayne,

I am really running behind this month—maybe the rest of me will catch up to it before I get in the arrears again.

I really enjoyed the long letters column in this issue—it's kinda like robbing the P.O.B.'s without the risk of crushed fingers. Talking about crushed, I'm really starting to feel for that poor jerk in Journey Through the Tenderloin. Grace is cool—I sure hope mosta the people I know don't go to hell too—I like my privacy. Crosstown Monologue—wow—everything is a dream—and the dream is a dream. The Bathtub Story was very interesting too; I must say I've lost my fair share of toilets that way myself and ya know you're down the drain when ya can't outdistance them on the interstate.

Well, so much for my 2 cents' worth (inflation has raised it from one cent so if ya want my opinion, come prepared to pay the price). Take care and beware of clowns gone bad.

Beastingly,

D.A. BEAST (RICK MCCANN)  
P.O. Box 2842  
Winter Park, FL 32790

So hey,

the latest INSIDE JOKE recently arrived on my mail pile, and while I haven't sent any mailing comments for a few issues, I will toss a few comments your way...Anni seldom strays more than a hand's-breadth off the target, but this month's column was exceptionally right on the bull's eye (OK, I'll can the archery metaphor)—especially her analysis of that particularly ubiquitous personals ad where the attractive-couple-seeks-bi-female. (Why is it always a bi-female sought, never a bi-male, huh??) Anni's lettercolumn quashing of the letter previous from J. MacDougall said everything that needed to be said. His letter spoke volumes about the chip on his shoulder but said very little about actual reality. I love guys in the short range—as you may recall, Matt is 5'6", same as me. And Anni mentions in passing something that I too have noticed and found terribly perverse—really-tall guys' penchant for dating really-tiny women. (Particularly common is the pairing of Young Nordic Giants with Teentsy Oriental Cupcakes.) I find this pairing utterly icky and fetishy—all the worse for being a publicly acceptable fetish. Golden showers and penis-piercing don't bother me half as much, possibly because I don't have to see them if I don't look for them. I dunno, I like to look eye-to-eye with a guy, not eye-to-vestigial-nipple. Hmph...

Other likes & gripes this issue: Talk Show Host Confidential (expertise on experts) rang perfectly true...I've seen the process of becoming-an-expert (5% knowledge mixed with 95% chutzpah) take place before my eyes with people I know. You or I could do it, if we had the nerve. A big if, in my case. Liked Prudence's "Bathtub Story" a great deal more than I expected to; not to say it was that great, but it did meander nicely. DBenedict's vampiristic column was pretty good too.

A recent development in INSIDE JOKE that I heartily approve of is the new "Commercial McClue-In" (didn't get that pun until just this very moment as I was typing it—my next sentence was going to be 'but what the fuck does it mean?!') column. Writing about commercials is a great idea because it gives one a lot of leeway, the kind of flexibility I enjoyed so when I was writing my videos column: if one sees some kind of theme in what one's seeing, one can run with it; and if not, one can just recount what one has seen lately and rap about the items individually. A column like this, I predict, will beef up your letters column—because everybody is familiar with, and HAS OPINIONS ON, current commercials—I bet you'll see a real swerve in IJ's mail in the direction of comments loosely related to this column, on the topic of commercials. I project this with conviction because that's what I'M going to do, coming up in the very next paragraph.

I too get peeved every time I see that commercial or ad about doctors preferring XXX brand aspirin to Tylenol, Advil, etc., as the painkiller they'd "most like to take on a desert island" or whatever-such. There's a perfectly sound medical reason for such a choice—aspirin is a very versatile drug, combining painkiller qualities with other useful tricks like fever reduction—and of course on that hypothetical desert island one would want to pick the most versatile drug, one that would be of aid in whatever myriad situations might arise. But that has nothing nothing nothing to do with the appropriateness of aspirin in the specific case of an individual patient in need of a painkiller! You bet this ad campaign has me totally peeved. It's beyond idiotic. I don't even want to think about people getting suckered in by this. Ppptthuii.

