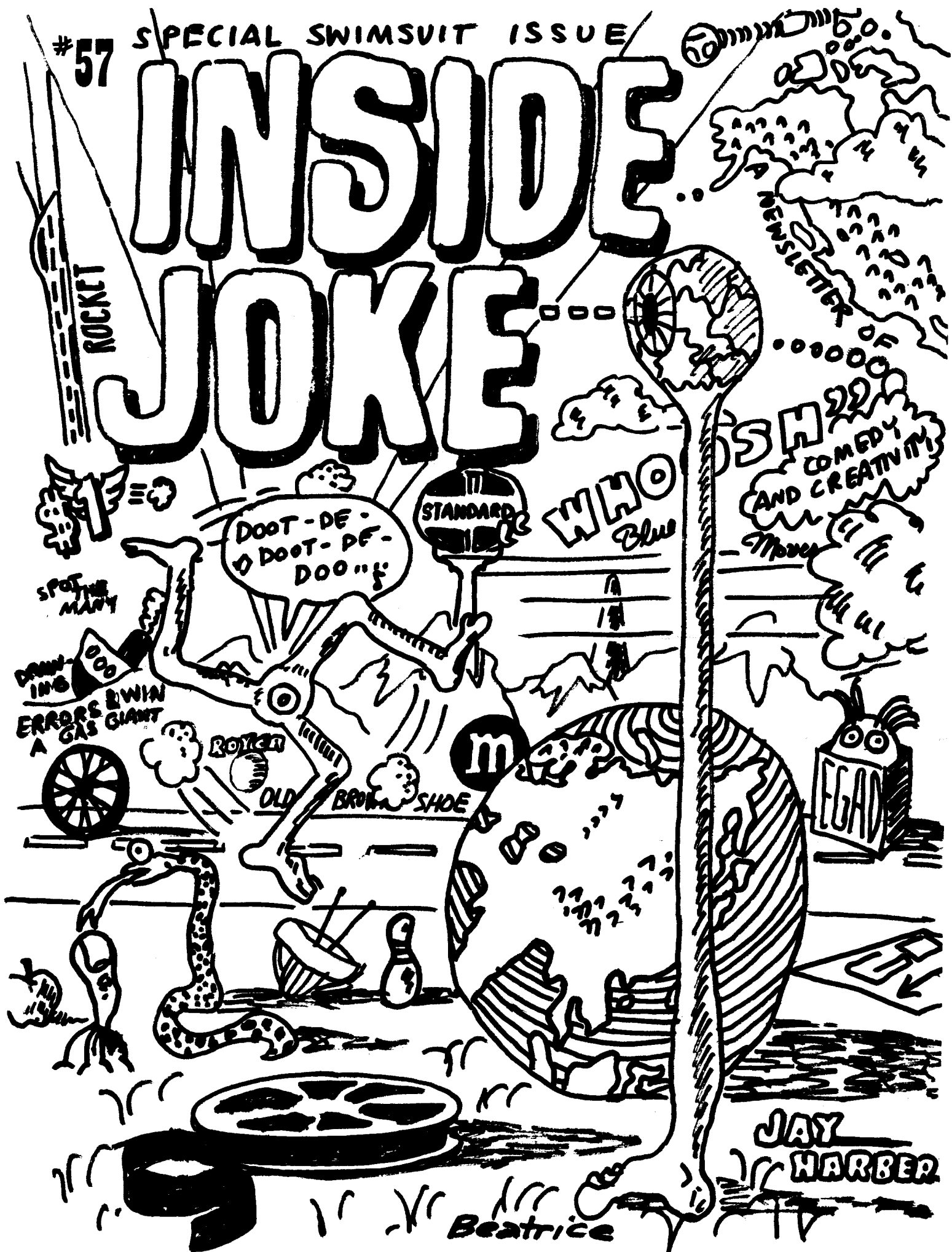


#57

SPECIAL SWIMSUIT ISSUE

INSIDE JOKES



JAY
HARBER

Beatrice

Upcoming Events

- JANUARY 15 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #58
 JANUARY 16 - ETHEL MERRMAN (b.?)
 JANUARY 17 - TOM CORNEJO (23); Andy Kaufman (b. 1939); Benjamin Franklin (b. 1706)
 JANUARY 18 - A.A. Milne (b. 1882); Oliver Hardy (b.?) ; Cary Grant (b. 1904); Danny Kaye (b. 1913)
 JANUARY 19 - BRIAN CATANZARO (33); Janis Joplin (b. 1943); Edgar Allen Poe (b. 1809)
 JANUARY 20 - Fellini (b. 1920); George Burns (92)
 JANUARY 21 - Wolfman Jack (49)
 JANUARY 22 - MIKE PACKER (33); Bill Bixby (51); D.W. Griffith (b. 1875); "Laugh-In" prem. ('68)
 JANUARY 23 - Ernie Kovacs (b. 1919); Humphrey Bogart (b.?) ; National Handwriting Day
 JANUARY 24 - John Belushi (b. 1950); Gold discovered in California (c. 1848)
 JANUARY 26 - RICK HENDERSON (30)
 JANUARY 27 - DEBORAH BENEDICT (37); Lewis Carroll a/k/a Rev. Charles Dodgson (b. 1832)
 JANUARY 28 - GARY FLOAM (41)
 JANUARY 29 - W.C. Fields (b. 1880)
 JANUARY 30 - Richard Brautigan (b. 1933)
 JANUARY 31 - Eddie Cantor (b. 1882); Phil Collins (36)
 FEBRUARY 1 - George Pal (b. 1908)
 FEBRUARY 2 - Tom Smothers (48); Ayn Rand (b. 1905); James Joyce (b. 1882)
 FEBRUARY 3 - Gertrude Stein (b. 1874)
 FEBRUARY 5 - William Burroughs (74); "Turn-On" premieres and is cancelled same day (1969)
 FEBRUARY 6 - Babe Ruth (b. 1895)
 FEBRUARY 7 - Charles Dickens (b. 1812)
 FEBRUARY 8 - Neal Cassady (b. 1926)
 FEBRUARY 10 - MICHAEL FLORES (?); Donovan (?); Jimmy Durante (b. 1893)

(continued on page four...)

 * INSIDE JOKE is put on hexaweekly by Elayne "No Turning Back"
 * Wechsler and many dear friends (thanks for all the wonderful
 * cards!) and emanates from beautiful downtown Brooklyn, where
 * snow blankets the ground and squid keeps popping up in the
 * laps of Mafiosi, go figure...
 * EDITOR-IN-RESIDENCE.....ELAYNE WECHSLER
 * PRODUCTION ASSISTANT/FIANCÉ-AT-LARGE.....STEVE CHAPUT
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ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

Welcome to 1988, Year of No Excuses—oh, that was 1987. Okay, then, regular subscribers are getting this IJ about a week later than you should be because my Conspiracy Job left me so swamped that I couldn't manage to steal back enough time to get IJ typed up and sent out by the new year. As it is, my reasonable printer is on vacation so I had to pay twice the usual charge to get this baby copied so that I could mail it out to reach most of you just around, or less than a week after, the deadline for #58, which I'm not changing (although I will, of course, be expecting some submissions to come straggling in from now until the end of the month or so; just don't delay too long or your bit won't make 58, ok?).

Meanwhile, we have a couple Christmastime submissions which I didn't want to save until next year, especially as one of them is from "returning" staffer Steve Scharff—welcome back, and also a very warm welcome back to Deborah Benedict, whose poems will be appearing here for awhile until the pain lessens enough for her to write IJ more lengthy pieces...but you should see her questionnaire responses!

Oh, and speaking of those: Okay, I'll give you guys one more chance on that "Ten Best/Worst" question. Was it really that obscure that so many of you misunderstood? I guess I assumed more people glimpsed Letterman's nightly "Top Ten" than actually do. So let me try to clarify once more: I want a Ten Best or Ten Worst Something, not just a listing of ten things about 1987 that you personally liked or disliked. You know, like the examples I gave in the question, or like "Ten Best Hairdos," "Ten Worst Fox Network Shows," "Ten Most Irrational Government Lies," "Ten Sickest Michael Jackson Stories..." get it now? Good; I'm looking forward to getting some interesting lists by the end of the month to publish next issue!

I'm almost positive the editorial box hasn't left anyone out this month, except for J.C. Brainbeau and Michael Packer, who've generously bought ad space, for which I thank them. Belated apologies to Larry Blazek, Andy Roberts and Larry Stolte—I had submissions from all of you last time which somehow never made it in. Whom am I kidding?—I fucked up last time, sorry. You're all in here this time, along with lots of dog tales, for some reason; a few new folks, including artist Susan Catherine, whose "Overheard at Lunch Counters" series runs in all sorts of neat small press publications; everything you ever wanted to know about Gerry Anderson from an expert, Doug Pelton; series finales from Rodny Dioxin, Brian Catanzaro and Kathy Stadalsky (K.L. and Tom Roberts' "Homo Patrol" and Pru's new story both have one more installment for now, which will appear next issue); lots of untitled stuff (is 1988 the Year of No Titles, I wonder?); lots of minifictions; oh, you know, the usual. We also hope to have Mike Dobbs (who's been almost as busy as me this past couple months, poor lad) and A.J. Wright back with us next issue to round out the staffer list.

And as I mentioned in this issue's letter column, March 19 is indeed the date for our annual IJ Party (this year's theme: The Pre-Wedding Reception, commemorating our Last Days of Singlehood and Impending Nuptials and so forth), which will feature strange videos (old cartoons, Jayne Mansfield, anything anyone else cares to bring) and audios (some Duck's Breath stuff, songs from friends of IJ, etc.), a Cookie O'Puss if we're lucky, a live performance by the Ground Zero Club featuring our own Tom Deja (actually pronounced "Deejay," by the way), and of course our annual "Gerber," a round-robin story (I promise to get the typewriter in shipshape if you all promise NOT to write about aliens this year, okay?) to be begun by Vinnie Bartilucci, whose name is banded about quite a bit this issue by everyone from the Four-Color Fiend to his fiancée Dorian, and who has been kind enough to repro up some IJ back issues for free for us, so that we can once again offer all back issues at \$1 each, either through the mail or at the party. Oh, and if you've a zine to sell, as usual feel free to bring it to the party. We'll try to send out actual invitations again, but just so you know, if you're reading this, you're pretty much invited, provided you call us around March 10 or so to let us know you're coming. We're here at the (718) H-E-L-P-A-T-1 Hotline, as usual.

The Whozits have walked out again, this time under protest that the year's first Celebrity Non-Entity, the Leap Second, has gotten more attention that it deserves, and less than they deserve. Just ignore them, and they may be back next issue...

...the deadline for which, as I've mentioned, is still January 15; although I know many submissions might be late for this one, I still intend on putting #58 together as quickly as possible so I can send it to you in plenty of time for the next deadline, which is February 29 (for #59)—if #59 isn't already laid out by the party I may even be able to fit the Gerber story in there, but we'll see. INSIDE JOKE is \$1 per issue, with advance (NON-REFUNDABLE) subs of up to \$8 a year (anything above that is automatically considered a donation, which I could always use as I've laid out over \$300 for this issue alone out-of-pocket and nobody's even bought a \$5 IJ cap to fill the coffers), or 3 IRCs per issue if you live overseas; Canadians, pay American cash or postal money order. Everyone, please make any checks/m.o.'s to "Elayne Wechsler," NOT to IJ. Contributors have the option of only paying 56¢ (58¢ American if from Canada) in stamps for IJ #58 if their submission is in there. If there's an "X" by your name on the mailing label, it's time to send more subscription money. Send all stuff, including letters, writing, artwork and so on to us at P.O. Box 1609, Madison Sq. Station, New York, NY 10159 and this issue is dedicated to the memories of "Pistol" Pete Maravich (for you sports lovers) and Jasha Heifetz (for you music lovers), the latter of whom is a distant relation to our own Pru... and well miss you, Trevor Howard.



DIARY of The ROCK FIEND



by
Anni Ackner

LESS THAN I NEED TO KNOW

Over the past several years, in my capacity as your beloved Witty, Sophisticated, Acerbic Commentator on the American Scene, I have endeavoured, time and again, to use my specialized bit of knowledge and accumulated wisdom for the good of my readers. As those of you who have been following along with the proper amount of attention can attest, through the course of my career in these pages I have, in one column or another, selflessly and humbly attempted to educate those kind enough to peruse my work on such diverse topics as weight loss, politics, the proper behaviour of hosts and guests, surviving the vagaries of everyday life, and other matters of grave social import, all without thought of personal gain and solely for the benefit of the devotees of this publication. Because of this innate selflessness, and due also in part to my extreme modesty, it never once occurred to me—I do, after all, have one or two other things on my mind—that this little instructional programme of mine might have an unforeseen and potentially disastrous consequence.

The problem, you see, is this: All unintentionally, but with the best will in the world, it appears that—and you can just imagine my embarrassment—I have fulfilled my function as educator and general Font of Wisdom to such an unheard of extent, and with such success, that the rumour has somehow gotten around that I, in effect, know Everything.

This is an unfortunate state of affairs not only in a semantic sense—after all, if I know Everything, what on earth am I doing in this apartment with that cat?—but for a more personal reason as well: As a matter of fact, there are at least ten things I don't know, or don't understand, and if everyone thinks I know Everything, the chances are very good that no one is going to bother to come around and explain them to me, which in turn means I'm in for a great many more of those long, long blank nights spent staring at the ceiling and shredding Kleenex tissues into teeny tiny bits. In an effort to avoid—or at least postpone—this horrible fate (and if you don't think it's horrible you haven't tried listening to what passes as the radio in Reading, PA at 4 o'clock in the morning recently), I present to you a list of the foremost things that I do not know or understand, in the hope that you, my friends, will be able to see beyond my facade of sparkling intelligence and offer me some answers. Please submit them in triplicate, on plain white paper, numbered if possible. Things have a way of getting misplaced around here, but, as I long ago figured out that there are small and malign elves that inhabit the desk drawers of Thinking People and periodically make bonfires out of important papers and toast toadstools over them, this isn't something for which I need an explanation.

In any event:

THE TEN FOREMOST THINGS FOR WHICH I HAVE NO ANSWERS or

Trivial Recruit

1) Why is it, do you suppose, that with all the recent studies and surveys proving that many women—perhaps the majority of women—live either by themselves or without the company of other adults, and all the recent advances in technology and physics, clothing manufacturers persist in putting zippers on the backs of women's dresses? There isn't a woman in the world who has arms long enough to zip herself into one of these instruments of torture comfortably—there are, for that matter, very few spider monkeys with the requisite armspan—and, as far as that goes, there are precious few men who can successfully manipulate a back zipper all the way up to the neckline without getting the thing caught in either his partner's (a) bra, (b) slip, (c) skin, (d) hair or (e) all of the above, which means, in effect, that the only women who can really wear a back zipper are those in lesbian relationships. As the lesbian population is relatively small, and as those among that population who are stupid enough to purchase a dress with a back zipper is even smaller, it would seem to me that this particular fashion would scarcely be cost effective, but there it is, and there they sit, rack after rack of them, grinning at you with their metal teeth in every dress shop from Rodeo Drive to Rivington Street. I just don't understand it.

2) While we're on the subject of fashion, can anyone explain to me why it was that they brought back the mini-skirt? I mean, there we all were, nice and comfortable and happy in our longer hemlines, able once more to wear a skirt and still be secure in the knowledge that we could bend down, cross our legs and even sit with our knees moderately spaced all without fear of embarrassment, criticism or the thought that someone would notice that we had stretch marks on the backs of our thighs, and bingo—the next thing you know there's Oleg Cassini and that wonderful wacky bunch over on Seventh Avenue trotting out lines of skirts that, in more civilized countries, might be touted as fancy cummerbunds. Now, I know all about men designing with an eye towards what they like to see, and the correlation between the rising hemline and the falling stock market and all that, but the simple fact of the matter is that there are only two women over the age of 15 in the entire world who look good in mini-skirts, and nobody likes them. Think

about it.

3) Has anyone ever seen Michael Jackson and Diana Ross in the same room together? Well, have they?

4) How does it happen, do you think, that I always manage to have cigarettes, but never have any matches? After all, cigarettes are \$1.35 a pack around here, while they'll give you matches for free in just about any restaurant or newsstand, and there are precisely as many matches in a book as there are cigarettes in a pack (unless you happen to be one of those sorts who smokes the new cigarettes that come 25 to a pack, in which case you have no one to blame but yourself), so you would think that, by the laws of mathematics, when you have cigarettes you ought to have matches, but somehow, it never works out that way. This usually occurs to me as I am trying futilely to light my cigarette on one of the burners on the stove, and I wish someone would hurry up and answer it, as I am rapidly running out of eyebrows.

5) Can anyone figure out why Michael Musto makes more money than I do? There's an electric company, a gas company, a cable company and at least three major credit cards who all have a vested interest in this one.

6) I think I'd actually pay real live money at this point to anyone capable of straightening out those Energizer Battery commercials for me ("Kid! Sieve, please take note). You know the ones I mean—an acromegalic Australian fellow who wears a brush haircut and possesses a major resemblance to Popeye comes out ("lurches" may be a more exact word), sings something incomprehensible in what I assume is English if only because it doesn't appear to be anything else, then comes the pitch for the battery—this is the only part on which I really feel I have a grip. I mean, I know what a battery is, and I understand that they're trying to sell me a battery, and that's quite all right with me. I approve of batteries. They make things run and you don't get a bill for them every month, which is all I feel I can fairly ask of an inanimate object at this point—after which the Australian sings again and then shouts "Oy!". End of commercial. Leaving completely aside the fact that I have never understood the current American obsession with Australia—granted that that fellow throwing his shrimp on the barbie was passably cute the first 400 times I saw him, and granted that the place is pretty inoffensive and contains more than its share of weird animals, how much mileage can you get out of a continent whose chief export, for many years, was Olivia Newton-John?—I can't, though I have pondered it at length, comprehend what a misshapen Australian has to do with batteries in the first place. Where's the connection? Are batteries grown in Australia? Is this guy supposed to be a battery farmer from the Outback? Do these patteries politely say "G'Day" when you take them out of the package? And if they do, is that supposed to be a selling point? What's going on here, anyway?

7) And by the way, has anyone, anywhere, ever heard anybody seriously refer to McDonald's as "Mickey-D's"? If so, why?

8) Orpah Winfrey?

9) Does anybody happen to understand why a cat—and, moreover, a cat who has been certified by a vet I have every reason to trust not to be suffering from brain damage, all evidence to the contrary notwithstanding—will eat an entire bar of soap? All right, I can see taking one bite, just out of curiosity—a cat is only human—and perhaps even two, just to see if the second bite tastes as bad as did the first (I've done that with certain buckets of take-out chicken, myself), but an entire bar of soap? And why, having eaten that bar of soap, will the cat, realizing only too late what a serious mistake it has made, choose, with the entire house at its disposal, to rid itself of the offending tidbit in the middle of an imported virgin wool blanket that has to be dry-cleaned?

10) Finally, can anybody figure out why I constantly set these things up to have ten parts when I only have nine jokes? I'm sure I'd have a lot less gray hair, and I'm certain that old burning feeling in the pit of my stomach would improve considerably, if I could only satisfactorily solve this particular dilemma. And while we're at it, can anybody see a way for me to end this column with my customary style and grace? I'm afraid I can't—this is known in humour column circles as "Writing Oneself Into A Corner" or "Navasky's Revenge"—and I'm equally afraid that that's going to leave Our Beloved Editrix with a couple of cold, blank inches, which will cause her to force me to wear a bridesmaid's dress that used to belong to Little Bo Peep, so if you can think of an ending for this piece, I'd gratefully accept your passing it on to Elayne with all due haste. As for me, I'll be rootling around in the pits of my desk drawers, hunting for toadstools.

