



ONLY the Mockingbird
sings at
the edge
of the
woods

WE HAVE CONSTRUCTED
PYRAMIDS IN HONOR
OF OUR ESCAPING...

SURE
TO
AL
PIN
THE HANDLES... THE VANDALS
TOOK THE

TAKE YOUR
IDIOTIC MACHINE
AND GO PLAY
SOMEWHERE
ELSE!

WORLD'S LARGEST Ocean

MOCKIN' BIRD HILL

RANCHO
MALARIO

ANTELOPE
FREEWAY
NO EXIT!

HOW DO YOU
FIGHT GUILT?
YOU'RE LIKE MY
CONSCIENCE

WHAT'RE
YOU DOING
OUT HERE
ALL BY
YOURSELF?

REGION
WE'A

HOW DO
YOU FIGHT
ANGER? THAT'S
WHAT REALLY
CONNECTS
US.

WANTS
GOT 10.
11 DOLLAR
NO. 15718

STREETS OF LARGED

I DON'T KNOW
IT'S LIKE ENERGY

DERRY
SEWERS
BOULEVARD
OF
SHOWN DREAMS

500
GOES DIRECT TO THE

PART OF THE
QUESTION

HEARTBREAK HOTEL
LOVELY STREET
WRIGLEY FIELD

FOR A NEW FOOL GIRL BY THE WHIRL POOL
MINOOT TOOK

IF NO ANSWER -
PLEASE LEAVE YOUR
NAME AND SOUL
AT THE DOOR.
ONE OF OUR
LESSER DEMONS
WILL GET BACK
TO YOU!

Graceland

ACROSS THE ALLEY FROM THE ALAMO

of Comedy and Creativity

DUNWICH • COVER THE WATERFRONT

150 earthsea

BE A SUCCESS
TRY

YOU CAN SHOOT
THE ANIMALS IN
THE FOREST...
BUT YOU CANNOT
SHOOT THE FOREST!

GO AHEAD.
FEAR ME!
HATE ME!

I EAT
IT UP.

HOUSE OF
USHER

HOUSE OF
USHER

Celebrating 6 Bizarre Years OF

GUN
for All

NARNIA

Lappeland

NOT A
THROUGH
STREET

ARKHAM
ASYLUM

ROUTE 666

YOUR BED
MONSTERS

LOOK OUT KID!

THE MORTAL
COIL
BAR & GRILL
HAPPY HOUR: NOW!

IDEATH

NOW, NOW. IS THAT
THE WAY TO TALK TO
SOMEONE WHO'S
GOING TO TAKE YOU
ON A TRIP?

HOV!
HOV!

BUY THE
HOME
VERSION!

JA

SOPHISTICATED SUSPENSE

Professor
Marvel's
PUNIBALL
GAME
1 GAME
4 QUARTERS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thanks to T.S. and Denver for the use of some dates from their "1987 Calendar for Organized Psychotics"...

DECEMBER 15, 1986 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #51
AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

- DECEMBER 16 - Philip Dick (b. 1928); Beethoven (b. 1770); Boston Tea Party (1773)
DECEMBER 18 - Betty Grable (b. 1916); Slavery abolished (1805)
DECEMBER 19 - Phil Ochs (b. 1940); Poor Richard's Almanack published (1732)
DECEMBER 21 - Frank Zappa (46)
DECEMBER 22 - National Flashlight Day
DECEMBER 25 - Annie Lennox (32); Cab Calloway (79); Rod Serling (b. 1924)
DECEMBER 26 - Henry Miller (b. 1891)
DECEMBER 27 - "Howdy Doody" debuts on tv (1932); Radio City Music Hall opens (1932)
DECEMBER 30 - Mike Nesmith (43)
JANUARY 1, 1987 - Frank Langella (47)
JANUARY 2 - NINA BOGIN (33); Isaac Asimov (67)
JANUARY 3 - J.R.R. Tolkien (b. 1892)
JANUARY 4 - Sterling Holloway (b. 1905)
JANUARY 6 - Carl Sandburg (b. 1878)
JANUARY 8 - STEVEN SCHARFF (25); David Bowie (40); Butterfly McQueen (b. 1911)
JANUARY 9 - Joan Baez (46)
JANUARY 10 - Jim Croce (b. ?); Donald Fagen (37); Ray Bolger (83); National Nothing Day
JANUARY 15 - BARBARA PACKER (33); Captain Beefheart (?); 2 million gallons of molasses flood Boston, 21 drown (1919)
JANUARY 16 - Ethel Merman (b. ?); Ma Barker dies in wild gun battle (1935)
JANUARY 17 - TOM CORNEJO (22); Ben Franklin (b. 1705); Andy Kaufman (b. 1939)
JANUARY 18 - Danny Kaye (74); Cary Grant (83); Oliver Hardy (b. ?); A.A. Milne (b. 1882)
JANUARY 19 - BRIAN CATANZARO (32); Edgar Allen Poe (b. 1809); Janis Joplin (b. 1943)
JANUARY 20 - George Burns (91); Fellini (b. 1920)
JANUARY 21 - Wolfman Jack (48)
JANUARY 22 - MIKE PACKER (32); D.W. Griffith (b. 1875)
JANUARY 23 - Ernie Kovacs (b. 1919); Humphrey Bogart (b. ?); National Handwriting Day

* INSIDE JOKE is, as it ever was and ever shall be, put on by Elayne Wechsler and many dear friends and emanates from beautiful downtown Brooklyn, on a desk by a windowsill on which sits a cat which is absolutely fascinated by my asterisk-making for this editorial box. Like the cat, I'm easily amused, and look where it's gotten me so far.

EDITOR-IN-RESIDENCE.....ELAYNE WECHSLER
PRODUCTION ASST./FIANCE-AT-LARGE.....STEVE CHAPUT
INKadinkadoo.....OLE WAGGLEBRAINS

FRONT COVER BY DEBORAH BENEDICT

STAFF WRITERS/ARTISTS, PAST AND PRESENT

ANNI ACKNER!	RORY HOUGHENS!	GEORG PATTERSON!
DEBORAH BENEDICT!	PETE LABRIOLA!	BRIAN PEARCE!
ALIX BISHOFF!	GARY LIGI!	ROLD!
BRIAN CATANZARO!	J.P. MORGAN!	TOM SANDERS!
MIKE DOBBS!	LARRY OBERCI!	STEVE SCHARFF!
TOM GEDWILLO!	SUSAN PACKIE!	KERRY THORNLEY!
MIKE GUNDERLOY!		PHIL TORTORICI!

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE:

ANDY AMSTER	MARY ANN HENN	MICHAEL POLO
TIM ARNOLD	WAYNE HOGAN	HANK ROLL
D.A. BEAST	MARGOT INSLEY	PETER SELLNER
LARRY BLAZEK	TULI KUPFERBERG	DAVID SERLIN
KEN BURKE	LYN LIFSHIN	DANA SNOW
TOM CORNEJO	JAMES MACDOUGALL	st. EVE
DAZA	LUKE MCGUFF	DORIAN TENORE
JAY DEFELICIS	MICHAEL MCINNIS	LORI TWERSKY
VERNON GRANT	ROGER MORRIS	SIGMUND WEISS
GARY PIG GOLD	SPENCER PINNEY	and "KID" SIEVE

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

Ads furnished by J.C. Brainbeau, The Monthly...Bulletin, The SubGenius Foundation, Twisted Image, Wall-Op, and YU News...

Copywrite 1986 Pen-Elayne Enterprises — Kip M. Ghesin, Pres.
Back issues available for \$1 each
Writers'/Artists' Guidelines available for SASE

- JANUARY 24 - John Belushi (b. 1950); Gold discovered in California (1848)
JANUARY 27 - DEBORAH BENEDICT (36); Lewis Carroll (b. 1832); Freddie Prinze shoots self ('77)
JANUARY 29 - W.C. Fields (b. 1880)
JANUARY 30 - Richard Brautigan (b. 1935)
JANUARY 31 - Phil Collins (36); TENTATIVE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #52

ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

In October of 1980 I decided to create a newsletter devoted to The Uncle Floyd Show, a local vaudevilian comedy program in NJ. Host Floyd Vivino had often remarked that the show took a bit of getting used to because of all the in-jokes, and I pictured INSIDE JOKE as an appropriate name. After Uncle Floyd and I got bored with one another, I was hooked enough on IJ to continue it as a general newsletter of comedy and creativity. My college buddy Bill-Dale Marcinko, whose own zine, Ascension From the Ashes (AFTA) is still talked of with reverence in some small press circles, helped me organize a mailing list; among the first names on that list was Steve Chaput, who would later become IJ's Production Assistant and my fiancé. I envisioned IJ as a sort of commune-in-writing, where tenant-contributors would pitch in with the chores that needed doing (in other words, writing and art) and I'd take care of organizing the bills and repairs (typing, occasional grammar corrections, reductions, mailing). And for the most part it's turned out that way, although I've had my share of partings-of-the-way with writers who felt differently about what an editor's role and policies should be (and the debate still continues, as evidenced in this issue's letter column). Still, I hope I've made more friends than enemies in the past six years, and when you come right down to it, that's the best one can say about anyone.

I won't go into more detail of IJ's history, because it's not done yet. I'd like to keep evolving and changing, moving forward along a sometimes bumpy road but always willing to learn and mature still further. One can't please everyone always, but we seem to have pleased enough folks most of the time that I think it's been worthwhile; and, whether monthly or hexaweekly, we've managed to accomplish things pretty much on schedule, a somewhat rare occurrence in the world of independent zines.

Far too many people have helped through the years for me to thank you all individually, but IJ's printers (Tom, Uncle Wiggly and now Debbie) deserve most of the credit; without them we'd have ceased to exist long ago. Steven Scharff has been with IJ since the first issue of Volume I; times would've been a lot rougher without Jill and Anni and Steve. And without you as well. The persona I project in these pages may only have a casual (and causal) relationship to the "real" Elayne, but your readership and response has meant a great deal to both of me.

Staff writers and artists have come and gone as well, but some of the old gang have returned for a one-time reunion here, and I thank Brians C and P, Toms G and S and Mike G (whose idea it was to begin with) for their input. I promised a list of staffer addresses, but have decided to hold off until next time, as there are yet personnel changes afoot (where, oh where are you, A.J.?).

Staffers have the option of requesting two copies of this issue if they so desire, and only three have done so, so any others of you who want an extra issue, please let me know ASAP—this goes for past as well as current staffers. And being that this is a special occasion, this is going out free to all contributors, but it's a one-issue-only offer, so remember the sub name (complete info below) next time. Anyone paid up for this issue gets their subscription bumped back one more issue, if they've contributed to this one. Hope this isn't too confusing!

Our inside back page features the return of the IJ Questionnaire, which I urge everyone to please fill out and send back to me by the deadline; results will be published in #51 or #52, depending on return rate.

The aforementioned deadline is December 15, and since our esteemed printer is in the process of changing locales, #51 may be a bit late (as this here's a bit early), so I'm not setting further deadlines for 1987 yet. Submissions travel to our Palatial P.O. faster in legal-size (#10) envelopes than in 9 x 12 jobs and can include letters, poetry, articles, art, etc. but we already have a front cover. Advance subscriptions are \$8/year (check to be made out to my name, NOT IJ), with anything over that considered donation (and thanks again to J.C. Brainbeau for his generosity this time). Issues of IJ are \$1 each, or 39¢ postage (40¢ to Canada) if your submission is in the issue, or a one-sheet plus 39¢/40¢ (same for mini-comics), or a trade of your publication for mine one a one-for one (if you publish infrequently) or all-for-all (if you publish regularly) basis. If there's an "X" next to your name, this is your last issue and it's time to renew. Social notes: The Annual IJ Party will no longer be held around New Year's Eve, but will move permanently to the second or third Saturday in March, whichever's closer to the Ides. Thanks to Laura, Paul, T.S., Denver, Ace, Bruce, Chris, Lori (next time for sure!) and a special "ya-ba-DEE-ah" to Candi and Matt for making my solo vacation in San Fran a lot less lonely. Happy holidays-of-choice to all concerned, 29th-birthday-condolence cards and such can be sent me at Apt. Third Eye or our IJ address, P.O. Box 1609, Mad. Sq. Station, New York, NY 10159, this issue is dedicated in memory of Forrest Tucker and Paul Frees, and here's to 50 more, with love. Thanks, and Enjoy.

*and off Roger C. "Harry Mudd" Carmel

Fan Noose

by Elaine Wechsler



Many thanks to Margot Insley of Dolphin Moon Press for the artwork to our new logo...All of you whose little Post-It notes on this issue's cover bear asterisks, your permission is requested from James Wallis to reprint certain of your past *IJ* contributions in his upcoming publication *INSTANT KARMA*. I opined to James that in all likelihood most *IJ* contributors would as soon write brand-new original stuff for *IK* as allow their stuff to be reprinted, but if you're one of those on James' list, please reply to me or James regarding your permission—he's at Flat 5, 139 Hainault Rd., London E11 1DT ENGLAND... It is unfortunate that very few publications put out by science fiction fans manage to rise above the closed little circle (sometimes it's a

circle of one!) to which they're directed, since fandom is generally possessed of many people who would otherwise impress with their creativity and intelligence. Two cases in point are *PROJECT ZARATHUSTRA* from Michael Grubb (805 1/2 Oaslaw St., Durham, NC 27705), which contains personal doings of Michael's life, the nominations for the '86 Hugo (3 pages of nothing but a list), a couple book reviews and more personal news; and the new issue of *Sam Helm and Ginnie Fleming's NOTES* (#5), which goes from a gratuitous nude on the cover to a more than gratuitous convention report at the end (enumerating how many times the authors had sex, for god-ake!)—in truth, this does show a bit more promise than other fan nonsense because of the wonderful subscriptions of folks like Jeff Grimshaw and Anni Ackner, but I'd suggest skipping the letters column entirely and just reading the staffers. "The usual" (a buck or trade or letter-or-comment) to 495 West 186th Street, New York, NY 10033...And it doesn't get any better when a fan achieves an amount of fame and notoriety either—thank goodness *Richard Gels* won't be kicking around his ego anymore in the otherwise professionally-done semi-pro magazine *SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW*. Issue 61 is the last, but be forewarned, Rich's self-congratulations will be extended into his upcoming personal zine *THE NAKED ID* (did I hear someone say "More Than I Need To Know"?). If you're interested, for some reason, in either of these two publications, *SFR* is \$2.50 and *TNI* a bit less, I guess, from P.O. Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211...Speaking of pretention, *THE ATROCITY Gazette* is back, and although editor *Hank Roll* and readers still make a big deal out of being *MENSANS*, at least the *Absurd SIG* (Special Interest Group, like a *MENSA* subsect) is at least back to its sick and interesting format (as opposed to their "sleaze in Japan" output last time), so do send \$1 to 2419 Greensburg Pike, Pittsburgh, PA 15221...Sometimes sickness holds intense fascination for some, and it makes good copy too, as evidenced by *MURDER CAN BE FUN*. In #3, editor *Johnny Marr* details the failed attempt by *Valerie Solanas* to kill *Andy Warhol* in 1968, reviews sleaze movies, books and catalogs, and there's even a "Jeopardy"-type contest—all for only 50¢ to P.O. Box 640111, San Francisco, CA 94109...And *Klaus Haisch's BUF-0* tackles comics, the *Moral Majority* and *Garbage Pail Kids*; it's also presumably \$1 to 1729 E. Tabor St., Indianapolis, IN 46203...*BOLD PRINT* is a well-done and youthfully energetic zine from *Kyle Hogg* (1120 W. Grace St., #12, Richmond, VA 23220)—some nice poems, some mediocre ones, all strong and heartfelt. If you, like me, wish you could've done something like this when you were younger, do send a buck or so to *Kaywhyeele*...Only if you're real nuts about baseball (hello to all fellow withdrawal sufferers!) would *BASEBALL OUR WAY* make sense to you, although editor *Dale Jellings* was kind enough to print a few words from yours truly—send \$1 for a sample to 3211 Milwaukee St., #1, Madison, WI 53714...Hooray, *TWISTED IMAGE* is back in regular business, and *Ace Backwords* has an array of crazies the likes of which you will NEVER find in *IJ* (trust me, no overlap here!) participating; worth the buck for you well-rounded types craving grittier alternatives to this here rag—send to *Ace* at 1630 University Ave. #26, Berkeley, CA 94703...If you like the *IJ* artwork of another staffer, *J.P. Morgan* (who did all of the "upcoming milestone issue" spots this time), #6 of his mini-comic *FUDGONG FUNNIES* is out and gut-splitting as usual—only 50¢ to P.O. Box 78, Keansburg, NJ 07734...An artist of a different (almost hallucinogenic!) calibre, *Robert Michael*, has brought out #3 of *CRAZY ADULT*—it's an acquired taste, but I think it's worth the effort; send \$2.25 to 46 Barn Rd., Agawam, MA 01001...The *NY SubG* *Deval* is but two weeks away as I write, and my fellow ranter and Pope of Long Island (someone has to be) *Vinnie Bartilucci* has published his latest tract, *DIARRHETICS* (about Ecotremedication), for the asking and two bits. It's a tad *MTINTK*, but funny anyway; send to 45 Newburgh St., Elmont, NY 11003...Anyone with what the *SubG's* refer to as a *Conspiracy Job* should be reading *PROCESSED WORLD*. Issue 17 tells horror tales of termination, union organization attempts, chemical contamination of Silicon Valley workers, and contains

some great fiction and poetry (and a hilariously scary board game in the centerfold)—48 slick and typeset pages (it helps that co-editor *Lucius Cabins' Con Job* is in graphic design!) for \$3 to 41 Sutter St., #1829, San Francisco, CA 94104...The politics are a bit naive and simplistic, and editor *Jared Scarborough* actually believes marijuana makes one revert to a 5-year-old state, but the fall '86 issue of *TREETOP PANORAMA* is most noteworthy for its readers' letter/stories of rural life in America's heartland; it's an excellent way to get back in mental touch with a lifestyle one doesn't often see chronicled in the independent press. Send \$1 to Route One Box 160, Payson, IL 62360...This brings us to our batch of regularly-received publications, which have all been plugged more fully in previous *IJs* (but if you'd like a more detailed personal synopsis, write me & ask about the zine in question). Many of the following contain the designation "creative zine," which can mean anything from the eccentric to the bizarre to the literarily excellent so, as always, I'd love to suggest you send for as many as you'd like! *BABUSHKIN'S DIGEST* V.2#9—*L.D. Babushkin*, P.O. Box 128, Rosendale, NY 12472 (Jewish leftist creative zine, this one the special "atonement issue;" free but send donation, check payable to "L. Bush"); *BITCH* #12—*Lori Twersky*, San Jose Face, Suite 164, 478 W. Hamilton Ave., Campbell, CA 95008 (women in mate; \$1.75); *THE BLOTTER* #7—*C.F. Kennedy*, 233 Woodbine Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4L 3P3 CANADA (literary creative zine; \$5/year for 6 issues); *LACTUCA* #4—*Mike Selender*, P.O. Box 621, Suffern, NY 10901 (literary creative quarterly; \$5); *LIVE FROM THE STAGGER CAFE*—*Luke McGuff*, P.O. Box 3680, Minneapolis, MN 55403 (creative zine; \$2); *META-SCOOP* V.3#11/12—*Barbara Sowell/Deb Armstrong*, 1004 Live Oak Ste. 101, Arlington, TX 76012 (metaphysical New Age zine; \$10/year); *THE MONKEES/BOYCE & HART PHOTO FAN CLUB* #67—*Jodi Hammrich*, P.O. Box 411, Watertown, SD 57201-0411 (2 issues this time, celebrating the concert/convention in LA when all 4 Monkees reunited; 50¢ + SASE); *THE MONTHLY...BULLETIN* #s 46, 47—*T.S. Child*, 2510 Bancroft Way #207, Berkeley, CA 94704 (creative zine; 50¢—and see elsewhere in this issue for an ad about T.S. and Denver's 1987 Calendar offer!); *NOTES FROM OBLIVION* #15—*Jay Harber*, 626 Paddock Lane, Libertyville, IL 60048 (creative zine, mostly correspondence & philosophy; send a buck and perhaps a tape-letter); *OUTER SHELL* V.14—*Roy Harper*, Box 7053, St. Petersburg, FL 33734 (one-sheet creative zine; SASE); *PHOEBE* V.3#7—*James MacDougall*, 1162 Routes 5 & 20, Waterloo, NY 13165 (creative zine, note address change; 55¢); *THE PIG PAPER* #28—*Gary Pig Gold*, 70 Cotton Dr., Mississauga, Ont. L5G 1Z9 CANADA (one-sheet creative zine; SASE); *THE SOUTHERN LIBERTARIAN MESSENGER* V.15#5—*John Harillee*, Rt. 10 Box 52A, Florence, SC 29501 (libertarian; \$5/yr US, \$6/yr Canada). See you in the funny papers!

(Sorry the "regulars" section is a bit illegible—if you can't read some-thing, just ask!)



"OH-NO!!! JUST WHEN I'VE HIT SIX NUMBERS!..."



DIARY of The ROCK FIEND

by Anni Ackner

INSIDE DOPE

Naturally, as I have intimated time and time again, I want nothing more from this life than to be a good citizen of this fair nation of ours. Yes, far more than the transient glitter of material wealth (which is getting even more transient than one likes to consider these days, particularly around the 15th of the month), the fleeting satisfaction of fame (which, as a matter of fact, doesn't get you all that far anyway, especially with all those folks who suddenly wake up and realize they Know You along about the 15th of the month), and the arguably hallucinatory effects of being in love (about which the less said the better, come to think of it), far more even than my mad, mad desire to have some smart magazine editor approach me about doing a series of articles, comparing the broiled lobster purveyed by every decent seafood restaurant on the East Coast, with me doing my own comparison tasting (smart magazine editors please take note), is my insatiable yearning to stand up tall and proud and do my utmost to aid my country and the stalwart man who leads it.

In this capacity, I have, I must admit, with all due modesty, taken a role in many projects and activities. Wasn't it I, after all, who enlisted in the War on Poverty by organizing the Writers' March Against Contributors' Copies? Wasn't it I who sought to Help Beautify America by filing a Class Action Suit against the manufacturers of Hawaiian shirts, and who else could it have been but I who fought to stamp out pollution by seeking legislation banning the use of Obsession perfume within five miles of any public gathering place larger than a toll booth? With all this, you might think that I would be content to rest on my laurels and retire from the field of active good citizenship, but no, my friends. On the contrary, I find that the need for my contributions is at its greatest right now, and my most insistent challenge is still ahead of me. I find, in these troubled times, that Our President requires my aid in his holy War on Drugs.

Now, I have nothing but the utmost respect for Our President. He is a man of sterling worth, brave, upright and true, and really, one has to admire a man who has managed to live through getting shot, cancer and being married to the world's oldest living anorectic, all the while looking as though he had done nothing more strenuous than stage a covert bombing raid on Libya, but, in the case of the War on Drugs, I am very much afraid that—oh, dare I say such a thing—he has made two rather grave tactical errors. It isn't his fault, of course. A man such as he cannot possibly have made the acquaintance of many ravening dope fiends, and so cannot possess the knowledge of how to deal properly with them. Nevertheless, these two errors are of such seriousness and importance that they threaten the success of the entire War on Drugs if they are not immediately corrected, so I am certain that Our President will excuse my presumption if I respectfully point out to him that (A) Not everyone who sometimes uses drugs is a Ravening Dope Fiend, and (B) the currently popular urine test is no way to separate the Ravening Dope Fiends from the decent, law-abiding people of our land.

As far as the first goes, well, it's a common enough misconception. When one—especially so honest and forthright a one as Our President—sees two grown-up adult people laughing hysterically at dead baby jokes, tripping over things on the carpeting that aren't sized refrigerator as though they had just spent six weeks on the Pritiken diet, it's difficult for the layperson, or even the transient professional, to tell which one is the Ravening Dope Fiend and which one just an occasional user who simply happened to get hold of a little tid-bit of extra-good quality.

But why, you may ask, should we bother to make the distinction at all? Aren't occasional drug users apt to go on to become Ravening Dope Fiends at the slightest provocation, and shouldn't we nip this tendency in the bud while we can? Ah, but you see, this is merely another common misconception. In truth, occasional drug users tend, more often than not, to either stay occasional drug users, or give the thing up altogether when they realize they are spending inordinate amounts of time looking for the hidden cosmic implications in the latest copy of ARCHIE AND JUGHEAD, or go on to become nice, normal, three-martini-lunch drinkers like the rest of us. Rarely do they ever become Ravening Dope Fiends and so, rarely do they ever cause any real trouble beyond that of being forced to listen to a three-hour soliloquy on the joys of Thai stick as opposed to those of San Simiella at parties. No, we should not trouble to waste our precious time and resources on these people, who are nothing more than talkative—or sleepy—pests. It is that Ravening Dope Fiend, the scourge of our streets, that we are after.

As such, then, it should be obvious that the standard Random Drug Test, involving urine screening, is absolutely no use whatsoever. Not to put too fine a point on it, but to a specimen jar full of human liquid waste, a trace of drugs is a trace of drugs—it makes no distinction between the wee-wee taken from a dope-crazed killer who, after testing, will be happy to go out and rape your poor, ailing granny, and that of some poor, unlucky fool who just happened to smoke one of this thrice-yearly joints on the morning before the test.

Well then, you may be asking with justifiable impatience, what is there to be done about this horrible problem facing our coun-

try? Anni promised us aid, but so far all she's done is complain about the way Our President is handling this mess. To this I reply, "Fear not, my fellow Americans, for I, out of my long experience in dealing with, around and periodically to Ravening Dope Fiends, have evolved a brief, fool-proof, painless test that is guaranteed to separate the Ravening Dope Fiends from the Weekend Users." Easy to administer, inexpensive and virtually error-free, requiring everyone in the country to submit to this test will assure us that the Ravening Dope Fiends blighting our country will be weeded out and treated accordingly, and all without mess, bother, or the need to perform certain bodily gymnastics that those of us with poor aim find well-nigh impossible. And so, without further ado, I hereby, in my role as Good Citizen Extraordinaire, offer, free of charge, to this great land of ours, and its sainted President, the following:

ABSOLUTELY ERROR-FREE, QUICK 'N' EASY DRUG SCREENING TEST

Choose the answer to each question that most closely corresponds to the way that you feel. Be honest. We have ways of getting the truth out of you.

- 1) Take a look at your bedroom wall. You see:
 - a) Pale, pastel wallpaper with a lovely floral design.
 - b) A solid colour—you're into monochromatics this year.
 - c) A poster of Twisted Sister.
 - d) Embryo pigs in tuxedos dancing the fandango with the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- 2) For breakfast this morning you had:
 - a) Juice, toast, scrambled eggs and a bowl of cereal with fresh fruit.
 - b) Home-made yogurt, brewer's yeast, decaffeinated dark Franch roast coffee ground in your own grinder.
 - c) A double Whopper with cheese, a can of Coke, a package of Twinkies and a Milky Way.
 - d) A newborn infant stolen from its mother's arms.
- 3) Your favorite television programme is:
 - a) THE COSBY SHOW.
 - b) CHEERS.
 - c) Re-runs of GILLIGAN'S ISLAND.
 - d) Embryo pigs in tuxedos dancing the fandango with the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- 4) Pee Wee Herman is:
 - a) A silly, revolting juvenile jerk.
 - b) A mildly amusing and occasionally inventive comedian.
 - c) Funny.
 - d) The Dalai Lama of Tibet in the guise of the Anti-Christ.
- 5) Your hobbies are:
 - a) Needlepoint and painting ceramic clowns.
 - b) Non-existent, as your career doesn't allow you much free time, but you do like to get in a little racquetball.
 - c) Publishing a small-press journal dedicated to a rock band whose lead singer is reputed to be able to bite his own toenails while singing STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN, and clipping articles from the Weekly World News.
 - d) Kicking the crutches out from underneath handicapped people, breaking and entering, aggravated assault, and plotting ways to undermine the moral fabric of society.
- 6) Upon taking leave of an acquaintance, you customarily say:
 - a) "Have a nice day."
 - b) "Ciao."
 - c) Live long and prosper."
 - d) "Helter Skelter."
- 7) Your ideal job would be:
 - a) Something rewarding, that allows you to work with people, but still leaves you plenty of time to spend with your family.
 - b) Very highly paid, with a lot of prestige.
 - c) Some place where you don't have to work too hard, and they don't care if you use the word processor and copier for your own stuff.
 - d) Around small children, so you can shoot them up with heroin and molest them.
- 8) Last night before you fell asleep you dreamed about:
 - a) That little cottage in the country you mean to buy someday.
 - b) That eight-room condo on the Upper West Side on which you just placed a down payment.
 - c) Life in the Sixties.
 - d) John Hinckley.
- 9) Your favourite article of clothing is:
 - a) Your warm, comfy, faded old red checked flannel shirt.
 - b) Your beige linen blazer—perfect for office or evening.
 - c) Your "I was born this way. What's your excuse?" t-shirt.
 - d) your vermin-ridden, blood-encrusted, filthy raincoat.
- 10) In the 1986 World Series, you rooted for:
 - a) The Boston Red Sox, because they were the underdogs.
 - b) The New York Mets, because they were almost certain to win.
 - c) No one. Baseball is boring.
 - d) A team of Libyan terrorists to toss hand grenades down on to the playing field.