Your discussion on PSA's reminded me of something I've been noticing lately: the inane "educational" PSAs on Saturday morning cartoons. Watch 'em sometime instead of tuning 'em out: they're very weird. They TRY SO HARD that they're completely laughable.

My favorite: here's a kid (animated) seated at a picnic table outside some kind of western bunkhouse, chomping down some food. Up comes APACHE CHIEF! Bet you don't know who A.C. is, so I will expand: he's an invented, equal-opportunity superhero created to racially integrate the Super Friends line-up and pal around with Superman in radically limited animation. Forget what his heavy Apache powers are, but for the purposes of the present PSA example, it doesn't matter anyways. OK, up rides Apache Chief, who delivers a lecture to the chow-down kid on the hazards of EATING TOO FAST WITHOUT PROPERLY CHEWING. Got that? One of the major menaces facing kids today, huh? Imagine the network people doping this one out..."Drug abuse?" "Too negative." "Crossing only on the walk signal?" "We did that last year." "Nuclear power?" "Shit! WAY too controversial!!!" "The danger of being abducted by strangers?" "This season we're putting 3 out of every 4 PSAs per hour on abduction. We need a good idea for the fourth." "Well, sounds to me like the only thing left is warning against chewing your food too fast..." "That's IT!"

Of course you're probably aware of the proliferation of flag-wave themed commercials, but I've just seen the latest ones for Burger King and I must report, in all due astonishment, that they have managed to pack in more patriotic schmaltz per second than any other such commercial has. It's an accomplishment of sorts, I guess. Great theme: "This is a Burger King town" (...and if yew don't like that, stranger, we'll ride you out of town on a rail at sunset, yew commie pervert...) Pretty insidious...what kind of town ISN'T a Burger King town? This ad completely messes up my head.

Only ad I like right now is the double-15 for Dove Bars. They running 'em there? (Just starting to, but from the little I've seen, not bad.) Very short and very off-the-wall.

Scoop: I read in Billboard that TWO veejays will be leaving MTV soon. Don't have the clipping here, but I think it's Nina Nana Blackwood and JJ Ja-ckson. I've been wondering all along how long it would take them to bring in some new blood, veejay-wise. As for whether they picked the right two to can, my opinion is that the gruesome five are so perfectly matched in gruesome abysmality ('zat a word?) and terminal modernity that I'd prefer their making a 100% housecleaning sweep of all five. But it is odd, when you think about it, that they've kept the same lineup since day one, for four years now. How many RADIO lineups stay the same that long? (Ah, but how many television programs rotate cast member all that much?) Of course, radio stations are a bit different—they have competitors...

Slackfully yours,

CANDI STRECKER  
590 Lisbon  
San Francisco, CA 94112

Dear Elayne—

Well, it's that time of the hexaweek again. Our Alma Mater—Florida State University—has made it to the college world series. ESPN chatters in the background, as I chatter on here. The first things I check out when I get my INSIDE JOKE are the back cover, to check on the reproduction quality, and "Says-U," to see if I made a total jerk out of myself. As for the former, my heartfelt congratulations go out to Debbie David, for the best printing job I have ever seen on an IJ in my brief but tempestuous stay. As for the latter...well, the letter read better than I thought. I get this nagging feeling, oh, around three weeks before I get that friendly little bundle in the P.O. box, that I have typed both feet into my mouth. I can see by my editorial comments that a few toes may have been inserted along the way.

Barbara reads each letter I type, to be sure that I don't get too carried away with the moment, but I think she does it to be sure I haven't said anything too off-color about her...like *How SHE IS WANDERING AROUND THE LIVING ROOM IN A WEEKLY WORLD NEWS EXHIBITION*

Both Champagne and Champale liked the Roldo Rat cover—they say that it makes them hungry for some 'soul' food. They will never be able to face the science diet again.