(A NOTE FROM THE KID: Duly noting Anni's anxiety about dilemmas numbered 6 through 8, and in keeping with the spirit of comradeship for which the *11 Woman* is known—not to mention in the hopes that people will stop, once and for all, persisting in the belief that I am but another of Anni's fanciful noms de plume [I am quite flattered, of course, to have started said rumour, but I must insist with regret it is not true]—I will endeavour to provide my version of a response to these ponderous queries, and take care of dilemma #10, being stuck for an ending, as well [when in doubt, seek an addendum, I always say!]: The Aussie fellow in the Energizer commercials is Brian(?) "Jacko" Jackson, a football [soccer] star and rumoured Australian undefeated heavyweight boxer, who's been known to branch out into other fields such as the making of a recent music video with the title "My Brain Hurts." I personally feel that anybody who borrows that liberally and obviously from Monty Python can't be all bad, and truth to tell, Jacko's much more tolerable when his hair's slightly longer, as in the music video, than the crew cut he sports for the battery ads. As it is

(continued next page)

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not totally unheard of for a series of ads to become successful in one country and subsequently be exploited—I mean, exported to another [witness some of the Colgate commercials with decidedly Cockney accents], I assume some bright agency folks presumed that Jacko's popularity Down Under would stand a good chance of catching on in the Land of Kitsch and Money. I leave it to the good reading public to determine whether or not this has occurred. I have mentioned Jacko in past columns, though, Anni; honestly, if you can't be bothered reading my work carefully enough, I don't see why I should go to all this trouble in the first—oh yes, I remember why, now—you owe me dinero for this one, bucko. As Jacko would say, "Oy!"...The Four-Color Fiend is the first person I actually know to use the term "Mickey-D's" [the abbreviation coming from the first three letters of the company's name, but I assumed that was a trick question, no?] with alarming frequency, but, per our recent discussion, no, I've never heard it employed by any actual homeboys or -girls [neither do real black and brown, or yellow or purple-with-pink-polka-dots, people break out into song and dance at your local Golden Arches, so there you are]... "Orpah" is apparently a Biblical name, and the original intention of Winfrey's parents, who most likely had to deal with a dyslexic typist at the hospital where their daughter was born. Many families with relatively high hipness quotients bestow such names upon their children, presumably in an effort to make the child strong enough to deal with the cold, cruel world when the other kids make fun of his or her silly name. I don't know where exactly "Orpah" appears in the Bible, but they even gave Salome the short end of it [did you know her name never appears in the Bible even though there's a whole story about her?]. I'd glance in one of the "begat" sections, that's always a good bet...There you have it!]

"UPCOMING EVENTS" continued

- FEBRUARY 11 - Thomas Edison (b. 1847)
FEBRUARY 13 - Peter Gabriel (38); Peter Tork (44)
FEBRUARY 14 - Jack Benny (b. 1894); Mel Allen (66)
FEBRUARY 15 - Susan B. Anthony (b. 1820)
FEBRUARY 16 - Edgar Bergen (b. 1903); Hugh Beaumont (b. 1909)
FEBRUARY 22 - Edna St. Vincent Millay (b. 1892)
FEBRUARY 24 - Zeppo Marx (b. 1901); George Harrison (45); Anthony Burgess (71)
FEBRUARY 25 - Theodore Sturgeon (b. 1918); Buffalo Bill Cody (b. 1846); NYC Subway Opens (1890)
FEBRUARY 26 - ANDY ROBERTS (29)
FEBRUARY 28 - JOE SCHWIND (38); KEN BURKE (32); DANA A. SNOW (35); Zero Motel (b. 1915)
FEBRUARY 29 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #59



**BORED?
SUICIDAL?
DEPRESSED?**

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

BACKWORDS LOGIC by Ace Backwords ©1987

HOW I ENDED UP DROPPING OUT OF COLLEGE AND SITTING IN A COW PASTURE WITH A HEAD FULL OF LSD AND A SOUL FULL OF MADNESS

Living in a dorm with a hundred other college freshmen teaches you a lot about your fellow man. Most of the guys were fraternity jocks waiting to be pledged. Me and my roommate Gary were referred to as "the two burnouts at the end of the hall." We had long hair, smoked dope, and were more than a little spaced-out.

While most of the jocks were into Bachman Turner Overdrive (this was 1974), Gary was heavily into English Glitter bands like Roxy Music, Curved Air, and Ziggy Stardust. Gary even played rhythm guitar for a Kiss cover band, putting on make-up, 10-inch platforms, the whole bit. They played at 7th grade dances. Gary made a good rock star: pencil-thin with a huge mane of styled, goldilocks hair. He was a good guy and we hit it off from the start. We spent a lot of time listening to his collection of hundreds of records.

I started out an English major, switched to Art, and ended up a Religion major. It was Faulkner that ruined me for English. I was taking Literary Bullshit of the 20th Century 101, and the prof was just nuts on Faulkner.

"Just look how he makes one sentence last for 17 pages!" he would gush. "Totally incomprehensible! Pure Faulkner!"

I was going through some serious personal problems at the time, and not too keen on analyzing Faulkner's sentence structure, pure or otherwise. I figured God could help me deal with my existential confusion.

So I started taking all these religion courses. Met a guy named Brad Kochumas, the perfect wandering holyman, right out of a Tom Robbins novel. He turned me onto Alan Watts, Zen Buddhism and LSD.

4 Things were going okay. Me and Gary would stay up all night

jamming on guitars and discussing the true nature of the Cosmos. I was heavily into "Be Here Now" by Baba Ram Dass and dazzled Gary with my half-bright wisdom. I was sorting things out.

A couple of the guys on our floor took part in our philosophical rap sessions, but mostly they were into guzzling down kegs of 3.2 beer and talking about getting laid. The big thing that year was "streaking," running in the nude past the girls' dorm in the middle of the night. (In fact, a big corn-fed football player on our floor set the American record for the coldest streak, braving frost-bit testicles in sub-freezing weather!) Other kicks included fire extinguisher fights and weekly "Asshole of the Week" elections awarded to the biggest fuck-up on the floor. Skinny Mikey usually won. Mikey was a frail P.E. major studying to be a trainer. He carried the towels for the football team and served as the whipping boy for the hormone-crazed frat-boys who couldn't get dates on Friday night. Invariably, Mikey would end up tossed into the shower, clothes and all. I can still picture him emerging from the shower room, soaking wet, whimpering, "Gad dog you friggin' guys!"

One night me and Gary were lying in our beds in the dark, talking about stuff, confessing about girls we were in love with, etc. Gary had a particularly anguished tone in his voice when he asked me, "Is there anything you wish you could talk about but you're afraid to tell anybody?"

"No," I said. Of course I had tons of shit in my head, but I wasn't about to tell him that.

"When I was 12 all my teeth rotted out," confessed Gary. "I got false teeth."

Actually I had never noticed it, but Gary was really ashamed of this.

"Tomorrow I'm going to this Christian revival meeting to see if this faith healer can cure my teeth." (This was in Ohio, deep in the heart of the Bible Belt.)

The next night Gary comes bursting into the room. "Guess what? I've been saved! I've given my life to Jesus Christ!"

"You what?!!!"

"Yeah," explained Gary. "The preacher at the revival told everyone who was searching for an answer to come kneel at the front of the stage and let Jesus come into your heart. And Jesus came to me. It was unbelievable! I started crying. I've been born again!"

"Don't give me that Christian crap," I said. "Jesus was just one of many enlightened spiritual teachers, like the Buddha."

"I asked the preacher about that and he said Buddha was just Satan in disguise. Ace, you've been duped by Satan."

"Oh for christ's—"

"Ace, I was so confused and now Jesus has finally given me a purpose for my life."

"And what, pray tell, is that?"

"To save your soul before you end up suffering eternally in Hell."

What followed was a spiritual cold war—Gary sitting on his bed, me sitting on mine. And every conversation turned into a religious argument. Christianity vs. Buddhism. We were both fighting for our Souls.

Gary cut off his long hair and started walking around with a Bible. One night he slipped into a trance and wrote himself a 4-page letter starting "Dear Gary" and ending with "Sincerely yours, God." He claimed God was speaking through him.

The next night I walked into the room and two of his new born-again pals were there. His collection of rock records was strewn all over the floor. One of his friends, this intense little guy, was waving a copy of "Meet The Beatles" in the air.

"Can't you just see Satan in their faces!" he intoned. Then he smashed the album over his knee. Two big garbage bags were filled with the remnants of Gary's record collection.

"The Rolling Stones!" announced Gary, incredulous at the stupidity of rock worshippers. "They ADMIT they follow the Devil!"

WHACK! went "Her Satanic Majesty's Request." On the floor I could see shattered bits and pieces of Gary's sinful past. Eno. New York Dolls. Kiss. In the dumper.

The intense little guy looked at me. "The Beatles will burn in Hell for turning the youth onto drugs like LSD and the Maharishi. Before I met Jesus I sank so low I was sniffing gasoline to get high."

Gary looked at me with a superior smirk. "These are the Last Days, Ace, and you're gonna rot in Hell if you don't get on your knees and accept Jesus as your personal Savior."

"What?"

"God gives you the free will. It's your choice—Heaven or Hell." "You mean to say," I said, "that God, who created everything, including Satan, and knows the past and the future, gave people the free choice to pick Heaven or Hell, knowing in advance that millions of people would end up suffering eternally in Hell? What the hell kind of God would set up a deal like that?"

"Don't question God," said Gary. "He knows more than you. You're wasting your life with that Buddhism nonsense."

"I may be dumb, but I'm not THAT dumb," I said. It was bad enough that I was confused, but to have to defend my confusion! I gave Gary a forced smile that I hoped denoted my enlightenment, and slunk out of the room.

A couple of days later, alone in the dorm room, I got to thinking. Shit, my mind was a mess—a garbled mish-mash of Zen, Taoism, and "Kung-Fu" reruns. Who knows, maybe they were right.

I got down on my knees and said all the magic words. Jesus.

God. Save Me. Sinner.

Nothing happened.

I guess I was pretty dumb.

At the end of the semester I packed my bags, gobbled down some acid, and headed for California.

The Institute of Auschwitz at Institute, W.Va.

by John Paul Mengele, Ph.D.

While thousands of lawyers and hundreds of insurance companies scamper about trying to milk Union Carbide Corporation for every penny of its assets to settle claims resulting from the methyl isocyanate accident in Bhopal, India, the company has quietly gone about preparing its defense and conducting important research at the Institute of Auschwitz at Institute, West Virginia.

The Institute is reportedly staffed by the grandchildren of members of the Manhattan Project, the select group who labored to produce the weapons that brought World War II to a speedy and awesome conclusion at the mere cost of two Japanese cities and fewer than half a million Japanese.

It has become fashionable, of late, to question the sanity of a nation that would gather its best and brightest minds and set them to designing doomsday weaponry. Some nabobs of negativism go so far as to bemoan the alleged "inhuman cruelty" of vaporizing and otherwise annihilating and/or maiming the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, although it should be obvious the Japanese never needed those people to begin with. Without them, Japan has managed to conquer every American market it had its eyes on when the recycled Third Avenue New York El was dropped on Pearl Harbor.

In some circles, it's become fashionable to claim you've contracted Legionnaire's disease, Alzheimer's, Kuru, ARC or AIDS from an insect bite at a sushi bar. And it has also become fashionable to take potshots at large chemical corporations whose products do the very things they were developed to do: kill and maim. In the face of such attacks, many large chemical corporations have chosen to relax their safety standards to point out just how responsible and civic-minded they have been.

The point to be learned here is that if there is one truth governing all of existence, it is this: whatever you say the enemy is becomes the enemy, and the more menacing you say the enemy is the more menacing the enemy will become. This is what Newton's Law of Thermodynamics says, incidentally, by way of Einstein's little known and often maligned Theory of Reciprocity.

Therefore, it came as no surprise when classified documents recently smuggled to this writer by an East German operative expelled from Great Britain last month suggested that Union Carbide is routinely testing the effects of controlled toxic substance releases upon deaths, disabilities, mental aberrations, and genetic mutations among local citizens and rural Appalachian residents.

I called Union Carbide's chief, Warren Anderson, for comment on these charges for more than two weeks, but there was no answer. Reports from Yossarian Universal News Service indicate that Mr. Anderson and his wife have been unable to dine at their favorite restaurants since the Bhopal disaster for fear that their giggling might be misinterpreted as insensitivity to the plight of the poor and useless. Rumors abound that the Andersons have enrolled in Connecticut community college programs designed to teach tragically altered Americans how to master such necessary survival strategies as preparing TV dinners and taking out the trash. It is hoped these programs will teach Mr. Anderson the good business sense of purchasing a telephone answering machine.

A call to Union Carbide's Public Relations Officer, L.H. "Winky" Oswald, revealed that while The Institute of Auschwitz at Institute, W.Va., does exist, the purpose of The Institute is not to blackmail the average American with the threat of terminal poisoning or long-term contamination of the gene pool. Oswald was eager to explain that The Institute was endowed at the behest of Donald Regan, the closest human to the surgically altered porpoise that replaced President Ronald Reagan after the Hinckley assassination.

Few Americans have been willing to accept the former movie star's death, and a recent Gallup poll indicates nearly 70% of the population is willing to be ruled by a surgically altered porpoise so long as the details are kept hidden. Nearly 100% of those surveyed who confessed they don't even register, much less vote, expressed shock that the United States still had a President, regardless of his species.

Some alarmists charge that Union Carbide, the world's third largest manufacturer of poisons and mutagens, has apparently decided against following recent precedents for corporate dealings in the face of protracted and sure-loss legal proceedings. It has determined, according to these doomsayers, to take the offensive in the continuing war between mythical morality and realistic profits.

Not so, stressed Oswald, who was quick to point out that the settlement negotiated between several chemical manufacturers and Vietnam War veterans whose family trees had been allegedly hacked down by exposure to Agent Orange amounted to little more than 40¢ for each serviceman exposed, a fact he argued would sooner or later be used by secular humanists to call for an end to American militarism. While the companies engaged in the manufacture of Agent Orange admitted no wrongdoing and are exempted from future litigation under the terms of the agreement, Oswald argued the overall effect of the agreement was to cast doubt on the integrity and ambition of the companies involved. "How can you expect an industry committed to the premise that all life has an antidote," Oswald said, "to accept a punitive verdict based on an affirmation of its expressed purpose? That's simply balderdash."

That the Monsanto Corporation managed to file bankruptcy to avoid claims by marine construction workers who were permanently disabled by asbestos exposure while building the nation's naval

war machine during WWII is another sore spot with Oswald. "Protection from creditors," he said, "should be undertaken from a positive standpoint, not a negative one. Lord knows, everyone screws up now and then, and to say that the minority responsible for politically expedient—however needless—deaths must seek legal relief from the illness and termination experienced by the majority affected runs counter to the American Way. The law is for those who have no weapons. Those with the weapons have no need for the law. The Monsanto affair was total embarrassment, if you ask me."

Oswald is particularly incensed that the key clause focused upon by the media in most of the recent settlements is the stipulation that the defendants did not admit to any wrongdoing and cannot be prosecuted at a later date for any charges arising from the original claims. Oswald contends these stipulations are being interpreted by potential victims of future disasters as a tacit admission of guilt.

Union Carbide is, as a result, taking a stronger stand against lawsuits arising from the more than 40,000 deaths and 2 million disabilities stemming from fewer than 6 "unusual events" at its plants overseas. It appears now that Union Carbide has decided to fight for its survival, and from all indications, it may very well win.

Managers and key production employees have been issued full life-support systems, while residents living within a 395-mile radius of Union Carbide plants have been given toll-free numbers to call which access a continuous tape-loop message which begins: "This has been a test of the Union Carbide Corporation's toll-free emergency network. If this had been an actual alert, you would not have been able to understand this recording."

Although some scenarioists argue Union Carbide is prepared to unleash a biological and chemical preemptive strike against its perceived enemies here and abroad unparalleled in human history, industry spokeswomen are quick to point out that the controlled shutdown in Bhopal, India, was a complete success. The methyl isocyanate reserves were protected, and the only victims of the planned venting were street people, malingers, and other undesirable Americans themselves have overwhelmingly stated in recent years that they'd rather not have on their own streets.

When asked to comment upon these allegations, Union Carbide was unwilling to offer official comment, but one unnamed source did say: "Where the hell is Bhopal, India? Who the hell gives a shit about assholes in Bhopal, India? Tell me that!" Bhopal, India, from what the author has been able to determine, is located in a section of the world where cows (beef) are considered to be sacred.

There is much to support the unnamed source's contention, by the way. Since Ronald Reagan took office in 1980, this nation has struggled through the longest and most brutal depression in 70 years. Only by careful manipulation of statistics has the President been able to conceal (even from the unemployed themselves) that nearly 38% of the work force is either unemployed, too discouraged to look for work, or out on the street living in cardboard boxes. The 62% of able-bodied people fortunate enough to hold jobs they don't particularly like have remained extremely upset that they can't get through a block without being hassled for spare change. The administration's strategy to get 52% of the 16% of the 62% of the severely pissed-off people who actually vote to endorse the policies of a surgically altered porpoise have apparently paid off. A recent Harris poll has indicated that less than 8% of all eligible voters intend to vote between now and their deaths, and that nearly 75% of these people think Ronald Reagan (or whatever artificial President the country may offer that looks and sounds like Ronald Reagan) is the nicest guy you'd ever want to run a superpower.

These figures have helped bolster the administration's contention that the number one problem in the world today is non-violent crime against the middle-class, who could easily become part of the working class by losing their jobs.

As a result, more people than ever before are asking their local governments to further define non-violent crimes and give those crimes mandatory jail sentences, while the federal government remains adamant on the civil rights of inmates. An inmate, according to current rules, is eligible for eight times as much peace and quiet as the average American. Inmates cannot be subjected to a prison population density in excess of 10% of that experienced by the average South or Central American refugee.

Meanwhile, the federal government continues to diminish its contribution to jail construction, and the local citizens refuse to endorse levies to allow construction of additional facilities. The result is a stalemate in the never-ending battle against the population explosion. Oswald thinks Union Carbide's program for eliminating the terminally homeless and unemployed is a model of efficiency.

Few people in Institute, W.Va., in fact, seem to mind the endless stream of trucks and trains that daily disgorge America's human refuse into low-cost housing near the Union Carbide plant here. The town's fastest growing industry is sanitary landfill, however, and several environmental groups are charging there is nothing at all sanitary about these new operations.

Human rights activists have also flocked to this Appalachian Valley community to protest what they charge is an orchestrated policy of mass homicide. While Institute of Auschwitz researchers do admit that several experiments have resulted in extreme agony to the human subjects, they point to statistics that show nearly 85% of those participating in the tests have experienced total neurological collapse fully four hours prior to the onset of threshold level pain and ultimate termination.

The situation at Auschwitz has no apparent solution, at least

for the time being. And until stricter laws are enacted to dissuade secular humanists from protesting against the controlled elimination of neighboring life forms, certain individuals will continue to express outrage with each new report of chemical or biological death.

A recent study has shown that the states of Oregon, Utah, Idaho, and Washington, for instance, have lost more than 335,000 people during the past two years because of the lack of demand for wood products. Attempts to track these lost people down had led to dead ends. They never arrived anywhere. No one has any record of their whereabouts.