SCORING

Give yourself 1 point for every "a" answer, 2 points for every "b" answer, 3 points for every "c" answer and 4 points for every "d" answer.

10-19 points: You are a decent, normal, 100% All-American fine citizen. You are the friend and protector of children, small

(line missing -oops, sorry Anni!) → there, and eating their way through the contents of a banquet

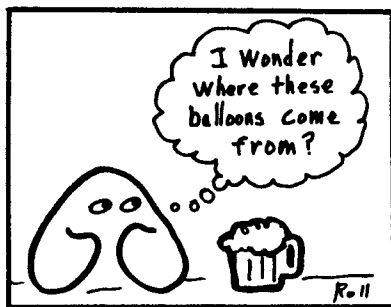
furry creatures, and the democratic way of life, a defender of morality, a supporter of the S.D.I., and probably bowl one heck of a good game. You fully understand the danger threatening our country from Ravening Dope Fiends, and God loves you for it.

20-29 points: You are a young, urban professional, upwardly mobile and proud of it. You believe very strongly in the free market, the capitalist system, and the American Express Gold Card, for they have been good to you. You own a video camcorder, a small but tasteful fiberglass weekend boat, and an Abyssinian cat named "Bubba." You may possibly have experimented with drugs on one or two rare occasions, but gave it up when you realized it was interfering with your clearness of thought, and God respects you for it.

30-34 points: You are an occasional or recreational drug user and, though you are playing with fire, will probably escape none the worse for it, which is a good deal more than you deserve. You have a taste for the bizarre, the peculiar, the arcane, harbour several disgusting personal habits, and own at least one photograph that would embarrass your poor mother just to death were she to see it. You have a tendency to act silly in public and, although you manage to function relatively well when sober, undergo a complete and pernicious change in personality when under the influence of drugs, and God thinks you're a rumbum for it.

35-40: You are a Ravening Dope Fiend. You are the scum of the earth, a debased and utter degenerate about whom one cannot find enough slimy things to say, and God wants you to report to your nearest police station immediately and turn yourself in.

Although I am certain that the efficaciousness of this little test will be immediately recognized, and the test itself put into general usage, and although I am equally certain that Our President, being the sort of man he is, will wish to reward me for my efforts in some way—say, something along the lines of the Congressional Medal of Honour, or perhaps naming a small interstate highway after me—I must ask that all such recompense be withheld, for I desire no remuneration. My reward will be in the knowing that our beloved country is finally free from the scourge of killer drugs, our streets are cleaned of menace and mayhem, our children will grow up happy and healthy, and in the crisp, \$50 bill I will require be paid to me every time the test is issued. I can ask for nothing greater.



Scathing Expose of the Cult Business!

How to start your own.
\$1 for introductory book.
Peels the lies off the 1,000
bogus cults and self-help
programs in America.

The SubGenius Foundation
P.O. Box 140306
Dallas, TX 75214

Fear and Loathing on The CBS Morning News by Brian Pearce

For those of you left with even the slightest bit of nagging doubt about the matter, it is now official: NOBODY watches the CBS MORNING NEWS. Nobody. Not a soul. In fact, a recent Nielsen survey found that 80% of the viewers commonly awake at that hour prefer wading on all fours through red-hot nails, shards of broken glass, and unidentified squishy things to the CBS MORNING NEWS. Another 12% prefer simply adding vinegar to their morning coffee.

Even I don't watch the CBS MORNING NEWS. Then again, I'm not usually awake at that hour (at least, not since Connie Chung got married). As a matter of fact, I think the last time I even watched the show was when, for reasons of economy, they started occupying the same set as CBS News NIGHTWATCH (and that was only because I wanted to see how the set looked under better lighting). I guess I'm just not a morning person.

I do keep hearing about it, though—all the time. Everywhere I turn. My wife tends to think I watch too much ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT...which is probably why. But it certainly has become a hot gossip topic; darned if I know why. Probably because hardly anyone stays long enough to keep an anchor chair warm down there. (Mind you, this is CBS—the network at which Walter Cronkite spent nearly 20 years in the same anchor chair...and left quite an impression...on the chair.) But it hasn't always been like this. Or has it?

For many years, the show was basically left alone. At some point, though, it finally dawned on the network that a morning news program could be quite profitable, yet somewhat inexpensive. CBS, basically at a loss for anything better, gave us Charles Kuralt and Diane Sawyer (in a format borrowed from the critically-acclaimed CBS News SUNDAY MORNING). You might say they started out with a best foot forward and a heart in the right place.

The show's ratings, though, were not. In fact, they were, as I remember, particularly dismal. And so, rather than grin a bit, and let the relatively new show find and build an audience—you'll notice something of a trend beginning here—CBS decided to let Charles Kuralt sleep in during the week. Or go on the road. Or something. It was something of a noble experiment...but the net-

work, figuring that the show was so different from its more successful competition (mostly in terms of the pacing of the program, which seemed better suited to a Sunday morning) that it'd NEVER find an audience, opted for back-to-the-ol'-drawing-board and all that. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

And in came Bill Kurtis, top-rated anchor from the CBS owned 'n' operated station in Chicago. At that point, I think about 7 or 8 additional people started watching. Maybe 9. Actually, the network was reasonably certain it'd found what it was looking for—whatever that was.

So, they redesigned the set. At least twice. (Obviously, the ratings problem must also be an aesthetics problem.) Then they started using the same set as NIGHTWATCH, but that didn't seem to help much. And finally it occurred to Diane Sawyer that she could make something better of her career with the network, and still sleep in days. So she left. And that's when the fun REALLY began...

Eventually, they replaced Diane Sawyer...with Phyllis George (just about the most inspired decision since Florence Henderson joined TODAY). Then Bill Kurtis left for Chicago (if I had to work with the woman, I'd quit too). They fire Phyllis George (about the most inspired decision since they hired Phyllis George). Substitutions galore. Watch the zany fun!

And back to square one, with Forrest Sawyer and Maria Shriver. Not for long, though—at least not in CBS MORNING NEWS terms. As you've no doubt heard, they've been given their walking papers... and we wait for the all-new, all-different, thrill-packed extravaganza CBS has planned for January of 1987. In the interim, Bob Scheffer and Faith Daniels anchor the last vestige of the CBS MORNING NEWS. By the way, this is a prime opportunity for all you Bob Scheffer fans—get those letter-writing campaigns and petitions afoot!

In the meanwhile, exact details of the aforementioned all-new, all-different, thrill-packed extravaganza are as of yet unavailable. (ED. UPDATE: Well, somewhat available. The new show, tentatively titled THE BREAKFAST SHOW, has signed on Marlette "I'm Not James Garner's Wife" Hartley as host(s). Which means, in practical terms, that about as many people as actually watch the broadcast actually know what's going on. I hear the show will be produced by a brand-spanking-new division within the CBS Broadcast Group, with CBS News as a major contributor. Which will probably mean more money spent on the same sort of losing proposition, but an opportunity for a tax write-off somewhere. Whatever...it sure is a good way to keep a secret.)

This is a decision arrived at by many months of precise indecision and careful bumbling on the part of CBS. Some months back, the network hired Susan Winston (formerly a producer at GOOD MORNING AMERICA) to come in and fix their proverbial little red wagon. And, for awhile at least, there was actually some sort of excitement at 51 West 52nd Street.

Reportedly, Winston's first concept for the morning slot was a revival of MIGHTY MOUSE PLAYHOUSE...she even went as far as to dress up Forrest Sawyer in costume and have him sing in operetta fashion. (She was, though, unable to convince David Hartman to appear as Oil Can Harry...) Management sat on it for a few days, but when negotiations with Dick Van Dyke (the original host of the show) fell through at the last minute, they sent Winston back to the think tank. Her second idea, a program with the tentative title ACROSS AMERICA, wasn't anything to scream about (at least, not in comparison with the first).

But the talk of who might anchor the program certainly was. I don't know about you, but I'd be up at 7:00am in a minute to see Charles Osgood and Linda Ellerbee on the same broadcast. I know, I know...it certainly wouldn't last long. (These are the people who sent Charles Kuralt back ON THE ROAD, after all.) But gee whiz...it sure would've been fun, wouldn't it?

As it turns out, Susan Winston gets to sleep in days for the time being—she and the network have parted company. Presumably because CBS listened to what she had to offer...and then chose to ignore her (that, or they insisted that Phyllis George was a perfect co-anchor for ACROSS AMERICA). I know, I don't understand it either.

I don't recall the exact quote (as newspapers tend to clutter up the apartment rather quickly and I tend to throw them out), but Van Gordon Sauter (recently ousted President of CBS News) had made a reference to the effect that the problems with the CBS MORNING NEWS are quite simple. It seems people are staying away from the broadcast because CBS is known and respected for news, and potential viewers are under the impression that the broadcast is straight news. [Which, long ago, was once the case...for the longest time, the CBS MORNING NEWS was just that. And really the only viable alternative to TODAY. I can't say I remember it myself, as I was raised in a TODAY neighborhood, but a friend of mine fondly recalls those days of yore, as far back as 1973. That was the time when you could watch SUNRISE SEMESTER, CAPTAIN KANGAROO and really make a day of it. But, as usual, I digress.]

This is probably not quite the case, despite the presence of "NEWS" in the title. A few television critics claim people are staying away due to rumors of seeing favorite anchorpersons sliced and diced on the air. I happen to think it's because people really DO want to see a revival of MIGHTY MOUSE PLAYHOUSE. I know I do.

Or maybe that show with the hand puppets that Walter Cronkite used to host. Or how about Linda Ellerbee and TOM TERRIFIC?...
NEXT: How many TODAY anchors can you stuff in a phone booth?

by Tom Gedwillo

Why I Don't Like Dentists

by Larry Oberc

The day before I got my wisdom teeth pulled out I told everyone in the breakroom at work they better wish the dentist luck because if I woke up while he was pulling a tooth he was going to need it...

So the dentist tells me after he's got me in the chair, a chained napkin around my neck holding me prisoner, IV in my arm, white towel covering a tray of tooth-pulling devices hidden from the public, that HE'S CHANGED HIS MIND!, THAT HE'S NOT GOING TO KNOCK ME OUT AFTER ALL!, THE BASTARD!, and there's nothing I can do about it, it's beyond recall, the last minute has come and gone, a month ago he told me sure, I'll knock you out, no problem, now he tells me NOT TO PANIC!, THAT PANICKING WILL ONLY MAKE IT WORSE ON MYSELF!, that's like telling a newborn baby boy not to squirm while getting circumcized, that squirming will only make it worse, things are going wrong in a hurry, the IV Lady squirts juice in my vein before I can properly plan an escape, before I can call the dentist any of the names popping into my head, everything fades, then, THERE'S A TUG!, my head is jerked to one side, my eyes quickly focus, THAT BASTARD IS UP TO SOMETHING!, it can't be good, I see a plyers deal with a tooth in it, I look at the dentist with fish-eyed meanness, he said I'd miss the show, that I wouldn't know anything was going on, PING!, the tooth drops on the now uncovered tray full of wicked tooth-pulling instruments, UGAH! I grunt UGAH!, letting the dentist know I'm on to his game, that I've caught him IN THE ACT!, he quickly tells the IV Lady 2 CCs, she squirts unashamedly into my arm, everything fades, peaceful, quiet, then another tug, WHY CAN'T THESE DAMN PEOPLE LEAVE ME ALONE?, let me enjoy life, appreciate the buzz, I go UGAH UGAH UGAH!!!, 2 CCs quick says the dentist afraid I might get out of hand, I learn quickly, like a rat pressing a bar for food pellets, I go UGAH UGAH UGAH!!!, trying to get my money's worth, squirt, squirt, tug, double tug, the tooth is fighting back, me, I don't give a shit who wins, the tooth or dentist, just as long as I keep getting squirted, then, it's over, they pull the IV out of my arm, the dentist asks me if I can stand, sure I say, I stand, now can you walk he asks, why shouldn't I be able to walk I ask, you didn't do nothing to my legs did you, no no he answers, I take a step, no problem, the dentist asks me if I can walk to the recovery room, sure I tell him, I've walked a lot more fucked up than this, I walk unassisted to the recovery room, the dentist and IV Lady stare at me, apparently they aren't used to quick recoveries, I sit down, quickly get bored, start looking around, I can see the receptionist's desk around the corner, not having anything else to do I watch her, a few minutes later the dentist makes sure I'm still alive, the IV Lady avoids me, I stand up, start to walk out of the recovery room, the IV Lady appears out of nowhere, blocks my path, says WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?, YOU HAVE TO STAY SEATED, THERE MIGHT BE SIDE EFFECTS, I continue to stand there, looking at her, wondering why she's so upset, SHE SCREAMS for the dentist, the receptionist picks up the phone like she's going to call the cops, the dentist runs into the hallway with his plyers looking like a weapon, I tell the dentist I want to go home, I can tell by looking at everyone there they want me to go home too, the dentist tells the receptionist, who is still holding the phone, to call a cab, the IV Lady makes me wait in the office for the cab, these people don't seem to trust me, the cab pulls up, when I get home I take off my clothes, get into bed, tell myself that I should get some sleep, that I had three teeth pulled, I lay there twenty minutes, not the least bit tired, walk into the bathroom and look in the mirror, no swelling, I get dressed, feel fine, go downtown, cash a check, stop by the Radio Shack for some antenna wire for my stereo, hit the grocery store for cream of this that the other soup, go home, open a beer, and start typing this...

"In the old days, secret societies had other (than political) objects. What these were we do not always know, though those of the East had mainly philosophy in view. The Egyptians had mysteries of the most elaborate kind, and in Asia there are societies which still retain peculiar initiation ceremonies."

- Muriel Domingo "The Empire of Might" (1923)

We can look back now and see that over the years there have been, unapparent to us, strong mystical connections among secret societies, drive-in cuisine, and popular music. With the help of Ms. Domingo's treatise of a half-century ago, I will explore the religious and anti-social aspects of leisure time.

THE MAGI: Magus is derived from Maja, the mirror wherein Brahm, according to Indian mythology, first saw the image of Cole Porter. (See "Legends of Peru, Indiana" Beguine Press 1965.) The Magus makes the operations of the Eternal Life his study, and his power truly was that of a king. The Magi are recorded to have been led by the star to the cradle of Elvis Presley.

THE DRUIDS: Taught the doctrine of one supreme being, the Druids entertained great respect for the numbers three, seven, nineteen, and twenty-three. Many of the practices of the Druids are still adhered to in freemasonry (sun and star worship) and found their first introduction to post-World War II culture in such recordings as "Down the Road Apiece" (Amos Milburn) and "Good Rockin' Tonight" (Roy Brown).

THE THUGS: Like all similar societies, the Thugs have had their traditions. According to them, Kroc in the beginning determined to destroy the whole human race by the slow administration of mass-produced and conveniently-packaged "food" parcels. The Thugs had their saints and martyrs, Wendy and Sanders being two of the most famous. Worshipers of a deity delighting in sodium, twentieth-century descendants are still found among the crazed population of transients who live on a diet of dumpster scraps behind fast food restaurants.

THE PHOENIX: The Egyptians began the year with the rising leg of the dog-star (Sirius). They had many feasts that coincided with the positioning of the constellations and for Sirius they symbolized the season with a bird known as the Phoenix. (See "Death, Resurrection, Ad Nauseum" Falcon Books 1951.) Dying upon the altar of the sun, out of its ashes there arose a little glow worm that gave birth to a bird. The bird is the word.

THE CABBALA: This has metaphysical speculations concerning the Deity and the worlds visible and invisible. Daniel, the pontiff of the Magic Dragon and prophet of Peter, Paul and Mary, may be considered the chief founder of the Cabbala. Each patriarch was assigned a familiar spirit and the Alexander School of Great Thought put forth that as time went on, Philo Vance supplanted Daniel. Cabbala has two principle written sources. The first ("Book of Words") is a series of monologues and violin scriptures supposedly introduced by Sefer Youngman. The second ("Zardoz") is a mystical presentation attributed to Simon ben Yohai LeBon.

THE DERVISHES: The theological basis of these sects is a form of Sufism, signified by a personal credit union with God. The celebrated Persian poet and restaurateur Omar "The Grill" Khayyam was a practicing member of the Dervishes (aka Fakirs or Quakers). Offshoots include howling dervishes, whirling dervishes, spinning dervishes and roller dervishes. Certain "heavy-metal" recording groups of this century base their lyrics on the four Islamic orders of this society: 1) The Riff-raff, who carry black flags and smoke unfiltered Camels. 2) The Kaderijeh, with their white flags; they are mainly fisherman and the world's leading exporters of Turtle Wax. 3) The Bidani Men, whose founder is the greatest saint of Egyptian popular music, Achmed Lee Lewis. (See "What? No Business Acumen?" by Sam Phillips, C.T. Parker Ltd. 1955.) 4. The Obla Ibrahim, with green flags and pointed slippers; they are the original architects of domed stadiums. All that is known of them is that they have franchises in most large cities.

PUMPKIN HEAD

BRIAN GYANZARD '86

YEAH, BUT IT'S GOTTEN SO COMMERCIAL AND EXPENSIVE!



I REMEMBER WHEN WE WERE KIDS, THERE WERE DOZENS OF WIERD APPARITIONS SPOOKING THE STREETS



BY THE WAY, PUMPKIN, THANKS FOR THE HALLOWE'EN CARD



LAI #3
by Michael McInnis
On ships we deploy.
In a large convoy
We sail.
Once past the last buoy,
Kid from Illinois
was pale.
We laughed at the boy
Too sick to enjoy
The gale.

1984: Nuke 'em, Don-o

by Mike Gunderloy

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We at IJ are fortunate to have acquired a small portion of the forthcoming autobiography of Pope Sicile I, soon to see print in book form as *HOW I GOT THERE FROM HERE*, aka *Fear and Loathing in Bakersfield*. As far as can be determined, the Pope lives in a reality which diverged from ours some time in the late 70's. How this manuscript came to be available in the IJ Postal Suite is still a mystery, but we are investigating.)

The sun came up over the Nevada desert like the bloodshot eye of a gargantuan Gila Monster. Herr Doktor Gold and I stood in the early dawn and surveyed the remains of the erstwhile ambulance, now repainted a nondescript grey. A patch of dark sand glared back at us from between the front wheels, silent testimony to the cracked engine block.

"Maybe," commented my buddy, "we shouldn't have stressed the poor thing so much. Should have stopped back there at that fence instead of running for it. But then..." his voice trailed off as he opened the white lab coat to reveal the Hawaiian shorts beneath. Shrugging, he began to apply some of his hoarded suntan lotion to the vast expanse of belly this maneuver revealed.

"But then," I continued, "we would have had to explain to the authorities just what we were doing here in a stolen ambulance, loaded with stolen drugs, dodging the draft." I kicked a rock and a scorpion scuttled out from underneath, vanishing under a mesquite bush a moment later. "All in all, I think we did the prudent thing."

"Yeah, well," said Herb, "I just hope they don't have any more gas handy." He chuckled. "Sure did make a nice bonfire, the way it blew up when the Molotov hit their fuel dump. Nice toss, old buddy."

"It was nothing," I said, inwardly quiet pleased with myself and with Herb's compliment. But worry fought with pleasure and threatened to win. I hadn't been able to read the sign on the way into whatever this place was, but it had had the international radiation warning sign. And it was certainly unusual to see even a platoon of Regular Army troops guarding anything in the interior, so far from the cities or the battle zones. All of the shit jobs went to the National Guard these days, which was filled mainly with convicts: guys rounded up for (like me and Herb) dodging the draft. And that they had gasoline...we'd been lucky to have the lab ethanol to run the van on, even though it pained us to burn it instead of drinking it. But with black-market gas at one hundred and thirty new dollars to the gallon, and us without any of the devalued currency at all (you had to give your registration number when changing it), it was the only way to get around.

"Hey, buddy, look at this stuff." Herb's voice woke me from my reverie, and I almost caught the rock he tossed my way. Bending over to pick it up, I saw that it was some sort of green glassy stuff, with a few grains of black sand fused into it. Was it Tellerite that it was called? I couldn't remember, but I knew what caused it—atomic explosions atop the desert sands. Shit. We must be right in the middle of the old testing range. But the range had been shut down since the One-Day War back in '80, since Iran had made so much better a testing place. Or had it? I had this awful suspicion that I knew what the sign had said back at the fence we crashed.

Worry won the battle in my head as I explained my suspicions to my partner. His response was to walk over to the van, open his black bag, and fish out some blotter paper. Tearing off a strip and putting it under his tongue, he walked back over to me. "What now, Al? Run for it?" he asked, handing the acid to me.

"I don't think so," I said, tearing off a strip and chewing it myself. "Vegas is out, of course, and so is Salt Lake. That takes care of South and East. West is Death Valley, and I'd just as soon not visit there in mid-August, thank you very much. And North...we'd have to cross the test range itself. I don't figure those Army dudes would have been there if they weren't doing something real soon, like today. Nope, I think we'd better dig in and hope for the best. After things settle down, maybe we can skirt Vegas and head over towards Arizona. I knew some folks who were down by one of the Indian reservations there, before all this started."

I wished we could have made a run for one of the major cities—it would be nice to have a shower again—but the only two close ones were certainly not for a couple of fugitives. Right after the War, Vegas had been turned over to the Mob completely, in exchange for hard currency. It turned out they had more gold than anyone had suspected, and now even the military government stayed out of the area. Strangers without a family tattoo were rumoured to be roasted for dinner, or worse. As for Salt Lake City, it was a hotbed of National Service activity, as the Mormons took very well to the blind personal obedience to President Danner. I had had very little experience with those modern Hitler Youth, would carry the scars the rest of my life, and didn't particularly want any more.

Puzzling over our tattered Triple-A maps, we took our best guess as to the direction of Frenchman's Flats, and pushed the van around so that it was broadside to the anticipated blast. Then we unloaded everything, dividing it up into two piles, one to take and one to leave behind. The sun climbed higher and we started to sweat profusely. Herb stripped down to just shorts and sunglasses as the LSD took hold and I went for blue jeans and my ragged-ass camo hat. We were both basking in the sun like drug-crazed iguanas as we pulled out the last piece of machinery, the stolen heart-lung machine.

"Too bad we never came up with a use for this sucker," complained Herb. "And we couldn't even find a buyer. Oh well, easy come, easy go." He picked up a crescent wrench and walloped the glass oxygenation chamber. Shards flew lazily through the air, leaving multi-colored streaks behind on my altered retina.

It was a bit of a struggle to tip the van over, even empty, but by using the lightbar as a lever we finally managed. We had shovelled out a trench about two and a half feet deep behind it when the whole world turned white around us. "Drop!" I shouted. It proved to be unnecessary, as Herb was already flat on the ground. I joined him and we pulled the sliding door of the van, previously detached, across us.

It was damned hot in that hole, and it would have been dark if we weren't both so cranked up by now that it didn't matter. I could feel the peak coming on as the ground shook beneath us and the winds started. There was a sound like small-arms fire as flying rocks and gravel hit the top of the van, and the tinkle of shattered windows. Then the howl of the wind died down and the good Doktor pushed the door aside.

"As your physician," he pronounced, standing unsteadily, "I advise you that your kids are going to have green tentacles. Also, we'll be safer inside the van when the fallout arrives than in the piss-ass slit trench. Help me get this door back on and we'll pile some dirt on top of it."

I got up to give him a hand and then stood there, petrified by the terrible beauty of it all. What with all the CIA experiments back in the 60's, I suppose it's possible that we were not the first people to see the aftermath of an atomic bomb while peaking on acid, but I rather doubt it. The Washington Post would have dug up that story long before the controls were put on them, if that were true. In any case, we're sure to be part of a select few.

The mushroom cloud was just beginning to rise in the clean desert air, glowing gently in a million colors that only we could see. The very air around us glowed softly. The vanishing sighs of the wind sounded like a thousand secret whispers, carrying Zen koans past and through us. And in the cloud itself...well, it would be corny if I told you we saw the face of God. So I'm not going to say anything. Herb understands, having shared the moment with me. But the rest of you are blind, and if you are lucky (or unlucky? In these days I am no longer sure) you will stay that way.

"God damn," whispered my companion, "we should do this more often!"

I agreed with him, and then the spell was broken and we got to work. Soon we were happy inside our almost completely dirt-covered van, having crawled in through the broken windshield, swigging from some of the last Blue Label Bourbon anywhere on earth. Every once in a while one or the other of us started to grin, or chuckle.

A week later we shouldered our packs and set off across the desert.

Distractional Analysis

by Dr. B.F. Ligi,
Pataphysician-in-Residence

(continued from last issue's session, in which we went deeper and deeper...)

Okay, you can wake up now. Admit it. Isn't that better? Don't you feel relaxed? I bet most of you can barely keep your eyes open. That's how relaxed you are, and believe me, when nothing at all bothers you, when you can nod out in front of a radar screen, then you're well on your way to managing stress.

I wish to share with you in your totally relaxed state the full text of former Portland, Oregon, Mayor Frank Ivancie's column the week following his defeat at the hands of a drunken pagan who likes to ride around Portland on a bicycle yelling "Whoop! Whoop!"

FRANK TALK

By Frank Ivancie

ELECTION NIGHT REJECTIONS

Election night is very important to everyone in the universe. But for the rulers—winners or runner-ups—it's a pretty much unique kind of experience. There's the certified tenseness of waiting for the first results, the inebriation or anger as you assess the mayhem and meaninglessness of the vote...and then the grim finality of the verdict itself.

In winning the air is charged with barbecue delight. People reach out to stroke you, swarm over you like hungry ants on a honey-coated head, pat you on the fanny like a happy coach, congratulate you, and offer to perform certain services I am not prepared to mention in a family publication such as this one in rooms which have been reserved upstairs for just such unmentionable purposes.

Losing is something else. I mean I can't really put it into words to describe it to people who have always had it easy and never been winners before, like I have been for the past 26 years. It has this very private side, like a mole on a part of your body that turns you into a priest. When you know it's going to be you that's the loser, you have to set your mind and psych yourself out in a positive direction, like finding a war to channel your tension and less-than-positive feelings into, so that you will be able to inflict terrible agony and punishment upon a real and defined enemy instead of your family and troops and supporters. You've got to direct a young man to charge a pillbox or a tank with one hand-grenade and an air pistol. You've got to call in airstrikes on the VC or Sandinistas or Symbionese Liberation Air Force bases.

You can't let yourself take it personally that there are so many scumbuckets in the world that would vote for some bimbo who thinks people, especially poor people, are more important than economic development and Japanese trade agreements.

No one wins all the time in all things against all of the people. Abraham Lincoln said that. Losing is the risk you take when you rise to a challenge like a feisty old steelhead to a glob of salmon eggs on a 1/0 hook. It's the same in the political arena as it is in life in General Motors or General Electric. You put your record, your accomplishments, and your faith that you will be able to continue the level of fast-lane life to which you have grown accustomed on the line, put on your best business suit, and lie like the devil to keep that good money rolling in. If there's one thing I've learned in 26 years as a politician it's that my job is to find out where the buck stops when it no longer stops here.

I've had my up times and not-so-up times in political and industrial life...I haven't won every battle I've fought. But I've won a good goddamn many more than my dingbat opponent has, and the city is the better for it. And so am I. I feel I've been enriched by my opportunities to lead you, and I want to thank each and every one of you for those opportunities.

You can't be a slushy soldier in life...melting under the neutron bombs of outrageous fortune or the fickle singing sparrows of public opinion. Spiro Agnew said that, and I've made it one of my most favorite mottos. You have to stand your ground like Audie Murphy or Ronald Reagan or Richard Nixon. If you lose, you pick yourself up and go on the lecture tour and advise the incompetent administrations that inevitably follow a period of strong and divisive leadership on foreign policy, morality, and the correct interpretation of executive privilege. Yesterday's gone, as the old song goes, except for what you'll never learn from it. It's today that counts. Tomorrow is a figment in the imaginations of communists and people from outer space. Long-term planning is a waste of time. And all of those who voted for my opponent will see how wrong they were to think about the future instead of thinking of what they could have had right now if they'd kept me in office. Mark my words.