Now there's a cartoon strip...Reverent Righteous, Ricky Racoon, and Hacker Duck. Perhaps another fannish tradition would be in store for IJ if all its artists would get together...the visual equivalent of the 'gerber' (delightful, to say the least—I plan to do one at the next straight s-f convention I attend), an 'artists' jam.' Similar to Brad W. Foster's Our Story Thus Far. Each artist does a page of a story, which someone has to start, of course. Comments, anyone? (While I can't see any of us writer-types remaining dormant for a whole issue, does anybody out there think the idea has merit as a "special art issue" of IJ, perhaps next year some time?)

Dear Anni—please don't smoke and powder your nose at the same time—it might go off. I knew that there was something that I liked about you besides your wit and punchy proserities. Anyone who likes Doctor Who can't be all that bad. May I suggest purchasing a copy of Doctor Who—The Role-Playing Game, just for the reference value. It is fascinating reading.

This has been an exceptionally fine issue. I liked all of the prose, in this one, except "Luck Comes to McShamus," which wasn't that bad either, just difficult to follow after a print of Guinness. Anni's column was up to her usuals and we liked Mike Dobbs' column, as well. We both listen to a good deal of talk radio, down here, because the rock radio stinks during the day, and his words ring true. I listened to a debate of sorts today on whether or not the New Testament was a work of fiction, written by



a Roman family, around the year 100. (By the gods...Arizona is beating us four to nothing. This makes me ashamed of the Southern accent I developed just for collegiate sports.) When in doubt (I find the talk show hosts on the local station resort to this), ask for precise documentation when a caller or guest says something that you can't immediately refute, or try to discredit said person by casting doubt on his credentials. These are the practices that drive me crazy. When I want to hear strange stuff on the radio, I don't want to hear credentials.

Katy, bar the door. An Arizona two-run homer. Now I remember why I don't like sports (with the possible exception of pro wrestling and Roller Derby). Enough abuse for one night. J.P., you cannot see the parody potential in Care Bears and the Smurfs. Perhaps someday you will understand. I don't think that comment on Jamie Lee Curtis was MTINTK (well, maybe not MTYNTN, but I was not that interested in musings over chests and whatnot...). Do I have to call a lawyer or get shots? (I'm thinking, I'm thinking) Please don't get me wrong, ladies. I only like to see women get exploited in the entertainment media, where I am sure that what I see and hear is not real. To hell with Meryl Streep—give me Bimbos. But I would be pissed off if my wife was making less money than a man doing the same exact job, with the same experience. Of course, this assumes that she is working first. If all wishes were gratified, many dreams would be destroyed.

Yours—

PHIL TORTORICI  
P.O. Box 57487  
West Palm Beach, FL 33405

Dearest Elayne & Co.,

#46!...Magnificent front and back covers my Messrs. Roldo and Torto(rici), respectively! My fave pieces here are from Aristotle, Prudence, Lawrence, Roldo (again), Michael, "Kid" and Anni. You know who you are and you know what you did! (Whoops, almost forgot Da Beast's neet pome...yay!)

I'd love nothing better than to oblige Ms. Sieve and send in my candidates for Most Mind-Croggling Commercial, but (1) there's hardly anything on I want to watch (like the Three Stooges on Sunday morning, or the occasional cheapo-stinko horror flick), (2) when I do watch TV, the flash-twitch eye-contact thumpa-thumpa commercials get on my nerves (and if anybody needed proof that MTV is primarily a testing ground for new hypno-marketing techniques, there 'tis...), and (3) I'm too busy reviewing cheapo-stinko horror flicks and drawing ill cartoons, y'know? But I would like to tell you about weird scenes at Monmouth Mall (Eatontown, NJ)... stuff like the big NutraSweet display they had at the Health & Fitness Fair...or later, when the mall had some other theme (Public Service): there was this table, see, where they were fingerprinting innocent children (and just how is this supposed to keep the kids safe from harm, hrm? Will it magically keep drug fiends and perverts away? Or do the powers that be want the fingerprints...for other reasons?)...and next to this, at the same table, is some dork in an ill-fitting WPLJ lion costume ("The King of Rock," yeah, right... "The King of Pap" is more like it...) giving out bumper stickers, and luring the kiddies over to the fingerprint station. But that's not all! Nearby was a radio-controlled fire-plug-shaped "robot," rolling up to passing tykes and...you guessed it, inviting them to be fingerprinted! Hooraw, hooraw!