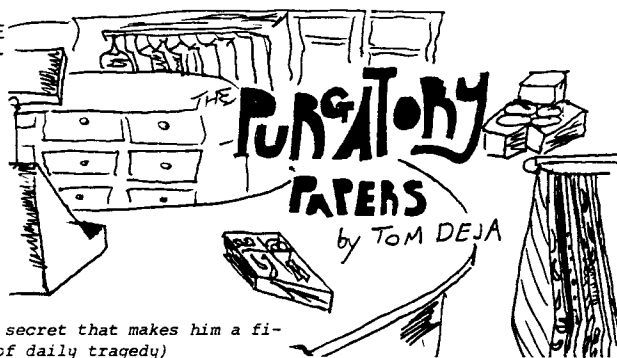
But now it appears these economically homeless had been hired as test participants by the University of Auschwitz. Longtime residents of the area claim that more than 8 million people have lived in the lethal zone within 250 yards of the plant's perimeter during the past 18 months, and that the Bekin's vans have been arriving ten to twenty times a day in front of the low-cost housing, never removing furniture.

Union Carbide does not dispute these charges, although it declines to comment upon specific numbers, citing reasons of national security. Oswald says the company is simply carrying out instructions from the Reagan administration which received an overwhelming mandate in 1984 to carry out its austere domestic budget reductions.

This author followed a convoy of Bekin's vans to Norfolk, Va., where he witnessed thousands of what appeared to be large sacks of grain loaded into merchant transports bearing South African home ports. The stench in the air was sickening, even for low tide.

THE
CURSE
OF THE
SALES-
MAN'S
FACE

(In
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our
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The statement I am about to make is true. I mean every word of it.

The next person to ask "Do you work here?" dies.

My frustration is at its peak. I cannot go into a store without some innocent asking that question. Sometimes they try to be clever. They ask instead, "Is this the correct price?", or "Where are your housewares?" (proper response: "In my house, you nit.") I can tell what they really want to know. They want to know if I work here. I have taken to glaring and shaking uncontrollably in response. The other day my friend Vinnie had to restrain me lest I tear apart some poor unfortunate in Toys R Us. He thought this was amusing. I assure you: this isn't amusing.

To clear any confusion, I would like to state that I don't work for the following stores: Alexander's, Bloomingdale's, A&S, Barnes & Noble, Trash & Vaudeville, J&R Record World, plain old Record World, Record Factory, Jean Factory, Card Factory, Art Cards, Lee's Art Shop, Stop N' Shop, Hobbies N' Such, Kay-Bee Hobbies and any of the small bizarre discount shops I have been known to frequent. I have only worked in two stores in my entire life. I left Crazy Eddie's due to rampaging boredom and do not wish to discuss my year-and-a-third at Strawberry's. For anyone not yet sure of your future, don't be a shoe department salesman on Sundays. Crazy folk come out on Sunday.

The pity is, even as early as the Strawberry's job I was too jaded from answering the question. I made up clever little responses to the question. Instead of a simple "Yes" I would say, "Oh, I hope so," or, "If I'm not, I'm afraid I'm unemployed." Sometimes I would answer with both. My favorite response is, "To tell the truth, I was kidnapped at a young age by Serbian Nationals and am even now awaiting their sign to start the revolution."

Don't worry. She didn't think it was funny, either.

The thing that makes my affliction so upsetting is that I am not by nature a helpful person. My demeanor is far from nice. After all, I am on record as disliking 75% of the human race. My hatred of the average human is surpassed only by my hatred of cute children. Such children should be beaten. Over the head. With a lead pipe. Repeatedly.¹

I am confident that if I found out the reason for my curse—

**ON JULY 26, 1776, THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS
NAMED BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AS
POSTMASTER GENERAL.**

**His annual salary? \$1,000 per year. If agriculture
and industry had operated under a 50/50 workers,
others money split that annual salary would still be
\$1,000. End inflation before it's too late — like '88.
Send S.A.S.E. to must-be-adopted UNFIXED WAGES
Box 2243 — YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, 44504**

herewith called "sales quality"—I would live a more normal life. If tamed, the sales quality could be useful. Since people seem intent upon looking at me as an authority figure, I could have them get me stuff. Used correctly, the sales quality might even be a boon.

Obversely, I can use the sales quality only when I need it. Once mastered, I could turn it off at will. I could also market the secret and pass it on to people who truly need to have people fall over them. Who knows how much Jim and Tammy would pay for that secret? I could even use the sales quality to bring about anarchy. Imagine an army of bums running throughout the subways with this knowledge. They'd get as far as "Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen—" and helpless commuters would throw their wallets and purses at their feet. See, a controlled sales quality could bring about big changes around here, buddy.

Realizing its limitless potential, I've tried to isolate the source of the "sales quality." After some introspection, I believe it has something to do with my appearance. After all, all that lovely scowling and hostility I throw off doesn't seem to deter these seekers of consumerist truth. Thus, it must be a visual intoxicant that has them running to me like flies to a McDonald's Happy Meal.

Perhaps it is my glasses. A pair of glasses is the universal symbol for Knowledge and Authority. Glasses do not appear to be a symbol of attentiveness, however. If all us glasses-wearers were attentive, do you think our eyesight would have been allowed to deteriorate so much? Many people think scientists, a noted group of people who are knowledgeable, wear glasses unless they're charlatans (a la Ghostbusters' Peter Venkman) or tragic leading men. Very often comic leading men like Cary Grant in Bringing Up Baby are allowed to wear glasses. However, I'm afraid this theory doesn't hold formaldehyde. It's patently untrue. I know of many stupid people who wear glasses, including some scientists.

Perhaps it is the button-front-and-sports-jacket look I affect. People reason that if you dress like that it's because the store wants you to. Nobody dresses like that voluntarily unless they're going to a wedding, a funeral or both. I dress this way because I think I look good like this. Others have adopted this mode of dress but they're generally friendless and deserve to be bothered in stores.

The most plausible theory concerns buttons. I began wearing buttons in junior high school—over ten years ago. Thus, I was wearing them before they became the low-fashion accessory favored by bike messengers and pre-adolescent girls.² Now, buttons are a prevalent communications form in society. That's why it's a pity that the majority of them express such deathless sentiments as "I Scream When I Come." My favorites are short, cynical and to the point. Avoiding people who wear buttons is generally a good idea. I mean, who wants to bother a person whose lapel says "Leave Me Alone"?

A few years ago, most stores began requiring employees to wear little plastic identification badges. These badges, whether circular or rectangular, look suspiciously like buttons. In fact, many store people have an inordinate interest in buttons. They all screw their eyes up real close to mine, that's for sure. These IDs (usually with store logo and slogan on top) are worn proudly by these lowlies for three reasons:

- a) It allows employee and customer to achieve a more personal relationship and encourages name sharing.
- b) It allows you to rat on him/her without the jerk who ruined your shopping experience knowing.
- c) It reminds you what this misbegotten hellhole you are trapped in is called.

We customers are so used to seeing these badges. They are identifiers of office like the policeman's hat or the welfare case worker's sneer. Somebody who wears an item similar to that identifier will obviously be considered a member of that identifier's fellowship. If this is considered a simple case of confusion, then their asking of the Question is understandable.

Understandable, but not forgivable.

Every time I go shopping, the experience ends up ruined. Their pleas for help make looking for a funky jacket or pants and impossibility. I end up thinking these people have a low opinion of me. After all, haven't you ever gotten a good look at these people?³ On top of that, valuable time is wasted with every evocation of the Question. If I didn't spend so much time shoeing away customers, I would have cured cancer by now. True, I'm not planning on curing cancer (I'm a communications major, not a doctor, dammit!), but if I wanted to, you would all be feeling real guilty now. At the very least you're preventing me from finding the missing Avengers novels. What makes it worse is that both Vinnie and 4-Color Fiend Steve have ones that they won't sell to me so I got to work even harder.

Do me a favor. Leave me alone. The world would be a much better place if I could shop in peace. Besides, I don't want to kill you. Much.

THE AMAZING TOM DEJA FOOTNOTE TERROR!

1—I realize that I have now branded myself a commie pinko Nazi baby hater. Tough. If we didn't have snivelling cutesters getting what they wanted there would be no Yuppies. Think about it.

2—Thus is it always in the fashion world. I have always been cursed with being there first. Who came up with fashion black? Me. Who came up with short lengths in pants and shirts? Me. Who came up with suspenders? Me. Paisley? Me. Hawaiian shirts? That was Vinnie. You can't blame that trend on me.

3—Okay, the people at Bloomingdale's and Barney's are presentable, but that doesn't stop them from being miserable misogynist bastards who hate everybody, kind of like... nyaahhhh.

A UP IN THE PLASMAFOOL

by Dorian Tenore

IT'S NOT JUST A JOB, IT'S A MISADVENTURE

Ah, Hollywood! Land of glamour, multi-million dollar deals, cokeheads, right? Maybe, if you're Steven Spielberg or a member of the "Brat Pack." From where I'm sitting, though—at an ancient TRS-80 in a midtown Manhattan office at 6:30 AM, waiting for possible cries of distress from a deserted hospital on Staten Island—the movie biz looks, shall we say, a bit more down-to-earth. Not really bad, and not unrewarding either, but glamorous? That wasn't the word I would have chosen.

However, if it hadn't been for Bob Zimmerman, my friend and fellow CAPRA (a bi-monthly APA dedicated to movies; if you're interested in reading or contributing to it yourself, drop a line to its Central Mailer, Marc Reed, at 4453 N. 69th St., Milwaukee, WI 53218—enclose \$1 to receive an issue...he's a good lad...) contributor, I'd probably be sitting in a classroom listening to some instructor spout theories on the significance of Director Such-and-Blah's oeuvre. After Vinnie and I returned from our trip to Great Britain, I was all set to take NYU's Intensive Filmmaking Workshop for 11 weeks. Then fate intervened, in the form of an answering machine message from Bob.

Seems Bob was hired by Sony to be line producer for three theatrical films they're financing. Motion pictures are a new area for Sony, so they're playing it safe by starting out with low-budget genre films which will be certain to make a profit one way or another. Bob needed a production office coordinator on these films, and he offered me the job. Well, saying no to a movie job would have been like turning down a chance to meet Jeff Goldblum! The pay is, er, adequate. The important thing is, it's a chance to get hands-on experience (definitely "Learn While You Earn") and a first-hand look at what really goes on during film production. Besides, let's face it—movie job opportunities are harder to come by than film school classes.

The first film we're working on is a sci-fi thriller, a cross between SUNSET BOULEVARD, ALTERED STATES and THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN. The working title (something to call the flick until they decide on a real title) is BRAINS FOR BEAUTY. It's a nutty, campy, stylish script (B-movie-ish in the positive sense of the term) about an aging screen queen who's financing experiments to create a youth serum. It's created, and she uses it and becomes young and beautiful again. However, it turns out to have some pretty wild side effects—like, now and then, she turns into a bloodthirsty mutant.

There are some great lines, like when the rejuvenated movie star starts mutating in a nightclub restroom in front of two trendy types: "This place hasn't been the same since they let in the bridge and tunnel crowd!" Or when the mad scientist's assistant, Stella, gets killed by the mutant, he kneels at her side, moaning "Stella! Stella!" The mutant, now turned back into the gorgeous babe, says, "Your Marlon Brando needs a little work, Doctor."

My place in all this is basically to be Bob's second-in-command, running the production office. Now, the production office gives you both the fun and the drudgery of filmmaking. For every script you read, for every time you go see the dailies (the footage from that day's filming), there's a time you have to sit behind the computer slaving away over the budget, or a million problems pouring in over the phone that need to be taken care of yesterday.

You think you're pooped by your 9 to 5 job? Try our 12 to 14-hour days! The hours really separate the dilettantes from the die-hards—the people who are serious about pursuing a film production career usually don't bitch about the long hours. (They may be a little cranky from lack of sleep, though...) Usually I get in at 9 AM and leave between 9 and 10 PM. (Lately, we've started shooting early in the morning, so I've had to be in by 6 or 7 AM. But at least I get home early, at 7 PM.) The folks on the set have insane hours, too, but their contracts have a turnaround clause stating that they must get 10 hours off—read: sleep—between wrap time and the next day's call time (when everyone must be on the set or meet to travel to the set).

One of my duties is to keep track of the budget on the computer. Although no one will ever mistake me for a CPA, keeping track of other people's expenses and receipts has made me more careful with my own finances. (In Hell, they must make accountants sit in windowless rooms with fluorescent lighting, trying to decipher crumpled 1" x 1" receipts written in pens that are nearly out of ink.) Also, it's forced me to master spreadsheet computer programs—I'm actually capable of teaching my assistants how to use them!

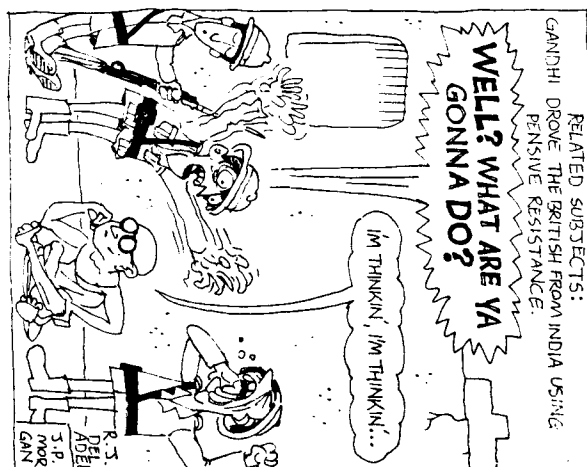
During the early days of pre-production I was running errands and scouting around for the props and locations, getting prices and directions and such. (Luckily, I can now split those duties with my assistant, Jenny, a terrific gal who comes frighteningly close to sainthood.) For example, for the first two weeks on the job, I was calling all over New York and New Jersey for white rats and rabbits and for a Mercedes-Benz.

We often called the folks who actually manufacture the props we wanted to use in the films—for example, we called Benson & Hedges about getting cigarettes for the leading lady's character to smoke (eventually, we got them from Nat Sherman, the big downtown tobacconist). While the larger companies (the ones for which people like Ridley Scott make million-dollar commercials) usually hem and haw over lending products to low-budget films who can't give them

CHANGE YOUR PAST
The Subgenius Foundation can
make you even stranger!
Send \$1 for Intense Pamphlet!

GUIDE FOR WEIRDOS!

Power through your abnormality.
Your strangeness will save you.



mucho moolah, smaller companies are often willing to help out in exchange for their names in the credits (that's another reason film credits are so much longer these days).

Getting animals for the lab scenes was a lot harder. Even though the animals are only being used for background (the big "mutating rat" scene is being done with a mechanical puppet), the people who could provide us with them are understandably worried about nasty things happening to the little dears. Well, most of them: when I phoned the breeding place that provides Cornell University with experimental animals, they quoted me prices ending in far too many zeros for our budget to handle, then blithely asked, "By the way, after you return the animals to us, we'll have to destroy them."

"WHAT?!"

"Well, once they've been exposed to a non-sterile environment, they're of no use to the experimental labs we sell them to, so unless you wish to keep them..."

Just what I always wanted—the blood of 12 white rats and 2 rabbits on my hands. Since we really didn't know anyone who could provide a good home for them, we not-so-graciously turned them down.

I also helped draw up the crew/cast lists and the contracts for everyone working on the films. The contract I got a kick out of was Katell Plevin's. A featured player on SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE (that's what Eddie Murphy was before they made him a regular and skyrocketed him to stardom) and as nice as she is pretty, Katell plays the mad scientist's lovelorn assistant, and her agent nearly had kittens getting us to add a no-nudity clause to Katell's contract. If the agent had been paying attention to the script, she would have realized that the character doesn't even get to kiss anyone, much less strip naked. Hell's bells, I don't think Katell even gets to remove the glasses she has to wear for this role!

I also hire production assistants for the set. The ones we've found have come mostly from film schools and from other filmmakers with whom Bob has worked. Finding good P.A.'s hasn't been too hard—even the ones with little experience are okay, as long as they're enthusiastic and willing to learn—although the paltry salary (\$150/week!) and the aforementioned grueling hours put some people off. But, hey, from what the other folks on the film have told me, many production assistants on low-budget films don't get paid at all. Still, overall reaction is good, and the camaraderie usually convinces newcomers to stay (sometimes even if we don't want them to!).

It's all really exciting, and it's much more responsibility than I've been used to having. At first it was a bit intimidating, but I've gotten used to my authority and am enjoying it, especially since many of the folks working on this film aren't much older than I am. The oldest person on the film is the producer, and he's in his 40s. It's a great way to make contacts, too!

Many members of the cast and crew have worked with each other on different projects before, so they already have a rapport. The best stories come from those who first worked together on Troma films. Troma, the tiny company responsible for such "classics" as THE TOXIC AVENGER, SURF NAZIS MUST DIE and FAT GUY GOES NUTZOID, is notorious for slave-driving their employees and delaying payment for as long as possible.

I even get to sit in on production meetings (it's fun to hear people talking about creating a mutant rat as if they were exchanging cookie recipes) and script readings by the cast. The actors are terrific and most of them are very likable people, as well as consummate professionals. Besides Katell, standouts include Vivian Lanko as the rejuvenated screen queen, James Hogue as her faithful companion Wilhelm, and as the mad scientist, John MacKay. Look up "intense" in the dictionary, and you'll find John's picture next to it. He speaks just like Martin Sheen (now apparently best known as the famous father of Emilio Estevez and Charlie Sheen!).

All things considered, I'm really glad I'm here. The hours may be long, and there may be a lot of headaches, but somehow I don't mind, since it's an interesting job in the field I like. I sure as hell wouldn't have stayed at Standard & Poor's 12 to 14 hours a day, no matter how well they paid me! All in all, I have every reason to say "Hooray for Hollywood!"

"TO BE CONTINUED," as the old serials used to say...



WARHOL'S DOG

Nobody ever knew Andy Warhol. Never REALLY knew him, that is. Of course, everybody was familiar with

his work—Marilyn, Elvis, the soup can—and a precious few could even tell you he was that crazy-haired New York artist guy who made a few movies. But when Andy Warhol died, characteristically under mysterious circumstances, no one could offer much in the way of information, or even speculation, on the man BEHIND the silk screens, the films, and the prescription glasses. In some ways, Andy's greatest achievement could in retrospect be how totally and successfully he hid behind his carefully-crafted self-image, concealing his innermost thoughts and personality whilst functioning under the bright light of fame...and for far longer than fifteen minutes, at that.

I was about to resign my pig's instinct to the realization that I might never be able to probe that deeply below Warhol's veneer...that

Andy Warhol to dog: 'I know you can talk'

NEW YORK (AP) — The late Andy Warhol was so preoccupied with money he stuffed cash under his mattress and tried to persuade his dog to talk, saying, "If you'd talk, we could make millions."

That, at least, is what Warhol's friend, the decorator Jed Johnson, is quoted as saying in *House & Garden* magazine.

Johnson says he used to hear the

artist say to his dachshund, "Talk, Archie, talk! I know you can talk. I don't know why you have to be so stubborn. If you'd talk, we could make millions."

Johnson says Warhol kept wads of money under his special straw mattress and once told him, "You only feel as rich as the money you have in your pocket or under your mattress."

is, until this seemingly inconsequential little column-filler crept out along the wire services in late '87. Quicker than you could say Pop Art I manned the phones, eventually tracking down the sole living creature I intuitively realized to be the curator of Andy Warhol's hidden past. Archie, first of all, thank you so much for consenting to speak to me today.

That's quite alright. But please try to keep in mind that this isn't something I do every day.

I guess, to begin, how did you come into Andy Warhol's life?

In an old cardboard box with an old blanket at the bottom and a clock to remind me of my mother—though how a clock is supposed to remind me of ANYONE, let alone my own mother, is beyond me! I mean, what's the first thing that comes to mind when you think of YOUR mother? A Bulova travel alarm?