Life is little more than a bad bet. You don't just put down your money and take your chance. Life is a matter of taking whatever you can and leaving as little as possible.

You don't get married if you don't want to have an affair.

You don't start up a business if you don't want to take advantage of tax loopholes.

You don't enter the Olympics expecting to compete against the Russians.

Whatever blunders you make in life, you expect to come out on top. And you expect to get whatever you want with the least bit of effort. At least if you're politically inclined. You have to master the concept of government by wish to succeed in this world.

It's the same in business. You can't sit in the loading zone and expect people to simply load your Buick Regal with fancy jewels, gourmet food and expensive clothes. You have to give money to make money. And you don't give money to poor people because all they do with it is spend it on wine.

You can't listen to the naysayers. You should have them shot. If a project makes sense and it's a good addition to your investment portfolio, you go ahead with it no matter what the poor people think. Most poor people, after all, don't even have addresses, and without an address you can't register to vote, and if you're not registered, you won't vote, and if you don't vote, you can't gripe. That's clear as a bell.

I love this goddamn city. It's been a major part of my self-enrichment for many, many years. It's in my blood like AIDS. Caring for Portland, Oregon, is not something I can turn on and off like the switch on an electric chair.

As the months grind on in my lame duck administration, I'll continue to strive to make this city something any sensitive person with little imagination and lots of money can be proud of, and I'll do it the way I always have...with little integrity and lots of pride. We've come a long way, baby—and I don't mean that purgatorially—in the last 3½ years. We've turned the corner, and the only unfortunate thing is that we find a huge gathering of alcoholics and atheists hanging out under the street lamps. We had such an upbeat and Michael Jackson-type kind of sense of momentum in this city. I won't give in easy. I fully intend to finish what I was elected to do and initiate a write-in campaign to oust my opponent in the November general election.

I want to thank my troops and patrons for flooding this office with calls, letters, telegrams, checks, gold ingots, and currency. They've been reassuring.

Now let me reassure you, too, dear troops and patrons: Winning never hurt anyone. One door opens after another. And being a good loser is no better than being just an average loser. I have faith in money, power, myself, and your write-in votes in November. God bless you all, and go out and win one for the Gimpser.

And I hope all of you will take this text home in your subconscious dreams and study it carefully. It's another grand example of how we in the modern world have learned to manage stress.

And now that you are completely relaxed, for those of you who are still listening to the sound of my voice, or even if you aren't, I am going to count backwards from 10 to 1, and as I do so you will return to your normal selves, but totally relaxed and free from worry and stress.

10. Your muscles are still completely untensed, elongated, supple. You won't remember a thing I have said to you. You feel rested, secure, malleable, and ready to face whatever tasks your supervisor assigns you the rest of the day. You are anxious to do whatever you are asked in a cheerful and efficient manner, no matter how mental and degrading, whether or not you really want to.

9. It's getting easier and easier for you to relax and let go, even if you really don't want to, and whether or not either your left hand or your right hand or neither hand feels more or less heavy or tingly and warm or cold than the other. This makes perfectly good sense to you, even if it doesn't.

8. When you put your hands on the wheel this evening, you will be fully alert and ready to respond to any opportunity that presents itself to crash into large immovable objects or any irresistible force.

7. You can feel flesh on your face again, but it is relaxed and smooth and untroubled. You feel as if you could star in an Ivory Soap commercial, even if you don't really feel that way at all, even though you recognize you are ugly as hell.

6. The muscles in your chest and back are still completely relaxed and rejuvenated. You are so happy and complacent. You would do anything your supervisor asks you just to show him or her how appreciative you are for having been allowed the opportunity to attend these seminars.

5. But you still have some pretty severe problems, most of you, and you could really use with some professional counselling, so whether or not you can hear the sound of my voice, you won't remember what I am telling you, but you are all welcome to come up after class and ask for my card and make an appointment for an introductory visit for the low, low price of \$125, even if you can't really afford it and don't really want to.

4. You are almost back to reality now, and many of you are thinking about registering to vote in Portland, Oregon, so you can write in Frank Ivancie's name in the November General Election.

3. You can feel all of your appendages now, unless, of course, you don't have all your appendages, in which case you can only feel those appendages you still have.

2. You have never been more alive than you are at this moment. If you put your mind to it, you can see that nuclear war is not unthinkable, and one could be won, even if you can't see yourself among one of the big winners.

1. You can open your eyes, stretch, yawn, and feel perfectly at ease with yourself. You don't in the least feel any guilt about

having relaxed during a time when you'd normally be slaving away for little or no purpose and for little or no reward, because you know that a relaxed worker is a more productive worker.

Thank you. You've been a very good class. I'll see you next week, same time, same conference room, at the same free price, when we'll talk briefly about how better to manage your time, before we turn our discussion to how to make the best use of your anger and depression.

Dr. B. F. Ligi, is a consultant for Eagle Enterprises and the Symbionese Liberation Coast Guard. He lives in a houseboat in the Willamette Riverfront Development. His latest book is *Sticking It To Them (Roll Your Own Press, 1983)*.

SATAN'S BRAIN SURGEON

by Rodny Dioxin and Prudence Gaelor

The sky was dark and conspicuously without rolling credits as Dr. Benson Fargo stood in the pouring rain wondering where he'd left his machete. He had his shovel in hand and was set for a good night's digging but it would all be for naught if he'd left the machete back at the lab.

"Perhaps you could conjure up a new one," suggested his assistant shortly before Fargo kicked him in the mud, which was relatively easy as his assistant was a large sentient cabbage (by the name of Rimboldt Dinkhover, from the fourth and a half dimension but that's neither here nor there...I digress).

"Fool vegetable! The dark powers are not to be trifled with." Fargo spat ineffectually in the downpour. It was much like turning on a light bulb next to the sun. Then he remembered where he'd left his machete. It wasn't in the lab at all, but in the van inconspicuously parked behind the Neighborhood Crime Watch sign by the cemetery gates. While he waited for Dinkhover to return with the blade, he began his work on the plot of Dr. Mary Callaghan, 1913-1983, devoted wife, mother and neurosurgeon. He'd get even with the cow. She'd wrecked one of his experiments in Bio. lab in 1933 and it had been all downhill from there. She'd stood him up on fifteen dates in June of '37, had courted him through WWII, had then married his best friend in the early fifties, denied him tenure in the late sixties, and had run off with his youngest daughter to a radical lesbian commune and yoghurt factory in the mid-seventies.

"How fitting, dearest Mary, that you should provide the *materiel* for my greatest experiment." He would have said move but Dinkhover returned and nearly sliced off three of Benson's toes in dropping the machete. Rain always screwed up his psionics, or so Fargo assumed. He recovered and resumed digging. Some time later a candy-apple green van could have been seen (had there been anyone around to see) driving away from Utopia Cemetery. The van took a sharp turn out of the gates and headed off at high speed into the countryside.

Meanwhile, in an apparently unrelated plot development, miles away in a small city where the sun had just been granted a cameo appearance, a young woman slammed her fist into the wall of a hotel lobby. As is usual in such cases the wall won and the young woman said several crude things best left to the imagination (it'll only be cruder that way).

"Shit," she said (negating the previous sentence).

The solitico bellboy with the rampaging glands sensed an opening. "Wow!" he said while studying the fractured plaster on the wall. Then, "Is there anything I can do to help?"

"Yeah. Drop dead, jerk." With that, Holly Calioistro walked into the bar and ordered. "Gimme six beers and a straw."

"Very funny."

"So's yer face."

Holly had what you'd call an attitude problem. She'd been abandoned and raised in an orphanage in Iowa. Now she was out pounding the pavement, headed for New York. She'd not exactly made great progress; having been on the road for several months she'd only gotten as far as Maumee, Ohio. But it had been raining for the last month (or so it seemed) and travelling had been quite washed out, so she'd gotten a job answering phones for a small record company. She liked it okay. She got to meet a lot of cool punk bands (the label's sole product) and that was fun. But most weekends were reduced to trekking down to the local Holiday Inn for Buy-One-Get-One-Free Singapore Sling nights. And her name wasn't really Calioistro anyway. The orphanage hadn't known her name, nor had they been able to locate her records, so they just called her Holly Stein. The Holly part they'd gotten from the embroidered bib she'd been wearing when they found her. Calioistro came to her in a dream so that's what she called herself now.

Holly found herself a corner booth, started putting away her beers, listening to her Walkman. The jukebox, as usual, was spewing out country music. Through the beginnings of an alcoholic haze she saw three emaciated new-wave/big-hair types in the midst of a heated discussion with the bartender. They walked away, each holding a six-pack. Holly realized they were headed for her table but was hardly flattered as there was no one else in the bar. They sat the beer down on the table and the one who appeared to be the leader (most emaciated/biggest hair) leaned over towards Holly and spat in her hair. Holly leapt onto the table and returned the

gesture.

"Fuckin' poseur," she snarled as she jumped off the table and stormed out of the bar. "Gods this sucks! Rain or not, I'm gettin' to New York if I have to walk the whole goddamn way."

Only a mile and a half down the road, Holly decided that walking all the way to NYC just wasn't her idea of great kicks. The buzz had worn off (as it always does) and the tape was melting in her Walkman. Clouds were coming. It was going to rain again.

Was became is and Holly, wet to the lower epidermis, wondered if one could be electrocuted by a Walkman (actually, this is highly unlikely except when one is wet). Her feet hurt as they swelled from walking at the same time her Converse decided to shrink, due to walking along in the gutter, being splashed by passing cars. As she turned to see how soon the next drenching would come, a hideously green van skimmed past, spraying her in the face.

"Hey! Look at the wet fox," said Rimboldt from the dash of the van, as it splashed by a very wet and angry Holly Calioistro. "I didn't know they had wet t-shirt contests in Ohio. I bet she'll win first prize. Whatcha think, Benson? Think she'll win?"

"Silence, you undercooked side-dish! That is a patently stupid assumption. You don't even know that she's going to a wet t-shirt contest. Now pipe down. I'm doing science here."

"Well, we could ask her. Besides, she looked your type. Sorta almost like that Callaghan broad we were poking at earlier."

"The devil you say!" Fargo slammed on the breaks and threw the van into reverse, drenching Holly again. Rolling down the window to check on his find (trustworthy assistants never get the credit), Fargo was assaulted by a long stream of expletives which went something like:

"Hey you goddamn jerk nazi bastard! Whyncha watch where yer drivin' ya brainless commie yahoo?!? Do I look like I need a shower out here?"

Inside the van, Fargo was beside himself. This young one would serve nicely indeed. Soon his revenge would be complete. Nothing would stand between him and the fulfillment of his master scheme for the total destruction of his arch-nemesis. Or, as the sticker on his dashboard said, "you can die—but you can't hide." So did he think as he leaned out into the rain and said, "My dear lady, I feel so badly for having splashed you. May I offer you a lift."

Holly stared at him blankly. Rain pelted her already matted hair. "Well, this is more like it," she said as she climbed into the van. It was warm and toasty inside (meaning, redundantly, that it was also warm and not that it was made of singed bread) and Holly began to feel drowsy from the avoer-over-mentioned warmth. As they drove along she thought to ask what seemed an important question.

"Wass yer name?" she slurred.

"Benson. And this is my dubiously qualified associate Rimboldt. And you are?"

"Holly. Do you always name yer dashboard ornaments?"

"Well, this is a very special ornament. To where may I convey you, Holly?"

"I'm goin' to New York. How 'bout yourself?"

"What providence. That's just exactly where we're headed."

"But I thought we were going straight back to—" Dinkhover got no further as Fargo elbowed him into the glove-box and slammed the door.

"Pipe down, you leafy fiend," Fargo snarled at the door. In reply came muffled obscenities.

"Say, didja ever think of taking yer act onstage?"

"My act?"

"Ventriloquism. You're pretty good, although I saw yer lips move a little at the end."

"You're babbling, my child. Why don't you get some sleep?"

That sounded like a capital idea, so Holly allowed herself to drift off to sleep just in time to miss Dinkhover melting his way through the door of the glove-box.

"Look, Doctor Fargo, she's asleep now so you can stop driving around in circles and head back to the lab. And get someone in to clean up that glove compartment. It's a mess."

"Must you always interrupt me with your trivialities while I'm trying to do serious science? However, my salad-bar reject, you have inadvertently stumbled onto a truth. It is time to get to work. This girl will do quite well, I think. Once I've transplanted Mary's reanimated brain into this body, my revenge will be complete. Yes!! And as an added bonus feature, I'll have uncovered the very secret of life itself. Do you realize what that means?"

"Fat book contracts and the last five minutes of the Carson show?"

"Besides that. It means that I'll finally get the recognition and fame that should've been mine all along."

"That's not why you want to put Mary's brain into this attractive young body."

"Don't go telling me my business, rabbit-food! I'm in charge here. Now, when we get back to the lab, give this wench a bath. I only got into science because it was clean."

Two hours later, Holly was bathed and strapped to a long table in the center of the lab. It was a large room with cheery yellow wallpaper and pastel pink countertops. Fargo hated it but it had been such a bargain he couldn't resist. So, he was now about to commence his greatest work in the former home of "Ma's Country Kitchen and Fish Cleaning Shoppe." Little did he know that his

plans had been subverted by a sinister scheme so diabolical that had Fargo known of it...well, he sure would've been impressed.

Where once customers had shmoozed over chocolate sodas there were now erlenmeyer flasks and beakers filled with arcane liquids and one large mason jar labelled "Mary Callaghan" containing the dearly departed's recently liberated brain. Where in happier times young lovers waited to have their carp scraped there was now an array of sophisticated surgical equipment.

Fargo strode into the room, accompanied by a swell of music from speakers hidden behind the old soft-ice-cream machine. "Thank you, thank you. It's only half of what I deserve. I'd like to thank all the nobel Nobel gnomes and gnomettes. Further—more—"

"Cut the balloon juice, Doc," said Dinkhover as he propelled himself into the small of Fargo's back.

"Screw off, salad-stuff! And go find my copy of The Guide to Quantum Demonology."

"It's right next to you, on the pink table."

"All the tables are pink, you lobotomized legume!"

"Right there, next to the incense and on top of the Liber Albi Columbae. Beats me how this is science. But you're in charge."

"Once again you reveal your pathetic ignorance. Why the dark powers couldn't have sent me a sub-demon, I don't know. Or even a sub-sub-demon...anything would be an improvement. But such is not to be, it seems. Instead they send out to the fourth-and-a-half dimension for some cut-rate semi-assistance that's not even fit for a McDonald's hamburger."

At least that's what Fargo thought. In fact, Dr. Benson Fargo was about as good at quantum demonology as he was at neurosurgery (and there was a string of malpractice suits documenting that). But there really were dark powers at work and if Fargo hadn't been so intent on his chanting he might have noticed the faint trail of glowing gasses that was escaping from the mason jar containing Mary's brain.

Dinkhover finished his preparations on Holly's still unconscious form. "We're all set, Doc. The girl's ready. The brain's ready. Only thing is, I didn't get a chance to feed the Callaghan corpse to the wolves. Did you know there hasn't been a wolf sighted in Ohio since 1915?"

"It was just an expression, you doltish vegetable. Oh, never mind that now. Prepare the sacred scalpel of Zog."

"Do you think it'll work?"

"Of course it will, you overgrown brussel sprout. Imagine, if you will, a similar situation, such as when the Earth collides with a truck."

"Well?"

"Well? WELL?!!? Momentum is still conserved!!!"

"But what's that got to do with this?"

"I don't know. Fuck off."

"What a stupid example. It makes no sense at all. To think you'd actually try to draw a parallel..."

"I don't argue with anything that grows in dirt. Now hand me that scalpel or I'll parboil you."

"Here you go. But I'm leaving now. Brain surgery is just too icky."

"Wimp," cried Fargo after the departing Dinkhover. "He's right, though. Why, this isn't clean at all. Why do people have to bleed so much? The lack of self-control is appalling. Ah well...goodbye, Holly. I'd like to say I'll miss you but you look like the sort of degenerate scum the world'll be better off without."

It was some three hours since Dr. Fargo had closed the skull of the former Holly Calioistro over the revived brain of Mary Callaghan.

"It's amazing what the careful application of chemicals can do for brain tissue. But I think the main question is: what do I call her?"

"Hate to disagree with you, Doc, but I think you ought to be more interested in whether or not she's ever going to wake up again. It's been a while now."

"If I have to tell you one more time not to interrupt science with stupid questions you're going straight to the Veg-O-Matic. We'll see how wise you crack in twelve identical slices."

The pointless bickering continued for several hours. Then Dinkhover went out to immerse himself in a bucket of water (something which never failed to cheer him up). When he returned, he saw Fargo bending over the prone Mary/Holly, waving a vial containing essence of Nacho Cheese Doritos under her nostrils.

"Please, Fargo. That's so gross."

"Freeze in your tracks, sauerkraut!"

"What's eating you, Doc?"

"Ah, but it will be quite vice-versa, my leafy friend, unless you tell me why you've chosen to sabotage my experiment."

"What are you raving about?" asked Dinkhover, ducking under the vial that Fargo hurled at him.

"My instruments indicate excessive alpha wave activity of an undetermined nature. I need something to blame. You die."

"I have to warn you, Doc. My dimension won't take kindly to the stir-frying of one of its citizens. We're talking pan-galactic armageddon here. So put that wok down, willya..."

"Begging will not save you, cretinous sprout. I will be avenged."

10 "You'll be carted away in a cookie wagon."



"Who said that?" Fargo was confused. The voice sounded familiar. Mary? Could it have been? He knelt over her on the table and screamed into her face. "Mary? Is that you, you cow?!"

"Eat hot death, wacko," snarled the figure on the table as her knee shot up into Fargo's stomach.

"That must be her," said Dinkhover to the moaning figure on the floor.

"Of course it's me," said the woman rising from the table.

"Yes, I'm alive. Little thanks to you, Benson. You always were an incompetent little drone. But so easily manipulated. Yes, you've been an effective little tool, for now I am free once again to walk the Earth. And this time it shall be mine. Yes! The world shall be mine! I do thank you, Fargo, you contemptible fool. Well, you wanted Hell and you're going to get it. Sub-demon indeed! It's a disgrace even to have uttered the word in my presence. Have you any idea with whom you're dealing? It is I, Zog the Awesome, herself, freed again. Now I shall possess the universe and I believe I shall start with you first."

"Never." Fargo had no idea what was going on, but he felt some show of strength was expected, no matter how futile. "Yes, never! Not while I still control the Sacred Scalpel you don't. You are powerless against your own scalpel. The Guide to Quantum Demonology said so."

"No! Not the Scalpel!" shrieked Zog.

Fargo advanced upon Zog and trapped her in the corner next to "Grandpa Bob's Handy-Dandy Automatic Fish Scraper (pat. pend.)."

"You've destroyed all my hopes and dreams but I'll never let you destroy me. My revenge will be complete. I've got you where I want you, Zog. You will serve me!"

"Leave the girl alone," shouted a voice from the doorway.

Fargo and Zog looked up in the direction of the voice. It was one of the big-hair types from the bar. Behind him stood his two friends.

"Who are you and how did you get here?" asked Fargo, still keeping the Scalpel trained on Zog.

"My name is Bennie; they are Dave and Alan. We have a band called Broken Dreams. We saw the 'for sale' sign on your van. If it was cheap we were going to buy it to carry our instruments. I think you should put down that knife and we can talk business."

"NO!" howled Fargo. "Don't you realize what she is?" He rushed at Zog, scalpel extended, aiming for the throat. But, in his blind lunge, he wasn't paying attention to where he was going. He tripped over Dinkhover and hurtled headlong into the fish scraper, where he was scraped to an untimely death.

Bennie rushed over to Zog and took her in his arms. "Sorry 'bout that spitting thing. Just trying to be sociable." Dave threw his jacket over her shoulders (or tried—actually it landed on Bennie's head) and Alan brought her a beaker of water.

"Are you alright?" asked Dave.

"Yes, I'm okay. But I shudder to think what might have happened if..." Zog stooped and picked up the Scalpel which Fargo had dropped. "Thanks ever so much. Oh and by the way, Dave, you seem to be standing in some cabbage."

"Oh, yech," he said and began scraping all that was left of Dinkhover off his boots and into a sink.

"So, what's your name?"

"You can call me Zog. And you can let me go now, Bennie. I'm fine, really."

"Yes, you're safe now," Alan interjected cheerfully. "Do you have someplace to go? We'll take you there if you like."

"Nowhere special."

"You could come with us. We're going to New York. We've got a gig there in three days," said Bennie. "That is, if you don't mind riding in the back of a station wagon loaded down with instruments."

"I'd like that," replied Zog. "And we could take the van."

SNIDE CRITIC REVIEWS

by J.P. Morgan

Huzzah! Huzzah! It's the gala 50th issue! Nobel Prize, here we come! So Elaine asks, "What has the Snide Critic got up his sleeve for the 50th?" Funny you should ask, dear editrix...what could be more appropriate for the occasion than an equally impressive list of Mega-Dud Movies? No, the Snide Critic would never equate a bastion of high standards like IJ with cold-blooded Hollywood treacle; it's just that THEY spent so much money for so little return over the past few years...the sheer volume of effort, veritable armies of special effects crews, camerapeople, publicists—it's an astounding achievement of a different sort! Just look at this list of losers...and for each movie, envision a countless number of moneybags, millions and millions of moneybags, all flying away on fluttering little wings:

1986: BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA! HOWARD THE DUCK! LABYRINTH! THE MANHATTAN PROJECT! SHORT CIRCUIT! SPACE CAMP! FLIGHT OF THE NAVIGATOR! HIGHLANDER! INVADERS FROM MARS! PSYCHO III! HOUSE! TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE III!

1985: GONIES! MAD MAX BEYOND THUNDERDOME! LIFEFORCE! A VIEW TO A KILL! FRIGHT NIGHT! MY SCIENCE PROJECT! EXPLORERS! THE BLACK CAULDRON! BABY! WEIRD SCIENCE! GODZILLA 1985! RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD! MAXIE! REAL GENIUS! TEEN WOLF! WARNING SIGN! IMPULSE! RETURN TO OZ! THE EMERALD FOREST! THE BRIDE! 1984! SANTA CLAUS, THE MOVIE! ONE MAGIC CHRISTMAS!

1984: DUNE! ENEMY MINE! 2010! INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM...

Well, you get the idea. I haven't even included low-budget clunkers like VAMP, TOXIC AVENGER or TERRORVISION! How can THEY (Omniscorp? The Conspiracy?) possibly produce so much hokey that nobody wants to go see—or, at best, make much, much less profit than expected? If the local bakery put all of its money into glucose-frosted caviar brownies (with sprinkles), how long would they stay in business? How many mink-lined Sherman tanks could your favorite gun & ammo shop sell? You catch my drift? How could so many mega-budget fantasies fail in so little time? Are we all jaded? Is it us? Or is it just THEM? After all, THEY think nothing of spending vast fortunes on ultra nuke-tron doomsday bombs, or funding B-movie android presidents, or setting up mind-control MTV, or acquiring all independent newspapers and TV stations and turning them all into USA Today/People zombie pap (after getting CBS, NBC and ABC years ago)! Why shou THEY stop at movies? WHAT MISINFORMATION ARE THEY TRYING TO IMPART TO US, ANYWAY?? Consider the list well, and meditate upon it...*(I dunno, J.P., maybe it's you, too. I genuinely liked about a third of the movies you listed above...but hey, that's just me...-ye ed.)*

Well. Now that we're all nice and paranoid, let's review some film, eh?

FROM BEYOND—Empire Films' output is, shall we say, uneven. Most of their films stink—END OF THE WORLD, PARASITE, METALSTORM, DUNGEONMASTER and TERRORVISION entertain on no level, except maybe for personal speculation on what kind of film the viewer could have made with the same budget. These films are so cheesy, badly acted, and dull that they make 90 minutes go by like 90 years (more for your money?)...but Empire has occasionally rallied with interesting stuff. TOURIST TRAP (1979) is a Stephen King fave (for what it's worth), what with all the psychokinetic murder, moving mannequins, scenery-chewing Chuck Connors, and general loopiness. RE-ANIMATOR (1985) got a bit thumbs-up from the Snide Critic; it's chock-full of great gore and laughs, and is actually worth watching. Empire's latest, FROM BEYOND, is almost, but not quite, as good. Like RE-ANIMATOR, it's based on an H.P. Lovecraft story—though either film resembles Lovecraft the way the Three Stooges resemble Oscar Wilde's characters. Anyway, FROM BEYOND features a machine that stimulates the pineal gland, thus causing those within range to see other-dimensional critters. Trouble is, the critters can then see you, and then eat your head right off! This happens to one Dr. Pretorious, and his assistant Crawford is duly blamed for it. Everybody thinks he's nuts, but nice lady Dr. McMichaels wants to prove his sanity by re-creating the experiment. Smart move! It turns out that Dr. Pretorious' head has been absorbed by a gummy, shape-changing being; since he was already sexually impotent, and heavily into B&D, that's not good!

There's a decent helping of shocks here, provided mostly by many stretcho-disgusto flesh effects—but they seem awfully inspired by John Carpenter's THE THING remake. Pretorious resembles a beastie from THE THING's scene where it bursts from a guy's chest and hangs from the ceiling, and there's a super-lamprey in the basement straight from the kennel scene! And there's some "alien-vision" lifted from THE WOLFEN...but the creepy, snake-like mutant pineals are a first. Despite a lot of silliness (Dr. McMichaels gets into leather, everybody's attacked by styrofoam pellets in one scene, and why the hell don't the idiots leave the house?), FROM BEYOND isn't as dull as most other Empire releases. But I worry about the pronounced misogyny in these things...

THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES (1971)—Tell you what: let's talk about an infinitely more genteel and classy Mad Doctor—one of the all-time greats! Vincent Price is Dr. Phibes, a faceless, voiceless genius who got that way in a severe automobile accident; his beloved wife dies in surgery, and the brilliant Phibes wreaks vengeance on the "responsible" surgeons with the biblical Pharaoh's Curses: blood, locusts, hail, rats, etc. Phibes drains one guy

NEXT ISSUE:
NUMBER 51!

LACKING WINNERS

Every war is suicide.

We need chance selected WINNERS

... NOT JUST SURVIVORS.

Shoot SASE to war ending WINNERS
Box 2243, Youngstown, Ohio, 44504

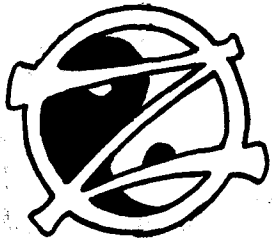
of all his blood...he pours vegetable syrup on a sleeping woman, and has his locusts devour her...he uses a portable hail machine to kill a victim in his own car, and impales another with a flying brass unicorn's head...it's a fun movie! The good Doctor wears a false face, speaks with a modified Victrola phonograph that plugs into one side of his neck, and he eats through an opening on the other side. He's ably assisted by the beautiful, silent Vulnavia, and dances with her to the trains of his Amazing Clockwork Musicians! I remember first seeing Phibes' big unmasking scene on a Saturday morning show called "The Curiosity Shop" (it featured a wall of talking puppet heads, and snippets of European animation), and then going to see the movie the same day.

By the way...what happened to AT THE MOVIES? They've replaced Siskel & Ebert with Rex Reed and some other guy. (ED. NOTE—The rather wimpy Bill Harris, late of Showtime.) I don't want to look at Wex Weed and the other guy! Bah, sick! Oh, and didja know that Russell Mulcahy (rock video whiz and director of HIGHLANDER, remember?) is set to direct...RAMBO III! No, honest! I read it in Cinefantastique! I'm not kidding! Hello? Hey, come back...