Slack on you!!

JOHN P. MORGAN  
185 Seabreeze Ave., #4  
East Keansburg, NJ 07734

Elayne,

Well hararara luvs. Looks like it's me again as Rodny, or America's sweetheart as we call him round these parts, is holding his brief till he turns blue (or some interesting color). I must say that the last IJ was majorly mixed. Anni-kins was as brill as she's been in quite some time and the Johnny Hollywood piece was revelatory. Pru's piece has been one of my faves since I first heard it way back when in the snow and the whatnot. Too sorry but the grammar shite is all shite and boring and I simply do not care to be bothered with bothering. What's happened to poor Larry Oberc? The decline in quality is tres distressant, is it not? Please don't talk to me about Ace Backwards. I shoul'nae comment as I don't actually read the thing. Too tragic, so? Ah but I can feel the ennui setting in so I must nip down the pub for a bit.

Au reservoir,

*ANNEA TREPHINE*  
ANNEA TREPHINE  
Exeter Sidings

Dear Elayne,

I had a response to Anni's response mentally composed, but I decided not to write it down...I find myself very much alone with my opinion so I'm beating a retreat. And I must agree that "full of crap" is without a doubt too strong a comment on Anni's comments. However, I find some fault with her survey. Firstly, Anni's friends have peculiar tastes in men. Not that peculiar, I tend to understand how most of the men listed could be selected (I'm even going to reverse my view of Dudley Moore), but Tom Hulce? Tom Hulce?!!! Nope. (You're nuts—I think Tom Hulce is gorgeous!—maiden jappan (typist))

Secondly (and much more importantly), I think my findings might have been supported if Anni's survey had included a sampling from the 17-25 crowd. The mature women surveyed are clearly out of my league. And that crack about chasing 15 year olds was low, cruel and unworthy of Ms. Ackner.

I figure that antagonizing the best writer in IJ (but for its

editor, natch) is about the dumbest thing I've ever done, and I want to apologize. I'd like to think that I'm not quite as big an asshole as I sound...

Loved IJ 46, Anni's caustic comments aside.

Cheers!

JAMES MacDOUGALL  
511 Routes 5 & 20  
Waterloo, NY 13165

Dear Elayne,

Well, there's no getting away from it—I am simply in a pissy mood. I have just spent the better part of the day pushing a 250 lb. woman around on a bedboard, emptying catheter bags and conducting range-of-motion exercises—as I have painstakingly and tediously detailed elsewhere, after I lost my last secretarial job, I took a long hard look at myself and decided I was not prepared to spend the rest of my life typing letters for men whose idea of punctuation consisted of saving up all the commas and then scattering them, willy-nilly, throughout the last sentence, and being afraid of losing my job because I didn't come up to some fairly arbitrary standard of beauty, so I took a course and became a Home Health Aide, a career in which no one cares what one looks like or whether one is willing to make coffee, so long as one can manage to bathe and diaper a full-sized adult without thinking deep, dark thoughts—my feet hurt, the Yankees went down 14-7 to the Toronto Bluejays, of all people, I am drinking a lukewarm watery diet Coke and watching EASY RIDER after having watched LOST IN AMERICA (this is HBO's idea of concept programming, and the only thing I can say about it is that EASY RIDER has better music, nicer clothes, and nominally more interesting characters. Sacreligious as it is, even in my flaming hippie days I never much cared for EASY RIDER. I did my share of travelling around the country—by thumb, by bus, and even by motorcycle for a time—so the story holds no particular mystique for me, and the film is just so damned male, if you see what I mean. And please, fellas, don't send me letters. I simply mean that, like Hemingway's writing, there's nothing really here for a woman to hold on to, or identify with), and this is obviously no way to write an IJ letter. In this sort of mood, all I can remember about #46 is that it seemed to contain what Jill Zimmerman might call Tons O'Vampires. Having just read, with limited enthusiasm, THE VAMPIRE LESTAT, I'm afraid I've had just about enough of the children of the night and what beautiful music they make, and I kind of wish Mildred had decided to come back as a mermaid or a griffin or just about any other fabulous creature but a vampire.