Well, I believe the theory is that a ticking clock helps very young kittens and pups sleep at night.

But sleep was something NOBODY got much of at the Factory.

That was the loft on East Forty-Seventh in New York where Andy lived and worked.

Danced and partied is more like it...Yes, I was brought there as a birthday present by Danny Fields in 1965. The same Danny Fields who went on to achieve some degree of notoriety in the music business with Iggy & The Stooges, 16 Magazine, and The Ramones, correct? Except back then, Danny was nothing more than just another pretty young face in Andy's harem of fringe figures.

Along with...

Along with...oh, now, let me see...Walter Hopps, Henry Geldzahler, Paul Morrissey—who later made all those absolutely HORRIBLE movies with Andy, Chuck Wein—who got us all wearing those stupid striped Lovin' Spoonful shirts, Lou Reed—who put together that absolutely HORRID band The Velvet Pumpernickel—Underground.

Whatever. Plus all those sad runaway kids with the silly names, like Billy Name, Paul America, Richie Berlin, Brigid Berlin, Viva, Baby Jane, Cherry Vanilla, and my personal fave, Liva Snaps. Only

kidding.

Did you ever know Edie Sedgwick?

Edie? The "Youthquake"? Oh my, yes. What a pain in the tail SHE was. All the fuss they've made over her—especially that dreadful biography George Plimpton did that for some mysterious reason I was written entirely out of. TOTALLY. Maybe that's just sour bones on my part, but every two-bit bit-part player and aluminum foil hanger was interviewed for that book. But not ME. They stepped right over me COMPLETELY. Perhaps they didn't want to hear what I had to say: that from MY viewpoint, Edie was nothing but a spoiled no-good who delighted in manipulating Andy. And they say I was led around on a leash! She was a poor skinny rich girl who sprayed Andy's hair silver one night and kept Andy's boys serviced between shoots...or SHOTS, should I say.

Which brings us to the subject of—

—Drugs. Yes, a lot's been made of that aspect of Factory life as well. But I saw no more, though certainly no LESS, substance abuse around Andy than I imagine occurred anywhere else back in those supposedly swinging Sixties. At least amongst so-called "artistic" circles. And, personally speaking, the odd distemper shot was MY only run-in with, as they say, the needle and the damage done. Of course, after Andy's shooting, there were a few pain-killers and sedatives, but in no way near Presleyesque amounts, I can assure you.

That's something else I'd like to ask you about.

Around 1967 or '68, I think it was—you know, please bear with me, but after seven, they say a dachshund's memory is the first to go!—we were evicted from the Factory, heaven knows why (*sarcastic bark*), and moved into a nice new white loft on Union Square—thankfully WITHOUT any aluminum foil walls and ceilings! No sooner had we settled in than...well, I recall it was a frightfully sticky day, all the windows were wide open; I'd just been digging around out back. There were just a few people around working on Andy's latest Al Jardine retrospective when suddenly, this crazy woman burst in, shooting every which way. No warning. No nothing Just, all of a sudden, Bang! Bang! Bang!

Paul Morrissey was out in the hall. He missed the whole thing. I just had time to scurry behind the fridge. One of Andy's assistants, Mario, got grazed by one bullet, but poor Andy wasn't so lucky. He got it right in the gut.

Do you know who did it?

Sure I did. We KNEW her. Some woman named Valerie who'd been promised a part in one of Andy's little movies. She had this group called S.C.U.M.—the Society to Cut Up Men. This isn't something out of Mr. Neutron either—I swear to Lassie this is the dog's-honest truth! Her lawyer even tried to get her off by pleading she did it for feminist reasons. Right. Well, maybe it worked, coz she only served fifteen or sixteen years, and would you believe she's now a senior editor at Downtown Magazine? Everyone says Andy was a changed man after the shooting.

True enough. But I think that's only because they bumped him off the cover of Life Magazine that month, coz that was right when Bobby Kennedy was shot. Andy always seemed pissed that Bobby made that cover instead of him. "Archie, if only I'D died and BOBBY'D lived, I would have been that cover story, I betcha," he'd tell me over and over and over as he convalesced. Dogdammit, that's all I ever heard for MONTHS: "Bobby beat me onto the cover of Life... those fucking Kennedys!"

Throughout the Seventies, and mostly right on up to his death, Andy lived a much more different, private life.

That was not a conscious decision, I believe, Life Magazine notwithstanding. He just gradually became less prolific, less productive, and DEFINITELY less healthy, though, I mean, he'd never exactly been the Schwarzenegger type. A video for The Cars or Saturday Night Live here; a portrait for Wayne Gretzky or Mick Jagger there...as you can see, he was basically floundering artistically.

And personally?

He seemed to be slowly but surely closing himself off. We went for less walks together, but on the other hand, we sure had some GREAT talks those last few years.

About?

Money, most often. Some say he became obsessed with money during that last while, but I'd say no more obsessed with it than you or I, or any other denizen of the Reagan Age. It's true, at times he'd really get under my fur about going out on some speaking engagements with him—sometimes FOR him. But all those tales about him, pleading that "If only you could talk, Arch, we could REALLY clean up" are all, if you will excuse my bluntness, a load of catshit. We were never THAT hard up—he could always write another Sixties book, draw another celebrity, or re-issue his Frankenstein movie if he needed some quick dough. Believe me, Andy was NEVER hurtin'!

His death must have affected you greatly.

Yes, I'd have to admit it did. Nobody could play fetch or man a pooper-scooper like Warhol could. I miss our lazy afternoons beside the trees in Central Park, dancing to The Cheepskates at Tramps, or watching the lost Honeymooners episodes in the Museum of Broadcasting. And those simple, quiet moments—like leisurely riding uptown with Jodie Foster, or lunching out in Montauk with our good pal Prewitt.

You see, as most people should, I prefer to remember Andy Warhol not as the trendy anemic Czech master of the fine art of redundancy, but as simply...a Survivor. He survived his childhood—three, count 'em, THREE nervous breakdowns before the age of eleven. He survived the Sixties, including an assassination attempt—AND Edie Sedgwick! And he survived, into near old age, as... well, what more can I say? Dog's Best Friend.



I know the holiday's over, but I did want to get this in anyway. If you're inclined to do your holiday shopping for '88 early, you might think about purchasing copies of the following poem (printed in red on green paper and looking really nice, a great gift) in quantities of 3/\$1 or 25/\$5; Euleta has even promised to split the proceeds with INSIDE JOKE, so there's a nice fund-raiser right there! Euleta's address is Route 2, Box 355, Berryville, AK 72616, and a merry Ex-mas to you all!

"Twas THE NIGHT BEFORE EX-MAS"

by Euleta Usrey

'Twas the night before Ex-mas, and at the church house,
The god plague had changed him from a man to a mouse.
The prayers were spoken by the altar so bare,
In the pitiful hope that a god would be there.
The children imprisoned back in the pews—
Brainwashed to believing the church's strange views,
And Mamma in her meekness, the docile young wife
Had given up living for a godly-type life.
When out on the grounds there arose such a clatter
They sprang from the church to see what was the matter.
Away to the street they flew like a flash,
Stood staring at people—the kind they called 'trash.'
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of midday to their movements, then—oh!
What to the wondering eyes should appear
But sings criticizing the things they held dear.
Why a little old grandma, so lively and quick,—
Held up a sign saying, "Take religion and stick—"
More rapid than eagles, the anarchists they came,
And they whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:
Now, bosses! now, preachers! now, lawyers, politicians!
On, landlords! on, teachers! on, authority's vixen!
To the end of their reign! To the time of their fall!
Now destroy 'em, destroy 'em, destroy 'em all!
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So up to the rooftop, the people they flew,
Tore down the steeple, and the cross there too.
And then, in a moment, he heard on the street
The prancing and dancing of freedom's own feet.
He was holding his head, and turning around
When out from the crowd she came with a bound.
She dressed in a yard sale, from her head to her foot,
Her clothes all mismatched, one shoe and one boot;
A bundle of pamphlets flung on her back.
And she looked like a bag lady opening her pack.
Her eyes—how they twinkled! her dimples—how merry!
Her cheeks were like roses, her nose like a cherry!
Her pert little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the hair on her head was as white as the snow.
The booklet she threw, it fell at his feet—
"Freedom we give, and freedom we keep!"
She had a broad face and a determined look,
She gave when she liked; what she wanted she took.
She was forthright, outspoken, a right forceful elf,
And he admired her spirit, in spite of herself;
The look in her eye, the twist of her head,
With all of them like her—authority was dead!
They spoke no more words, but went straight to their work,
And burned all the rule books, then turned with a jerk.
He laying his beliefs aside for real life,
He joined the crowd, behind his own wife.
They left for new tasks, headed for town,
Somebody muttered, "Burn city hall down."
But I heard him exclaim as he marched out of sight,
"Authority is dead! It's the people's first night!"

My Last Christmas

by Steven F. Scharff

As I write this, I have just completed a day's worth of Christmas shopping. The stores have been touting the appropriate commercial displays since the week before Hallowe'en, and the mad rush just after Thanksgiving has become a national tradition. But the day brought to mind something that had long since been buried in my memory.

I believe it was in 1983. I was working for Spencer Gifts in a large shopping mall. Dealing with customers is a headache in itself, but during Christmastime, it became nearly unbearable. Back then, Cabbage Patch dolls were all the rage, and every second customer (and almost every phone call) was concerned about purchasing the dolls we didn't have. All this began to add up incredible stress upon me.

Call it nervous release, or what have you, but I fell into a very dangerous situation. I became lost in the "spirit of Christmas." During those days I had fallen from my Lutheran faith and became a self-professed agnostic, but still felt Christmas was something to be kept in a personal manner. And my way was failing for the line of thought that if I could keep a positive attitude for the season, I could keep it for the entire year.

I kept this up for the entire two weeks of intense shopping. I smiled and joked with the customers, trying to bring as much cheer as I could into the hyperspeed pace of the shopping frenzy. Then came Christmas Eve...

We closed early, as is usual for most stores on December 24th, and I kept up my mask for those hours, which seemed to drag on as if I were sailing into a strong wind. Then we closed, and the manager told us to start taking down the decorations. I complied, and began to help out with the removal of the red and green banners from the ceiling and bringing the "After Christmas Sale" signs from the storeroom. When everything fell into place...

This wasn't Christmas. This was a merchandising gimmick, like Lucy claimed it was in the Peanuts TV special "Merry Christmas, Charlie Brown." When we came back to work on the 26th, the Christmas cards would be off the shelves, the decorations would be slowly taken down, and the Salvation Army musicians would be back at their missions.

We had completed work, and went to the stockroom to tell of what our families had planned for the holiday, but being the only male employee in the store I felt awkward and didn't say much. The chatting continued for the better part of an hour, and as the ladies continued, I silently left the stockroom to walk around the now-deserted sales floor. Where there had been wall-to-wall customers only two hours before, there was now empty space and a rather worn carpet. I sat on the edge of a display unit, looking across the way at the discounted ceramic figurines, and felt about as "left behind" as they were. It was a quiet and lonely time, and one that hit like a kick in the gut. I had fallen for a child-like attitude for Christmas.

It brought back to mind the fact that I had convinced my parents I believed in Santa Claus up until I was eleven years old, because I thought I was supposed to!

Then the conversation in the doorway changed to, "Well, it's about time we left." I solemnly got up and walked back to the stockroom to get my parka. One of the cashiers looked at me and said, "What's the matter, Steve? Hope you haven't gone Scrooge on us now that the sale's over?"

"I've just been doing some thinking."

"Oh, that. Well, have a happy...well, whatever you agnostics have!"

Her perfume trailed about three feet behind her as she walked towards the front doors. The manager unlocked them, and one by one we filed out.

I walked with the others to the comatose escalators while the manager and assistant made their way to the night deposit box. The mall concourse was as wide as a football field, and had the eerie atmosphere that one would experience if one walked through

an amusement park during the winter. Brightly-colored displays grown dim without light. "Photos with Santa" set-ups, which reminded me of temples, without the seemingly endless line of children either over-anxious or terrified, about to come face to face with the "all-seeing one" who knew everything they had done that previous year.

We walked down a side hallway, down to the glass doors that would lead us into the parking lot. A "Merry Christmas" from the security guard and we were out, walking into the darkness and to our separate ways. I had to park on the far side of the lot due to the massive amount of cars, so my walk would be long. The cold stung my face as my breath fogged my glasses. I continued my thoughts about what this season meant to me. Another year of the aluminum tree in the living room, stupid cartoons on the TV, endless Christmas songs on the radio, and seeing tons of paper and empty boxes left out for garbage the next pick-up day after.

I unlocked the door of my car, climbed in behind the wheel, slammed the door shut, and began to bawl like a baby. I pounded the steering wheel in my frustration, trying to relieve any angst that I had hidden behind a guise of cheer.

Then, after drying my eyes, I began the long drive home, taking the long way down Route 1. The highway, which would have been packed with trucks, was deserted. The only other vehicles I saw were a motorcycle with two riders, a police car, and a tank truck pulling into the Exxon refinery.

I took my exit, and drove down the side streets until I came to Warinanco Park. I would normally drive through the park, passing the wide lake on my left, but instead I felt compelled to pull my car into the parking lot across from the lake.

I got out of my car, began my walk to the lake, and noticed that that little snow was on the ground, laying in patches on the dried grass, looked like holes in a fabric. The light from both the moon and the sodium-vapor lamps made everything look as if it were a black-and-white movie.

I stood at the edge of the lake, staring into the darkness that matched the darkness of my emotion. I remember that there was no sound, save for the wind in the tree branches to either side of me. I stood motionless at the lakeside, as if waiting for something to happen.

Then I remembered where I was standing. I was about three or four, during the summer, walking in the park with my mother, when I saw my brother by the lake, exactly where I was standing that night, and he had made some type of "raft" out of some sticks, leaves, and one of his socks. I know it sounds strange, but there he was, kneeling by the water's edge, with a sock and sneaker on one foot, and the other foot bare! I stood beside him as he placed the raft in the water and, carried by the water's current, it began to make its way to the center of the lake.

Purely by instinct, I reached out to the raft for the sock, when I lost my footing, completely misjudging how far away it was, and fell, face first, into the water. It was only two feet of water, but when you're just out of your diapers everything seems so big. I floundered in the water, gasping for air, and the only thing I could clearly remember was the sight of my brother's face for a mere split-second. He sat there, his face expressionless, his jaw hanging slack in disbelief. Then, his arm grabbing mine (the one with the hand clutching a wet grey sock), and my mother's voice halfway shouting, "Oh, Steven! LOOK at you!" And my only thoughts were of the embarrassment of getting wet and the necessity of going home.

The stillness of the park was broken with my voice, booming with laughter, echoing across the surface of the lake.

Santa Claus be damned!

I strode back to the car with a purpose. Family! That was what I had forgotten. I had tried to secure myself with something artificial but relied only upon myself, and had not considered where my roots really were. I drove home, listening to the wind whistle through an open car door window. My thoughts were of my brother and parents. The thought of the presents under the tree never crossed my mind.

And besides, even if it was cold, I love the night air.

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF DR. IGUANA THE SEARCH CONTINUES.

by Kenneth Burke

THE "TEST YOUR ELVIS IQ" QUIZ!

- Elvis' first record label was...
a) RCA. c) Vee-Jay.
b) SUN. d) Hand wash—drip dry.
- Elvis' first back-up band consisted of...
a) Scotty Moore and Bill Black
b) Dinty Moore and Cilla Black.
c) Don DeFore and Robert Stack.
d) various members of The Clash and The Doors.
- Elvis' first studio drummer was...
a) D.J. Fontana. c) Wayne Fontana.
b) Johnny Bonner. d) Sonny Bono.
- The "Million Dollar Quartet" was comprised of...
a) J.D. Sumner and the Stamps.
b) The Jordanaires.
c) Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash.
d) Elvis Presley, J.P. Getty, John D. Rockefeller and Howard Hughes.
- Elvis' first movie, Love Me Tender, was originally titled...
a) The Girl Can't Help It. c) The Reno Brothers.
b) Plan Nine From Outer Space. d) Deep Throat.
- Elvis' manager, Tom Parker, was known as "Colonel" because...
a) he had an illustrious military background.
b) he was so good at husking corn that he was nicknamed "Kernel" and the name transformed into "Colonel" over the years.
c) Louisiana governor Jimmy Davis gave him an honorary rank in his state militia.
d) everyone was always giving him "the bird."
- When Elvis appeared on the Ed Sullivan TV show, he was filmed...
a) from the waist up. c) just at the waist.
b) from the waist down. d) from inside the waist.
- One of Elvis' early nicknames was...
a) 'That Rocking Guitar Man.'
b) 'Mr. Blue Suede Shoes.'
c) 'The Hillbilly Cat.'
d) 'That Glue-Sniffing Greasy Haired Punk With Sideburns.'
- Ironically, Vernon Presley, Elvis' dad, once told his son...
a) "I never met a guitar player worth a damn."
b) "Always be a good boy, don't ever play with guns."
c) "Don't worry son, it'll feel better when it quits hurtin'."
d) "Boy, how many times do I have to tell you? Shake your legs, move your hips real sexy-like, and when the girls start screaming, act like you don't know what's going on."
- The men who worked for Elvis were known in the press as...
a) The Blue Moon Boys. c) The Rat Pack.
b) The Memphis Mafia. d) Louise.
- Elvis' favorite bodyguard was...
a) Red West. b) Sonny West. c) Adam West. d) Honey West.
- Elvis nearly married this famous movie co-star:
a) Debra Paget. c) Ann-Margret.
b) Nancy Sinatra. d) Charles Bronson.
- When Elvis wanted to see a movie, he usually...
a) rented out a local movie theatre so he and his friends could enjoy private screenings.
b) waited for the movie to come on TV.
c) would have a bodyguard pay to get in and then open up the exit door so Elvis could sneak in the theatre without paying.
d) hire the actors to re-enact their parts in his living room.
- Elvis held an 8th degree black belt in...
a) Kung Fu. b) Tae Kwon Do. c) Karate. d) Pornography.
- Next to his Bible, Elvis' favorite reference book was...
a) The Smith And Wesson Handgun Guide.
b) The Physician's Desk Reference.
c) The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran.
d) Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss.
- In later years, Elvis was heard to say, "Honey, I've tried 'em all, but the best drug going is...
a) Methedrine." c) fluoride."
b) dilaudid." d) cheeseburgers."
- Elvis did not consider himself a junkie because...
a) he believed in God.
b) he did not steal TV sets to pay for his habit.
c) he did not use illegal intravenous drugs.
d) he was not dead yet.
- He referred to it as "little Elvis." It was...
a) his penis. b) his guitar.
c) the two-shot Derringer pistol he kept in his boat.
d) his garbage disposal.
- Barbra Streisand asked Elvis to co-star with her in this movie:
a) The Main Event. c) Funny Girl.
b) A Star Is Born. d) Elvis On Tour.

- When Elvis saw his lovemate for the night naked, he would say, a) "What? Leftovers again?"
b) "Oh lordy Jesus, a naked woman! I never saw a woman naked before."
c) "Honey, you have a beautiful body, but I'd prefer that you slip something on."
d) "Did you ever hear the one about the pickpocket in the nudist camp?"
- Amongst Elvis' more paranoid fantasies was the prospect that...
a) some smug son-of-a-bitch would be sitting in a courtroom proudly proclaiming, "I killed Elvis Presley."
b) Tom Jones would sue him over copyright infringement over the theft of his Vegas act.
c) manufacturers would stop making amphetamines and barbituates.
d) if he stopped eating, demons in his body would rip the flesh from his bones.