Wax Ink by Rory Houchens

50 GOOD REASONS TO KEEP YOUR RECORD PLAYER

1. WISH YOU WERE HERE—Pink Floyd (CBS)
2. ANOTHER GREEN WORLD—Eno (Island)
3. BERLIN—Lou Reed (RCA)
4. WORLD'S END—Andwella (ABC)
5. THE FRUIT OF THE ORIGINAL SIN—Various Artists (Les disques de crepuscule)
6. DRUMS & WIRES—XTC (Virgin)
7. DON'T ASK—Sonny Rollins (Milestone)
8. THE KICK INSIDE—Kate Bush (EMI America)
9. TAXI DRIVER Soundtrack (Arista)
10. IN CONCERT—Hot Rize (Flying Fish)
11. SONGS—Steve Lacy/Brion Gysin (hat Art)
12. MEAT PUPPETS II (SST)
13. BLANK GENERATION—Richard Hell & the Voidoids (Sire)
14. FOR YOUR PLEASURE—Roxy Music (Atco)
15. TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT—Neil Young (Reprise)
16. HOPES AND FEARS—The Art Bears (Random Radar)
17. OF HUMAN FEELINGS—Ornette Coleman (Antilles)
18. A CLOCKWORK ORANGE Soundtrack (Warner Bros.)
19. READS HIS POETRY—Charles Bukowski (Takoma)
20. BIG HITS—MX-80 Sound (Gulcher)
21. 20 GREAT HITS—Hank Williams (MGM)
22. PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION—Ansermet (London)
23. DRUMMING—Steve Reich (Deutsche Grammophon)
24. LOVE CRY—Albert Ayler (Impulse)
25. BE STIFF—DEVO (Stiff)
26. #1—Sneakers (Carnivorous)
27. POUR DOWN LIKE SILVER—Richard & Linda Thompson (Island)
28. SOUND-ON-SOUND—Bill Nelson's Red Noise (Harvest)
29. SILVERBIRD—Leo Sayer (Warner Bros.)
30. APRIL IN PARIS—Thelonious Monk (Milestone)
31. EL TOPO Soundtrack (Apple)
32. JIMMY BELL'S IN TOWN—The Numbers Band (Water Bros.)
33. THE COMMERCIAL ALBUM—The Residents (Ralph)
34. NUDE ANTS—Keith Jarrett (ECM)
35. JOHN LENNON AND THE PLASTIC ONO BAND (Apple)
36. COLOSSAL YOUTH—Young Marble Giants (Rough Trade)
37. TEENAGE HEAD—Flamin' Groovies (Kama Sutra)
38. COSMO'S FACTORY—Creedence Clearwater Revival (Fantasy)
39. BLACK VINYL SHOES—Shoes (Black Vinyl)
40. THIRD—Big Star (PVC)
41. HIS GREATEST YEARS, VOL. TWO—John Coltrane (Impulse)
42. BY NUMBERS—The Who (MCA)
43. THE BEATLES (White Album)—The Beatles (Apple)
44. ANTHOLOGY—Junior Walker & The All Stars (Motown)
45. JAZZ AT MASSEY HALL—The Quintet (Debut)
46. FIVE LEAVES LEFT—Nick Drake (Antilles)
47. BGM—Yellow Magic Orchestra (A&M)
48. COUNTDOWN TO ECSTASY—Steely Dan (ABC)
49. CLASSIC CLIFTON—Clifton Chenier (Arhoolie)
50. NO DICE—Badfinger (Apple)



Zenarchy STORIES

by Ho Chi Zen

THE WISDOM OF THE FOOLS

by Kerry Wendell Thornley

Recite the Tao Te Ching
an hundred varied ways;
rejoice in the ancient lore
and examine the Mysterious Learning;
read the inscriptions
in tree trunks and study
principles of jade and rivers;
perceive the transcendent
splendor of deformed
bonsai-tree folk
and listen to what butchers
tell kings about philosophy
and the vast emptiness
of the Great Way
that saturates even
crevices of ox joints.
Beat old Confucius
about the head with your
whisk-broom and drive him
out of your trousers.
Understand, without understanding
how you understand, that
fish like darting about
and, likewise, also like
yourself along the river, knowing.

If you are poor, make
your family forget
their poverty and, if
you are rich, hire a
servant to follow you
about with a wine flask
and a shovel—in case
you need a drink or die.
If they try to compel you
to serve or lead the state,
go deep into the hills,
no one knows where, and hide
in a cave. Cherish worn and
broken and old things and so
age without fear as you enter
worn broken oldness,
laughing along the way.
If you fell from a cart,
relax on your way down so as
not to break your bones. (And
try to figure out where else
this applies, because you need
all the rest you can get.)
Find strength in flexibility
and reduce the need for force.
Saunter—now move, now stop—
taking the ten thousand things
one by one. Cling as a babe to
its mother's breast to the inner
stillness. Respect the nature
of things and their uses will
suggest themselves.

BUMMER

God appeared.

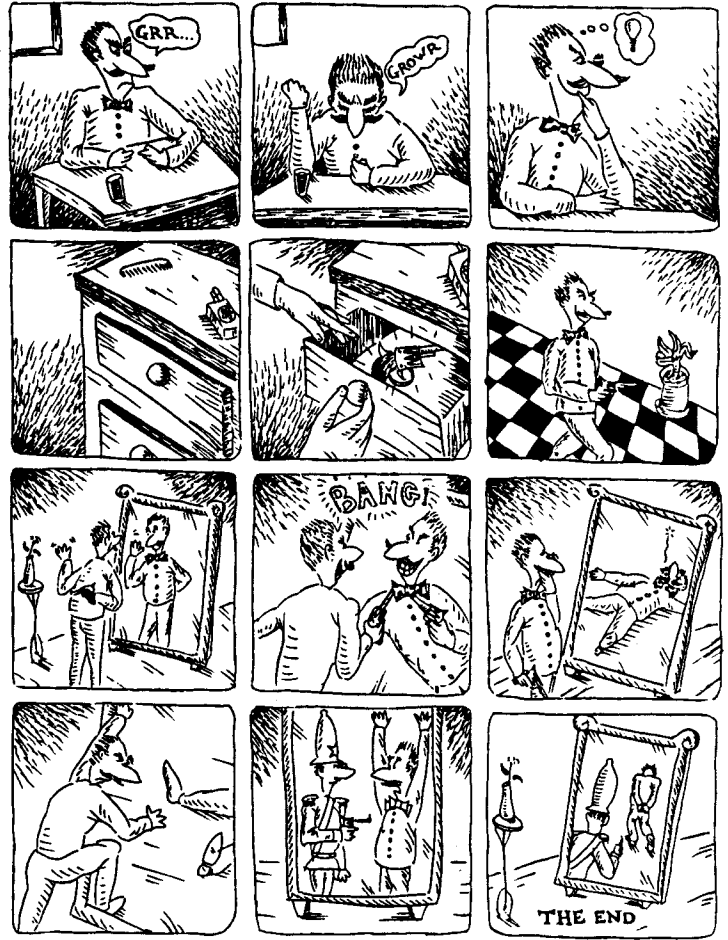
He looked off in three directions at once. His four
arms flew out. Time to dance!

A Display of Divine Majesty—lightning streaks, plan-
nets on His fingertips—a Cosmic Juggler, moving so fast
He became a still pattern, humming (like a rock whirling
on the end of a string becomes a ring or a fast-spinning
wagon wheel turns into a disc).

Then—disintegration! A skull-headed machine gunner
popping people open.

I fear. Drop out—down into the body. Into a cell.

PAN JUMPS UP
by Deborah Benedict
Pan jumps up
and says, "Do you wonder where I've been?"
It's been quiet, Pan.
Where have you been?
Pan says, "I've been in silence.
I've been in discipline.
I've been in the Scholomance.
They're getting ready for the hunt
and I'm in training."



*Crime don't pay! ©1989 P. S. S. S.

While watching MISSION IMPOSSIBLE recently...

"Should any of your I.M.
Force be caught or killed,
the secretary will disavow
any knowledge..."



Cell. With rats underneath! Or worse—reptilian rats,
gnawing upward.

Fangs of steel break through the floor.

The floor is a door.

And I a poor Jew, clinging to the wall.

The door gave way.

The drum was silent.

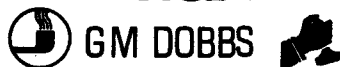
Outside was Nothing, the Void.

Hung Mung, laughing madly, turned my way and said:

"There is no enemy—
ANYWHERE."

(Anyone may reprint, spindle, or mutilate.)

TALK SHOW HOST confidential



It wasn't all that long ago that I was sitting at Elayne's and Woody Allen said to me, "Mike, how does she do it?"

I replied with a question, something the Woodman despises: "How does she do what?"

Woody became slightly cheesed and tossed the latest issue of INSIDE JOKE over his shoulder, hitting Yoko Ono on the padded shoulder of a simply dreadful sweat garment.

"IJ, of course, you idiot...how does Elayne manage to run this wonderful place and manage to produce the best comedy magazine in America?" Woody gasped over his shoulder as he ran over to Yoko muttering his deepest apologies.

"Well, if you would come back to our table, I'll tell you all about IJ," I said between sips of a marvelous cup of coffee laced with Vandermint's.

Woody settled down in his chair, and Yoko decided to join us.

"All I know," I began, "is that she had a marvelous knack for recognizing talent. I was puttering around writing pop culture pieces for alternative newspapers..."

Yoko giggled and said quietly, "Oh Mike, that's you—ever the Sixties." She sang the last phrase in her thin reedy voice. Woody shot her a mean glance.

"As I was saying," I continued, "I was writing while performing my daily gig as a radio talk show host. I was enjoying my limited bit of fame when I received an odd letter. 'Hello,' I said, 'I wonder what this is?'"

"The envelope was not unlike linen and the stationery inside was trimmed with a golden ribbon. Magnificent. It was a fan letter, praising my recent column in a fanzine. I was naturally enthralled. There was no return address and it was signed merely 'E'.

"Naturally, I was quite taken with discovering the identity of my correspondent. So, I took the letter to my stationery shop and asked them to run a check on the paper..."

"Hello, Michael darling," a voice from behind my chair interrupted. "How are you doing?"

The owner of the voice was, of course, Ms. Anni Ackner, who needs no introduction to those who read the editorial pages of America's finest newspapers. Her much-ballyhooed "write-off" with Russell Baker resulted in not only the cancellation of his column but his premature retirement.

"I'm fine, Anni, how's by you?" I replied.

"I'm delicious," she said, glancing meaningfully at Woody. "See you later."

Woody became uncomfortable after she left. Clearly their weekend in the country had proved too much for him.

"Anyway, I discovered that my mysterious fan was Elayne of IJ and Elayne of Elayne's, and my life hasn't been the same since. I invited myself in here one day while in New York and pushed past her manager, Steven, just long enough to tell her who I was. She looked up just long enough from her typewriter to tell Steve not to throw me out and to find me a seat in the main room."

"It took me months to get into the main room," observed Yoko.

"Yes, I know I was lucky," I said, "but that's the magic of this place. It can make you a star or a bum or both. Take Rodney and da beast, for instance. Media stars with hot and cold running gofers in a matter of two issues of IJ. And then there was Ace Backwards actually replacing Al Goldstein as the editor of SCREW because of his series in IJ...J.P. Morgan provoking the heart attack in Vincent Canby with his blisteringly insightful reviews in IJ...The list goes on and on...Larry Oberc being named the poet-in-residence at Yale... Deborah Benedict finally getting rid of her Mildred Neptune for whom she supported to these many years...all because of this wonderful publication and this wonderful woman."

You're Going BACK To California? You Just Got Back! by Tom Sanders

Did you know they won't let you listen to the radio while you're in the air? Tuning across the AM or FM hands could knock out the plane's radio if you get it in the right spot. If you put two AM radios next to each other and tune them about 455 kHz apart, you hear what can happen. But I've never heard of any planes crashing because someone was up there tuning around instead of listening to tapes.

I flew out there on a Friday night and, once we got past the big cities, all the listenable stations were broadcasting high school basketball. I heard games in three different time zones in one night. Listening to two Nebraska high school teams go at it from seven miles up beats books on tape or the in-flight canned music any time.

You can see Chicago, Milwaukee and Detroit at the same time from a certain spot over south central Michigan.

James Dean died at an unsafe intersection. Two California state highways Y-off there at the fatal crossroads with no traffic light or stop signs to keep order. Even a flashing "left on red after stop" light would have kept Donald Turnupseed from blithely turning into the silver Porsche's path without checking oncoming traffic.

Up the way at Blackwell's Corners, where California 46 and a county road meet, is a grocery store that was Dean's final on-the-road refreshment stop. He bought a bag of apples, if you'll remember from the David Dalton biography. They didn't have any—I purposely looked—but as I came out, a silver Porsche pulled out of the parking lot and headed west. NO kidding! I snapped a twilight picture that didn't develop. Spooky enough to stop at Aggie's restaurant in Cholame and have the clock read precisely six PM, the exact time of the accident.

I had no trouble finding the way to San Jose.

Never order burgers in a town with one radio station. Tucumcari, New Mexico, with thirty-two burger joints and sixty-three Indian souvenir shops lining old 66, is a case in point. Where did the guys in the Route 66 TV show go for chow?

Bakersfield is Grapes of Wrath country. Re-reading the book after driving out there on the same roads that in the 30's were filled with jobless, landless people heading west drove home the sadness and desperation that ruled their lives.

Petaluma, California's post office is a bright mint green. The one in Winslow, Arizona is a rich reddish brown and looks like an old Spanish fort. The pictures came out great! Standin' on a corner in Winslow, Arizona taking pictures. Such a fine sight to see.

**#200 in just
One Hundred and
Fifty More Issues...**

Woody began to cry just a bit and asked Yoko for a Kleenex. He knew that both of us knew that Elayne had been able to save Woody's aging bottom when his remake of Bergman's THE SEVENTH SEAL failed at the box office. She had purchased the home video rights and turned the mess over to The Firesign Theatre, who combined Woody's footage with some directed by Ed Wood for a Swedish-tinged PLAN SEVEN FROM OUTER SPACE. It was a hit on the art circuit.

Elayne swept into the scene amid cheers from other tables. Clutching the latest issue of IJ in her hands, she distributed issues at every table. The cover work was marvelous, and I thought that Phil Tortorici did an excellent job considering he had recently bought out Andy Warhol's Factory and was now considered the artist in New York. Peter Max had asked Phil for a job, and he gave the old hippie the sweep-up position at nights.

Elayne didn't say a word to us...she just smiled, and artfully grabbed our check and crumpled it into a small ball. Ah, the magic.



Toiled Again!

by Susan Packie

"What's eating you, Senator?" the senator from New York asked the senator from New Jersey.

"A bunch of turkeys are outside my office demanding that the state give them back their homeland."

"Turkeys? That's no way to talk about your Native American constituents!"

"Turkeys. They have feathers and go gobble gobble. They say they used to have the run of the state, and they want it back."

"Wherever did they get an idea like that?"

"A bunch of wild pheasants were just allowed to roam freely through backyards on Staten Island."

"Staten Island? That's in my jurisdiction!"

"Pretty soon, the wild pheasants will be powerful enough to have their own representative elected senator, and then it won't be your jurisdiction anymore."

"Well, the turkeys in New Jersey could do that just as easily."

"They could, but they won't. They recognize me as one of their own."

"Then why are they protesting outside your office?"

"I guess they didn't get enough gravy for Thanksgiving."

"Weren't they on the sauce?"

"Mashed, too, but that doesn't make any difference now. If I don't make concessions, they'll make mince-meat of me."

"In a pie, it's delicious."

"Don't make jokes. Aren't you going to help me? Are you chicken?"

"Me? Chicken? With all those wild pheasants out there? I'd have to be crazy!"

"So what should we do?"

"How about a fact-finding trip to Turkey?"

"Great idea. We can take along the turkeys and wild pheasants to feed the starving masses."

"I don't know if the turkeys and the wild pheasants are that hungry."

"Maybe we could divert their attention by telling them one of their own kind has a shot at the Presidency in the next election."

The play almost worked. Unfortunately, one protesting constituent remembered that a fellow turkey already held that office.

14 "Perhaps they'd settle for Cranford."



**YOSSARIAN
UNIVERSAL**
News Service

ALL THE NEWS IS BUILT FOR YOU

SAN FRANCISCO (YU)—Yossarian Universal News Service filed suit in 9th District Court today charging the United States government with copyright infringement, theft of services, and unfair competition in connection with the recent disinformation campaign waged against Libyan strongman, Moammar Gadhafi. Also named in the suit were Adm. John M. Poindexter, Secretary of State George Schultz, and President Ronald Reagan.

YU News Service, a professional parody news and disinformation syndicate founded in 1984 by Paul Fericano and Eden Pastoraligi, claims Adm. Poindexter illegally made use of one of their dispatches in penning an August 14, 1986 memorandum to the President. "One of the key elements (of the disinformation program)," the disputed paragraph reads, "is that it combines real and illusionary events—through a disinformation program—with the basic goal of making Gadhafi *think* that there is a high degree of internal opposition to him within Libya, that his key trusted aides are disloyal, (and) that the U.S. is about to move against him militarily." This paragraph, according to the brief filed by YU attorney William Penn, of the prestigious firm of Jefferson, Penn & Teller, first appeared in YU dispatch 850401A, which was widely distributed in the Spring of 1985.

President Reagan, whose image appears in YU advertisements for press credentials, refused to comment on rumors that members of his administration had not paid the \$50 annual membership fee and therefore were not entitled to reprint YU materials. Speaking off the record and refusing to be identified, Mr. Reagan would only say: "Our position—this was wrong and false—our position has been one of which, after we took the action we felt we had to take, and I still believe was the correct thing to do, our position has been one in which we would just as soon have Mr. Gadhafi go to bed every night wondering what we might do."

Reached at his vacation retreat in Martha's Vineyard, YU Editor-In-Chief Fericano said he wasn't opposed to the administration's use of YU material. "After all," he said in a phone interview, "YU is dedicated to the notion that all news is created equal in an age of disinformation. If they (the administration) had paid the membership fee, there'd be no problem. I mean, this is a business we're running here, not a welfare state."

Managing Editor Pastoraligi held a press conference in Portland, Maine, to assure journalists there that all charges would be dropped against the government once the membership fee is received. "What's fair is fair," Pastoraligi stressed, noting that Gadhafi has been using the service since early 1984 and is paid up through 1990.

STRENGTH OF CHAR-

a sort of memory and article

AETER

by Sigmund Weiss

In reflecting on past individuals I knew, I often think of William Pickens, that giant of a man, his features muscular from the struggles and passions of his life, kind, gentle, black as earth supporting life; his thoughts and words speaking for a free Africa and the black man's sense of SELF. Pickens was a Garveyite, author of two books about his struggle to free himself and his people against the prejudices of the whites. Among his compatriots he seemed to me (and by the words of other blacks) as if in stature A SELF looking beyond himself into the qualitties of his people and nature. There is something about the black people's features that illuminate the bony structure of their faces as in the nature of the vibrancy of Earth. Often listening to him in his public speeches, I developed an empathy toward the black race and their struggles to free themselves from white oppression.

I originally met Pickens at a dinner to support Garvey for his fight for a Free Africa and a Back to Africa movement of the American blacks. In those days of the Twenties and Thirties into the Forties, it seemed impossible for black people to gain an inch in their struggle for equality and privilege. But in the nature of growth and character development, struggle seems to be that essential need.

How much struggle of the American blacks became one of the essential elements in the freeing of African nations and peoples against the imperialism of so-called European and American democracies is still a question to be settled in historical studies. But as I view it, the struggle of the American blacks through Garvey, DuBois, Moore and all those in the communist and radical movements must have been a stimulus to the Africans to free themselves of the yoke of imperialism, even though in Africa the struggle is continuous.

The Revolutionary mind is one that takes chances. The changes for which they are fighting become important because the conditions under which the oppressed exist and work are too precarious, self-damaging and unreasonable. Without changes, there can be no growth, no developing of SELF in character and relationships. When living becomes an oppressing existence, parts of the population under that oppression break, split into groups, some toward outlooks of violence, others toward legal means. Those who are the oppressors, like in South Africa, become followers for the status quo. Those who are oppressed either accept their lower state of living or fight to overthrow that oppressing class in the nature of their society. This is absolutely necessary in the nature of us as humans. Without the struggle of the oppressed class of people against their oppressors, human nature cannot develop into the attributes of godhead. It is the oppressed elements in our societies, as well as those in past societies, that become the true means of developing human nature in its greater qualities.

If we think in terms of the word "evolution," it must mean "states of struggle against those oppressive forces in the human character as well as in the acts of nature." To fear struggle and change is what is dangerous in our present society. Such fears breed lack of understanding others, a lack of relating to those in need, and in turn work with the oppressors as forms of oppression to stymie human growth and development. The fear of Russia has become an oppressive fear in our nation, causing our leaders to aid those who oppress, not those who are oppressed. This is and has been the philosophy against human change and growth by all our presidents and leaders in the 20th century.

BEWARE: CLOUD TEETH

by Larry Blazek

Hey, hey
what do you know
the clouds have come
at night we'll glow
won't need a light
when making love
don't much feel like it though

Loosing hair
or puking red?
relax, it's not worse
than twenty wristwatches in bed
Who wants to know the time so well?
(One clue: It's not the Dead.)



PIGSHIT

By Gary Pig Gold

TURNING FIFTY

At a little past 8AM sharp, an alarm clock peals across the Murphy bed. But the body that lies there, motionless but for darting eyes, has been awake most of the night, fitfully counting and re-counting the tiny dots in the ceiling tiles—a simple diversion from pain learned in the orthodontist's chair as a child which continues to serve the man well to this day.

Stabbing a switch at the foot of the bed with his toe, the images of an early-morning magazine show drift silently, meaninglessly from a tiny television screen. The latest stars swap their latest tall tales, plug their latest plasticware, and flaunt their biggest assets to the accompaniment of canned music and canned applause. If only his toe could be bothered turning the volume knob up, the man on the bed could snicker that those voices providing laughter on the magazine show belong to people long gone, dead and buried. But is there any comfort to be had catching on to such things? For he knows the TV programs will outlive US ALL.

It takes close to an hour to prod the body out of bed, into slippers, onto the floor and into the kitchen. There, on the yellowing Souvenir of Calgary tablecloth neatly set out the evening before, is a single bowl, a single spoon, and a huge box of corn flakes. Just Add Milk, and some circular shoved through the mail-slot last week, and breakfast manages to consume another hour. And he never forgets to wash the dish and spoon spotless afterwards.

It's still drizzling slightly this morning, but the man ventures outside nonetheless. After all, it HAS been several days (four? seven?) since he last left his dank basement apartment for some fresh air (he has to keep his window nailed shut because the lock's broken and one night he believes he awoke to find a burglar halfway through it and climbing down onto the kitchen counter). En route out the dusty old Victorian lobby, he must nod a hello to the postman and his bills, and to the elderly woman upstairs whose name continues to escape him. Once onto the street, though, he encounters only strangers. He doesn't have to open his mouth once.

His rounds are made. He sees the swans still sail across the park, the ocean liners still load and unload amidst all the waterfront construction, and the mall downtown still stuffed with too many kids with radios too loud and hairstyles too peculiar. Exactly what do all these children plan on doing in ten or twenty years' time anyways? Why aren't they at home with their parents? Watching TV and eating corn flakes?

And the panhandlers are still EVERYWHERE, with their shaking outstretched palms and sob stories as old as their charity boots. Why aren't they...AT WORK, dammit? ALL men should WANT to work. Be PROUD to work. Not waste their lives trailing around the city.

The library, as always, offers a welcome solitude and silence before returning to his basement. Here in the library there are magazines and washrooms to be visited, and clippings files marked "Shows And Show Persons" and "Serial Homicides" to be painstakingly sorted through once again. Upon doing so, the man can once again reassure himself he's GLAD he won't die famous, or even notorious.

By dusk, having long ago finished off his last peppermint Life Saver, he's ready for dinner. So he reluctantly re-files Chaplin and Speck for another day and stops by the corner convenience store for a can of instant macaroni and cheese and a can of Hawaiian Punch. Perhaps some Valu-Pak assorted cookies? No—there's still some orange sherbet in the icebox. He'll make that last until he has to go outside again.

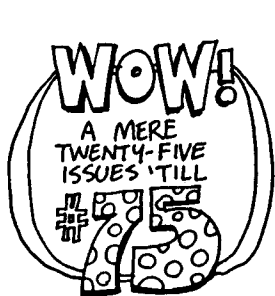
Come evening, after dinner's been eaten and the dish and spoon washed, the door buzzer suddenly shrieks. Luckily, he still had the volume off as he watched TV, so he could pretend nobody was home. Still, you'd think people would know better by now that attempt to intrude upon his meticulously-ordered schedule in the world of happy-go-lucky solitude he'd worked for so long to make impenetrable.

It's dark soon enough; time to read himself asleep. Was that a tapping at his window, or just another pesky kitten near his garbage? Rather than slit open the drapes to peek outside, he remains on his bed. An hour later, and the tapping still hasn't returned. That's good.

By 1:30AM there's nothing left on the TV, and last Saturday's paper has been read from front to back at least once. So the light is switched off, the body is stripped down to its underwear, and it is time to lay back his head.

But it is that silly state of hovering between consciousness and slumber that he dreads the most, for it is here that he is constantly confronted with aching memories of jobs lost, opportunities tossed, friends he grew to mistrust and women he wished he'd actually spoken to. Sometimes these flooding images bolt him dead upright on his bed, as his t-shirt is quickly soaked in a cold sweat, the migraines and nerve rashes raging again. Sometimes a distant high school melody or snatch of movie scenery will lift him briefly from the nocturnal onslaught; in fact, once the telephone rang at this most terrifying of times...and he almost

answered it!
But if he is lucky, the alarm clock will continue to save him at a little past 8AM, and he will be cruelly allowed to continue turning fifty.



DOING
YOUR
HOMEWORK

Nowadays

anything goes. There's a sidewalk here and one over there so I'll start a new path across the grass and here's the entrance to the parking lot for those who walk but I'll drive on it because it's closer to that empty parking place and they just put a handrail in two places around the building so I'll cut across the lawn where there is no rail it's shorter and I matter more than the grass.

- Mary Ann Henn



AND THEN ON TUESDAY, I'LL

FALL IN LOVE by David Serlin

I'm waiting at the airport for your plane to come in. I'm rummaging around for newspapers that people left in transit. I walk the distance between the arrivals monitor and the squishy blue vinyl seats. You've been delayed.

I keep hoping your plane will crash. I don't want you to die, so much as I want your plane to crash. I want to be weeping and snarling and hit cameramen when they try to interview me, like Sean Penn. "My baby's dead and YOU want to INTERVIEW me?!" Pow! Why does everyone think they have the right to know about other people's lives when they're so secretive about their own? I keep hoping your plane will crash so I can make a valid point. We'll make a scholarship out of your name. You'll be immortal.

What's going on in your head when the plane touches the runway? Do you ever catch yourself thinking about that exact moment when the wheels embrace the ground and any trillion possibilities can happen and you can spin and sputter and crash and die? Do you ever see the flight attendants breathe in and sigh? They know that each time they fly the chances increase for a trip that ends in disaster. A one-way ticket to hell.

I walk over to Gate C3 and I see a horde of pale people coming towards me. I run up to you and I hug you, and I grab your hand and we run to the baggage claim area. I ask you what your luggage looks like, but I notice it's not you and I've never seen you before. You're from Chicago and YOU'RE really from Minneapolis. I apologize and go back to the arrival monitor.

I keep thinking that all through the series, Laverne & Shirley were virgins. They never once vo-deo-do-do'ed with anyone. Would it have really changed things? Would Laverne have been any less obnoxious—and did Shirley have a great sex life (sans intercourse, of course) with The Big Ragu?

My mom got a letter in the mail, saying our family name was rare and exclusive and we can order a leather-bound volume detailing our genealogy for \$30. As far as I'm concerned, the less relatives I have the better. I'm conceiving of a family reunion that transcends the laws of nausea. And I happen to know our name is just a shortened bastardization of our original Polish name Tsurulnik, so I don't know these people anyway.

I see your crumpled face temporarily lodged in the armpit of a seven-foot black man who's removing his carry-on from the overhead luggage rack. I see you studying the pattern on his polyester shirt and wondering how he could afford a plane ticket. I wonder how close to the front of the plane you are, and how long it will take you to evacuate the cabin. I see you cringe as you walk by the flight attendant and resist muffling her face with a plastic soft drink cup.

I wonder why airports are so ugly. They remind me of my house when I was little and how embarrassed I was to have my friends see the broken shutter and the dangling vertical blinds and the toothpaste cemented to the sink. I keep thinking how I could have been born unto royalty. I see the sad airport people and I die a thousand deaths in the depths of my mind.

I'm standing at the monitor and it reads 753 MNPLS - FT LAUD G C3. I rush over to the roped-off area and I meet you and kiss you and hug you. Then I introduce myself.

PEACE WITHOUT DEATH?

by Larry Blazek
Young brothers everywhere
don't be persuaded
to kill your brothers
over the sea
even if you feel
it's your duty to murder
a killer you'll always be
Young killers everywhere
lay down your arms
or just use them for shooting
at flies

if you feel you must kill
turn your guns, if you will
on the bastards that sent you
to die

I want to see
a Soviet soldier and an Afghan
freedom fighter
smoke a joint with a Green Beret
then go shoot empty ammo tins
reporting later:
"Sir, we got twenty today!"