Oh Lord, I'm sorry. This is going even worse than I expected, and we've just come to that really idiotic bit in the commune. Ah, perhaps I can redeem myself a little—in answer to Deborah's question, while it has been traditional for vampires to be pictured as always wearing black, this stems merely from the fact that vampires tend to favour the elegant and tasteful in attire, and not from any hard-and-fast rule. Since black is, of course, the most elegant and tasteful colour, it does show up often in vampirish wardrobes, but any colour with style and grace will do. A deep rose or wine is nice, as are the quieter shades of purple, some of the darker blues, sea green, scarlet in moderation, winter white, and dove or pearl gray. I'm sure we all agree that pastels are just too too, and naturally solids are much better than prints—no vampire would be caught undead in plaid or polka dots. Fabric is just as important as colour—jersey, silk, antique lace, suede, subtle traces of leather, a fanciful touch of denim and the occasional tweed in colder climates are all fine; polyester, nylon, in fact, anything created in a laboratory is out—as is cut—vampires do not wear culottes—but above all, personal style is to be stressed, and any and all of these rules may be broken—except the one about the culottes—if the wearer has the flair to carry it off. As no one, living, dead or otherwise, has more flair than our Mildred, I'm sure she will surprise and delight us, in immortality as in earthly life, with the creativity and excellence of her wardrobe.

Now that's better, and I liked both the covers, and Kid's column as well, but I just now remembered that, on top of everything else, My Other Sister's bridal shower is tomorrow, and I will soon be expected to join 14 theoretically normal women in making merry over Corningware and dear little watering cans made into place settings, so I am going to have to stop short abruptly. Now. This minute. Do understand.

Found in America,

ANNI ACKNER  
The Hotel New Jersey



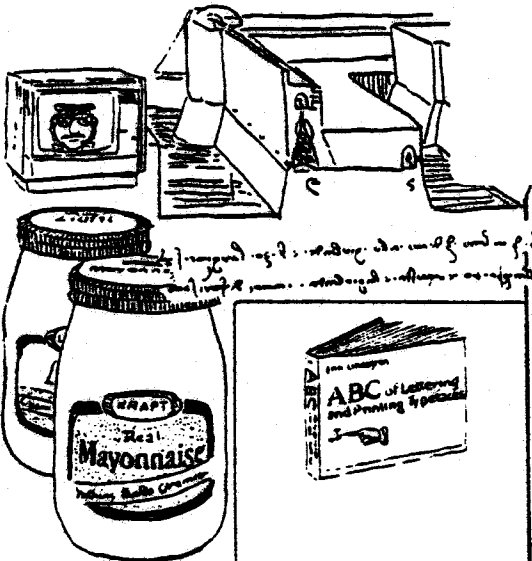
the day of trouble:  
I will deliver thee,  
and thou shalt