- During his last tours, Elvis' motto was...
a) The Elvis Presley Express Rolls On.
b) Always Elvis.
c) TCB - Taking Care of Business.
d) Find 'Em, Feel 'Em, Fuck 'Em, Forget 'Em.
- Upon Elvis' death, record producer Felton Jarvis was quoted as saying,
a) "It's like saying they're not gonna make cheeseburgers anymore."
b) "Oh shit! Call my broker and get a margin quote on my RCA stock."
c) "Man, I'm sure gonna miss ol'...who'd you say died?"
d) "Good career move."

- Though many derogatory things have been written about Elvis after his death, the fact remains that...
a) he revolutionized popular music.
b) he was and always will be the King of Rock 'n' Roll.
c) I miss him very much.
d) All of the above.
- ANSWERS: 1.b; 2.a; 3.b; 4.c; 5.c; 6.c; 7.a; 8.c; 9.a; 10.b; 11.a; 12.c; 13.a; 14.c; 15.b; 16.b; 17.c; 18.a; 19.b; 20.c; 21.a; 22.c; 23.a; 24.d
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 24
Your Score and what it says about your "Elvis IQ":

0 - 5: You are an Elvis moron. You probably thought I meant Elvis Costello. Either sharpen up your Elvis IQ or you will be heading for a life of sad desperation resulting in your making prison license plates and being gang-raped by your fellow inmates.

6 - 10: You're not really trying hard enough. Do the quiz over again and if you get the same score (or lower) do penance by watchin video cassettes of Harum Scarum, Paradise Hawaiian Style and Clambake back to back without bathroom breaks.

11 - 15: You have been alive during the last 20 years and you have read something about Elvis, though you couldn't care less about him. Practice your Elvis sneer ("Hey man, what's wrong with mah lip? You remember that doncha, man? I got news for ya baby, I did 29 pictures that way!") 20 minutes each morning until you start digging "The Pelvis" a little more.

16 - 19: You really dug Elvis as a child. You secretly harbor the opinion that the movies Tickle Me, Roustabout and Kid Galahad were greater film achievements than Loving You or Jailhouse Rock. You believe that Elvis would have eventually gotten around to giving you a Cadillac.

20 - 23: You are either a professional Elvis imitator or a cynical rock'n'roll archivist. You either want to understand Elvis' life by being just like him or you want to crush his memory under the sadistic weight of cold statistics and sensationalized gossip about his private life. When an attempt was made to steal Presley's corpse, you either thought it was funny or got angry because you hadn't thought of it first. If you're an Elvis impersonator, you have always felt contemptuous of Priscilla for divorcing Elvis and you have placed more than a little credence in the supermarket scandal sheet stories that say Priscilla Beaulieu and Yoko Ono were part of an international conspiracy to put an end to rock music by drowning its great artists in a sea of confusion and personal grief. If you're the cynical rock archivist, you have bought two copies of every Elvis lp ever released. You listen to one copy while the other copy is wrapped in plastic and alphabetically filed away in your collection forever. In either case, you are the living example of the subtle difference between someone who is a loyal fan and a person who is carefully nurturing a severe mental illness.

24 points: You aced this test and are probably thinking up questions to ask me! You understand that Elvis Presley really did know more about the guitar than which end he was supposed to blow into. You would've liked to have been Elvis' one "no bullshit buddy" and your mission in life is to crawl into the tape vaults at RCA and find all of Elvis' missing recordings for the legendary Sun label and get them issued to the general public. You once greased your hair up a la Elvis but abandoned the look when you started feeling Brylcreme melting down over your face. When you heard the news about Presley's death, your reaction was one of emotion and regret that opened up a bottomless pit of personal horror in your soul that demanded that you come to grips with your own mortality. You understand so much more today than you did before because of the way you felt about Elvis. You are entitled to one night of staying up until dawn playing your Elvis records over and over again really loud, dancing, drinking, and laughing in his honor, because that's the way he would have wanted it.

(ED. NOTE: The opinions of Elvis expressed above are solely those of the author, lest anyone think ye editrix is the least bit interested in Elvis Presley, which she's not. On the other hand, if you take the last paragraph and, where appropriate, substitute the name of John Lennon...Guess we all have our weaknesses.)

(Elvis would've been 53 this January 8; I guess this is our "tribute" to him...)

SISKEL & EBERT RATE THE ORGANS

by David Serlin

SISKEL: It's not surprising, when you consider the differences between us, that Roger and I have had a hard time finding a show to host since we were asked to leave Sneak Previews—

EBERT: —forcibly removed, I would extend the argument—

S: And in the past few years we have, oh, what would be the word? Wandered? Flitted?

E: Nomadically searched?

S: Yes, we TV nomads have tried to find a suitable program for our disparate—

E: Try desperate...

S: —crucially opposing viewpoints. Roger, maybe you'd like to—

E: The question isn't that simple, Gene. We, as film critics and amateur philosophers in the broadest—

S: The absolute broadest...

E: —sense of the word, cannot find a decent topic to work with. I think, mainly, if I may be so bold, that our producers have found our debates to be somewhat—

S: Gruesome?

E: No, no, more like...semantic? Redundant?

S: Irrelevant? I get accused of that every damn program...

E: Well, despite these accusations we have arrived at what, primarily, we agree on in terms of—

S: Content, subject matter...

E: Knowledge yet to be entertained...

S: Intriguing information...

E: Specially bold targets of—

S: Enlightenment?

E: No, more of a renaissance...

S: Renaissance? What are you, quoting from some unproduced screenplay—

E: I'm speaking, like yourself, off the top of my head—

S: —that you were working on but were too embarrassed to talk about in public—

E: —but, apparently, talking off the top of your head is conducive to exposing your bald spot—

S: —while you lounged out in your Pork-A-Teria collecting unemployment checks?

E: —like some evil eye that flashes its psuedo-French penis-envy literary fucking slop on a stupid Chicago newspaper audience?

S: Roger, Roger! Penis-envy, Roger?

E: I don't know where that came from, I'm sorry. Look, I'm blushing; I'm actually blushing.

S: Which reminds me, we're here to critique the organs.

E: That's right, we're here to rate the organs. Now, before the show, we both agreed on a few choice, select organs to critique. Now Gene, here is my list.

S: "Brain, pancreas, and bowel"? These are your choices?

E: Didn't we agree on these? Oh, maybe I lost my other list...

S: I did not come all the way downtown to dispute the relative merits of the human bowel with you on national television.

E: Well, uh, Gene, what does your list say?

S: I have, "Kidney, heart, and sex organs."

E: Okay. Fair enough. I will join you in your so-called jaunt through the internal viscera.

S: Roger, the kidney is an excellent organ. It cleans and filters and helps to remove waste materials. It is a vital, richly necessary, and brilliantly executed organ, and I, for one, give it a thumbs up.

E: Now, Gene, I hate to disagree with you on that point, but I would hardly consider it vital. People have been known to survive with just one kidney—

S: Exactly the point I was trying to make, Roger; it is such an influential organ that, in fact, it need not be in its natural configuration of two to be fully functional.

E: No, Gene, I can't accept that. When we talk of organs, we need to specifically honor those that are original, creative, and stand on their own.

S: Okay. I like the kidney; it's bold, functional, and quite adept to hearty eating binges as demonstrated by my porcine partner here, and I give it a thumbs up. Roger feels it is below standard, not up to the glorification that I have given it, and he gives it a thumbs down. Next organ.

E: Yes, next we have the heart. As Woody Allen so remarkably pinpointed in his 1985 film "Hannah and Her Sisters," the heart is a "resilient little muscle." It pumps blood throughout our system, which, unless I'm very much mistaken, is quite necessary for living. As I'm predisposed to the act of being alive—existing, if you will—I would have to give the heart a thumbs up.

S: You are so easily given to paltry passions and circumstantial evidence, my bloated amigo. The fact is, the heart is a cruel, distempered beast. A loved one can "break your heart." A disappointing situation can frequently occur, though you may have had your "heart set" on it happening otherwise. Such potential for disaster is the work of an unscrupulous organ.

E: So you're giving the heart a thumbs down?

S: Yes, I'm afraid, I will admit, yes, I am.

E: Okay, to me, the heart is the very essence of life: sensual, brash, a conflict of twisting and turning finishing in a bloody climax. As I've said, I give it a thumbs up. Gene, a cynic and an unromantic, gives it a thumbs down, with movites of which I couldn't possibly give without expelling all of my popcorn to the floor in a turbulent, frothy discharge.

S: Well done, Roger. That leaves us with our final organ, the sex organ.

ART SHOW

by Larry Oberc

a- What's your name?

b- That Picasso was one strange motherfucker. All those weird shapes.

c- Betty. And you?

d- I didn't know there were any Picassos here.

a- John. What do you think about Bob's work?

b- There aren't.

c- I like it. Especially the one with the green blood spurting out of the canvas.

d- Then why are you talking about Picasso? I thought this was stuff by some guy named Robert or something.

a- You married?

b- They are. It just reminded me of Picasso.

c- No. Are you?

d- Man, I don't know why I go to these things with someone like you.

a- No. How about a boyfriend? You dating anyone?

b- How about you? You're not exactly an art genius, you know.

c- No. How about you?

d- I'm better than this Robert guy. Hell, look at all this stuff. There isn't a straight line on any of them.

a- Let's say we go get a drink after the show.

b- Straight lines got nothing to do with it.

c- Sure. Where at?

d- That's where you're wrong. Straight lines got a lot to do with it.

a- There's a nice place around the corner. Quiet, laid back. It'll give us a chance to talk.

b- Man, you're one stupid person.

c- Sounds good.

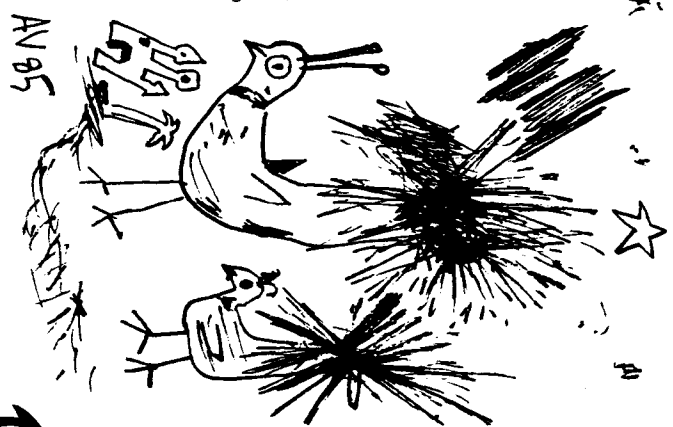
d- You got a lot of nerve, calling me stupid.

a- Why don't we sneak out early? There are a lot of, well, you know, art types here. We should be talking over a drink instead of listening to these, you know.

b- Want to fight about it? Bet you I can kick your ass.

c- Sure. Let me get my coat.

d- Man, leave me alone. I'm going to go talk to that Robert guy, the artist. You ought to go home, pass out or something.



E: Right, Gene. I found the sex organ, particularly the female, to, well, to be quite honest, quite a lovely, memorable organ. Passionate, seductive, energetic and—dare I say—maternal?

S: Yes, exactly, I couldn't agree more. The beauty, the structure of it all, it underlies a timeless framework that all quality body organs share in. I can think of no other organs this year that entertained me as much, but unfortunately not as often as I would have liked.

E: Yes, it made me feel like a little kid again. Really. I truly give it a thumbs up, and may I say, on this or any particular occasion, I give it a whole hand.

S: Exactly.

E: So here's a final recap of what we saw today. The Kidney, a little organ that made fraternity parties a more memorable experience—I give it a thumbs down; Gene gives it a thumbs up.

S: The Heart, a collection of love and intrigue set against a backdrop of blood and, interestingly enough, more blood—I gave it a thumbs down; Roger gives it a thumbs up.

E: Last but not least, the Sex Organ, a momentous symbol of pleasure and fulfillment in a godless society. Gene and I give it a thumbs up, as frequently as possible.

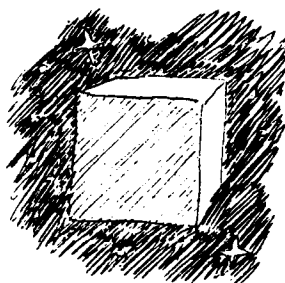
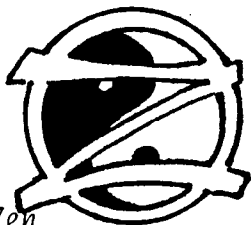
S: So there you have it.

E: Drop by next week when we rate three new organs, and we'll delve into our Organ Archives to look at the human brain, when we ask the eternal question, "Where Are They Now?"

S: Until then, see you at the hospital.

Zenarchy STORIES

by Ho Chi Zen
TREE STUMP ZEN



THE CUBE THAT CONQUERED SPACE!!

The Font Of Inspiration

by Susan Packie

Some writers have muses. Some become extraordinarily inspired after reading what other authors have written. Some say they get their ideas from ordinary incidents, from their own experiences, or from newspaper clippings. Hildreth Cummings was different. Her stories came out of the shower nozzle.

It all started with a New Year's resolution that Hildreth made to write lots of stories during the upcoming year. Never mind that she had only one story published in all the seventeen years that she had been writing. Never mind that she would have no market for stories, even if she could write them. Never mind that she needed a two-day break for every two pages she typed. She was resolved.

Luckily, she had the full support of her shower. Along with the water came two-page stories that would make Guy de Maupassant, E.B. White, and Art Buchwald wish they had chosen other professions.

The stories varied with the temperature of the water. The hot water evoked stories of lust and murder. The temperate water brought forth slapstick humor. The cold water hid tales of espionage. Variations in water temperature during the course of a shower led to murderously funny spy stories.

The first emergence occurred when the oil burner broke down and the water was turning to ice as it landed in the tub. It was a story about a Soviet spy who infiltrated Silicon Valley, turned himself into a computer, was sold to the White House, and started transmitting highly classified government secrets directly to Moscow. The water began to warm. The spy/computer inadvertently fell in love with a soda vending machine. The water was hot. The machine revealed that it had been a voluptuous female working for the CIA all along. The two of them defected and ran off to Tahiti to get married.

After the initial breakthrough, the stories came fast and furious. A gargantuan bear devoured Philadelphia. Two young children gave birth to a brood of mermaids. The President died, was replaced by a store mannequin, and no one noticed. Not even his wife! The best part of all was that magazines couldn't get enough of Hildreth's stories. She had ten years of orders to fill.

But her curiosity was driving her crazy. Where were all these tales coming from? Why did they wait until she was in the shower to strike? She knew they had something to do with the hot and cold water, but what? Finally, she reached for a hammer and started smashing the bathroom wall. She was engulfed in tiles and plaster. She whacked again. The pipes split open and bodies began falling out, filling her apartment. They represented a cross-section of the world's population—in other words, they were her story characters. They made a beeline for Hildreth's refrigerator and cleaned her out before she could get out of the bathroom.

"What? You object? Without us, you would be nothing! Without us, you would know nothing! Without us, you would still be getting rejection letters!"

"Yes, but without you, I'd be sane!"

With that, she threw away her typewriter. The story people grabbed their throats and gagged hideously. Then, they were gone. They completely disappeared, evaporated. Hildreth sighed in relief. She would never shower again. It was too risky. She dumped some of the plaster in the toilet and flushed. As she did, she faintly heard voices. A king was ordering the execution of his only daughter.

"This," said Yuan Wu of something, "is standing by a stump waiting for a rabbit."

The Translator explains: "This refers to a story of a man who saw a running rabbit happen to collide with a tree stump and die; the man took the rabbit for food, and, thinking to obtain another rabbit, he foolishly stood by the stump, waiting for it to 'catch' another rabbit for him. This is used to describe those who cling to words or images, thinking them to be a source of enlightenment." So says The Blue Cliff Record (translated by Thomas and J.C. Cleary, Shambhala, Boulder & London, 1977) in the Seventh Case. Yuan Wu was also fond of exclaiming things like, "He waits to draw his bow until after the thief escapes!"

TOO PIERCING

Master Shih Kung was a hunter before his enlightenment. Among the monks, he liked to draw his bow at those who asked about Zen. This he tried finally with a monk named San P'ing who bared his breast and said, "Is this a killing arrow or a life-giving arrow?"

Shih Kung threw his bow away and said, "After thirty years I have finally managed to shoot half a sage!"

ELOQUENT SERMON

When the Buddha stood up on Vulture Peak to preach, and only held up a flower instead—Kashyapa understood. The Buddha gave him the flower, because although none spoke, Kashyapa had smiled.

Later, Ananda, the Buddha's brother and Kashyapa's brother-disciple, asked, "How came the Honored One to give you his Golden Robe?"

Kashyapa said: "Ananda! Go take down the banner pole in front of the gate."

Says the translator of The Blue Cliff Record: "The banner in front of a monastery in India signalled that teaching and debate were going on therein."

BEYOND BUDDHISM

"When you get to the point of merging with nature, it's like the eye does not see itself, the ear does not hear itself, the finger does not feel itself; it's like a sword doesn't cut itself, fire does not burn itself." At this point there are many instances of compassionate assistance in the teachings; this is why they led down a single path, and in methods of the secondary truth set up host and guest, devices and objects, questions and answers. Thus it is said, 'The Buddhas have not appeared in the world, nor is there any nirvana. They manifest such things as expedient means to rescue sentient beings.'"
—Yuan Wu, The Blue Cliff Record, p. 157

12 FAMOUS BUDDHA MIND SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAM

True or False:

1. Pain is simply God's way of hurting you.
2. UFOs are bigger on the inside than the outside.
3. Chopsticks work the same as a strapless gown.
4. A libertarian is just a Republican who takes drugs.
5. What has only 16 calories per teaspoonful and is all natural? (Hint: There's 9 teaspoons of it in a Coke, 10 in a Pepsi)
6. Which is true? a) I clean my hairbrush with my comb b) I clean my comb with my hairbrush c) Both
7. Baby oil is: a) made from babies; b) very young oil; c) applied to squeaking babies.
8. (courtesy of Private Wintergreen, one of our favorite Buddha-heads) Which would you prefer the military spend 9,600 on? a) Bombs; b) Nerve gas; c) An Allen wrench
9. List what you would do with the defense budget: a) b) c) Other)

(Buddhahead Don Strachen is Guardian Diety of the 12 Famous Buddha Mind School and may be scrutinized through his publication, Light Times, Box 84366, Los Angeles, CA 90073.)

ZEN BUDDHISM

Upon his enlightenment, the very first words Guatama Buddha uttered were: "I have seen you, house builder. The ridgepole is broken. You will never build houses again."

TO HIDE A DRAGON

Yuan Wu was fond of such paradoxes as first remarking, "In a clear pool there's no place for a blue dragon to coil up." And then he would say, "Stagnant water cannot conceal a dragon." Of which he seemed most convinced, though, was that to explain further would have spoiled it for you. In fact, even if you figured it out for yourself—he would warn—that surely would spoil it for you.

But then maybe finding good hiding places for dragons is not an urgent matter anyway.

NOT MUCH TO IT

"Much falsehood is not as good as a little truth."—Yuan Wu



The Auto-Cannibal

PART ONE by Prudence Gaelor

Prudence lay her head on the lip of the tub, munching on her grilled cheese sandwich. Grandma Ed made open face grilled cheese sandwiches, two slices of American cheese overlapping on a piece of bread, so that none of the bread peeked through, shoved underneath the broiler until the cheese began to bubble and get brown.

"These grilled cheeses are much nicer than the ones at Mummy's club. Don'tcha think, Bunny?"

"I wouldn't know. I've never been invited to the club. Remember there is a no rabbits policy," Pink Bunny responded tersely. "Besides, what's so great about these grilled cheeses? They look like nursery food to me."