IF IN A PREVIOUS WAR WE OR THEY SUFFERED 100,000, 10,000 OR JUST ONE KILLED We would face eternal extinction because of the absence of 100,000, 10,000 or one chance-selected winners or winner. Since I'm living and am the sole possessor of this and three other must-be-adopted concepts assume that this is a latter-day heron — THANKS. However, it might be #1. Play it safe and send SASE to: WINNERS — Box 2243 YOUNGSTOWN — OHIO, 44504

Can't help but chuckle at International Crises? You'll laugh all the way to the fully-equipped survival shelter when "Bob" lets you in on the real joke.

HILARIOUS OUTLINE OF DESTRUCTION: \$1

The Church of the SubGenius® P.O. Box 140306 Dallas, TX 75214

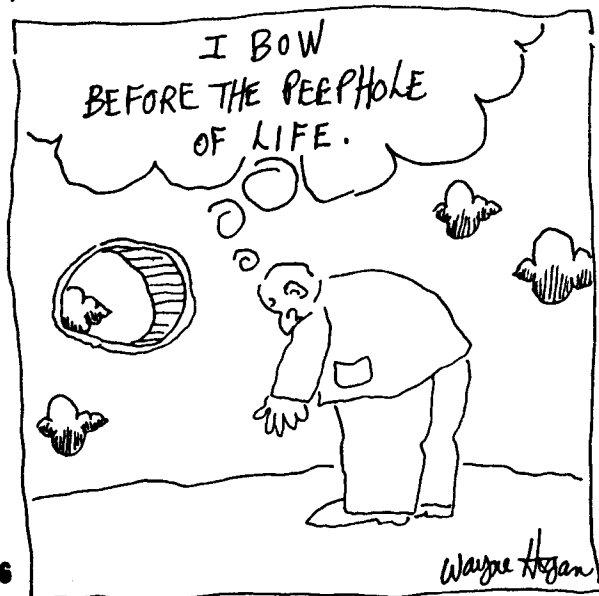


WANT A PRESS CARD?

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 94030-0236. Join the parody: Communicate with YU!

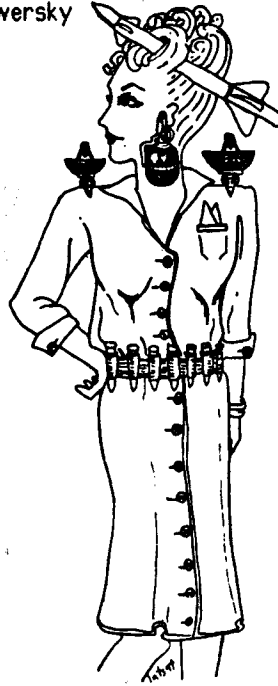
PHILOSOPHER LAUREATE



Commercial McClue-In by "Kid" Sieve

Dress For Excess:

—some hints on aggressive fashions for the office
from Lori Twersky



PLASTIC BAGS

by Mary Ann Henn
I can't see one
without thinking
of Gollum—a Hobbit
a demoralized one
but a Hobbit he was
who spent his days
seeking
groping through dark caverns
staring through water
his skin tender
stretchy
as a plastic bag.
Straining darkness
reflecting like glass
his eyes
glaring light
cold as plastic bags.
Poor Gollum.

Never overlook the possibilities in accessories! Here, a dull dress is enlivened by classic cartridge belt and a pair of steerable receiver aerial dishes. The business-like touch of the mini-SA-1 Guild surface-to-air missile offsets the exotic earrings made of RDG-5s, possibly the most widely used hand grenade of the Warsaw Pact forces.

BLUE EYES LIKE HEROIN

by Lyn Lifshin
that blue valour
shirt the
rain was blue
all Friday my

mouth dry my
legs a braid.
Sure got a
kind hearted.
But those evil
men won't let me.

An *IJ* reader recently opined that Deborah Benedict's marvelous and informative expose of McDonald's "food" was wholly inappropriate for *IJ*, being neither comedy nor creativity, and that even these offerings from yours truly skirt the borderline. While I've not yet gotten over the stun induced by this remark, I shall nonetheless reply that I personally found DeeBee's bit quite amusing (as, apparently, do many of you in the letters columns) and far more demonstrative of the ability to reason creatively and independently from those who try to feed this garbage to our minds and bodies than most other recent analyses I've seen. It's true that comedy and creativity are subjective impressions, but to assert that anti-mindsfuck public services don't belong in *INSIDE JOKE* is, I believe, missing a rather large point of what we're all about.

McDonald's, meanwhile, is about to launch (possibly as early as January) "a major print campaign to promote the nutritional qualities of its food, according to sources" says *Ad Age*, so best hang on to and pass around the aforementioned expose. And don't forget to ask for a write-in ballot when you cast your McVotes...

Has David Byrne sued Orangina yet, or do the "can't taste the juice white-suited Byrnes clones constitute the sincerest form of flattery (in order to appeal to a certain audience segment for purposes of selling their product, of course)?"

Yo, Mikey's back! John "Mikey" Gilchrist has made a series of new spots for Life cereal playing, more or less, on the nostalgic fondness so many of us/Them have for commercial characters, the purveyors of the Modern Mythology (and let me slip in a plug here for the Museum of Modern Mythology in San Francisco, about which more information will be forthcoming in future columns—it's real neat, and thanks, Candi!). "Mikey," now 18 (as is Gilchrist), is breakfasting in a college cafeteria when he is confronted by one or another coed asking him if he doesn't look familiar. The one I'm dying to see (I'm told the ads are running now, but so far I haven't viewed any) is the one where she says something like "Wait, don't tell me" and then guesses: "My god, I'm sitting here having breakfast with The Beaver!!"

A more-than-honorable mention to the Will Vinton spots now on the air (see DeeBee's letter), and an interesting side-note to the California Raisin one is that there were actually only four raisins in that conga line, "elongated thanks to a matteing technique" (also according to *Ad Age*). Do take it for granted that any real good clay-animated ad you see on tv nowadays is from Claymation of Portland, OR, the best in the biz.

Which brings me, boiling with rage, to the interesting fact that all the fun animation these days (with the notable exception of Pee-wee's Playhouse) is found solely in commercials, the sponsors being, I suppose, the only ones with enough money to afford the luxury. As usual, the viewers lose out.

And now the news: PepsiCo, which owns Pizza Hut, plans to open some "restaurants" in Moscow. According to most American news reports about Russian food lines and scarcities, I suppose places like McDonald's and Pizza Hut really are restaurants there. Somehow I long for the good old days when the Soviets had enough common sense to denounce Western decadence. The good side to all of this, of course, is that with all their arteries hardening up and their teeth rotting and whatever else happens to them as a result of fast-food ingredients, Soviet citizens will no longer live years longer than their American counterparts, and thus, in their own small way, American corporations are doing their part for world equality and peace.

Well, it's been quite a rivalry between Philip Morris, representing Virginia Slims, and a Long Island-based antismoking group called Doctors Ought to Care (DOC), who launched their own tennis tournament (the Emphysema Slims, starring Martina Nosmokova) and are now responding to PM's essay contest on "whether a proposed advertising ban on tobacco products would violate free expression" (how much am I bid that any essayist answering "no" automatically disqualifies him/herself from this contest?) with an essay of their own, on "whether tobacco executives are criminally responsible for the deaths, diseases and fires that their products cause." Explains DOC's Dr. Allen Blum, "What we are trying to do is call attention to the farce of the tobacco companies trying to clamor onto the First Amendment and hide behind it, and divert attention from the wrongs of what they are doing to society." The news article I read on this gave no addresses for where one could send in their essays (I could use 1000 bucks, too), but, while I'm not about to take any stand on the act of smoking itself (hi Anni), I do think that if pro-smoking ads go, so should anti-smoking ones (and anti-drug ads too, while we're at it, but that's just me...).

Lastly, I thought you'd like to know that Robert J. Hagen, who played Mr. Goodwrench in, as *Newsday* reports, "a commercial in which General Motors auto-part dealers are portrayed as a cross between a saint and a scoutmaster," had previously been sued for \$1 million in a police brutality case (he's a former cop—why doesn't this connection surprise me either?). The ads were pulled when GM found this tidbit out, so sorry if you've missed 'em. "Sure I'll fix your engine, maggot..."

I laugh out loud, unashamedly, at the Philips light bulb commercials (which show lights failing at hideously inopportune moments in people's lives, resulting in embarrassment, accidents and, in a positively inspiring ad, a kitty being sucked up into a

vacuum cleaner), but I doubt that anyone will remember the name of the company itself as much as the ads. Shades of the Alka Seltzer "spicy meatballs" series of years back.

Honorable mention to the Perdue ads with Frank done up in silhouette a la Hitchcock, music and everything.

Vanna White has finally found her niche, writing letters on tv commercials to McDonald's about their McD.L.T.s...

I did mention I was going to review the Home Shopping Network this time, didn't I? Honestly, I don't know where to begin ripping into this monstrosity... Imagine your worst hard-sell fears: all-American clone androids whose speech makes *Entertainment Tonight* host Mary Hart sound bored; call-in testimonials from white trash all over the country who act as though the overpriced and useless product they just called to buy is the greatest miracle they've ever known, outside of the ones they read about in the *National Enquirer*; endless camera close-ups that linger all over Cubic-Zirconia-till-you-puke and little musical clown toys and brass bookends while anonymous fingers lovingly caress the merchandise, the real star of the show. It's absolutely bizarre, and rather hypnotic. I must admit to having recently become a mail-order shopper (mostly panty-hose and little \$1.99 doohickeys), and some of the stuff offered on the Home Shopping Network, when you have been watching it long enough, can start to take on the appearance of something so essential you don't know how you ever got along without it before, so do beware. Yes, I've seen one or two items under \$10 (especially when the already-peppy off-camera announcers get even more excited and decide, with an absolutely precious display of mock spontaneity, to lower the price on an item, presumably one which they haven't sold up to its quota), and some of the stuff is quite similar to the doohickeys I'm liable to buy through the mail anyway, so the danger is clear and present. But I, fortunately, am cynical enough about anything I see on tv to be able to step back and remind myself, yo, it's only a commercial, it's only a commercial, it's only a commercial... and, of course, the bastards who now flaunt themselves on this channel 24 hours a day took away the NY area's quality response to MTV, the wonderful late lamented U-68. Anyone smell conspiracy?

I'd like to end with a personal note to Vidal Sassoon, who does not read this column: Vidal, trust me, they don't look good.

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF DR. IGUANA THE SEARCH CONTINUES.

by the Rev. Kenneth K. Burke

Ralph Kramden stubbed the cigarette he had been smoking into the perma-ash tray by the couch. The cigarettes didn't taste bad, they just didn't have a taste. These new filters, they keep the bad stuff locked away, but they keep you from what you wanted in a smoke in the first place. So many things had changed for Kramden through the years, most of all his appearance. Where once he had appeared overweight yet vigorous and powerful, he now looked partially deflated and unsubstantial. The years would do that to a man. It would rob him of his intensity and bleed him of his energies. Sometimes Ralph would bite his lower lip and stare emotionally at his old photo album, revisiting his salad days and marveling at his youth, but after closing the album, he avoided his reflections in the mirrors and windows in his home. He knew he wouldn't see the man he wanted to see.

Ralph had left the old neighborhood years ago after his big promotion at the bus company finally came through. At first he and Alice visited Ed and Trixie Norton regularly, but as Ralph's fortunes continued to improve, he no longer found bowling or the Raccoon Lodge to his liking. Alice finally had the baby she always wanted, and now that they could afford it, they had another. Alice and Ralph went through marriage counseling, and Ralph went through analysis to solve his hostility problem. Ralph had learned to handle situations with poise, and he no longer argued violently with Alice, but he also lost much of the passion of his love for her, and she busied herself with little Ralph Jr. and her youngest, Amy. Later, she would drink a little too much and laugh a little too loudly at social functions.

There wasn't a whole lot of the old neighborhood left in him, but what there was made him choke with emotion. His friends, they really were his friends. They insulted him, played tricks on him, and yelled at him from their apartments above and below, but they were still his friends. They loaned him tools, laughed at his jokes, sent up soup when he was sick, and yelled surprise at all his birthday parties. There was always someone to talk to in the old neighborhood, and with him and Norton around, they gave their neighbors plenty to talk about. Norton, where was he? He had called Ed and he had agreed to meet him at the old apartment at 2pm before the wreckers came and knocked it down. All his old friends were gone now, either moved to parts unknown or dead. The last time he had seen any of the old gang from the lodge was when the big fire destroyed their lodge hall during a convention and most of them were killed. The few Raccoons left never bothered to reorganize.

There was a knock at the door; some plaster loosened from the ceiling. "Come in," answered Ralph.

"Hey Ralph! Hey Ralphie boy!"

It was Norton. A bit older, his twenty-five-cent barber-college special was replaced with a fairly elegant coiffure showing his white flowing locks to good advantage. He was a little better dressed, and his eyes didn't seem to bug out the way they used to, but there was a gleam in them he recognized. By God, it was Norton, it was Norton!

"Norton, it's good to see you, pal. How're ya doing?"

Ed told his story. He still worked for the city, got a nice raise when they made him supervisor. He and Trixie stayed in the same building until five years ago. Then they moved into a high-security condo on the Upper East Side.

"How did you ever afford that on what the city pays you, Norton?"

"Trixie."

"Trixie?"

"Yeah. Sometime during the sixties she got herself whatchacall liberated."

"Liberated? What were you doing, keeping her captive?"

"Naw, she just started running around now wearing a brassiere, looking for work, and wanting to be treated like an equal."

"Well, what did you say to that?"

"I said if she wanted to be treated like an equal that would be fine with me, but was she sure she could take the downgrade in status?"

The boys laughed and slapped each other on the backs in remembrance of their henpecked existence in the old days.

"Anywho, Trixie ended up getting a job with IBM. You know she was always a whiz at research, and after two years, she was making more than I was down in the sewer, and after three, I told her it was okay for her to be liberated."

"Attaboy, Norton."

Norton reached into his overcoat pocket and brought out a beer and handed it to Ralph. It was still cold enough to drink. Norton pulled another out of his other pocket for himself. They both crunched in the pop tops and took a drink.

"You still drinking Rheingold, Norton?"

"Yeah Ralph, I buy whatever is on sale 'cause all beer just sails through me. Heh-heh."

"Har-de-har-har."

The beer made the corny jokes funny and Ralph began to feel close to Ed for the first time in years.

"Well Norton, the old building's gonna get its final reward soon. I kinda feel like a part of me will cave in when this building does."

"Yeah, I know what you mean. I bet you wish your kids coulda seen this place, eh Ralph? See what their old man went through?"

"I brought 'em down here once. We didn't get to come inside though, people were still living here and Alice was afraid we'd get held up or something. The kids thought it was what they call gross. I guess that means sickening."

"Me and Trixie wanted to have some kids, ya know, but we found out that we couldn't."

"Well, what was stopping you, Norton?"

"The doctor said that my sperm count was too low or somethin'. I said, 'Listen, Doc, I don't count sperm, I just put 'em in.' Va-va-va-voom!"

"You dog you, Norton."

"And Trixie, she was really hung up on this kid thing for awhile and she asked if I'd like to try and have a kid through artificial insemination and I said, 'What's helping a person breathe got to do with having kids?' Yok-yok."

"Norton, artificial insemination means taking someone else's sperm and fertilizing one of your wife's eggs and putting it back in the ovary. You could have a child that has the genes of a Nobel Prize-winning scientist or some other kind of genius."

"Yeah, I know Ralph, but why would I want a kid that was better than me around the house? It'd always be, 'No Dad, that's wrong,' or, 'Dad, that's chemically impossible,' or, 'Dad, that's totally illogical.' It's tough having a child prodigy around the house always showing up his old man. I know because I used to do that to my old man."

"Yeah, how'd you do that, Norton?"

"By getting a job in the sewer. Boy, was he steamed when he found out how much money I made by sinking so low."

"Get outta here. Norton, you always say the nuttiest things. You're a wacko. I sure have missed you, pal. I get awful lonesome for the good old days in this apartment."

"GOOD OLD DAYS? HERE? Ralph, snap out of it. Don't you remember the bugs in the sink, the landlord hiking the rent up five dollars a month when he was already getting too much for it? Don't you remember wearing the same clothes year after year, and seeing your wife have to do the same while all her school chums dressed in the latest fashions? Don't you remember the fruitless worries, and the incalculable frustration of just trying to get through the day just so you could come home to a shabby two-room apartment with an icebox—not even a refrigerator, but an old-fashioned icebox? And the brown water from the pipes, and the wallpaper peeling off the walls during August, and the hold-ups on the bus? Ralph, those weren't good times! We were at war with nature trying to survive. We didn't win all the fights, but we made it like howling animals. These are the good old days right now, Ralph."

Ralph nodded sadly and looked around the apartment once more. He fumbled through his pocket for his lighter and popped a cigarette between his lips, lit it, and offered one to Norton, who refused.

"Naw, doctor made me give it up. Had a heart attack last year, y'know."

"Norton! A heart attack?"

"Yeah, it was no big deal, I just gotta watch out for myself a little more."

"Pal, why didn't you tell me?"

"There wasn't anything you could do, and you know, we'd been outta touch..."

"Norton, you shoulda called me, or had Trixie call me. I would have been over like a shot. Just call and boom, I woulda been right there. You know Norton, in my heart, you and I have always been buddies. My—my best friend, my only real friend..."

Norton smiled and nodded his head. There were tears in the corners of both men's eyes. Ralph smiled as he watched and on the verge of being overcome, Ed Norton took out a big red cowboy handkerchief and blew his nose which made a sound like the horn of a fifty-three Buick. Ralph paced the apartment, looking around with an amused eye that he hadn't had until he saw his old friend.

"This place really was a dump, wasn't it? Look at this, same old firetrap gas stove that was here when Alice and I lived here."

"Same crack in the ceiling too, Ralph. I never saw the same people live in this apartment from one month to the next after you left. I never got to know any of them either because they were always foreigners and as soon as I learned to say hello in one language, they'd move out and I'd have to learn another. I could've went to work for the United Nations as a grunter! Snurk, snurk, snurk!"

"You know Norton, I wish Alice and I had stayed somewhere close to here. The city is so alive, there's always something to see or do here."

"Aw Ralph, you used to tell me all the time that the city was no place to live if you were gonna raise kids. The streets are so dirty, there's crime everywhere, a kid could get killed playing stickball in the streets, and he could always fall in with the

wrong crowd. You always used to tell me that you wanted to give your kids all the advantages that you never had."

"Yeah, I remember saying that, but you wanna know what I've learned, Norton? When you give your kids all the things you never had, they become people that you don't understand."

"Whatsa matter, Ralphie? The kids giving their Pop a hard time? Is your boy picking fights with you trying to show the old man up? Ho-ho, I used to do that all the time when I was a kid.."

"He's GAY, Norton."

"He's gay?"

"They're both gay."

"What are you saying, Ralph?"

"What do you mean, what am I saying, Norton? Ralphie Jr. likes boys and Amy likes girls, that's what I'm saying. My son is never going to be a football quarterback and my daughter is never going to marry a doctor and have kids. That's what I'm saying, Norton, that's what I'm saying!"

"Gee Ralph, maybe it's a phase they're going through. You know, like smoking or getting a tattoo or using too much make-up."

"That's what Alice always says, only it's Amy who's smoking and getting the tattoos and Ralphie Jr. who's playing with make-up!"

"Well...Ralph, they're still your kids, you still love 'em, don't you?"

"Sure I do, Norton, but it hurts to do it sometimes. Even though I wanted them to be everything I wasn't, I still wanted them to be a little like me, somehow."

"Well, maybe being gay is their way—"

"Oh no. Oh no, don't pin that on me, Norton. Don't pin that on me! That's strictly from Alice's side of the family. I always suspected that there was a little bulldog in that mother of hers, and her Uncle Stanley from Ohio? I always thought there was a little something, y'know, fruity about him."

"You know Ralph, nobody cares about that stuff like they used to. People got too much on their minds to worry about what other people do these days. They're better at minding their own business than they used to be. Remember Skinny McInnis?"

"Yeah sure, down at Clancy's pool room."

"Well, one night last year, Arnie Kogan, Sammy Gizzlehart, and Milton O'Toole bet Skinny ten bucks that he couldn't get a woman to notice him. So Skinny takes the bet and waits outside the pool room and starts saying 'hello, howdy-do' to the ladies passing by. They just act like he's not there. So he starts making faces at them. They still don't pay any attention to him. So he starts hollerin', jumpin' up and down, doing the twist, even laying down like a dead man on the sidewalk. Still nothing. Ladies walk by him, around him, and over him like he was dog-doo on the street."

"So Skinny lost the bet, eh?"

"Naw. Skinny doesn't give up that easily. He stands, goes back to leaning against the pool room window, and he unzips his fly and spreads the zipper apart so you can see his B.V.D.'s. Nothing happens. Skinny doesn't like the idea of ever losing a bet, so he takes his thing out and lets it hang outside his pants. Still, he can't seem to get a woman's attention, so he starts pointing it at people with his hand and saying, 'Would you care to say a few words to our listeners at home?' Finally someone noticed."

"A lady?"

"A lady cop! She says, 'What do you think you're doing, Casanova, giving the folks a little show?' And so Skinny explains about the bet and the faces and the laying down on the sidewalk, and how he hates to lose a bet, especially to Arnie, Sammy, and Milton, who come out and back up his story."

"So then what happened, Norton?"

"The lady cop just looks at Skinny, then she looks at Arnie, Sammy, and Milton, then she looks down and says, 'Buster, I oughta run you in for exposing yourself, but taking into consideration what you're exposing, I guess we can safely say you're not presenting a clear and present danger to anyone,' and she let him go!"

Ralph and Ed laughed together like they hadn't laughed in all those years since he and Ralph lived in the same building. Ralph laughed until he dropped the cigarette from between uncontrolled smiling lips. Norton laughed through his adenoids like he always did when he told a story. He was glad to see that he still had the magic touch when it came to making Ralph laugh.

Ralph chuckled some more and he wiped cold tears of joy from the corners of his eyes.

"So you see Ralph, these days you can do anything you want, and nobody'll care, and if they do, they'll be satisfied with a good explanation and then they'll leave you alone."

"Norton, you're so right. Whew. What a cut-up old Skinny is. You know what I was gonna do, old pal? I mean here, today, in this building? I had planned to say my good-bye to you, give you a message for Alice and the kids on where they could find the will, and I was gonna hide in this building."

"Hide in the building?"

"Yep, Norton, I was gonna hide in the building and let the cranes tear it down with me in it. Then two old fossils from the past would be taken care of at once. Two relics, two eyesores that outlived their usefulness could be torn down, the rubble of our shattered lives would be broken up, and we'd be put up somewhere else as landfill or recycled cement. Two things that didn't make sense in these times could be recycled and put to better use, Norton. It was going to be simple, but you know, Norton, I rea-

lize now that my fate isn't tied up with this apartment building, or this old neighborhood, or even with the bus company I work for. My fate is my own."

Norton shifted his hat in his hand, not knowing how to respond. Ralph had always been the smart one, the one with the big dreams and ambitious goals. Since he put his entire heart and soul into everything, he was so much easier to hurt and had a lot more to lose. But now Ralph talked so differently from the old days. His tone seemed so desperate and lacking in hope. Still, Ralph was sounding out the feelings that Norton so often felt, and it made him feel a little less sore inside and a little more like dealing with life and people again. There was always something about Ralph and their friendship that complemented both men's lives, and only now did the two fully realize that fact.

"Hey Ralph, let's go get another beer."

"Should you be drinking with a bad heart, Norton?"

"I don't drink with my heart, Ralph, I drink with my mouth."

"Norton, YOU are a mental case."

The two men left the building talking excitedly. There are fights at the Garden Tuesday, the Yankees start their homestand tonight. Do you and Trixie still like seafood? The two were so carried away with their animated walking and talking, they didn't even notice when the wreckers came. The explosives were set, and the old apartment building was destroyed, collapsing from within.

THE KNOCK, KNOCK JOKE IN THE STYLE OF RAYMOND CHANDLER

by Michael Polo

"Knock, knock."

I looked at the door. It was a door that usually stays fairly mute owing to the fact that it was the door to my office's vestibule and business was not the best it had ever been. I opened the desk drawer and removed a bottle of liquid suitable for removing varnish from tabletops or for drinking straight up or with a little ice.

I opted for the latter and then asked, "Who's there?"

"Banana," the door replied.

This aroused my curiosity, because when I pass them in the supermarket they generally aren't speaking to me, even though we're usually on good terms.

I asked the next obvious question that came to mind.

"Banana who?"

"Knock, knock," the door answered.

Either Mr. Banana Knock-knock didn't realize the door was unlocked or his brain had been fleeced by a lower primate who was probably very hungry. I rolled a cigarette between my fingers, poked it between my lips and torched it.

My question curled from my mouth in lazy wisps.

"Who's there?"

The door said "Banana" just as I had expected.

At the risk of sounding repetitious, I asked, "Banana who?"

Then came the inevitable, "Knock, knock."

I was thinking that the only way to get rid of this fruit was to say that I couldn't hear him, I had a banana in my ear. Only that probably wouldn't work because bananas don't have ears. This one obviously didn't have any, either.

I bolstered myself with the varnish remover and shouted, "Who's there?"

The door surprised me. It said, "Orange."

I considered the possibilities. It wasn't Mr. Banana Knock-knock, it was Mr. Banana Orange. It wasn't a banana or an orange at all, it was secretly an avocado. It was early in the day and this was a subtle way to persuade me into considering fruit-topped cereal and juice for breakfast. If Mr. Banana Knock-knock (or Mr. Banana Orange) was looking for a shamus, there was probably an awareness floating around in its pulp that all private detectives put in their stomach at any given part of the day is tabletop finish eradicator. In any case, that idea didn't have a peel. Excuse me, I meant to say "appeal" but this was no joke and I felt like laughing.

I threw in the towel and inquired, "Orange who?"

Then it hit me, like a ton of bananas and oranges. I felt like the guy that slips on the banana peel and lands where the prankster considers his victim's brains to be. I covered my ears futilely and waited.

"Orange," laughed the door, "you glad I didn't say banana?"

A HEATED SITUATION

by Roger Morris

It was the hottest day ever recorded in the history of the world and everyone was sweating, more or less, like a pig. The odor this created was so intense in some of the more densely-populated areas that it caused many natural disasters. Earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes and the instantaneous birth of seven thousand cancer insurance salesmen were among the most catastrophic. I, being unable to cope with all these disasters and the intense heat, went berserk.

Having lost all my good sense and rationality, I ran out into the streets screaming, "The Yeti is here, the Yeti is here, hide all of your mold spores and taste of someone else's spit!" Hundreds of people immediately began to follow my instructions. I then got down on all fours and scrambled over to the electric doors of a supermarket. Every time the doors would open, I would growl, howl and bark like a seventeen-year-old German shepherd being bred by Lorne Greene. The security guards chased me away.

I then wandered aimlessly in the streets for hours until I stumbled into the front door of a Naval recruitment office. Having realized just where I was, I took advantage of the situation and asked the officer in charge to please remove my umbilical cord—I was ready for a navel. Unfortunately, he misunderstood what I had said and thought I was a famous Hollywood producer looking for someone who could do an impression of Yogi Bear in Chinese while strapped to the exhaust port of a rocket ship. Needless to say, he didn't do a very good impression; maybe it was the uniform. I gave him my opinion and left his office in hopes of finding a drooling dentist.

The intense heat was still antagonizing me, making me sweat, making me crazier than I already was, making me lose control of all my bodily functions and making me like it. The day was getting along, though, and I knew it would only be a matter of time before the cool night air would rescue me from my insanity. For that brief moment I felt relieved, but I quickly reverted back and went on one last crazed frenzy.

I ran erratically down sidewalk until I found a uniform shop. I then sneaked in, put a whaler's uniform on and walked out without paying for it. From there I made my way to the docks, where I stole a harpoon gun from a Russian whaling ship.