He shall sustain  
thee. — Psalm 55:22  
Know ye that the

All we like sheep  
have gone astray;  
we have turned



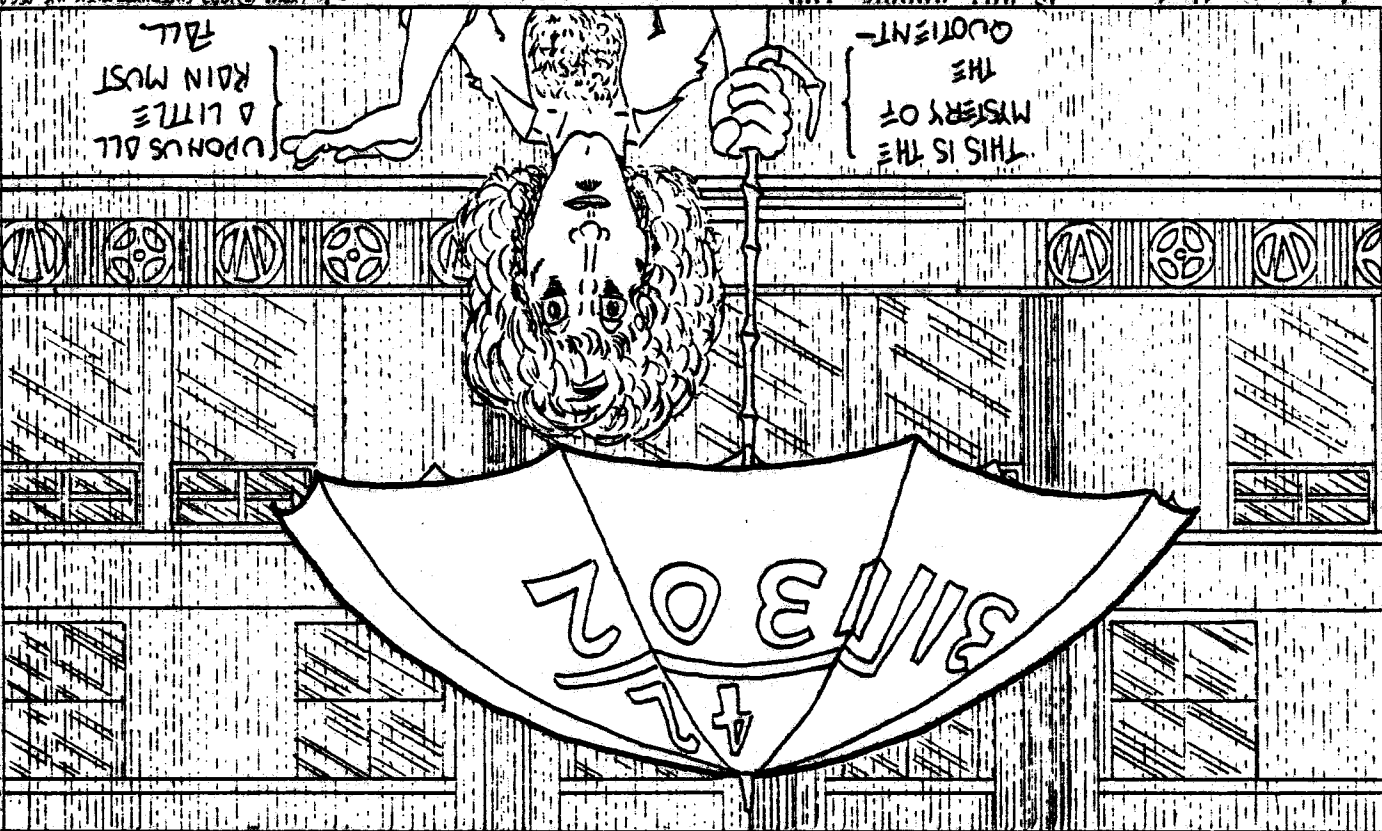
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**INSIDE JOKE**  
**FLAYNE WECHSLER**  
8051-4008  
MADISON SQUARE STATION  
NEW YORK NY 10159

in his Son. — 1 Jn. 5:11  
For ye are all the  
children of God by  
faith in Christ  
eternal life, and  
that ye may believe  
on the name of the

Lord save me.  
Matt. 14:30  
BELIEVER'S NAME



For I know that  
my redeemer liv-  
eth, and that he  
shall stand at the

Many are the af-  
flicted; let him  
pray. — James 5:13

and saved him out  
of all his troubles.  
The angel of the  
Lord encampeth

with wings a-  
round; they shall  
run, and not be

we have  
God  
Lord