"I can't decide. I'm not sure whether I like them better because the top layer of cheese forms a brown, crusty bubble which you can pop and let the melted cheese underneath ooze through, or..." she paused and took a bite. "Or if because all the bread gets kind of moist and chewy and sticky and you have to pry it off your teeth with your tongue." She stretched and her hi-tops hit the faucet.

"Hey! Watch it, Pru! You nearly turned the water on!"

"So?"

"So, I've already had my bath for the century!"

"We could sing bath songs, like the one with the little boy bathing in the river with the water moccasin in it."

"Then we'd really catch it."

Prudence feigned a yawn. "Bunny, I can't imagine being in any more trouble than we're in now. We ran away from the infirmary to watch The Creeping Flesh, a movie that airs four hours after our bed time, and to do so we invite ourselves over to Grandma Ed's, a place we're not allowed and the whole reason we were staying in the infirmary in the first place, stopping off on the way to scavenge through a few dumpsters, and we don't tell anybody, including Grandma Ed that we're doing this, nor do we leave a note, and thus the police went searching for us for two hours and when we turned up, my parents were called, told where we were and they had to cut short their business trip to come home early and beat me to jelly. No, Bunny! At this point, I don't think that taking a bath in my clothes will really matter."

"Sure, but you don't want Grandma Ed mad at you, too, do you? She sent us in here so she could clean up the place, not so that we could mess up another room!"

"Yeah, I guess you're right." She reached over and grabbed another grilled cheese sandwich off the plate on the toilet. She was in mid-chomp when they heard the doorbell ring.

"Patrick's waiting in the car." was all they heard Mummy say. (concluded next issue)

DANGEROUS BEHAVIOR OF EX-GIRLFRIENDS

by Carol E. Magary

1. You go into stores that sell Ziggy "I wuv you" buttons and couples-on-the-beach-at-sunset posters and Garfield jellybeans, and you take out your machete and chop everything into 14 pieces—once for every time you and your boyfriend went to see "Reds" together, and you cried but he only pretended to.

2. You refer to the person who was once "Puppy Toes" or "Big Whammy" now as "That asshole I was seeing because he had a Porsche" and "Antarctica in Bed."

3. You call up his house and pretend that you are: a) an IRS auditor and there seems to be a pesky error from 1972 that needs correction by documented grocery bills within 30 days or he risks life imprisonment with someone named Spike; b) a DJ at the local radio station saying that he is the lucky winner of a trip around Europe only if he apologizes on air to his ex-girlfriend for being a heartless bastard who didn't deserve her in the first place; c) another ex-girlfriend with herpes.

4. Your favorite songs are now "You're No Good," "Round Dog," "You're So Vain" and the famous C&W hit, "If May Be Blue Skies In Oklahoma, But You're Radioactive Waste On Legs To Me."

5. You call up his new girlfriend and describe in lurid detail dysfunctions and perversions he will exhibit later (even if he seems like a really nice guy now), such as making her dress up like Gene Shalit and call him Rona during sex.

6. You take all the letters he wrote to you and rip them into 14 pieces, once for each time you saw "Eddie Murphy in Concert" together, and he laughed but you only pretended to.

7. You get up in the middle of the night and eat two Sara Lee cheesecakes, a box of Ring-Dings, a bag of pork rinds and a package of barbecue flavored chip dip, then put on the bikini he loved you in and write a list of everything on your body that will keep you from attracting Mel Gibson.

8. You find yourself saying things like, "My last relationship didn't work out because he projected an astral plane identity that conflicted with my upwardly mobile feminist magic crystal-oriented bourgeois existentialism," when actually you broke up because you got in an argument over whether Spuds MacKenzie was real or not.

9. You start dating a new guy who has the same obnoxious traits as your ex, but now you find them "cute."

10. After reading all the "Men Who Hate Women But Actually Love The Women Who Hate Men And Then Read Shere Hite And Become Trappist Monks" books, you decide that your ex-boyfriend wasn't so bad after all. Ignoring the advice of your friends, family, co-workers, bag ladies, his psychiatrist, Dr. Ruth, Dr. Joyce Brothers, Alan Thicke, and the Pope, you go back to him. He doesn't want you back. Repeat steps #1-9.



NEXT: HEADQUARTERS
CHARACTER BY K.L. ROBERTS INKED BY TOM ROBERTS

Marcos Claims Credit For Tremors
MANILLA (YU) — An earthquake measuring 5.2 on the Richter scale rocked parts of the central and northern sections of the capital yesterday, but no injuries or property damage were reported. Immediately after the quake struck, former Philippine Dictator Ferdinand Marcos issued a tersely worded statement from his Hawaiian villa taking full responsibility for the attempted coup.

Italians Opt Again For All-Out Order
ROME (YU) — Tens of thousands of young Italian men posted on street corners throughout the city Friday cut the throats of hundreds of smokers who refused to put out their cigarettes.

The No-Smoking Day campaign was called by the Italian Intolerance League, which recruited the young men from various police files and trained them to confront smokers on the street. Those who refused to extinguish their fags had their throats slashed and their cigarettes stolen, while those who complied were shot, beaten and left for dead.

With more than 800 people dead and over 2,000 hospitalized, the League plans to continue its successful anti-smoking campaign in other cities, as well as utilize similar tactics in Naples later this month in an event called No-Talking Day.

Gandhi Loses 3 More Seats

NEW DELHI (YU) — The opposition took the first two seats in the foyer and one seat in the upstairs bedroom of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's winter residence in Kanpur yesterday, bringing the total to 23 seats Gandhi has lost from various rooms in his house since last April.

Rock Kills Woman

BORING, Oregon (YU) — A Boring resident was killed early this morning when a meteorite crashed through the roof of her home in the Sylvan Hills Mobile Village, crushing her skull. The victim's name is being withheld, pending notification of her next of kin — husband Mildred Potemkin Bland, and their twin eight-year-old daughters, Vera and Ultima — who escaped with slight injuries.

Millions Critical

Cruise Missile Test Misses Restaurant

PORTRADIUM, Northwest Territories, Canada (YU) — U.S. military experts hailed the first solo flight of an armed U.S. cruise missile across the Pacific Ocean early this morning, despite the fact that it missed its original target by more than 4000 miles and ended up destroying a bait and tackle shop in this tiny, remote fishing village.

The missile, traveling 1200 mph at altitudes of 50-75 feet and equipped with a "semi-nuclear warhead," was launched from a B-52 bomber over the Hawaiian Islands where it was expected to travel 47 miles across Maui and destroy an abandoned Jack-In-The-Box restaurant situated on the island's southern coast.

"All in all, we are very pleased with the way things turned out," remarked a low-level military strategist who refused to give his age. "We'll probably be analyzing data for months, but for the moment it looks like a complete success."

No other details were fabricated as to why the missile's guidance system failed.

Gumwalt Theater Bombed

Houston Gays Bashed By Robert Conrad Brigade

HOUSTON (YU) — An anti-gay organization, threatening continued violence against local movie theaters that show films depicting grown men engaged in acts of dancing, has claimed responsibility for last night's bombing

of the Gumwalt Theater where a 1954 Donald O'Connor movie ("Francis Joins the Stud Farm") was being shown.

A spokesguy for the "Robert Conrad Brigade," Houston's largest and most prestigious anti-

gay group, vows his organization will continue to fight the daily menace of AIDS II (Astaire Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

An assistant manager of the Gumwalt Theater, who asked to be identi-

fied, says his theater has reconsidered its cinematic priorities and will reopen next week with a "Sam Peckinpah Film Festival."

You will experience every jolt...every jar of a Psychedelic Circus...The Beatniks...Sickniks... and Acid-Heads...and you will witness their ecstasies, their agonies and their sensualities...You will be hurled into their bizarre debauched dreams and frenzied fantasies!



The revealing story of

The PILLAR OF FIRE SOCIETY features 13 friend Mike Packer and their demo tape, "IN THE ROSE BOWER," is available for \$5.50 from P.O. Box 3540, Grand Rapids, MI 49501 (make checks payable to "M.J. Packer"). Side One's all original material w/ real pretty psychedelic era-style music, and Side Two's really boffo, with neat redos of "Bus Stop" and "Five O'Clock World" (two of my personal favorite "oldies") plus what I feel to be the best cut on the tape, "Wall of Death," presumably about an amusement park ride I guess. For more info call at 616/458-7364...

The PILLAR of FIRE Society

OVERHEARD

AT
AMERICA'S LUNCH COUNTERS



Susan Catherine

"Sometimes my little bit of insanity gets the best of me and I have to go take a nap."

NOT SO TOUGH

by Richard F. Hay, Sr.
I felt tough and brave all at once.

The poor old farmer must have been scared to death.

Me with a submachine gun slung over my shoulder and a cigar between my teeth.

With hand signs and the few words of German I had mastered, I let it be known that I wanted one of his chickens and fast.

He thrust one into my hands.
"Kill it," I said.
He slit its throat while I held it.

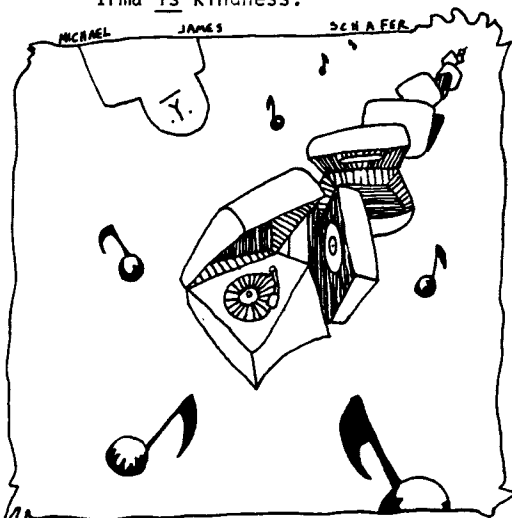
All my bravado quickly drained from my body as I slowly walked away.

MISSING WORDS

by Richard F. Hay, Sr.
Missing words are soon apparent in their absence from Irma's vocabulary.

It's natural for her not to use unkid words.

For in a word,
Irma is kindness.



THE MUSIC DROPS BY DEGREES AS THE TABLE SPINS TO A NEW WORLD ♪♪.

Wax Ink

by Rory Houchens

UNSUNG STORIES—Phil Alvin (Slash)—Where most solo albums do little more than gorge already obese egos by showing what a talented multi-instrumentalist or great composer the artist in question is, Phil Alvin dredges up obscure chunks of prime American music from the not so distant past and gets folks like Sun Ra and the Dirty Dozen Brass band to back him up. "Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn" is given a big, Broadway treatment thanks to gutsy horn work by the Dirty Dozen and saxist Lee Allen, and "Death In The Morning" tears itself free of the Devil's grasp and heads straight for Heaven while the Jubilee Train Singers lay down the gospel. Spare arrangements add to the poignancy of the eerie "Titanic Blues" and the murderous "Gangster's Blues," while Otis Blackwell's "Daddy Rollin' Stone" benefits from strong, electric guitar work, fluid piano and a big beat. The two best cuts here are a brilliant version of "Brother Can You Spare A Dime," featuring subtly adequate backing by Sun Ra's Arkestra, and a chilling rendition of the tragic country tune "Collins Cave," with Richard Greene's mournful violin. Three cheers to Phil Alvin for resurrecting some old gems that may have otherwise been forgotten.

WHO'S GOT THE 10½?—Black Flag (SST Records)—Another live document from one of the underground's hardest working and most prolific bands. Black Flag blow smoke on "Loose Nut," a catalog of stress and alienation, and run through some Iggy/Stooges calisthenics on "Bastard of Love." They study oppression during the Black Sabbath-inspired "Modern Man" and attempt a punk minuet on "In My Head." But due to some claustrophobic production, the music never quite hits the boiling point.

COUNTRY AIRS—Rick Wakeman (New Age/Coda/Jem)—Nowadays any music that is reasonably pensive, relatively uninvolved, justifiably low-key, and played by one person on one instrument is considered great audio art and is recorded using the most technologically advanced equipment, pressed on expensive, flawless virgin vinyl, sheathed in high grade plastic, and lovingly wrapped in an exquisite, imported cover. And chances are it'll play softer than a ghost's whisper, have all the backbone of a jellyfish, and lull you to sleep quicker than a Sunday School sermon. COUNTRY AIRS tries for such distinction, but thankfully falls just short of the bullseye. Sure enough, the music is lush, thoughtful and inoffensive, conjuring up images of ornate music boxes and amber portraits of turn-of-the-century families gathered in cheerful parlors, but Wakeman displays a strong sense of melody and the music is more diverse than one would expect—it evokes a green spring rather than a gray, cloudy winter. File this one next to George Winston and David Lanz but keep it well away from the likes of Keith Jaffett and Cecil Taylor.

CHRONICLE VOLUME TWO—Creedence Clearwater Revival (Fantasy)—Since John Fogerty has re-emerged as one of America's most beloved pop icons, it would appear that the time is ripe for (re)discovering the group that made him a musical hero in the first place, Creedence Clearwater Revival. Even though all the band's "big hits" were included on the decade-old first volume of CHRONICLE, there's more than enough snazzy material to fill the four sides offered here. You're treated to the swampy voodoo of "Born On The Bayou" and "Tombstone Shadow," the blistering rock and roll of "It Came Out Of The Sky" and "Molina," the chooglin', hillbilly hijinks of "Before You Accuse Me" and "My Baby Left Me," and the flat-out country (and western) of "Don't Look Now" and "Lookin' For A Reason" (wherein the ghost of Hank Williams tangles with the shadow of Merle Haggard). Which is to say nothing of historically-correct covers of "Good Golly Miss Molly," "Cotton Fields," "The Midnight Special" and "Hello Mary Lou." Impressive and essential stuff.

Persia On the Hudson

by Mike Gunderloy

(being another chapter of the somewhat confused autobiography of Pope Sicile I, to be published someday under the title of HOW I GOT THERE FROM HERE, aka Fear and Loathing in Bakersfield. Any resemblance to actual history means you've wandered into the wrong universe.)

Things had pretty well gone to pot. First the acid supply had run out, then I'd snorted the last of the methamphetamines, and finally the booze was finished off (except for one bottle of Blue Label Champagne that I was saving for a special occasion, optimistically assuming that there would be one sometime in the future). Now I was reduced to smoking this filthy weed, which never did much for me in the first place besides rip my throat lining all to hell. At least it was growing wild in the hills above what was left of Troy these days.

Or rather, it was growing wild a few months ago. Now, I imagined, the seeds that we'd all carded out of the buds were lying dormant under the thick blanket of snow, waiting to burst into life again when (and if) the spring sun returned. It was winter in the Hudson Valley, the hardest winter since the disastrous year of '84, when people hereabouts had starved to death in bumper crops. Even with martial law in Albany, the state government hadn't felt secure enough to stay, and so they'd fled to the Big Apple, which could at least be supplied by boat. Now of course they weren't there any more either, except for a few turncoats who were rapidly learning to bow to Mecca five times a day. Last I'd heard the state government in exile was out around Syracuse. Or maybe Rochester. It didn't matter.

What mattered was the craft coming up the river towards my vantage point, the one painted all white except for the red crescent. Thick clouds of black smoke mixed with white steam rising from the leaks in its engine, and clusters of young men, armed with automatic weapons, milled about its decks. I held the binoculars up for a closer look, swearing as the cold metal pressed searingly into the flesh around my eyes.

The boat had been put together, I decided, out of five barges lashed together, headed up by a converted tugboat that was now burning something noxious—wood?—to drive a steam engine the Sharif's troops had dug up from Allah knows where. Breaking the ice in front was what had to be a captured Coast Guard ship, the orange stripe on its bow barely whitewashed over. It looked like the whole assemblage must hold about 500 of the Revolutionary Guards and, while they were for the most part awfully young, they at least looked well-fed, which put them far ahead of any resistance they were liable to encounter around here.

Hunkering down tighter on the windswept roof, I considered my options. There weren't a whole lot of them. The caterpillar-barge was going to run into heavy ice in another mile or two, if it even intended to go that far, and then the Guards would come ashore. Since they'd already bypassed the Port of Albany, I figured they had to be headed for the Watervliet Arsenal. I'd been on that side of the river myself a couple of weeks back, and prowled around cautiously, but a few rifle shots had been enough to make me give it up as a bad job. The US Army might be defunct, and the Arsenal might be burnt out, but there was life there yet.

And, since the Guards weren't dumb, no matter what the jokes circulating on the official Radio Amerika might want us to believe, they'd be putting a few folks ashore on this side of the river to seize the high ground which, it just happened, I was on—Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, which overlooks the remnants of the city of Troy.

Well, it looked like it was time to go underground again. Fortunately, there weren't a lot of people left who knew anything of the history of the area, and the last time I'd checked it, my rat-hole was safe and sound, if a bit chilly. It was less than a mile from here to there—at least once I'd gotten down off the roof of this burnt-out building—so I figured I had time to watch the fun.

Coupe Coup Contained By Conte

CONAKRY, Guinea (YU) — Guinean President Richard Conte announced that former Prime Minister Diarrhea Tortuga, who drove a '32 Ford Coupe into the Presidential Palace on July 4, had been apprehended at a Holiday Inn and "will be beaten to death by myself with great relish."

Conte addressed a crowd estimated at between 10 and 900,000 people in front of the Guinea Pickle Palace, saying his former prime minister had been found Sunday morning "hiding in a clothes hamper. Let everyone under-

stand. I am going to kill this son of a bitch with my own hands, and all the other rowdies in his Coupe." Hot pepper relish, Guinea's number one export, forms the basis for several local religions. It is also used symbolically in many state functions.

Yossarian Universal

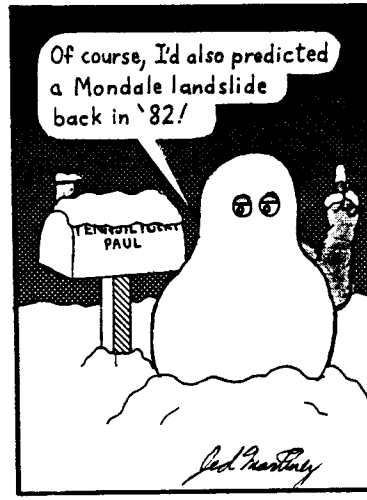
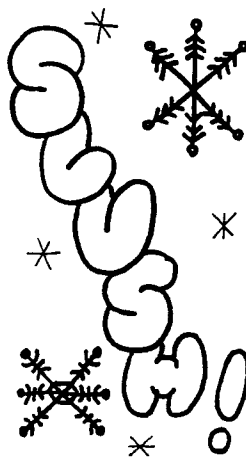
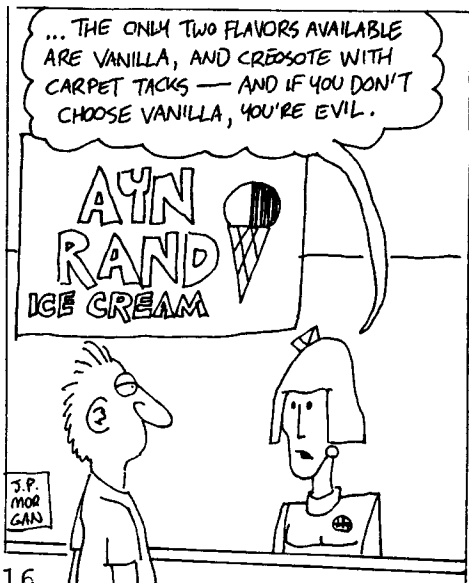
I eased open my snow-white jacket far enough to get the pipe out, and set about the tricky business of getting it packed and lit. While the high wind made this pretty tough, at least the whipping snow would make the smoke damned near invisible.