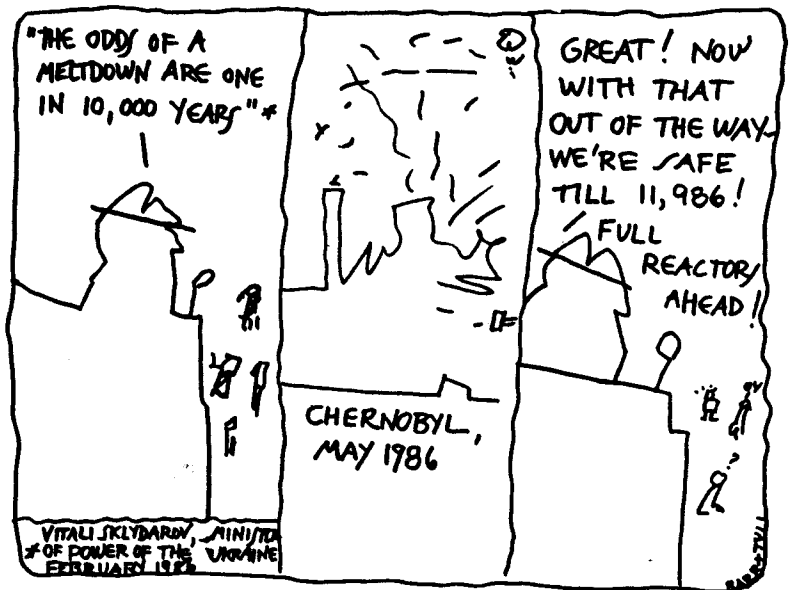
The very next thing I remember was being in Washington, D.C. pointing my finger at Tip O'Neill and yelling, "Thar she blows!" Suddenly, just as I was about to pull the trigger of my stolen harpoon gun, he turned and all I could see was a giant red nose glaring in my eyes. It confused me. I took my finger off the trigger and began to wonder if I had somehow mistaken Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer for a giant sperm whale. I wondered how cute little Rudolph could have put on so much weight and gotten so damned ugly.

By this time the police had confiscated my harpoon gun and had me in the back seat of a black and white unit headed for the slammer. This caused me to recite every single feminine napkin commercial I had ever seen on television. The officers ignored me. They turned up the radio and turned on the air conditioner.

The air conditioner! Cool air at last! From that moment on, I did nothing but regain my good sense and, after a few miles, I was in total control of myself. I then explained to the policemen what had happened. They agreed that it could have happened to anyone. They stopped the car, let me out and suggested that I move to Alaska.



DOGGY MOONSHINE & THE APOSTLES OF PUP



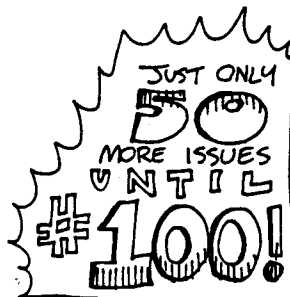
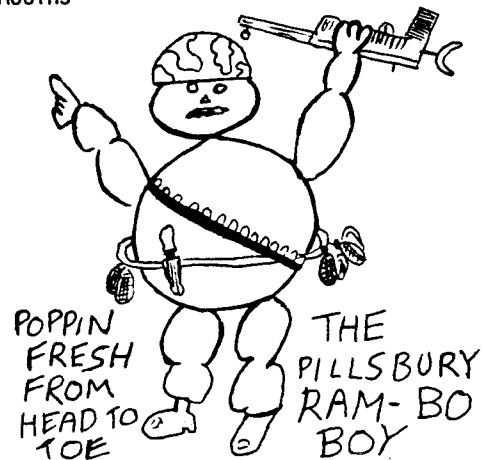
THE NIGHTMARE BLACK MOUTHS

by Lyn Lifshin

like musicians
sucked back
into notes
they were playing

my head aches,
verbs like a
tied off vein
bruised sky

a rose blur
on paper the
no sleep night
carving scars
into Tuesday



HOW I BUY MY RECORDS

by Deborah Benedict

I goes into the shop.
"Where's your singles section?"
Clerk thinks I'm poor.
Already I got no respect.
"Top forty?" he sneers and
points to a cobwebbed corner.
"You know," I says, paying
for them later with a
hundred dollar bill,
"I like the singles because
they remind me of my childhood.
Necco Wafers and Little Richard
for forty nine cents."

Science and Medicine are FRAUDS!

Who Needs Mental Health?

You can channel 'It' into higher intelligence and
creativity. Abnormality provides special power...
BREAK LOOSE!
You know who you are.
\$1 for info.

The SubGenius Foundation
P.O. Box 146306
Dallas, Texas 75214

RADICAL INSANITY.

JESUS CHRIST WAS A JEW.
This time it will probably be a
Scotch-Irishman if I may be so
bold. No one else has come up
with even one let alone all four
of the must-be-adopted
concepts. Before we all get
blown to hell and back shoot a
S.A.S.E. to:
4 WRONGS RIGHTED
Box 2243
YOUNGSTOWN - OHIO, 44504

THE LAST DIVE
OF
GREG LOUGAINIS!

McMACK: MISSION UNSPECIFIED On the Shores of Lake LaVerne

by James Alan MacDougall

Lake LaVerne is on the campus of Iowa State University, in the city of Ames, in the state of Iowa, in the United States of America, on the North American continent, on the planet Earth, in the system of the star Sol, in the Milky Way galaxy. At least it is in most universes.

Lake LaVerne exists during the twentieth century and during a large chunk of the time before and after the twentieth century as well.

Most people who have seen Lake LaVerne can tell you that the title "lake" is a bit on the pretentious side.

Beth Adams sat with her back to a tree looking across Lake LaVerne. It wasn't normally something she would want to look across. LaVerne, being a small pond on a university campus, was covered with litter and rumored to have unthinkable things within it which Beth refused to think about.

But under just the right conditions of moonlight, all bodies of water, even LaVerne, are positively stunning. It was under just such conditions that Beth now viewed Lake LaVerne, and she found it distractingly beautiful. She needed to look at something distracting to take her mind off her boyfriend who was being a real jerk. They had just had a fight.

She soon had something else to distract her. Out of the corner of her eye she noticed a man step from behind a tree. Now he had come to be behind the tree Beth couldn't say exactly; this was the first she had seen of him.

Beth almost suspected that the man was trying to sneak up on her. That is, she would have suspected this were it not for the extremely deliberate way he now walked up to her.

"Greetings," he said in a firm voice. "I am McMack."

Beth waited a moment before responding, expecting further explanation from the man. None was forthcoming.

"Uh, hi," she said. This sounded distinctly unsatisfactory, and did not satisfy the man. He looked at Beth apprehensively.

"I am McMack," he repeated, this time with much less self-assurance.

The man, whose name Beth surmised was McMack, seemed to think this was all he needed to say. Beth decided that if she left things to him they weren't going to get anywhere. She would have to take control of the conversation.

"Um, can I help you?" she asked.

An anxious look appeared on the man's face. Beth had not said the right thing.

"Wasn't I supposed to make contact with you tonight?" he asked.

"I don't think so," said Beth. No one had ever asked her this before. She decided to give up control of the conversation.

"Oh, you would know if I was so I wasn't," said McMack. He sat dejectedly on the ground next to Beth. "You aren't going to scream and run away, are you?"

The way he said this sounded to Beth like a plea for her not to scream and run away. She looked him over carefully. He wasn't threatening. He was short, only a few inches over five feet tall. His long black coat was cut for someone taller and it dragged on the ground when he was standing. He had a soft grey felt hat with the brim turned down in front and turned up in back. He wore it cocked sharply to the right.

On his lapel he wore a smiley button.

He was absurd. Beth just couldn't feel afraid of anyone so totally absurd.

"Should I scream and run away?" she asked.

"Hell, no!" McMack cried. He fumbled in one of his deep pockets and came up with a small sack of something which rattled. "It's just that they sometimes scream and run away when I botch up making contact." He held out his sack to her. "Care for an M&M?"

Beth shook her head. She wasn't going to scream and run away but she didn't plan to take any food from him either.

"A Tootsie Roll, then?" said McMack, looking in another pocket.

"Or maybe a Gummy Bear?"

"No, no, I'm on a diet," said Beth hurriedly.

McMack shrugged. He drew a notebook from an inside pocket and consulted it.

"I need a few things straightened out. Is this Ames, Iowa?"

"Yes," said Beth, "weren't you sure?"

McMack ignored the question. "The year is 1984, right?"

Beth nodded. She was considering asking about this too, but decided against it.

"Is this November twenty-ninth?"

Beth shook her head. "No, it's the twenty-eighth."

McMack didn't take this well. "Son-of-a-bitch!" he shouted, "I'm too early!"

Beth was silent. She wanted to reassure him, to tell him that if he was early then all he had to do was come back later, but she was having a little trouble communicating at this point.

"I suppose I should wait until the contact man gets here," said McMack. "After all, he has to come all the way from the regional offices at Alpha Centauri. Still..." McMack pulled a device of roughly the same size as a portable television from an inside pocket of his coat. Beth wanted to ask how he managed to hide anything that large inside his coat, but the inarticulate gasp she uttered did not convey enough meaning.

The device was beeping softly.

McMack frowned and put it away. "The alien's already here. I'm not sure where but he's within 1000 feet."

"Huh?" Beth asked.

"I'd like to wait for my contact. But I should find this alien as soon as possible. He might be planning to blow up the planet."

"What?!"

McMack shrugged, "Who knows?"

Despite managing to say the whole word "what," Beth had still not recovered her full communicative powers; McMack wasn't helping.

"I have to explain a few things," said McMack.

Beth nodded.

"I work for the Celestial Intervention Agency," said McMack.

Beth nodded.

"We have a report that an alien is in this area at this time," said McMack.

Beth nodded.

"We don't know where he is or what he's going or even what kind of alien he is. That's why they sent me. I'm in charge of ambiguities."

Beth nodded enthusiastically. She could believe that last bit.

"Do you know anything about physics?" McMack asked.

This sounded like a question she might hear during a fairly normal conversation, so Beth responded to this one. "We're up to Newton in Physics 101."

"Newton?" McMack looked puzzled.

"Isaac Newton."

"Oh, right," said McMack. "The guy with the strange ideas about time and space being constant. He worked with Euclid, didn't he?"

"Huh?" Again, McMack wasn't helping.

"Never mind, I'm not too straight on the physical principles myself," said McMack. "Just take my word for it that I come to this time and place on an unspecified mission from another time and place."

Something about that struck Beth as familiar. "Like Doctor Who, you mean?"

McMack brightened. "You know the Doctor?"

"I've seen the TV show," Beth mumbled confusedly.

"TV?" McMack pondered this. "Oh, right, television. I'm not very familiar with it. Most civilizations lose interest in television soon after they invent radio."

Beth felt her brain spinning inside her skull.

"Look, I may need some help..." began McMack.

Beth was the only person there besides McMack, so she was able to finish the sentence for him. Now she finally had a very coherent thought.

"No way! You can just handle this yourself." She got up to leave.

"Now, be reasonable," said McMack.

Beth did not feel McMack was in any position to talk about being reasonable, and she began to tell him so.

"Think of it this way," said McMack. "You think I'm crazy, right?"

"That's right."

"Then I obviously can't be left alone. If you have any sense of social responsibility you'll stay and keep an eye on me."

Beth had to think about this one. This gave McMack time to press something into Beth's hand. It was a gun of some strange, modern design.

"There," said McMack. "If I give you any trouble then shoot me."

Beth was speechless. This, apparently, was McMack's effort to be reasonable.

"Come on," said McMack, walking away. Your name's Beth, right?"

"How did you know that?"

McMack shrugged. "I guessed. I'm pretty good at guessing."

Fine, thought Beth, just fine.

McMack rapped on a tree with his knuckles. "Hello, someone there?"

"What are you doing?" asked Beth, not looking forward to the answer.

"I'm searching for the alien. It could be an Antaran. They look like trees."

Beth nodded. Nodding didn't express anything that she was thinking but she nodded anyway.

"Actually, I've pretty much ruled out the Antarans."

"Why?" Beth asked. She was hoping that if she kept asking questions things would begin to make sense.

"I haven't got any really good reasons. I just don't feel like interrogating every tree in the park," McMack answered.

Given the rest of this conversation, thought Beth, that makes sense. She eyed the tree McMack had spoken to. She was fairly sure she had seen it in the same spot the other day. But still...

"Come on, Beth," said McMack.

"Mr. McMack, what are you going to do with you find this alien?" Beth asked. Not that I believe there are any aliens, she told herself.

"It's not 'Mr. McMack.' I am McMack. As for the alien, well, that depends on him. He might be just a tourist. He might be lost. He might be aggressive. I'll act accordingly."

An important question occurred to Beth. "Is it safe?"

McMack shrugged. "Maybe."

Beth hurried to catch up with him. They searched around the lake for the alien. At least, McMack searched; Beth sort of followed along. McMack talked all the while.

"I tell you, Beth, those aliens have it made," he told her. "Travelling around by space craft—me, I'm just a poor unspecified agent. All I have is my hat."

"Your hat?" Beth asked.

"My hat," said McMack. "This," he stated, taking off the hat and waving it at Beth, "is my vehicle." The way he was holding it Beth could see the inside of the hat. She'd seen the outside of the hat. It was just a hat. She didn't press.

"Hello," called McMack. "Do you come in peace?"

"Are you talking to the duck or the swan?"

"Yes," said McMack. "And that rock as well."

"What kind of alien looks like a rock?" Beth asked.

"None that I know of," said McMack, "but you can't be too sure."

Before this night is over, thought Beth, I'm going to give up asking questions. "Why do you think there's an alien here, anyway? No one's seen any flying saucers around here—"

"Of course not," said McMack. "There's no such thing. Most spacecraft are triangular. Besides, he didn't land. We detected a transporter beam."

"You mean like on Star Trek?" asked Beth.

McMack pondered this. "Is that television too?" Beth nodded. "Then it's probably nothing like it," he declared. He looked across Lake LaVerne. "At my briefing they mentioned an important body of water," he said.

Beth looked across Lake LaVerne. The moon had gone behind a cloud and Lake LaVerne again looked like a dirty little university duck pond. Important body of water? No way.

"I suppose in a previous geological epoch it was bigger," said McMack. "Geography Division's pretty lax about updating their files."

"Makes sense," said Beth, not that it actually made sense to her.

"Aha!" cried McMack. "What's that?"

"Oh, no, Mr. McMack, you don't want to go in there." He was pointing at the storm sewer.

"It's not 'Mr. McMack.' I am McMack."

Beth didn't much care. "But it's dark!"

"Good point," said McMack, drawing a flashlight from one of his pockets.

"And it's wet!" cried Beth.

"Another good point," said McMack, handing her a pair of rubber overshoes. "Here, put these on."

Beth was about to ask where he got the boots but decided against it. They fit perfectly. I should have expected this, thought Beth. She followed McMack into the storm drain.

(to be concluded next issue)

4-Color Fiend by Steve Chaput

I'd like to thank those of you nice enough to not only read FCF, but to actually take time out and comment. I do appreciate it, and as long as there are people who enjoy this waste of space I'll try to appear on a regular basis.

While we're on the subject of letters, let me invite those of you who do enjoy comics to write and let me know what you'd like to see reviewed here; I'll even go so far as to pick up an issue of something I normally don't read just to give me an idea what it's like. Let's face it, there is no way that I could possibly buy, let alone read, all the product currently available. If I'm missing something worthwhile, let me know.

Now let me answer a few letters that have come to my attention:

J.P. Morgan and Tim Arnold should know that I, personally, prefer the post-Bushmiller NANCY. I think that the new artist/writer (?) Scott is doing an excellent job and it's the first time that I can ever remember NANCY being funny (except by accident).

James Wallis might be interested to know that Kitchen Sink/Krupp is now the publisher of *Omaha, The Cat Dancer*, and will be reprinting the issues put out by SteelDragon Press. This will allow for a larger print run and better distribution of the book along with Kitchen's underground titles. As to whether or not Alan Moore is capable of being a novelist, I think that going back and re-reading the entire *Watchman* series after it's complete may answer that. The back-up text pieces in the series also indicate an ability to use various styles. Perhaps my own taste for the "hard-boiled" detective genre of mysteries allows me to more easily accept any clichés that Moore does use in his usual stories.

I've been tempted to pick up an issue of *Boris the Bear* for a while now, but just haven't gotten around to it. I'll let Phil Tortorici (along with the rest of you) know if and when I do get it.

As for new business:

Beginning in *Batman* #404 and continuing through #407, Frank Miller and David Mazzucchelli (who collaborated on Marvel's *Daredevil*) will be retelling the first year of the Batman's career in Gotham City. As with Byrne in *Superman*, the basic original remains intact, but the emphasis has shifted and the new version is much more likely to fit into Miller's *Dark Knight* version of the mythos. In the first issue we are already introduced to versions of Commissioner Gordon (as a lieutenant new to the town), a more cynical Alfred and Selina Kane (the future Catwoman) as a dominatrix. Looking forward to the first appearance of the costume and the origin of Robin. Word in the fanzines is that Steve Engelhart and Terry Austin (who did what many describe as the definitive Batman in *Detective* a number of years ago) will be returning to the character to do the second year. Looks good!

Of quick note is the two-issue *History of the DC Universe*. This is in the same square-bound format as *Dark Knight* (\$2.95 US). Written by Marv Wolfman and drawn by George Perez (who worked together on *Crisis on Infinite Earths*), it is a chronological retelling of the entire history of the DC universe from its creation (by the infamous glowing giant hand that both Marvel and DC use to denote God) through to the "end of time" (that's the part to which I'm looking forward). If you were confused by the current DC universe after DC changed everything, this should help things out.

Elfquest fans should be aware that WARP Graphics/Apple Comics is putting out an 8-part mini-series concerning the wolf-riders and their kin. Art is by Wendy Pini and Joe Staton, and it is written by Wendy in collaboration with her husband and hanger-on Richard ("It's an honor to work with Wendy even if I wasn't married to her!"). The story takes place several years after the original tale now being re-issued by Marvel. I've only glanced through the book, as I'm going to wait until the Marvel series finishes before I start on this one, never having read the original in any version prior to this.

Personal fave this time out is *Labor Force* by Blackthorne Publishing. Art is by David Ammerman & Jim Pascoe, written by Greg Swan. This is a black & white book, so be forewarned (as some people do not collect or read non-color books), and goes for \$1.50 US. It deals with a planet where everyone has super-powers, along the lines of *normalman's* LEVRAM, but slightly less slapstick, since to ensure public safety heroes cannot be "super-heroes," but can only use their powers to do day-to-day tasks (i.e., people with the power of super speed act as messengers, and those who can fly act as private carriers for passengers who cannot). As a financial enterprise, a group of super-powered people (all on the planet illegally) hire themselves out to the highest bidder to perform tasks. There is a lot of humor in this book, and the creators don't take themselves very seriously, although some of the tasks are of a serious nature and are treated as such. People are killed, and the first issue hints at possible future trouble as members begin to question the rightness of their actions. I would suggest everyone pass on an *X-Men* crossover or two and pick up an issue.

NEXT TIME: Steve goes to a con and returns to tell the tale!

Separated by boundaries of self-imposed exile from a random acceptance of elements which limit the purpose for actions whose goal is the growth of sensitivity and perceptions of beauty left as keys to stimulate contemplation of the divine. 9/11/86

- Jay DeFelicis



PENT-A-GRAM!



NORTON DIED!
'Want no dead.'
Don't let it happen again!

Fearful Signs Soon to Appear in Heavens

Emperor
Joshua
Norton I and three others: \$1
Poster WALL-OP
2981 Lookout PL NE
Atlanta, GA 303035

The Mountain

by D.A. Beast

The air was particularly cold for fall—even if it was 4000 feet up in the mountains. All the previous falls I had spent here, I could never recall it being this cold.

Now where the hell did she get to anyhow? She wanted to see the Alum mine and, after three hours of strenuous hiking, we had both been getting second thoughts about whether or not it was worth a continued expenditure of energy, and she said she was going around the next bend to see if there was any sign of it while I plopped on a log for an overdue smoke, and now she wasn't back, only ...only...it seems like we already saw the Alum mine... but then that couldn't be.

A hand on my shoulder. "You're back. Let's head back—it's too far and I want to spend as much time with you as possible before—" before what? This was just the beginning—the first fall, not the last. There would be plenty of time.

Suddenly there is a chill in the air and I reach for her hand. It's not there; yet she is there. I turn. She is there. Standing about four feet away, looking beautiful as always...yet there is something not quite right...such a strange look in her eyes, like she is afraid...for me.

"Is it up there?" I hear myself say.

"I'll always love you," she replies, walking back the way she came.

A wind rips around my feet, swirling leaves around like elves in the forest; but it's a bitter wind, like a scream through my head saying, "don't you remember, don't you remember..."

Remember what? How alone I was before I met her? How purposeless everything was before she came into my life? In a mere four weeks she had done more for my life than all the empty years before combined. We had just taken off so we could have this time together, away from everyone and everything that had been a slow poison before I met her. Yet, for a moment, when the wind came, it seemed so much longer since we met...and that horrible void...why does it hurt so much to think of it? This was...this is...the happiest time of my life.

Where is she?

Why does that damn wind keep howling?; it was beautiful when we were here...

"No!"

We were never here before. This is my—this is our first time here.

Yet the wind screams, "You know how far the mine is because you were there and you returned—only you."

"Sandy," a voice from inside me screams, "come back, it's too far. Let's go back and spend the rest of our lives together. It's not worth it."

Why did I have to stop for that smoke? I should have known it couldn't be further. Why does—why did she have to be so curious...not...wait...

A whisper. "Sandy." Was it the mind? Was it my own voice? Was it a memory?

For a brief moment—they come so much less often these days—I find myself alone on the side of a mountain...so hopelessly far from home...one year after the day my greatest love fell into forever in an old mine because, for one moment, I thought happiness could last forever and stopped for a smoke.

HE WHO SAVES A SINGLE JEWISH SOUL IS CONSIDERED AS THOUGH HE HAS SAVED THE ENTIRE WORLD. — Talmud Sanhedrin 37 A. My ears are ringing again — to save the entire world as we may have first done a million years ago more or less send SASE to arithmetically and spiritually sound 4 WAY HEREBEFORS Box 2243 YOUNGSTOWN — OHIO, 44504

GUARANTEED OVERNIGHT DELIVERY OR YOUR SOUL RETURNED

Hello. Hi. 1987 is going to be a really special year for you. Why? Because after you read this note you won't be able to suppress the urge to send away for Child & Tucson's 1987 Calendar for Organized Psychotics. With this fascinating example of anti-cultural falderal hanging on your wall for 12 fun-filled months you'll be all set to free yourself from that burdensome goal-oriented lifestyle. Featuring crazy and hilarious illustrations for each month plus important anniversaries in the history of misery and murder. Lots of space for appointments too. High-quality printing. Send just \$4 in stamps or well-disguised dollar bills (no checks) to: T.S. Child, 2510 Bancroft Way #207 Berkeley, CA 94704



Tired of Cosmic Sweetness-and-Light Crap?

Find the horrors of the modern world HILARIOUS?

Do You Have A Bizarre Personality?

There are more of you than you think. The SubCotidian Foundation P.O. Box 14638 Dallas, Texas 75214 \$1 for unbelievable book.

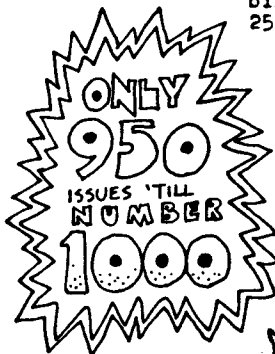
LOOK!!! HE'S GOT A COMPUTER UP HIS NOSE !!!



© VERNON GRANT — #1986

SINCE MAN ARRIVED

On Earth thinking 'a la Brainbeau has been a no-no but in the near future it has to be a yes-yes. Send SASE to inflation-ending, work-sharing, resource-saving unemployment and death-ending, HEREBEFORS Box 2243 Youngstown, Ohio, 44504



LAI #7
by Michael McInnis
In an arena
In Argentina
With you
We saw a scena
As an hyena
Ate two
Young girls Georgina
And Clementina
In view
Of Signorina
Alexandrina,
She who
Had to subpoena
The fat hyena
In lieu
Of poor Georgina
And Clementina
To sue.

SAVAGE SAYS: THERE'S NO FREE LUNCH

by Dorian Tenore

I'd never seen Jim Jarmusch's *STRANGER THAN PARADISE*, so when one of its stars, actor/musician John Lurie, described the experience of watching the daily rushes as akin to "dying slowly of some horrible disease," I wasn't exactly fired with enthusiasm about seeing Jarmusch's new comedy, *DOWN BY LAW*. That'll teach me to trust a movie star—*DOWN BY LAW* is one of the funniest films I've seen this year. It's film noir gone screwball, a situation comedy in the true sense of the term: the quirky humor comes not from set-up gags and one-liners, but from the situation itself and the (even quirkier) characters' reactions to said situation.

After establishing its seedy New Orleans setting via travelling shots and the gravel-pit voice of co-star Tom Waits growling out a twangy, calypso-flavored tune, *DOWN BY LAW* introduces us to Zac (Waits), an unemployed disk jockey, and Jack (Lurie—guess his stint in *STRANGER*...wasn't all that painful after all), a less-than-successful pimp. ("You know why you got big plans for tomorrow?" draws his only "talent." "'Cause yer always fucking up today.") Both are the epitome of cool, almost to the point of numbness; the kind of guys for whom life is a catchphrase ("Ya can't keep living in the present"... "Life is like dancing the limbo—it's all in how low you can go...").

But then the boys get framed (Zac for murder, Jack for child prostitution) and tossed into jail, where *DOWN BY LAW*'s understated nuttiness really takes hold. For it's here that our hipsters get a new roomie, ingenious Italian immigrant "Bob" (Roberto Benigni), whose fractured command of English ("Is no room here to swing a dead cat.") is culled from American movies and any insults hurled his way. But the greenhorn turns out to be more capable than the jaded Americans; he plans a jailbreak and, wouldn't you know, it works!

The rest is a low-key send-up of *THE DEFIANT ONES* as Zac and Jack semi-reluctantly team up with Bob to find their way out of the bayous and backwoods, find food (Benigni's monologue on how his mother catches and cooks rabbits is a classic), and find their way out of their hip self-centeredness long enough to cooperate. Director Jarmusch has an incredible talent for A) ignoring the typical plot devices of genre flicks and B) taking genre clichés and filtering them through a skewered '80s sensibility. For instance, most prison movies harp on the dangers of prison life—Jarmusch shows us the boredom of it, as our (anti-)heroes sit around, get on each other's nerves (a fistfight erupts because Zac marks off the days on the wall too dark), and keep themselves amused (Zac does the traffic/weather report for Jack in his D.J. voice).

Jarmusch's style is complemented perfectly by Lurie's steely jazz score and Robby Muller's stark, evocative black-&-white photography, as well as by his cast. The performances are in keeping with the characters' "style and attitude rules!" mien. Lurie, like his score, is the picture of ironic understatement and wit. He's also sensually good-looking in an angular, Jeff Goldblum manner ("Girls, are you tired of white-bread pretty boys like Rob Lowe?"). "Simian" is a good word for Tom Waits; it's as if a mad scientist had fused the personality of a new wave dude into an ape's body, and it suits Zac perfectly. Waits is fun to hear and to watch. Even the simple act of nodding is done with his entire body—you're half-afraid he'll tip over.

Roberto Benigni is uproarious as the overeager foreign bumpkin who runs circles around everybody in spit of himself. If Dondi had been less "icky," he might've grown up to be like this guy. Benigni not only has an ingratiating personality, he makes an art form out of fracturing the English language. (Wait'll you see what he does with the phrase "I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream"!)

There are also nice bits contributed by Ellen (BUCKAROO BONZAI) Barkin as Zac's girl and Vernel (PENNIES FROM HEAVEN) Bagneris as the smooth-talking low-life who sets Zac up. "It's a strange and-a beautiful-a world!" exults Benigni, and if he'd added the word "hilarious," he could've been describing *DOWN BY LAW*.

From a strange and beautiful world to "it's a strange world"—words used often and quite rightly by Jeffrey (Kyle McLachlan) and Sandy (Laura Dern), the protagonists of David Lynch's *BLUE VELVET*. If you were freaked out by *ERASERHEAD* and some of the stuff in the more mainstream *THE ELEPHANT MAN* and *DUNE* (which actually could have been a worthwhile flick had the editors taken some care instead of shoving the footage into a Cuisinart), then *BLUE VELVET* will totally fry your brain.

Talk about Mindfuck City—this erotic thriller gives surrealism a whole new meaning, as well as giving hero Jeffrey a startling, nay, spooky look at the underbelly of his hometown, Lumberton ("the town that knows how much wood a woodchuck can chuck!" crows the local D.J. "Start those chainsaws, folks!"). Home to visit his ailing dad, Jeffrey stumbles into a vortex of murder, kinky sex, and voyeurism when he finds a dismembered, ant-infested human ear in his backyard. Bringing it to a police detective, Jeffrey soon enlists the aid of the lawman's daughter, the virginal, appealing Sandy. Her "insider's" info soon leads our boy to a date with destiny—and with the beautiful, anguished nightclub chanteuse Dorothy Vallens (Isabella Rossellini, whose screen presence is equal to that of her late mother, Ingrid Bergman).