Just about the time I got my first good toke, the fireworks began. It turned out that I was right about the Arsenal not being deserted. See, there'd been this decorative tank sitting in the parking lot for years, to remind the men and women there what wonderful toys they were making shells for. A couple of weeks ago it had been turned so that the turret faced the river. At the time, I put it down to kids, or scavengers, but now it turned out that I was wrong. As the tugboat drew abreast of it, with the Guards swarming into rubber rafts, there was a sharp report, and a burst of flame from the muzzle of the tank. And then...

It was a good thing I'd bent over to try and get the pipe drawing a bit better, because otherwise the flash would have blinded me and I'd have had a hell of a time getting down from that roof. As it was the wind nearly knocked me off, and I lost the pipe anyhow. It was touch and go for a few moments, but I held on. And when I looked again, there wasn't much left of the Guards or the Arsenal. Instead, a huge column of steam was rising from the churning Hudson River, and the debris raining down was starting fires on both banks of the river. Damned if they didn't have a nuclear shell stored somewhere in the arsenal, or brought in secret-like! Looked like the Sharif was going to have a bit of trouble extending his control this far up the Hudson.

Meanwhile, I'd decided it was time to beat a retreat, troops or hamburger. I'd gotten one dose of radiation back in '84 and while it didn't kill me, it wasn't a hell of a lot of fun. So I made my way down the fire escape and set off at a good trot for the Poes-tenkill Gorge. Not a lot of people knew that there had been a turbine there before the modern one (which of course had been stripped out years ago, but still diverted the water from above the dam). But thanks to some exploring and a bit of reading history in what was left of the RPI library, I did. So I knew where to find the bottom end of the tunnel that had once carried water around the falls and to the waterwheel. When I got there, I moved aside the brush that was blocking it off, moving it back just as carefully when I was in. Then I proceeded to start working my way up into the cold and damp darkness by feel.

My chamber was about 50 feet in, buried under tons of rock—my sperm count wouldn't be dropping this time around. I got there and lit up the precious twelve-volt bulb. There were plenty of cars to salvage batteries from, and I had a little stack of them along one wall, so at least I'd have light, and whatever heat the bulb would give off. I had one spare, and I figured that I'd come out when they were both gone, or in a couple of weeks. Meanwhile, there was the Blue Label Champagne to open, and a precious book I'd been saving to read: WHEN THE SACRED GIMMILL CLOSES, by Lawrence Block. It was a publisher's proof copy that I'd found in some ruins a few miles down the river, and was printed on nice thin paper. As I finished the first page, I tore it out and rolled a joint from the big pile of brush sitting by the make-shift cot. As the smoke drifted up into the darkness, I wondered about Herb Gold, who'd helped me hijack the champagne I was drinking. Last I'd heard, he was heading for Arizona. Maybe I'd head that way when I got out of here. At least there was peyote in the desert. I laughed, and coughed, and returned to my book.



Commercial McClue-In

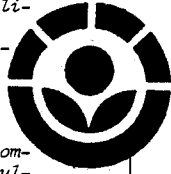
by "Kid" Sieve

I've decided to start the new year by keeping a resolution I made last year, to publicize the good work of the people at the Museum of Modern Mythology. This little gem, located on a cramped floor of office space in downtown San Francisco, pays homage to some of yesterday's and today's most memorable icons, characters created through the medium of advertising. Here you can find tribute to everything from the original "Uncle Sam" to the Stay-Puf man to, for all I know (I haven't been to the Museum since last I visited Mecca-by-the-Bay), Spuds McKenzie. Among the museum's attractions are mount-ups of old ads from WWII-era magazines and countless stuffed versions (most in miniature, but some rather imposing) of "all your favorites" from commercials past and present. It's not only worth a look, it's worth membership. I have a whole bunch of extra membership applications and a number of extra copies of their latest newsletter, which can be gotten from MJ's palatial p.o. box free for the asking. Membership, I should warn, is on the same level as with many other museums, starting at \$25 per year for an individual and going all the way up to a thou for Corporate Contributors, but it's prob'ly tax deductible.

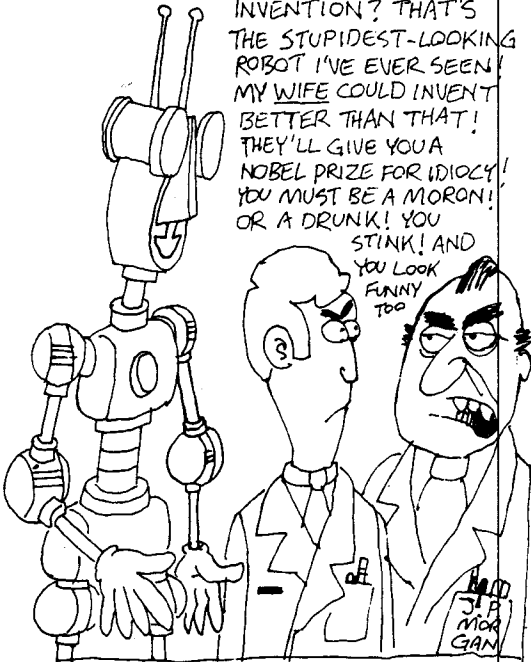
Something else that I suppose bears circulating was given me by st.EVE herself, which is a petition to save Max Headroom. They give a hotline (818/377-5000) which they claim operates 24 hours a day, but the petition notice contains far too many misspellings for me to believe it'll do an tota of good, but I guess there's nothing to lose, except Matt Frewer's nice new job on St. Elsewhere. Still, count me in as one of those who miss the show... I can repro this notice as well, for anyone who wants it.

Do you know this label? You might want to familiarize yourself with it—it's the "Radura Label." The latest in a series of little red swirls, beginning in April food companies need only display this cute lil' symbol on foods which have been bombarded with radioactivity (irradiated) to kill pests, delay spoilage, and do Earth Goddess-knows-what to your internal systems. Nice of the food companies to block legislation requiring complete divulgence of irradiated foods, especially while insisting there's nothing harmful in 'em. If it can't hurt you, folks, why the big secret and the cryptic symbol? Don't it look like the purtiest lil' ol' flower, now? See, it's just radiation, not to worry...

I think it's loathsome for right-wing assholes like Adolph Coors (and if you think your Coors boycott should end because a certain union couldn't stand up to management's pressure any more and are thus no longer striking to elicit pro-union sentiment from



YOU CALL THAT AN INVENTION? THAT'S THE STUPIDEST-LOOKING ROBOT I'VE EVER SEEN! MY WIFE COULD INVENT BETTER THAN THAT! THEY'LL GIVE YOU A NOBEL PRIZE FOR IDIOCY! YOU MUST BE A MORON! OR A DRUNK! YOU STINK! AND YOU LOOK FUNNY TOO



IF YOU'RE UNDER 79 YOU WOULDN'T BE LIVING IF THIS 80 YEAR OLD HADN'T BEEN BORN AND YOU CAN SAY THE SAME THING ABOUT ANYONE UNDER YOUR AGE MINUS ONE YEAR.
For some of those born today to reach 80 as in past and future herenows send S.A.S.E. to must-be-adopted 4 WAY PEACE PLAN - Box 2243 YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, 44504

labor-conscious New Yorkers and other Northeasterners, thereby blocking Coors' new target expansion market, you've been sadly misled) to use such lovely animation (reminiscent of those neat Hershey's commercials with figures out of media history) to sell their product to a "youth market." Barbara Lippert of AdWeek does too, and says so: "In light of Adolph Coors' buying cargo planes for Oliver North, I found the use of subversive types like James Dean interesting. Is all pardonable in beer and war?" Obviously Lippert, entrenched in Corporate America as she is, has good reason not to be incensed rather than merely finding something "interesting," but yours truly has no such restrictions. Look, guys, I don't care how nifty the beer might taste, supporting Coors' regime is putting guns into the hands of contra murderers and lining the pockets of fascist governmental billionaires. You know where you can stick that silver bullet, Herr Adolph...

Surely alert adwatchers haven't missed the tragic fact that children are now, more than ever, being specifically targeted as a valuable consumer segment. Listen to AdWeek's Noreen O'Leary and her dispassionate summary: "It would seem today's children are a marketer's dream target. They spend almost everything they earn; they don't comparison shop; they don't necessarily make logical purchase decisions. They're passionate television viewers, impressionable consumers and subject to intense peer pressure. They're often the offspring of guilt-ridden working parents, with more income to lavish on those children and fewer to spread it across." So let's go out there and take advantage of them, troops! Let's subvert them as quickly as we can, because the same surveys indicate they may be becoming "increasingly savvy" about our tactics. Can you imagine that? They're actually suspicious of us! So let's be vewwy, vewwy careful we don't talk down to them, only that we rob their childhood innocence and trust...

On a good note, we hope, since the latest wave of Sovietaphilia, or whatever you want to call it, some of those godawful Red Stereotype commercials may in fact be disappearing, and indeed advertising is seen as quite a growth industry and opportunity in today's perestroika-conscious USSR. "Now Soviet television encourages viewers," reports the 12/7/87 AdWeek, "to stay tuned for reklamy—half-hour clusters of product shots and service announcements that interrupt regular programming on the Soviet Union's two national and various regional TV channels with increasing frequency." The nightmare of imperialism come true, I fear. But I supposed they should've expected it when the first Pizza Huts opened for business...

And in the land of Free Enterprise (providing you have the money to pay for it, of course), a new people-meter system introduced by R.D. Percy & Co. is able to give second-by-second ratings for television commercials, thus inspiring "pods," whatever they are. If this sounds all too much like some bad horror movie, it probably is one. I'll photocopy the article for anyone who's interested in reading it.

Yays and Boos time: Missed most of the first-ever televised Clio Awards, but the parts I saw were kinda lame, except for the trip down advertising's memory lane (with Choo-Choo Charlie, Marky Maypo and other childhood favorites, all of which you can probably catch at the Museum of Modern Mythology anyway), so I didn't see enough beyond the mindless banter of the two Hill St. Law people (some hubby and wife co-hosts) to really judge what was awarded to whom. Any awards going to McDung-ald's or Booger King should be immediately rescinded, in my opinion, but other than that, I see not too much terribly wrong with giving kudos to the likes of Will Vinton and such. Wonder if Levi's has ever won any plaudits for its clever bits, usually seen in Saturday morning kiddid slots, using that wonderful animation of its logo? God I love those. Among this year's early entries are 7-Up's animation of its red dots—you know, the red dot that sits between the "7" and the "Up" on the can—which is terribly, terribly cute and funny. Guess we won't know of too many more for a few weeks now, as the Super Bowl is usually the time at which many new corporate ads are premiered. I would like, however, to draw your attention, specifically your sense of hearing before that of sight, to a new Efferdent commercial in which a man says something to the effect of, "Every evening my wife goes into the bathroom for a few minutes. I don't know what she does in there, but when she comes out, she feels a whole lot better." Why, goodness me, she's soaking her dentures, that's what she's doing! And what's that vibrator doing there?...

Hisses also to the new Oscal commercial in which a reasonably intelligent-looking young lady confesses to having heard a lot of media scare stories about calcium additives, but since this particular study whose results she practically waves in front of the camera came out, "Why should I want to dig any further?" Why, she'll just take Oscal, because some meaningless numbers on paper that can be easily manipulated by the Oscal company which is probably paying to have the study done in the first place tell her to! I mean, thinking's so time-consuming, you know?

Finally, an ode to Black Monday, and may the coming year see a raised voice of protest against insidious ads like Drexel Burnham's. The company which reportedly earned \$800 mil through their leveraged buyout of the Beatrice Cos. (for which my dad used to work) is pushing spots with the tag line "Drexel-Burnham: Helping People Manage Change." Through junk bonds! Says Barbara Lippert, "These are pure image ads, and more than anything else, they resemble political ads aimed at changing perception...It's the most artful propaganda we've seen since (the famous Lyndon Johnson) 'Daisy' (ad)...That it is selling virtue so blatantly could make anyone a cynic." Let's hope ID's reading public stays that way. Happy new year, we hope.

Royko, Berri Termed Terrorists

DAMASCUS, Ore. (YU) — A crack team of Green Berets combed the wooded banks of the Sandy River through the night for a group of dissident American journalists who have insisted the Reagan administration's use of the word "linkage" whenever it knuckles under to terrorist demands is improper and imprudent.

Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater has refused to comment on the charges that the administration has hired the consult-

ing firm of Agnew, Cosell, & Haig to design and implement a new language "which means absolutely nothing to nobody," according to top secret documents obtained by members of the YU staff.

The fugitive journalists include cynics Mike Royko and Dave "Knobby" Berri. They are heavily armed, with large biceps and thick wrists. Government forces have vowed not to take them alive.

— YU News Service

FAIRY TALES

by A.D. Winans

Man
I'll bet
You thought
Superman was really
Clark Kent
Went into that damn telephone booth to
Change his clothes
Well
You're wrong
Baby
Superman is really
Ronnie Reagan dressed in drag and the
Reason he went into that booth in the
first place

Was to take a
Leak

And that isn't the half of it
Man
Batman and Robin aren't all that
They were made out to be
Caped Crusaders going around acting
Like the holy duo
God and Jesus rolled into one
Man
I mean if they could have had a baby
They could have called it
Michael and there would have been
No need to teach it how to fly
Like angels already know things like that
Come naturally
But what would Batman and Robin know about.
things like that?

Anyway
Batman and Robin were homosexuals
All that crap like
BAM

WHAM

ZAM

POW

WOW

ZOWIE.

Just a masculine put on
Nothing more or less and
Captain Marvel dressed in the silly garb
of the

Midnight Imposter
CRUD
He was the worst one of them all
Born in Cook County
Illinois and those in the know
Call him the
Chicago Queen and
Billy Batson and Mary Marvel
Man
Don't tell me you fell for that
One too?

I mean
How naive can you be
I mean if
Batman and Robin had not made it
Superman was waiting in the wings
And don't mourn for
Captain Marvel
He had the
Plastic Man to make it with
You remember that silly creep with the
Long arms that reached around the corner
Grabbing at your
Gonads.

The Flame
That's another trip
He had the hots for
Wonder Woman who really wasn't a
Woman at all

Yeah
You guessed it just another
Drag Queen from the

I GET SO UPTIGHT EVEN SUICIDE
DOESN'T EXCITE ME
by Sheila E. Murphy
I discard things. Own wastebaskets the size of lives.
In time everyone fits. A matter of keeping the bins
full so I don't climb in. Where I am wanted.
The various containers of my life stink with what in
them has lasted. I would spill them if I could trust
the atmosphere to swallow. Nothing moves.
All barriers proclaim the nouns behind them. My fear
of strangers steps on energy that's dying.
Plenty of light sealed permanently away. Belief that
it exists despite the evidence.

Chem Prof Dies

CINCINNATI (YU) — A retired professor of chemistry was fatally injured early this morning when both the motorcycle and car he was driving collided at the intersection of North Somehow Avenue and Geneva Street.
Police say the victim, Max M. Kampelman, 78, apparently ran a red light.
YU News Service

OVERHEARD

AT
AMERICA'S LUNCH COUNTERS



Susan Catherine
"Grass snakes, they live in the grass and they keep
an eye on the grass, in case people malign it, you
know, start desicratin' the grass or somethin'."

Bronx who used to go with
Flash Gordon before this
Flat foot named
Dick Tracy busted them in
Union Square for indecent exposure

Super invincible heroes
All of them
J. Edgar Hoover rejects
Bullshit
I know the
Truth
I got it first hand from
Charlie Chan the biggest
Closet Queen of them
All

A MESSAGE FROM THE ALIEN

by Deborah Benedict

Hello.
I am one of those Aliens
You saw in the movies.
With the brave woman and the cat
With the brave woman and the girlchild.
Yes, one of those Aliens.
I am not happy with what you've seen.
It isn't true, it isn't fair -
We are not all nor are we always
Bloodthirsty Desperados
Barbaric Monsters.
We have another life
You know nothing about.
We have our Families
We have our Feasting Days
We have our Fasting Days
We have our Gods
We have our Homes
We have our Talents.
They didn't show this in the film.
They showed us at war.
So?
There are humans at war all the time!
Show them and no one cares.
Show us and everyone gets scared.
I want you to see the Aliens as they
are most of the time:
See us playing in the park.
See us gathering the family for dinner.
See us at a party, laughing and waltzing.
See us with our children, kissing them
goodnight.
See us at the beach, getting a suntan.
Don't let the one-dimensional impression
of the movies prejudice you.
I am an Alien and I speak for all Aliens:
Be fair to us, think well of us,
Respect us and pay us fair tribute.
Or we will eat you.

AIDS Makes YU News' Day

AIDS, Nebraska (YU) — This tiny midwestern town populated by tiny midwestern people has petitioned the Nebraska Supreme Court to approve its twelfth name change since its incorporation in 1942.

"We started out as Dresden," Chief Alderman Charles Manson told reporters clustered outside the courthouse, "and then there was Suez, Havana, Hue, Rapid City, and Altamont, so you can tell we've had some pretty rotten luck when it comes to names."

In recent years, these tiny midwestern residents have lived in PCB, Legionnaire's Disease, Toxic Shock, and most recently, AIDS.

Alderman Manson hopes the court will act swiftly to approve the change to De-luge, a name the short residents find historically appropriate.
YU News Service

VALLEY OF LOST NERVES

by Adam Eisenstat

Weeds
flaking train tracks
broken shopping cards
dented buckets of
rusted railroad spikes
other once proud commerce soldiers
driven to this swollen industrial tomb.
Once they were the conquerors
now they bear
the ragged scars of
nature's eternally inevitable victory;
mercifully beautiful wounds
unequaled by anything
in functional lives past.
Behold the random poetry of decay.

ANIMATION

UPDATE

by Jed Martinez

FILM REVIEW: Continuing in its tradition of showcasing the finest works from around the world (since 1985), Expanded Entertainment presents another potpourri of cartoon shorts, which should be playing (or will arrive) at a revival house nearest you. "THE 20TH INTERNATIONAL TOURNEE OF ANIMATION" contains many award-winning shorts which were highlighted at the 2nd Los Angeles International Animation Celebration last July. This latest anthology (hot on the heels of "Animation Celebration" and "The 19th International Tournee...") runs the gamut from pencil drawings (such as the excellent mini-musical of Bill Plympton, "Your Face") and clay animation (Csaba Varga's "Augusta Feeds Her Child," which marks the third U.S. festival appearance of the plasticine siren from Hungary) to state-of-the-art computer animation (coming from, of all places, the Walt Disney studio, in the form of "Oilspot and Lipstick," it's the story of two junkyard dogs, whose anatomy is comprised of—what else, junk). In addition, viewers will have the rare opportunity to see all three 1986 Oscar-nominated shorts, and judge for themselves which work is the best of the trio. (In my opinion, John Lasseter and William Reeves' "Luxo, Jr." should have earned the Oscar; not because it was an American film, but because of its unique way of telling a story through computer animation. Bob Stenhouse's "The Frog, The Dog and The Devil," from New Zealand, had enough full animation and special effects in its spooky plot to merit a personal and very close second. The actual winner, Belgium's "A Greek Tragedy" by Nicole Van Goethem, ranks third to me; its animation wasn't as full as the other nominees, and its plot dragged out a bit, but it was still good entertainment for six-and-a-half minutes.) As enjoyable as all of these cartoons are, the real question is "Can one sit through ninety minutes or more of these short subjects?" The average moviegoer's attention span would probably be put to the test by viewing this film, and trying to understand what the abstract images of Susan Young's "Carnival" (from Great Britain) mean, or why there is so much repetition presented in different manners in "Academy Leader Variations" (a collaborative effort from several nations). This film was obviously made for the fanatical cartoon lover, and even though it's not as good as "Animation Celebration," there's enough variety in this show to make one forget its weak moments. For me, the most memorable shorts were the humorous ones, including Bruno Bozzetto's "Baeus," Guido Manuli's "Plus One, Minus One" (both from Italy), Joanna Quinn's "Girl's Night Out" (from England), Juliet Stroud's "Snookles" and Bob Kurtz' "Drawing On My Mind" (the last two from the US). Dedicated to the memory of pioneer animator Winsor McCay, "The 20th International Tournee..." proves that we've come a long way since "Gertie the Dinosaur." Don't miss it.