Seems that Dorothy's husband and child are being held captive by Frank (Dennis Hopper), a local maniac whose hobbies are sucking great gulps of nitrous oxide, singing Roy Orbison tunes while savagely beating up folks, and raping Dorothy. Trouble is, Dorothy

seems to be starting to like it. Horrified yet fascinated, our hero confesses to Sandy, "I'm seeing a side of this place that was always hidden," and we know he's talking about his own soul as well as the town.

Was this what Bobby Vinton had in mind when he crooned the title ballad way back when? Only David Lynch could have evoked such lurid weirdness out of such wholesomeness—kinda like *LEAVE IT TO BEAVER MEETS THE MARQUIS DE SADE*. The imagery alone should have people arguing after leaving the theatre—angry ants viciously battling underground, corpses standing up like figures in some warped wax museum, robins appearing as if to reassure us that the world hasn't gone completely berserk.

The cast has *BLUE VELVET*'s feel down perfectly: Laura Dern is touching and intelligent, and the lovely Izzy is haunting as the victim who is only too happy to turn the tables. Kyle McLachlan shines as the All-American boy who's betrayed by the slightly crazed gleam in his eye. Dennis Hopper is at his most demonic as the perverted psychotic with the full-tilt-boogie homicidal gleam in both eyes (some things never change). *BLUE VELVET* may not be the type of film for Grandma, the kiddies and Fido, it may not even be categorizable, but it's one hell of a mind-blower!

On the lighter, albeit bittersweet, side of current cinema, I'm happy to report that the versatile Kathleen Turner gets the role of her career thus far and Francis Coppola gets back on track (for the first time since *THE GODFATHER*, in my humble opinion) with their seriocomic fantasy collaboration, *PEGGY SUE GOT MARRIED*. This should become one of the biggies of 1986 for its premise alone, one with which everybody—young, old, successful, or gutter-bound—can identify. There isn't a soul on God's green earth who hasn't yearned for a chance to relive some time in their lives knowing what they know now!

Middle-aged Peggy Sue Bodell (Turner, of course), the most popular gal in high school who married the school dreamboat, gets her chance to do just that at her high school reunion. From their auspicious beginnings as, respectively, majorette supreme and "the next Fabian," Peggy Sue and soon-to-be-ex-hubby Charlie (Nicolas Cage) have spent the last 26 years turning into a depressed *hausfrau* and a shallow philanderer whose commercials for his record shop would make Crazy Eddie cringe. At the urging of her teenage daughter (Helen Hunt, who seems to be making a career out of playing supporting roles in major movies and leading ladies in B-flicks like *TRANCERS*), the still-youthful Peggy Sue squeezes herself into her old prom dress and attends her high school reunion. Except for former nerd Richard (Barry Miller), who went on to high tech fame and fortune, Peggy Sue's former schoolmates haven't fared too well: some are cokeheads, some are nymphs, one's a wheelchair-bound stroke victim. And being crowned "Queen of the Reunion" does little to make our girl feel better, especially when a bedraggled-looking Charlie drunkenly lurches in. Who can blame her when she suddenly keels over onstage?

Ah, but it's when Peggy Sue awakens that her problems really start: she finds herself on a stretcher from the school's 1960 Blood Drive. Holy Toledo, it is the 1960 Blood Drive! She's fallen back in time, to when she and her pals were young, naive, boy-crazy (like I said, some things never change) and decked out in saddle shoes and pony tails. Thrilled, and armed with rueful knowledge of the future, Peggy Sue is soon dashing about trying to improve things and change her destiny, while her family and friends wonder what the hell's gotten into her—especially Charlie, who can't understand why Peggy's suddenly dodging him and hanging out with "creeps" like Richard and sexy beatnik Michael (Kevin O'Connor Jr.).

Maybe this all sounds like a grown-up's version of *BACK TO THE FUTURE* (much in the way that *STARMAN* was an adult's E.T.), but *PEGGY SUE GOT MARRIED* has, in addition to witty dialogue and good age-makeup jobs, a bittersweet quality. It's really a story about acceptance, about the realization that even one's smallest decisions can have an irreversible impact on one's destiny. The beautifully-written screenplay by Jeffy Leichtling and Arlene Sarner is full of wry yet poignant touches. Coppola's direction has a subtle magic that hasn't been evident since *THE CONVERSATION*; it has the kind of quality Spielberg could have brought to *THE COLOR PURPLE* if he hadn't "Disney-ized" it so much.

If Kathleen Turner doesn't get an Oscar nomination for this, all the voters for the Acting category should be taken hostage by movie-mad Libyan terrorists. In her capable hands, mousy, unhappy Peggy Sue gradually blossoms into a woman with new understanding and sympathy, and a bit more daring. Turner handles the nutty dilemma of a modern 40-year-old who keeps forgetting she's now in a 1960 teenager's body with both warmth and comedic flair. Nicolas Cage has some nice moments as perpetual loser/dreamer Charlie, especially in one scene where the agent he invited to watch him sing at a rhythm-and-blues club likes the back-up band better than Charlie. But as the teenage Charlie, why the hell does Cage have that asinine Jerry Lewis voice? If you were Peggy Sue, and this handsome devil of a guy glided up to you only to come out with this "wah-hah-hah" voice, would your first instinct be to fall madly in love with him? He sounds more like a hip '80s movie star's parody of a teenager than any real-life kid—really shatters the impression Cage is supposed to be making. Too bad, because otherwise Cage is quite good.

Everyone in the supporting cast is terrific, but three people really stand out. It's great to see Barbara Harris back on the screen—she's completely lovable as Peggy's slightly dizzy but caring mother. Trying to give her daughter pre-date advice, she

chirps, fluttering her delicate hands, "Just be perky, dear," and you know this adorable little lady has taken her own advice. Barry Miller brings a gentle dignity to the potentially stereotypical role of Richard the bookworm, combining intelligence with a teenager's wild flights of fancy. (Like when Peggy Sue confides in him about her predicament: "What if some madman finds out about you and tries to control your brain?" Muses Peggy Sue: "That's why I was divorcing my husband.") But Kevin O'Connor smoulders like mad and has some of the best lines as Peggy's beatnik fling: raving against the boredom of small-town life, he declares, "I'm gonna check out of this bourgeois motel and say, 'No more jello for me, Mom!'"

THE SELF-PORTRAIT OF REMBRANDT VON RYN by Spencer Pinney

Central Station in Amsterdam lies at the northern edge of Amsterdam proper, a stone's throw from the river and the ferries that cross it to North Amsterdam. In all other directions lies Amsterdam itself, a ring of canals defining the old city, beyond that the amorphous outer districts and the new suburbs of the capital city of the Netherlands. Central Station is not the center of the city but it is the beginning, the place where most of its visitors begin the journey through that mixture of reality and fantasy which is Amsterdam.

On October 29 I found myself there observing the Dutch version of rush hour, watching the commuters make their way to the suburbs of Amsterdam. I watched as the crowds hurried to their trains through the mail hall of the station, then later I walked behind the station and watched the smaller groups as they walked and pedaled to the ferries. The commuting ritual there is almost identical to that of New York, perhaps any other city, but not as intense as I know it. After a few minutes of this I headed out onto Stationsplein to watch the street performers and the other visitors who sat in small clumps around the plaza. Among them there was a young woman on her hands and knees, grinding chalk into the pavement. It was a chalk fresco.

Anyone who has spent any length of time in Greenwich Village has seen artists at work in the streets with boxes of chalk and oil pastels, reproducing Renaissance paintings on the sidewalk, a message and something to collect the loose change of appreciative strangers nearby. And here in Amsterdam, 4,800 miles away, I see a woman highlighting the background of Rembrandt's self-portrait. The face was almost finished, the background half-done and the robed torso yet to be outlined. I was fascinated at the sight of this, as this sort of street art is unknown to Amsterdam, judging from the reactions of the passers-by. Most of them did not seem to grasp it, hurrying by with surprised or puzzled expressions. The only ones that stopped and watched or talked to the artist seemed to be the foreigners, myself included.

I dropped a ryksdaler (2½ guilders, basically a Dutch \$1 silver dollar) in her basket and watched as she worked on the background, grinding the colors into the ground and smoothing them together with her palms. It was repetitive work, hard work that combined the need for physical endurance with the need for attention to detail. And this woman worked away with a diligence I never saw in the Village, here in the October chill.

After ten minutes she stood up to take a short break. I asked her how long she had been working on it. She started, she said, at ten that morning, but at six that evening she was still energetic, her smile as much a part of her features as her short blonde hair or her glasses on the chalk dust that stained her hands. Her accent was hard to place; it changed from time to time, sometimes sounding American, at other times Dutch or German. She was, like the rest of us, a visitor, staying in a dorm for five guilders a night, making art that might be paying for expenses.

She went back to work after a few minutes. I stayed a little while longer, then left a guilder and some small change and walked toward the Dam, toward a warm coffee shop and protection from the cold of night.

I thought about the artist and her art many times that evening. Of the many kinds of art that exist in the heart of a city, a sidewalk drawing is the most temporary. Of the works I have seen in New York, the longest-lived are usually no more than three days in good weather. Rain can destroy them even faster. Amsterdam had seen a lot of rain in the last three days; this was the first clear day since I'd arrived. It seemed at the same time noble and futile to spend so much time and effort and will for a work that survived at the whim of the universe and could be destroyed just as capriciously.

On Thursday afternoon I found her again, still working the color into the background. She had finished the *Zelfportrait* at 10pm the night before; her work now was to build up the colors from the decimation of the wind. Completed, it was the young Rembrandt, but she had added her own imprint to the basic work. The lighting and shading of the face and background, the set of the eyes and mouth were hers, a very subtle personal touch to the master work. As she worked and talked with people in the crowd now around her work, I saw that she was trying to make it last. Wanting to do more than simply pay her, I walked back inside the station and came back with some coffee, leaving it by the basket into which another guilder went. I headed towards the city for more sight-seeing and city-seeing, starting to look at this short woman and her art as an object lesson directed to me. Was it

THE PRODUCTS OF POP by Jay DeFelicis

Media attention can readily understand the meanings of the pop culture, in that the two live a symbiotic relationship, both surviving on the other's good graces. The distinction between what belongs to pop and products of high culture loses something in translation. High culture is a product of deep-seated necessity, while pop belongs to civilization's whims and fancies; it is not meant to last. The fact that our present communication facilities allow for a broader distribution of images than ever before fails to attest to those images' worth. The element that the two hold in common, though, is symbolism, constructing forms that represent some larger entity; the associations with these objects by individuals determine their lasting value. Think of a Vermeer painting with a clarity of light that expresses its skillful observation, and a modern corporate logo which speaks of different skills. Both remain symbols of a reality based upon the mind. The question is only from what source do these images find their purpose? Classical art sprung from a deep-seated human need to justify a sense of belonging, while our present age seems more concerned with dominating as much as possible. One understands its goals, even if far from view; the other attempts to change as soon as it is sensed that the audience is bored. While revelling in the artifacts of the past, we borrow freely with little acknowledgement or comprehension of the original inspiration. The boundaries become hazed; Strauss becomes space (2001), and Beethoven a bastard (*A Clockwork Orange*), within the context of mass marketing needs, while new images are created blind, seeking a relationship to the past. How far, how fast, replaces how pure or how correct. In present days we are bought and sold in allegiance to products of a temporary nature, a piece of nostalgia waiting to return, discarded for a newer vision. Nothing really belongs to us; we use things only for specific purposes, adapting the rules to fit the sitter, living in moments of unconscious time. There is no truth in advertising, beauty is only skin deep and art attempts to commit suicide by giving in to transient dreams; no longer able to hide during conception, the embryo dies in the womb. This is not our fault. Our growth has outstripped our ability to understand; the means are far ahead of the ends. In time we will create a new culture which speaks to basic needs, or perish unknown, leaving a gap between points of inspiration.

*(Someday I'll learn how to line up
all IT's columns straight = sign =)*

worth the effort to work at creating beauty even though it will be washed away by the world? In the long view, nothing lasts forever; art, like cities, even mountains all have their endpoints, their destruction. Beauty is worth anything in that context, even if the sublime is washed away eventually.

It rained long and hard that night, and as I went to the station on Friday to take the train to Utrecht, I looked for the fresco.

It had survived. Faded, to be sure, but it was still there, all the details of Rembrandt's face still visible, all the work put into it holding color and image in the concrete. People walked over it now by the hundreds; the artist now was not there to protect her work from them. It still held on Saturday afternoon, the rains coming again as evening fell.

Late that night, as I packed away my things and the presents for myself and others in my "real" world, I thought that this last rain would further erode the art, if not completely destroy it, this as I gradually lost the feeling I had had all that week, the feeling of being one with the city, one-millionth of its heartbeat.

I checked out of the hotel and took the tram to Central Station. Just before I entered the Station, I took one last look at the *Zelfportrait*. It was still there; the soft, rounded features of the young Rembrandt (faded but still vibrant), the eyes still staring out from the concrete after two heavy rains and thousands of footsteps over the last five days.

I turned and entered the station to take the train to Schiphol and from there fly back to the universe of New York City, a chalk fresco on a pavement stone that has felt far too much rain and too many footsteps since its creation.

Mr. Dimple, the rise and fall of...

by Daza

Threescore and five months ago, Bumpy Bigsley skipped happily down to the babbling brook by the tumble-down cottage all pink and baby blue with straw-thatched roofing overhanging white and yellow polka-dotted wainscoting on a sunny warm day.

Soon after, other ruffled-haired friends dressed in their comfy soft cotton playclothes rambled by, bringing oodles of playtoys to pass the day through, and a few electronic components.

Hour after hour they assembled and reassembled building block towns in the friendly, lazy sun. The big red letter "R" next to the soft grassy green "A," all together amongst the syncohyber-facted modulator and the ICBM missiles.

Satisfied with their bristling complex, Bumpy Bigsley smugly called Mr. Dimple down at the Ice Cream and Sweets shop and warned him to give away all his treats to kids everywhere, or face nuclear annihilation.

Mr. Dimple was not an easy man to ruffle, and as it happened, in his store, home-made rockets and plastic missile model kits were regularly stocked on the shelves next to the comic books and inflatable dolls. Late that night after closing, way in the back of the store, Mr. Dimple carefully crafted an ambitious eighteen-story anti-missile missile, all shiny silver and black. When all the lights in town were out, everyone snuggled under their covers, dreaming about ice cream for the masses, Dimple snuk his defensive complex outside and put it on top of his one-level little store, then retired for a good night's sleep.

The following morning, coming to open the doors of his store, Dimple was greeted by a multitude of children swarming around him chanting, "We want ice cream! We want ice cream!"

It seemed his towering self-defense had gone unnoticed. Indeed, these former patrons could hardly see very far above the sign over the door. Pointing frantically over his head, Dimple's defense had gone unheeded, unseen, and unreal. Wrapped in morning dew, covered in bits of dirt and dry grass, crazed kids hurled plastic missiles at a confused, fuzzy-headed fat man, who, rolling backwards into his friendly little shop like a big beach ball, hit the inflatable Suzy doll and launched his self-defense.

And so it was that his best customers met their end, socialism for sure dissipated, and grown-ups had more free time than they had ever known.

Poor Mr. Dimple. Who would buy his creamy creams and chocolate sugar balls?

Looking out of the recently charred warbly glass front window, Dimple hatched a new concept. All was not lost. With the right kind of packaging, those adults could be enticed to indulge each other with his treats; they had nothing else to do but spend money and entertain themselves with sensual delights, so why not get them addicted to his incredibly incredible desserts?

Dimple's Designer Delectables blossomed into a major commercial success overnight, franchised near and far, coast to coast, before the year was out. Even though the murderously maniacal mega-millionaire Dimple was building his success on the disappearance of children, it became fashionable to say "I eat at Dimple's."

Everywhere huge, shiny silver and black towers went up, the aroma of sugar and chocolate blown out tremendous vents into the local town. People lined up before work, during coffee breaks, lunch hours and after work, and for each sweet ton of cookies or ice cream, they received an inflatable Dimple doll.

But Mr. Success himself did not sit back and count the change, no indeed not.

Swollen with confidence and cake, he had diversified into men's business suits, cheap perfumes, sunglasses, briefcases, personal computers, television programming, the entire gamut of those things for which adults spent their money and time pursuing when free of parental ties. Dimple Denim, the sporty all-terrain ultra-sophisticated Dimplemobile, Dimple Detergent, Dimplepaste, the Dimple Golf Open, and more...What was shamefully wonderful about this success was that he only put his name on things already designed, and the people ran for them. He even published The Dimple Book of Etiquette, mostly reprints of old comic books.

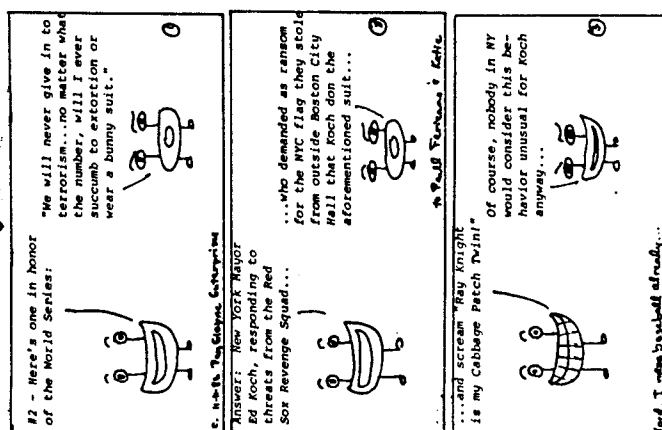
In the faraway land of Kidose, Royal Prince Wancho stood on his head atop the make-believe throne, listening to the latest reports from the Royal Fool Peterow, and was sorely troubled. His ridiculous country, where the only thing anyone took seriously was common decency and men never ever wore drab deadening suits and ties, was being threatened by the menace of highly subversive commercialism of Dimple and his famous ways.

"We must go to the source of the scourge to consume it forever!" were the wise words of the Fool.

Following this foolish advice, Prince Wancho declared in a public summons for all the hungriest and wisest people in the land to meet on Mooseday to formulate a formula for national defense. And so it was, late Sillyday evening, they came together and by Mooseday morning, sitting at the Polygon table, a resolution was passed.

The Royal Fool Peterow stood to announce "to all the hungry and wise, charged by Prince Wancho, sillier than any, to go forth unto Dimplehood and consume all the sweetness therein, leaving no shop uneaten, no granule of sugar intact. The root of this scourge being removed, the people will lose their senses, and so abandon

WHIZZITS in "SHOCKING BUT TRUE" REAL-LIFE QUOTATIONS" by Elayne



pretentious ways. The absurdity of individual kookiness will survive." And so saying, disguised as serious and characterless people, they saluted their quest and set forth forthwith, the short, the tall, the hungry all.

Meanwhile, His Dimpleness had announced plans to run for a high public office. Dimple's denizens were everywhere unopposed; it seemed no one could stop him.

That was when the Kidoseans, looking as bland as they could for Kidoseans, infiltrated. First it was candy machines emptied.

Then variety stores and breakfast cereal shelves cleaned out. Pastry stores, fast foods, ice cream vendors—every sweet tidbit carnivorously consumed by Kidoseans who had worked out (eating) strenuously to save the Grandmotherland.

Within days, people were unhappy and getting more uneasy, forgetting to tie their shoes, mismatching socks, screwing up at work. Dimple could not understand. The once happy little round man, now thrice the fellow he was, locked the doors on his sweet shops and drove off in his shiny black limousine chased by former customers in withdrawal. Civil disturbance led to exhaustion, and that was when things got really silly.

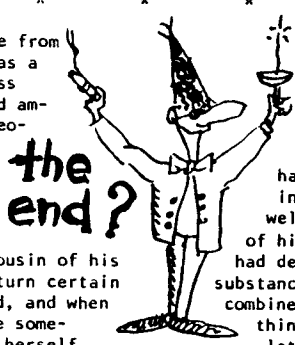
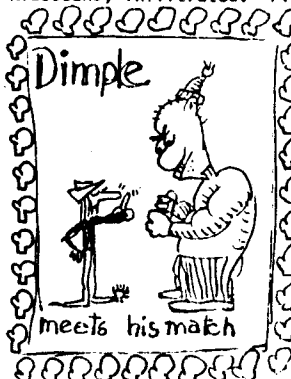
Back in Kidose, The Royal Fool Peterow had designed an entire wardrobe of silly clothes that changed colors every two minutes. There were three-eyed sunglasses, shorts for dogs, briefcases with false bottoms and recorded messages insulting people, zippers that opened at the sound of laughter, buttons that popped after exposed to sunlight...Standing on street corners, Kidosean super-salespeople sold them for a half-penny. Since no one had half a penny, they always bought more than they wanted.

Feeling this new sense of the ridiculous, and lacking the stimulus of sugar, the people rediscovered sex, which is widely known to be the next best thing to ice cream. A baby boom would surely follow. Nine months later, it did. Babies were booming everywhere.

The Kidoseans returned home valiant heroes and many sizes larger, looking ever so silly in their tight clothes. What a smashing success.

We leave our found world, free from ness that once was a free from needless vages of inflated am-pense of other peo-haunting rumor.

Mr. Dimple had reopened some of his stores selling baby clothes, and even married one of his former dairy queens. But a cousin of his had developed a secret for-substances into almost any combined with NutraSweet thing omenous. She hand-painted the sign herself, late one night, and put it up after dark. The next day, everyone would come to know about a one-level store in a sleepy little grove called Sonia's Soya.



Sayz-U!(Letters)

Elayne,

What to say? It might be kinda cool to be the "bad boy" of IJ if: 1) I didn't believe that Anni was a representative sample and that most people were simply bored by VAMPIRE SORORITY BABES (yeah I've heard of VAMPIRE LESBIANS OF SODOM—what can I say? sure it wasn't my best work but it wuz what I wanted to write so I wrote it; I tried some stuff, maybe it worked maybe it didn't) and 2) it wasn't so ludicrously easy to transgress against your "editorial standards."

You say that we've gotten our wires crossed somewhere. This is just not correct. In fact, I don't care about your editorial standards. I have never cared about your editorial standards. I have always written what I wanted. Only recently has this become a problem.

There are two reasons why I don't care about your editorial standards. One is a difference in our respective opinions on the function of the underground press. Basically, if I wanted to write to other people's standards (if I felt that I was capable as an artist of doing such a thing at this point in my life) I would suck it down and do it for the NEW YORKER. Now everyone can chuckle and say, haw haw wotta ego. Does this Dioxin schmuck really think he's that good? Not really. That's not the point. If I could write to other people's expectations and standards I'd take it above ground. At least there you get paid for channeling your creativity into other people's canals. The value I've always attached to IJ (and other pubs of its kind) is that a writer doesn't have to worry about the constraints of commerce. I considered this an open forum where I could write what I wanted. Obviously this is not the case any longer. Sure, the stuff is running (more on that later). But what kind of shot am I getting at the audience? If you assume, as I do, that people read the editorial box first then they come to my story with your opinions already superimposed on the experience. I do not wish to work this way.

Number two. I would have more interest in your editorial standards if you were actually editing IJ. Clearly, we also have a difference of opinion when it comes to the function of an editor. For me, the only thing an editor in the below-ground press oughta be editing for is quality of writing. Speaking as an editor in progress (so fucking what, rite?), I got no problems with wrangling it out with a writer. Course I have the advantage of no press schedule yet and being quarterly on top of that. And, of course, everyone has personal standards. An editor has to decide to what degree personal standards will inform editorial standards. But, for me, if you're going to set a standard then you should SET A STANDARD ferchrissake. To me that means if a story comes in that doesn't make the grade, you either bounce it back and ask for changes, or you just bounce it back. Don't run it. Is this a shocking concept? Something that transgresses and under-the-ground press code of ethics? I don't get it.

So that sums up my position on the IJ Guidelines. I do however need to add one more thing. I am, to say the least, not pleased to see myself presented to the IJ readership as a naughty child. This is high-order bullshit. Especially coming from someone who spends a page extolling the virtues of Howard Stern. Oh please, what a waste of perfectly good genetic material that man is. I shant get started. But I am not some ignorant four-year-old too stupid to know a rule when I see one. Au contraire. I simply will not play by yer rules. But, let's get real. They are your rules and I certainly don't expect you to change them. That wouldn't be fair. As much as I refuse to fit your mold, that much do I resist the notion that the mold should change to contain me. For my money, being a staff writer means having something every issue. Since I cannot/will not guarantee that I can produce "an INSIDE JOKE story" every six weeks I am no longer a staff writer. Contained herein is SATAN'S BRAIN SURGEON, a little work by me and Pru for #50. As for #49, it was quite good. All the usual suspects. Anni. DeeBee (hi!). Pru. Larry Oberc was quite fun this time. Good letters. Etc... sometimes it's real. sometimes it's fun. sometimes it's real fun. it always just is, isn't it.

Oreos Rule,

RODNY DIOXIN

(It's difficult, if you like to think of yourself as the first person to readily admit hangups and a willingness to evolve and remain open-minded despite said hangups, to apologize with any semblance of genuine sincerity while still holding firm to the convictions at which you've painfully arrived. The editorial policy of INSIDE JOKE—and indeed, my own interpretation of my role as putter-together of this commune-in-writing—was never originally meant to be set in stone. When we started, I received plenty of bad writing, but at the time I believed it was more important for never-before-published amateur writers to get exposure than for their words to come out well. As we attracted more good contributors, I came to realize that, much as it might go against my instincts at the time to just funnel things through and let them be, there arose such a discrepancy between the shit and the well-done stuff that something had to be done. I chose to accept the well-written pieces and send back the absolutely unusable ones with a note to the contributor as to what kind of work was needed in order to upgrade the piece in question. It was about this time that I discovered some otherwise good writers had been sending me

their shittiest work all along because they didn't deem IJ worth any great effort, and I thus decided I wanted to attract people who felt it was worth the effort. Then came the MTINTK stuff.

I had consistently been returning any piece that dealt with things of an erotic nature, but suddenly [so it seemed] I was starting to receive work like yours, Rodny—extremely well-written with not a thing wrong about it...except that it made me uncomfortable. I consider myself tolerant enough of other lifestyles to agree that there is nothing inherently wrong, evil, etc. about promiscuity, homosexuality, obviously sex acts themselves, and so forth. I do believe stories involving or referring to erotic subject matter deserve to be published. But once it came down to me having to make a decision, I was torn. Do I let the writer have the free reign I deem as essential as you do, Rodny, for the independent and alternative press, and put up with mild to acute discomfort because of my personal boundaries of taste, thereby making the putting together of IJ [especially typing] merely laborious instead of a labor of love? Or do I go against my own political beliefs regarding censorship, risk the justifiable anger of many of my friends whose only "crime" of unacceptability in IJ was that they weren't as inhibited as me, and possibly spoil, as you imply I have, the very purpose of IJ?

As I found myself in a no-win situation, I did what some [including you, I'm guessing] might consider the worst alternative—I tried to compromise. I know I hadn't the right not to publish what I knew was good writing, or work that I knew was very popular with many readers [for example, Ace's Tenderloin story]. I was also up against a wall regarding serials—if the first chapter did not contain any More Than I Need To Know subject matter, there was no way for me to know that future chapters would, especially if the author was a long-time IJ contributor and a personal friend who presumably knew my inhibitions and respected my need for them. Once a serial gets started, it is patently unfair to readers to suddenly yank subsequent chapters because things are getting too uncomfortable for the typist/editor. I hope this particular problem is no more, by the way, since I have asked that no more incomplete serials be sent to IJ.

And when I feel bounds have been overstepped, I always try to alert the contributor before putting my caveats in a public forum. Perhaps the caveats are vindictive and immature and should have no place in IJ, but I feel it important for me to assert my feelings on the matters at hand, the same as I do in the letters column, and I think it's much fairer to run a story as is and "warn" the readers in the editorial than to censor parts about which I may be squeamish. This way, readers get a chance to judge who they'd rather believe, me or the writer—and for the record, Rodny, the response I received on VAMPIRE SORORITY BABES was overwhelmingly for you and against my caveat, so nobody seemed swayed [and truly, it's not my intention to sway; it's supposed to be my way of saying "I can't agree with you but I'll defend to the death..."].

I have tried my best to "set a standard," but standards change as people do, and I'm still not rid of those inhibitions which would allow me to judge certain writing properly. I may never be rid of them; I may not feel as if I have to rid myself of them. So I do have an expectation, I admit it, and the expectation is, simply, respect my personal boundary. I don't want "an INSIDE JOKE story," whatever that is. I don't want people to feel constrained. I just want people to respect where my head's at, and work with that in mind when they write for IJ. I don't consider myself that restrictive to say 'hold off on sexual stuff, crudeness and graphic descriptions,' but if you feel you need the freedom to write about those subjects in the context of your work, and that this artistic freedom is more important than not making me uncomfortable, I apologize for anything I've said to mislead or hurt you, and sadly accept your resignation, Rodny.

P.S. Howard Stern does not write for IJ, nor would he want to, I'd expect. You are, however, far more virtuous in my opinion.) Dear Elayne—

Thank you for your personal guide to INSIDE JOKE [#49]. I'm looking forward to reading it, during the commercials.

And happy sixth anniversary!

MARVIN KITMAN
Television Critic, Newsday
Long Island, NY 11747

Dear Elayne and Inside Jokers,

50th ISSUE!!! 6 YEARS IN THE BUSINESS!!! 50 issues of laughter and fun, 6 whole big old years of fun and laughter! Wow! And only just recently busted for subversion! How was it done? Maybe the real meaning of inside joke is the same as a locked door mystery. I'm not sure what that means but I'll leave it in cause it sounds profound and probably someone out there understands it. I just write 'em, I don't explain 'em.

Happy Anniversary and many festive joybell ringing unto you. Elayne, I totally agree with the TV show opinions in IJ 49. I was at first ashamed to admit my affection for ALF, but dammit, he is funny and the show is funny and I love it. When ALF did his Risky Business lip synch, I was on the floor. Any time he goes after Lucky the Cat, I love it. His cosmetics selling scheme was perfect. This show will probably get cancelled because it is really too amusing for television. It just doesn't have the requisite mediocrity to succeed on network. Already I've heard the word "gimmicky" in connection with it. As though having a character on Dallas dream up the last season wasn't a gimmick. (and a desperate one. and a hokey one.) Never mind—ALF lives, for now

and when, oh when can I get an ALF doll, please? Sledge Hammer is also too wonderful to succeed and very few people seem to get it. David Rasche has it all over Don Johnson but not for the dull normals who buy the right products. See, I rejoice in a few good new shows, but I know better than to think they'll last. I was very glad to see you mention The Story of English as I have come to think of it as essential as NOVA.

Lucy is an embalmed embarrassment and evokes only pity. I think Designing Women is quite good—especially the episode about the fat guy. But still, for my money, the absolutely best written show on tv is St. Elsewhere.

Commercials—the two best commercials out right now are THE HAND WITH FIVE FINGERS Nikon commercials and the California Raisin commercial with the jive raisins bopping and dancing to "I Heard It Through the Grapevine." Wonderful, wonderful. ("Kid" Sieve says thanks a lot; now she has to think of something else about which to write! You took them words right from the hippie's mouth.) All current fast food commercials are despicable because of their stupid competitive angles. "This is a BURGER KING town"—oh wow, what a superb philosophical identification to be stuck with. I have visions of state troopers at the city limits stopping motorists and checking them out for BURGER AFFILIATION STATUS and dealing with them accordingly. Even Orwell couldn't have predicted this. And WENDY'S—best oxymoron of the year with its "new classic." Used in the sense n., how can something new be recognised as generally excellent or traditional? Don't even think of developing some "new" product and telling me I'll think it's excellent before I even try it! Remember Felix Unger's lesson—NEVER ASSUME—it makes an ASS out of U and ME.

I like the battery commercials, too. I think they're cuter than a couple of lost golf balls.

Who's the new British guy, James Wallis? Fab letter, James. Write more! Is there a Big Bealing? Is Spike Milligan still alive? What's Viv Stanshall up to these days? Did they let Syd Barrett out of the looney bin yet? Do you think Pete Best is a bitter man? Whatever happened to Gordon Waller of Peter and Gordon? Are the girls in Bananarama smart or banal? What's Carnaby Street like these days? Is there a big Elvis cult in Britain? A Fifties-nostalgia revival? Do you read Clive Barnes? Is British television really as superb as 60 Minutes says it is? Is John's Aunt Mimi still alive?

I know—why don't I write Brother James a letter with all these questies? Because, I believe I speak for the interests of my fellow IJers, and also James and I haven't been introduced. So we be casual. Is there black slang in England? Like, "it don't be my bidness, but she a ho'."?

Just wondering.

I don't really have any other comments about IJ 49. You know, I really just like to look at the pictures!

I do have a few predictions about 1987 that I need to share with the other new orphans of my species, so I can feel vindicated when they all come true.

- Anything Australian will be considered very hip and it will be the place to go.
- Nancy Reagan will enter the Betty Ford Center for Drug and Alcohol Addiction for her anorexia-based addiction to laxatives and diet pills. (Every time I see that woman I think of turning her over and using her head as an eraser!)
- Geraldo Rivera will do a fabulous expose on the fact that the government is supplying about 80% of cocaine and other drugs to America, in order to get them to "abuse" the drugs so the government can spend oodles of doodley squat on drug abuse programs, instead of feeding poor people and offering lower cost housing to those in need. Rivera will point out that the government is loath to do anything to help people who are tainted by the stigma of poverty, so it (they) have created a self-perpetuating drug problem that can only be solved by it (them). Geraldo will be framed and arrested for selling cocaine three days after his report.
- Michael Jackson will inadvertently kill himself or almost kill himself in his oxygen chamber. Janet Jackson will stun family and public alike by announcing that she's gay.
- Sarah Ferguson will be overheard calling Queen Elizabeth a "twat-faced bitch." Andrew will go into hiding because he won't be able to decide whose side he should be on.
- The following people will die, or come quite near death—Boy George, Salvador Dali, John Carradine, Robert Young, Dr. Auschlander.
- Dallas will finally be cancelled. Chuck Barris will re-emerge with a shocking new tv show.
- Computerised dictionaries will be very big. You enter any word phonetically and the computer will give the correct spelling and/or definition.
- Another famous actor will die of AIDS.
- Jean Harris will be freed from prison.
- The CIA will finally get its come-uppance for covert interference in El Salvador and Nicaragua.
- And finally, Tom Seaver will not be back for the Red Sox, not as an active player.

That's it—for now. I'll be back with more predictions later—after they've come true. In the meantime, look forward to more from Mildred Neptune. She has had adventures that even Steven Spielberg couldn't produce and direct!

No cute signoff,

DEBORAH BENEDICT
854 Y Street
Lincoln, Diadem of the Midwest
Nebraska, 68508

Dear Elayne,

Well, I must say right off the top that as far as roller coaster thrills and chills the absolute top of the cake or whatever was Deborah Benedict's article on the ingredients in McDonald's so-called food. Yeah! There were times I laughed, times I cried. Times I was so glad I hadn't actually gone to Burger King and gotten the large-bag-of-fries-and-small-Pepsi that I sometimes do when waiting for the bus, I couldn't tell ya. Wowweee! In fact, I'd really like to reprint it, if possible. Does agreement from you constitute enough permission, or should I contact Ms. Benedict herself? Oh please, oh please, let me know. (If I have to contact her, please send her address.) (As I make no pretense of ownership of IJ's contributions, all permission to reprint stuff from here should be asked of the original authors/artists. The address you seek is, of course, at the end of the above letter. Editors, many IJ writers [as is the case with many writers over- all] are usually thrilled that their stuff is deemed reprintable, and by all means do not be shy to write them!)

Other stuff I liked included, of course, the Ackner speedo-logue. Does she talk as she writes? Whew! Anyway, it brought back plenty of memories, being the youngest of five children, all of whom decided to get married within a year of each other. Whew! That was pretty exhausting. I had to be the altar boy and what they called the "forty-year-old midget" all at once. Hah! It was kind of disgusting. At least, in memory it's embarrassing, let's just say that.

I don't understand or necessarily agree with Tuli Kupferberg's cartoon. Does he understand The Bulletin of The Atomic Scientists? I don't think they would ever print a cover with something like "Kill Clean" on it. They are in fact an international lobbying and educational group dedicated to doing what they can to decrease the likelihood of atomic warfare. Hmmm, what an old term, atomic warfare. That's the fifties. Let's get with it, daddio, and plug the eighties: nuclear holocaust. Anyway, I have a lot of respect for The Bulletin, even though the articles are frequently too technical for me to read. They present information that otherwise wouldn't get circulated. I don't know if Tuli is aware of this or not.

I must admit that for one reason or another there seemed to be more stuff I just didn't finish this time. I don't know why. I did read "...Or Not TV," had already seen "A Sketch on the Orange Line," and also read the usuals, Zenarchy, Wax Ink, etc. Maybe it was the mad crush of my reading schedule these days. I don't know. (Hey, well, maybe it was the 32 pages last time...whew!)

LUKE MCGUFF
Box 3680
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Dear Elayne,

Woo! Zowie! Made it to #50! Like Mike Gunderloy said, it's kind of mind-boggling when you think about it. I remember, years ago, sending a SASE in response to a classified ad in the Aquarian, and getting this weird li'l zine in return. Don't remember the number, but I recall a Whozits strip with a Whozit wanted for necromancy, and they can't catch him 'cause they all look alike! (You're one up on me, there—I not only don't remember that strip, but I don't remember ever advertising in The Aquarian!) Also, a letter from someone saying he wouldn't subscribe to a zine with no serious purpose, and you recalled that the day IJ got serious was the day you quit, and the back cover featured two unsavory types on a street that spelled out "Inside Joke" over and over in tiny print. Ah memories...wish I knew what I did with it, I know I kept it...oh well, happy 50th!

Comments: #48 starts with a charming Vernon Grant cover—his Princess Tomi on a windswept rock works beautifully. Anni's "Fiend" column is just more proof that good mail is an important vitamin. I scarcely comment on Zenarchy, 'cause it's always "there," always usually great...an integral part of IJ. Thank you, Roldo, for clarifying "Mene Mene Tekel Upharson" (Deja Vu). Prudence's "On Carol" was a tad dry, not as much fun as her moth story in #47. (It was a flying whoonitsis, not a moth!) It's the home stretch for "Tenderloin?" Wow, can't wait to see Inside Stroke! Oberc's "A Strange Emptiness"—I kept hearing Procol Harem's "Strangers in Space" (from the "Spreading Magic" LP) as the soundtrack, y'know? Neat 2-page spread of film reviews. "Dr. Iguana" was good clean fun, especially the description of the Disney bug cartoon—zzap! Do you know why I like "Commercial Mc-Clue-In" so much? Saw this comedian (Carlin? Brenner?) years ago on the Tonight Show, and he pointed out that when you absorb a commercial jingle, it takes up so many brain cells, cells that could be occupied by tensor equations, or Shakespeare, or a good fantasy, inhabited instead by Ronald McDonald or Poppin' Fresh...gaah. Glad that Steve has a regular comics spot...what do you think of Evil Marvel refusing to return Jack Kirby's artwork? Bah! A pox on Marvel! "Space Trip": well, uh, the less said, the more unspoken...reminded me of typical bad Heinlein; sorry. You know, Phil's back covers are both the first thing you see (in the mailbox) and the last (while reading). That's not bad.

More Comments: #49...Yep, the first thing I saw was the truly nightmarish Bugs Bunny/Nancy Raygun Drug Campaign back cover. Congratulations, Phil, this is really appalling. "Distractional Analysis" (you can't spell "analysis" without A-N-A-L...): I read in View From The Edge that when Michael Jackson made nice with Reagan for the "Beat It" anti-drunk driving plug, he locked himself in the bathroom and wouldn't come out until un' Ronald per-

sonally asked him to. That said, Ligi's article is a pointy comment on the 'attitude adjustment' thoughtfully provided by the Powers That Be. Prudence and Bunny are back; great to see 'em again! Deborah's "Big Mac" article was full of sardonic chuckles and scary facts—even scarier than the back cover. (Anybody recall Helman's Secret Sauce? "Makes your home-made hamburgers taste like predigested muck!") I'm increasingly glad I quit visiting McDungball's ages ago. Messrs. Backwords and Hogan contribute more swell cartoons. Oberc's "Creative Writing" spot was highly informative of the creative process. Again, hooray for "McClue-In"! Sorry to read that "Inside Stroke" isn't going as well as expected—but the references to sex fantasy/wish fulfillment has me wondering what's gonna be showin' up in my mailbox! Hmm. Russell's "Rejections" was neat, because it's a thing we all think of doing, but don't. Nice extra-length letter from Britain's James Wallis. That was the irritating thing about Max Headroom—in a British glossy sci-fi movie magazine (last year), I read about the make-up job and rubber hairpiece and all...but then they tried to palm off Max as an Amazing Example of Computer Magic! Genuine Imitation Miracle—wow!!

Life is like a beanstalk - isn't it?

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

P.S. Elayne—I know you disagreed with me on LABYRINTH, but the closing remark should've read "Director in the sky," not Dictator! Of course, if it's been an especially difficult month, the latter term seems more appropriate, but still...*(Oops, the dyslexic typist strikes again! Still, Candi Strecker pointed out that last issue's best/worst error was twice misspelling "dog" as "god" in two totally different places...and apologies to Pru for messing up her title [it should've been "The Bunny Gets a Bath"], but I really did seem to see "Prudence" twice in the title...sigh...)* Dear Elayne:

Oh my dear—what on earth can I possibly say about the Golden Gala Edition of INSIDE JOKE? What can a poor wordsmith like myself do to capture the joys, the sorrows, the sacrifices, the triumphs that lead to this momentous occasion? Surely even to attempt such a thing is an impossible task and all I can do, all anyone can do, is think back and remember how it was at the beginning, to reminisce, for a moment, about how things were at the time of IJ's inception...

It was 1936, and the Depression was at its height. Despite the many reforms perpetrated by President Franklin Roosevelt, most of the country was out of work, spirits were at their lowest ebb, and people were starving for good quality comedy and creativity to take their minds off their troubles. Television had not yet been invented, Robin Williams was working small rooms in the Catskills, radio and the movies were a bitter morass of adorable children, mindless musical extravaganzas, and endless Shecky jokes, and so the cry went out for someone with insight and vision to bring forth a newsletter such as never had been seen before, wherein new talent in the fields of humour and imagination would meet and share their sorely needed wit and genius with the thirsting masses.

Heeding this call was Our Beloved Editrix, Elayne Wechsler. In 1936, Elayne was but a lowly pushcart peddler on the Lower East Side, hawking her wares of slapstick anecdotes and Uncle Floyd paraphernalia to an unappreciative public, but she had dreams of Something Better. Sensing the great need of the country for intelligent laughter and caustic silliness, she borrowed \$23—then an outrageous sum of money—from wealthy philanthropist and adman J.C. Brainbeau, and purchased a small, hand-worked printing press. Working tirelessly in her lavender attic room, printing, writing, pasting-up, networking, she produced the first INSIDE JOKE in the fall of 1936.

Although this first issue of IJ bore scant resemblance to the product we all love and admire in these modern times, being heavily influenced by the Uncle Floyd of her pushcart days, it was well received, and Elayne pressed on, always fighting to enhance and improve her newsletter, which grew and grew. Formidable writers and artists joined the staff, legendary names of their times—Paul Buhle, Tom Sanders, Mike Gunderloy, Gerry Reith, Brian Pearce—and others perhaps more familiar to the readers of today—Deborah Benedict, Alix Bishoff, Larry Oberc, Gary Ligi—until IJ became the wonderwork of literary ingenuity we see before us now.

My own small contribution to this effort began in 1938. At that time, I was eking out a slender living working for the WPA's Witty, Acerbic, Sophisticated Commentators on the American Scene Project when I was approached by Elayne, who had seen some of my scribbling in the Project's newspaper, THE DOLE, about doing a column. Naturally, I jumped at the chance to be involved with so prestigious an undertaking, and so our association began. The first DIARY OF THE ROCK FIEND appeared soon afterwards, and I have never for a moment regretted my decision.

Oh, the fun we had during those early years. Of course, I have long since documented most of this in my book MY LIFE WITH WECHSLER; still, it always gives me great enjoyment to recall those long nights in the attic room, plotting and planning and talking to Dave Ossman long distance, the days roaming around Greenwich Village, scaring the natives, the work that went into each one of those lovingly printed IJ's. The current IJ is a very fine thing, of course, but I wonder if the youngsters among us can truly understand the thrill and excitement of being a part of the premier newsletter of comedy and creativity in those early salad days.

The years since World War II have wrought many changes among us, and it does not due to dwell too much in the past, so allow me now to come back to the future, as it were, and talk about our modern IJ. IJ #49 was an issue indicative of the post-war product, containing both good and bad. Among the good, the wonderful new Pink Bunny story (one of the best in the long line of them), Ace Backwords' corporate cartoon (would that he would stick to cartooning, at which he is very good, and leave writing, at which he is not, alone), the little spoof of THE FUGITIVE (an eminently spoofable show, as I am here to tell you. It airs here every afternoon at 2:00, right after PERRY MASON and before LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE, and I try not to miss it when I'm at home) by the Rev. Kenneth K. Burke—one of the best of the New Breed, as I ought to have mentioned previous to this, but somehow never did—"Commercial McClue-In", and all the rest of the usual Congress of Strange People. As to the bad, well, in honour of this festive occasion I have decided to skip over it, although I have one fairly large bone which needs picking.

Elayne, you and I have disagreed many times over the length of our relationship—in fact, it is one of the strengths of our friendship that we can disagree so strenuously and still remain friends—but never, I think, have I disagreed with you so strongly as on this subject of Howard Stern. How, I like to think that I have some small sense of humour, and I don't really believe—or at least I fervently hope that it isn't true—that I am unduly "Tipper Gorch," but, to me, Howard Stern is a cruel, offensive and completely unfunny man. As far as I can see, he's right out of the David Letterman/Joan Rivers school of humour, which decrees that anyone who isn't precisely like the comedian—who is, needless to say, all-knowing, all-powerful, and perfect in every way, despite the self-effacement these "humourists" often elect—is immediately suspect and flawed, giving the comedian some divine right to lambast him or her. We pick up Stern on WYSP out here—God help us. YSP is otherwise a lovely radio station, specializing in what they call "classic rock," i.e., music from the late sixties/early seventies, and new releases from artists who began in that period and are still making music, which is really the only sort of music of which I am fond—and it infuriates me that I can't listen to it in the mornings because it chooses to air Stern instead of sticking with its major format. I agree that much of what he says is questionable, and worse than that, but I cannot dismiss it as "all being meant in fun," any more than I would choose to remain friendly with someone who consistently hurt my feelings, and badgered me about my weak points, and then tried to excuse my hurt by saying it had all been a joke, and didn't I have any sense of humour.

I truly believe that Stern is both racist and sexist, and the fact that he has a black woman as a co-host does not make him less so, any more than Reagan's appointment of a woman to the Supreme Court and a black man to his cabinet makes Reagan less so. And quite frankly, Elayne, I'm rather surprised that someone who looked askance at Rodney Dioxin's low-key lesbian hints in his stories can overlook Stern's asking Siskel and Ebert, for no apparent reason, if they were gay and performed oral sex on one another, not as a brief aside, but phrased and rephrased over a period of ten minutes. I'm surprised that anyone as ardently feminist as yourself can sit still for someone calling—even as a "joke"—breasts "sweater meat," and maintaining that "fat chicks" ought to be harpooned. *(To interrupt for a second, I usually turn the radio off at these points and wait awhile before turning it back on again. And, as I said before, Stern doesn't write for IJ, nor would I want him to, but IJ and WXRK/WYSP are two wholly different media; moreover, Stern is not a personal friend.)*

You say you wonder how anyone can take offense at Stern's "exaggerations." Well, perhaps it's because he chooses to exaggerate the attitudes and opinions that are most hurtful to the people in question. I never, for instance, took offense at Don Rickles—though I never found him particularly amusing, either—because the things at which he poked fun were never the secret, terribly painful things that we all harbour, in some way or another. There's no harm in calling someone a "hockey puck," or reminding a bald man that he's bald—particularly if the reminder is bald himself. Most of us can take jokes about our flaws and foibles, as long as they don't touch the hidden hurts. To tell a gay man that he's flamboyantly dressed, or has a lot of lovers or something of that sort, is one thing—depending on the phrasing, and how close you are to him, you might even elicit a laugh. To tell the same man that he's a sick pervert and ought to be locked up—the way Stern has, despite "Dial-A-Date"—is going to cause a lot of unnecessary pain (possibly even to you, when he quite rightly punches you a good one in the mouth), is completely cruel and uncalled-for, and serves absolutely no discernable purpose, besides being totally untrue.

So yes, I take offense at Stern. I take offense at his gay jokes, and I'm not gay. I take offense at his racist jokes, and I'm not a person of colour, and, of course, I especially take offense at his women and fat jokes, because I'm both of those. I would never suggest or advocate that he be taken off the air because I don't like him—I simply don't listen to him anymore—but this doesn't stop me from hoping that enough people will eventually grow tired or angry with his pretensions, and he'll go off the air because he has no audience. The best satire, Elayne, is done with a scalpel, not a pick-axe, and this is something Stern has yet to learn. *(While your points are, of course, all well taken,*

I still find Stern's commentary [as opposed to his insults] funny on a consistent enough basis that I continue to listen until I am bored, which could very well be any day now. I must confess that I've not felt the "hidden hurts" of his barbs as much as others apparently have, primarily because Stern and I don't know each other from Adam and, while I get the point of your analogy of the hurting friend [and have suffered a few too many of those also], I feel distanced and anonymous enough that it doesn't really touch me...and when it does, like I said, I turn the radio off.)

But there, that's quite enough of that—I didn't mean to rave on about it so long, and especially not now, on this festive occasion. And so, dear Elayne, happy, happy fiftieth INSIDE JOKE to you. I look forward to another fifty years of publishing delight, with and from you. The offices are bigger—did you ever think, back in those lavender attic days, that IJ would someday be located in a Palatial Post Office Box?—the humour is sharper, but the spirit remains the same.

Nostalgically,

ANNI ACKNER
Wynnewood at Wyomissing
855 N. Park Rd., #CC103
Wyomissing, PA 19610

Dear Elayne,

In what's becoming an alarming habit, I find I can't go to sleep again, so I shall attempt to make the best of the situation by corresponding myself to sleep. I have not a lot to say about IJ (9, save it is as fun as usual. Barbara and I have chortled a bit on various bits contained within—she liked "Rejections" quite a bit. Me, I may watch Starman once or twice and will definitely attempt to view Pee Wee Herman via Winston Dudley Emerson, my new VCR. More importantly, I am the proud owner of a copy of "Logopolis," via the public station in Miami, to watch over and over again, at my leisure.

I close with two comments: Anni, what crime did you commit that was bad enough to get you deported to such a horrid place? And Rodny, I understand. I sometimes draw from subject matter generated by random dice rolling.

Yours,

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

Berkeley's favorite underground paper is back!!

**TWISTED
IMAGE**

I FEEL 97%
MORE STUD-LIKE
AFTER MERELY
ONE VIEWING!



TWISTED IMAGE

1630 UNIVERSITY AV. #26

Berkeley, Ca. 94703

to order
send \$2 to

I REMEMBER YESTERDAY

(Rough Draft)
by Dana A. Snow

I remember yesterday

Almost as well as if it were tomorrow

Let's go to the Rand Thinktank

And see if they've any brains

we could borrow.

Minneapolis Revolted:

October 16!

by Luke McGuirk

On Thursday, October 16, Minneapolis' Backroom Anarchist Center and The Progressive Student Organization staged a "warchest tour" of downtown Minneapolis. A combination of street theatre, silliness and earnest intent, the "WarChest Tour" was a result of weeks if not months of planning. The idea was to target businesses in downtown Minneapolis that contribute to the war effort on numerous fronts. The victims included WCCO-TV, who ignore the aerial war in El Salvador and slant the news toward sensationalism; Pillsbury, whose ownership of Burger King and other fast food enterprises contributes to the destruction of the world's largest remaining rain forests in Central and South America; The Minneapolis Star and Tribune, whose board of directors interlocks with Hormel, and who constantly misrepresented the P-9 strike in Austin; Sen. Durenberger's office, whose vote on *contra* air switched when he realized it would pass without him, as a face-saving gesture to the groups that repeatedly occupied his office.

The "WarChest Tour" was inspired by a similar action at the Haymarket Gathering in downtown Chicago. The Minneapolis event attracted approximately 200 people, and, in the words of one participant, "we could have had 500 if more had known about it." Another participant mentioned that, although the tour started out with 85 people, by the end it had nearly doubled with people joining out of curiosity and interest.

In true anarchist style, the pre-event publicity consisted of a couple large graffiti at the University and at the Hennepin-Lake area, a hangout for fashionable young punks. There were also some flyers passed out hand-to-hand.

The event was peaceful and cooperative. The weather was perfect too, cloudless and warm. There were a few arrests, but they were for misdemeanors and not violent actions. The events included smashing a tv outside WCCO, walking through a large office building chanting "Work! Die!" and burning American, Soviet and McDonald's flags (as one person said later, "the three largest corporations in the world") outside a downtown fashion mall.

When the police tried to make their first arrest at the beginning of the demonstration, the squad car was surrounded by demonstrators chanting "Let them go! Let them go!" The car was immobilized and cut off from reinforcements. The police let the detainees go, who immediately rejoined the demonstration to cheers and applause. This was not mentioned by any of the media.

The participants also passed out a booklet explaining the demonstration and its purpose. The handbook gave the reasons that particular people or businesses were targeted, explaining in detail the historical context of the demonstration and the way these media and businesses were used as tools of the authorities to repress free thought and information exchange. It also provided a few helpful pages from the "Disarm Now Action" manual, distributed by a group trying to close down the Rock Island arsenal between Iowa and Illinois. I don't know if the Handbooks were passed out at the demonstration or used beforehand.

The event attracted a lot of media attention. The media focused on the more outlandish-looking punks, ignoring the fact that some of the participants were in their thirties. All three tv stations covered it. The Star and Tribune mentioned the burning flags and the smashed tv, but did not mention delivering the billboard-sized paper (taken from a billboard somehow) with "MINNEAPOLIS IS REVOLTING OCT. 16TH" in place of the headline. The Star's report on the demonstration had a five-column picture of the burning flag and a misleading headline ("Anarchists Organize to Wreak Havoc Downtown"). One tv station is alleged to have shown the burning American flag, but blacked out the other two flags. All three stations had a story about injured swans before the demonstration. The St. Paul and weekly papers did not mention it.

The event was considered a success by the participants. It helped to bring together some of the people in the anarchist community, was a great deal of fun to the participants, and most importantly, may have planted a few seeds in a few fertile minds. It showed some of the most exhilarating aspects of direct action: serious confrontation and a jocular challenge to the status quo.

The Minneapolis WarChest Tour was intended to challenge the passivity the authorities hope to instill in us all. For participants and on-lookers alike, it was a revelation. One hopes there are similar "WarChest Tours" in other parts of the country.

(DISCLAIMER: I must admit that I did not participate in the demonstration or planning; considering its success, however, I am eager to spread the word of its existence. The opinions expressed above are mine only, and do not represent the Backroom Anarchist Center. The reports were taken from eyewitness accounts; some information was taken from the WarChest Tour Handbook. The Backroom Anarchist Center can be reached at 2 E. 27th St., Minneapolis, MN 55407. Ask about Grey Zone, their newsletter. - LM)

STUPID HAIKU #1
by Maiden Japan
Imelda Marcos Japan
Had 3000 pair of shoes
All size 8 1/2.

IJ Questionnaire

And you thought I'd long forgotten about questionnaires...As I recall, we got about a 20% return on our last one, so I'd love to try for perhaps 25% or so this time. Please answer the following questions with your version of the truth and send a reasonable facsimile of this page (since I know most of you will want to keep Phil's back page artwork) back to me, preferably by the deadline (December 15) or by the end of the year at the latest. I hope to present the final tabulations in IJ #51 or 52.

Name _____ Birthday (yr. opt.) _____

How many people besides yourself, if any, read your copy of INSIDE JOKE? _____

Favorite regular feature(s) in IJ: _____

Least favorite regular feature(s) in IJ: _____

What do you read first in IJ? Last? _____

Favorite character from "Peanuts": _____

Most vividly-remembered childhood game: _____

What is your considered opinion of INSIDE JOKE, briefly? (We use this for ad copy)

How would you describe INSIDE JOKE (briefly) to "the uninitiated"? (Also good ad copy)

Please feel free to make any suggestions to improve, broaden, etc. this newsletter:

NOTE: "Regular features" include staffer columns as well as stuff like "Fan Noose" and the letters pages. If you need more room, as they used to say in school, do use a separate piece of paper or the back of this, if you've photocopied it. And please try to get it back to me as soon as you can; thanks!

Keep 'em guessin', Elaine.