BOOK REVIEW: Within weeks of each other, two reference books on cartoons were released; each one contains numerous photos, concise bits of information, and both are moderately priced...Although it's not completely accurate, "ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WALT DISNEY'S ANIMATED CHARACTERS" (from Harper & Row, \$35) is a worthy companion piece to place next to Leonard Maltin's "The Disney Films." Chock-full of trivia, this book goes into detail about the many stars (i.e., Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, etc.), secondary roles (Clara Cluck and Pegleg Pete) and incidental characters (such as some of the 'swamp critters' from "The Rescuers") from the many shorts and feature-length animated films from the Disney studios. Among the inaccuracies are the omission of certain titles from the filmographies of a number of characters (two examples: In 1941, "Mickey's Birthday Party" reunites the mouse with his supporting company from the shorts of the '30s, and the filmographies of characters Clarabell Cow and Horace Horsecollar had "...Party" listed, but Clara Cluck's filmography did not include it, and she was prominent in that cartoon; also, of the many characters opposite which Pluto played, one of them was a seal named

WOLF BOY OF CENTRAL PARK:

When we turned the corner of 79th Street, we saw in front of us a slovenly, obese woman holding a leash attached to a boy, late teens, at the neck. They were going into Central Park.

It was a hot day, and the boy wore no shirt. He was bent forward, as if his back had been damaged when he was very young. His skin was rippled and burned like a relief map. If he hadn't been so burned, he would have been one of those gorilla men, hair all over his arms, back, sides, shoulder, neck. Even so, great tufts and hillocks of hair stood out—one on his right shoulder like an epaulette.

Ann Marie and I were going to the American Museum of Natural History (finally able to take advantage of my membership after ten years). This was my worst allergy day, and I was doped up on some over-the-counter antihistamine. A wave from Central Park hit me and I had a sneezing fit, seven or eight in a row.

The boy turned around. His face shocked me and kind of choked off a sneeze. It reminded me of a face I had seen in the *Weekly World News*—headlined "She Loves Him Yet," the story was about a horribly burned Falklands vet whose fashion-model fiancée remained faithful. I gagged and choked and had to spit. The woman tugged on the boy's leash and spoke a few short words.

The boy's face, too, had a couple unshaveable patches of hair on it. His mouth looked like it had been debeaked at birth—squidlike. They went down a path into the park. Ann Marie explained that the woman sang and played the tamborine, and the boy danced as much as his damaged back allowed. — Luke McGuff

This blank space
can be yours - We always
need spot illustrations!
(we could use lots more
regular illus, too...)

Salty, who was only given a description from one cartoon, 1947's "Rescue Dog," when, in fact, he appeared in three shorts with the lucky dog. Salty's filmography, which was left out altogether, includes 1941's "Pluto's Playmate" and 1948's "Mickey and the Seal," plus an early prototype of the character in "Mickey's Circus" from 1936). Many characters from TV shows produced by Walt Disney Pictures are also missing (such as the egotistic artist Gusto Gummi, and his toucan compatriot Arty Deco, from "The Gummi Bears"). If you don't care too much for second bananas and minor roles, overlook this book, but for the Disney devotee, this is an absolute must, inaccuracies and all...A more interesting reference work is John Halas' "MASTERS OF ANIMATION" (Salem House, \$24.95), which gives capsulized details of various animators (from Walt Disney and Chuck Jones to Osamu Tezuka and Jiri Trnka) and their best films from around the world. In addition, the last part of this book places special emphasis on the modern techniques of animation (eg., computer graphics) and their use in television and in movies. Halas (of Halas & Batchelor, the studio that brought you "Animal Farm") has compiled animation reference books before, many in collaboration, but this solo effort is one of the most comprehensive books to date. With its numerous illustrations and photos (in color and black & white) and its brief descriptive text, this book is highly recommended.

MAGAZINE UPDATE: On a recent trek to New York City, I'd purchased in a comic book emporium a British publication called "ANIMATOR," which covers the industry in both Europe and the US. Its articles range from individually paragraphed updates to multi-paged stories on new film releases and the people affiliated with them (some pages containing full-color photos). The issue I'd bought (#21) devoted nine pages to the re-release of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," plus a concluding report on the Anney Festival '87, and some personal insights from Joanna Quinn, whose hilarious short "Girl's Night Out" won three awards there. (In the lower right corner of each odd-numbered page of the magazine is a different drawing of the cartoon's lead character, to be given movement when the reader uses "Animator" like a flip-book.) Among the contributors to "Animator" are John ("Get Animated!") Cawley and Brian Sibley. Put out quarterly by Filmcraft Publications, it's worth a look-see. A four-issue subscription from the US is worth eleven pounds, including airmail costs (payment by I.M.O. or check drawn on a British bank in Sterling). Back issues are also available. For more information, write to Filmcraft, 13 Ringway Road, Park Street, St. Albans, Herts AL2 2RE, UNITED KINGDOM. Allow some time for the response (I think it will be worth the wait).

FRUITS OF THEIR LABOR: In the same style as TV Guide's opinionated page "Cheers and Jeers," I'd like to give some capsule comments on the current animation scene by offering various fruits (and vegetables) to individuals and/or organizations that are worthy of such offerings...First of all, a "bowl of cherries" to TMS Entertainment, Inc., the animation studio behind Disney's "DuckTales," light fun for all (and a far cry from last season's dismal failure on CBS, "Galaxy High School," which only would've earned them "the pits")...Next, a "big lemon" goes to Ted Turner for trying to convince us that those "Popeye" cartoons are truly "colorized," when it is really poorly animated remakes (in the same vein as those color remakes of black & white "Looney Tunes" and "Betty Boop" cartoons) airing on Stupidstation WTBS...A great "bunch of grapes" to go Will Vinton Productions, whose Claymation projects include the Clio award-winning "California Raisin" TV commercials (with sequel spots already airing)...To "Cathy," the 1987 Emmy award winner as the "Best Animated TV Special," I offer some "sweet dates"...A "bunch of bananas" is what Bakshi Animation is, and "Mighty Mouse—The New Adventures" exemplifies it. I mean that as a compliment. The humor may be hit-and-miss at times, but the pace is manic enough to enjoy (just like the old Terrytoons used to be). Kudos to Ralph Bakshi and his cohorts...A "grove of California oranges" go to a number of cartoon characters making their comebacks this year in films—the aforementioned Mighty Mouse; plus The Mighty Heroes and Gandy Goose (alumnus from the Terrytoons stable); Gumby (also the comeback of Dallas McKennon as the voice of the boy of clay); Betty Boop (recently seen in a Hershey commercial, and soon to appear in a cameo role in "Who Framed Roger Rabbit?"); Donald Duck (sans Clarence Nash's voice); his nephews, Huey, Dewey and Louie, and Uncle Scrooge (with Alan Young reprising the role made famous in "Mickey's Christmas Carol") from the hit series "DuckTales;" and last, but not least, Daffy Duck (no relation), who returns to the big screen in two new shorts directed by Greg Ford (who previously programmed cartoon festivals for the Museum of Modern Art and the now-defunct revival house in NY, The Thalia), and once again voiced by Mel Blanc. The new shorts are titled "The Duxorcist" and "Night of the Living Duck"...A "load of rotten tomatoes" delivered with relish (—groan—) to Hanna-Barbera Productions, Inc., for having some offbeat comebacks of familiar characters: namely, "The Flintstone Kids" and "Popeye and Son." In all honesty, I avoid any cartoon show whose title ends with "Kids," "...and Son," "...and Sons," "...and Family," or "Jr."...Finally, the "whole cornucopia of a good crop" goes to cartoonist Matt ("Work Is Hell," "School Is Hell") Groening, whose animated snippets on "The Tracey Ullman Show" (on Fox Television) are the funniest things on the tube. They may be works in limited animation, but this limited animation works! The vignettes are brief, straight-to-the-point, off-the-wall, and downright laugh-out-loud funny! Keep up the good work, Matt! 19



Well, here we go for the first F-CF of the new year. We have a lot of comics-related material to cover, so let's get started, shall we?

Currently available in the comics shop is CRITTERS #21 (\$2 US/\$3 Can.), which features the third and final installment of J.P. Morgan's "Fission Chicken" story, "Marketing Experts from Beyond." There is also a nice cover by Sam Kieth, which is a tribute to Carl Barks. The usual fine package from editor Kim Thompson and crew... Also in the comicshops is the MUNDEN'S BAR ANNUAL (\$2.95 US) from First, as I mentioned last issue, which has new and reprint material from back issues of GRIMJACK. The big news is that it features a brand new story by Matt Feazell, starring Antiso-cialMan. This is the first time that he's appeared in color, and the story is written by Walt Lockley. There are also tales featuring Clonezone and Fish Police. I'd never seen a Munden's Bar strip, since I don't get GRIMJACK, but I was impressed by the range of stories (both the art and tone of each). A nice package.

Have some news from long-time IJ friend Valentino. Besides the fantastic NORMALMAN graphic novel (which reprints the entire series as well as the crossover in JOURNEY and other material), the guy is hard at work with material very different from what we've seen in the past. He's doing work (in what he calls his "super-dude style," a far cry from his noted "cartoony" approach) for DC and Marvel. You can see his covers for X-MEN INDEX #7 and AVENGERS INDEX #6 as well as various illos for the upcoming LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES WHO'S WHO. Valentino also has a complete story retelling the origin of Pete Cannon - Thunderbolt (an old Charlton character now owned by DC) for SECRET ORIGINS. Finally, for Fan-tagraphics he is editing a special issue of AMAZING HEROES, an all-3D issue, which also includes his personal interview with Ray Zone. The third issue of his series for Renegade, VALENTINO THE 3RD, is due out in April, and we'll keep you updated.

Now for some quick reviews of what's on the stands (at least as of when we write in early January):

AGENTS UNKNOWN (Renegade Press, \$2 US/\$2.75 Can.) deals with the agents for L.E.D. (Law Enforcement Division), a top-secret government agency working to defeat organized crime and international terrorists, from the late fifties through the present. Writer/creator Robert Soderer relates the tales in first-person "hard-boiled" narration. Artists Deli Barras (pencils) and Lan Medina (inks) work in a style more reminiscent of Al Williamson's comic strip work than the usual comic book style. Both blend well and create the proper mood for the stories. I love this sort of stuff myself, but if you don't care for it, pass this by.

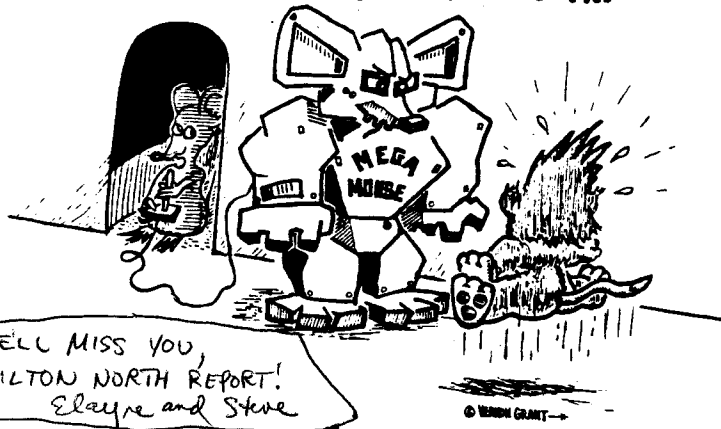
SPACE GHOST (Comico, \$3.50 US/\$4.95 Can.) is finally back, at least in a nice one-shot. Written by Mark Evanier (CROSSFIRE, DN-Agents, etc.) and drawn by Steve Rude (NEXUS, MISTER MIRACLE SPECIAL), it reads like a feature-length SPACE GHOST animated movie (we can only wish!). Evanier has captured all the flavor of SG & company from their original incarnation, well-remembered by many of us older fans. The art by Rude, with inking assist from Willie Blyberg, is incredible, and the coloring (painted) by Ken Steacy makes the whole thing look as though it was done from animation cells. My only problem with the book is that I figured out who the villain was by the middle of the story, so the unveiling was sort of anti-climactic. However, I must recommend it highly nonetheless.

XENON (VIZ/Eclipse, biweekly, \$1.50 US/\$2.25 Can.) is the latest entry into the rapidly growing manga reprint market. All of you out there into Japanimation should give it a look. Reprinted from the Japanese comic novels by Masaomi Kanzaki, XENON deals with a high school student who disappears and is later found wandering with amnesia and having been transformed into a cyborg by a "mysterious" corporation for reasons unknown (especially to him). If you enjoy any of the other manga reprints that have appeared this last year, you may want to give XENON a glance. And be prepared for all the other manga that will be appearing; the flood-gates have only begun to trickle, and Marvel is on the verge of doing reprints so the market will only increase. Like it or not, this is the next big thing in comics.

VIC AND BLOOD (Mad Dog Graphics, \$2 US/\$3 Can.) is a black & white, two-issue series from Harlan Ellison and Richard Corben dealing with the characters Ellison created in A BOY AND HIS DOG. Following the series, all the material will be repackaged and printed in color in graphic novel format. Anyone familiar with the work of Ellison and Corben will know what to expect; for you others, expect violence, attempted rape and general nastiness.

A BOY AND HIS 'BOT (NOW Comics, \$1.95 US/\$2.75 Can.) is a one-shot by Gary Thomas Washington, who may be familiar to some of you as an artist on MEGATON. He has a gentle cartoon style that is perfect for this story of a young boy who discovers a giant robot, accidentally crashed on Earth, and returns with it to outer space. Some may find it too cute, but I was frankly taken with it, and I highly recommend it to one and all. A fun little item that may, unfortunately, get lost among all the other B&W titles. (Hey,

"MECHANISTIC BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION" A KITTEN MEETS ITS FIRST MOUSE!...



wasn't there supposed to have been a "bust" in the B&W market? I seem to see just as many titles now as I did when the "boom" was going full steam. Going into a place like Forbidden Planet is staggering when you can't find the books you want because they are behind the latest issue of TEENAGE SUPER-FOXES.)

Two books I'd like to recommend for those of you out there who pick up all the "benefit" material. The Literacy Volunteers of Chicago, Inc. were able to get a number of independent companies to lend their aid to produce two comics and a poster to raise funds and awareness for their work with adult literacy. WORD WARRIORS (\$1.50 US/\$2.25 Can.) deals with murder and politics (of the dirty kind) bringing together the characters of Ms. Tree, Streetwolf, and Jon Sable (I'll actually miss his TV show, by the way, though they took the "war paint" away for the last episode), along with their creators, Max Allan Collins/Terry Beatty, Mark Wayne Harris, and Mike Grell (respectively). There is also work by Trina Robbins, Mark Hempel & Mark Wheatley, Tim Truman, Mike Gilbert and William Messner Loebs, among others. QUEST FOR DREAMS LOST (\$2 US/\$2.95 Can.) does a similar thing in a different fashion. Whereas WORD WARRIORS had the three main characters actually working together to solve a crime, the creations used in QUEST never actually meet, though the themes used in all the stories involve them in the search for items stolen from the same "client." In QUEST you'll find short pieces with the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (more about them below), The Trolllords, Silent Invasion, The Realm, Wordsmith, Reacto Man, Eb'n'n and The Aniverse. The success of each tale depends on how you feel about each book, but overall they are well done, and nice introductions to books you might otherwise not pick up. I already get three of them, but I'll let you guess which. Both books are recommended, but QUEST more highly.

THE WEIRD (DC, \$1.50 US/\$2 Can.) is a four-part mini-series by Jim Starlin, Bernie Wrightson and Dan "Grass" Green. It involves an otherworldly entity which comes to Earth and steals the body of a deceased man, reanimating and empowering it with incredible powers. He/it is chased by the Justice League (since the tale takes place before issue #7 of the JL's own title, Batman is still in charge, Guy Gardner is his old nasty self, and they are not yet International), and Superman is also around (for all you completists out there). Since Starlin came up with the idea and is writing it, death is a central theme (is this guy fixated or what? He must be tons of fun at parties). As expected, Wrightson's art, inked by Green, is a delight (though there are quite a few Gil Kane "up-the-nostril" shots), but the villain(?) looks like one of those mad scientists that Steve Ditko used to do in the post-code Marvel horror books and, for some strange reason, has chosen to dress himself in a semi-ninja outfit. Hard to tell from the first issue where they'll be going with this, but it's harmless fun and there are no crossover books to deal with either!

As mentioned above, there is a bit of news regarding the TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES. The TMNTs turned up in animated form here in New York on WWOR-TV during the last week in December. The show is gone now, and who knows if it'll be back. The reason that I even mention it, other than to let you know that it did exist and was pretty accurate to the comic (according to Vinnie, who called in panic one Tuesday morning to let me know it was on), is that it arrived with absolutely no pre-publicity. I mean, even CBG, which is usually on top of things like this, ran a front-page item the very week the show premiered. By the time I got the issue I had already missed the first show, and I can only assume that I wasn't the only one. I'd be curious to know from other IJ readers if they discovered the show, or if it likewise sneaked in to the schedule of your local station and just as quickly disappeared. Surely one of the great failures in promotion. If anyone could get me a tape with all five installments, I'd reimburse you. Let me know and we'll work something out, and I'll mention you in the next IJ.

This should be another strange year for comics fans, with the influx of all the manga, DC & Marvel's upcoming weekly comics and Eclipse and First both working on maxi-series which will shape the "universes" of the companies. Holy Moly!! Yes sir, an interesting year!

20 No Tary Soja

a good season for oreos

by Rodney K Dixion

PART THREE

"Oh Bunny," said Prudence who had only just managed to stop laughing. She went over and gave him a kiss and Anna even came over and said she was sorry. But he was determined to get one good sulk in before the day was over and this was going to be it. So they left him to his mood.

"Can I see whatcha drawin' Anna?"

"Naw. It's junk."

"C'mon. It bet it's real great."

"It's junk." She let Prudence look anyway.

"Wow. It's me 'n Bunny. Way cool. Can I have it, huh?"

"No way. It's horrorshow." She grabbed it and crumpled it up.

"I'll do you a real one. But you both have to sit still so I can get you down."

"No I Will Not!" said Pink Bunny and he bounced up and down to demonstrate.

"Maybe he'll feel better tomorrow," said Anna.

"Oh sure," said Prudence, her mouth full of potato chips.

"What do you do, 'sides paint?"

"Stuff around here."

"You mean like at nights you work here and go to school at the days or sumthin'."

"No I mean like I own this place."

"Way rad cool. How come?"

"Well, my Dad used to own it but he died so now I do."

"That's too bad."

"Yeah. Yeah. I miss him. He did that moose, y'know. He was a cool guy. Yeah."

"My Daddy doesn't have a moose with glasses or nuthin' but I don't want him to go 'way, know?"

"I know." Anna had to stop and blow her nose. But she was smiling. Prudence knew how that felt although she hadn't known that other people did too.

"Hey, what's that?"

"Oh just some old smurf." Prudence dropped it on top of a crayon box. She was sitting on the desk facing Anna who was in her chair.

"But it's green."

"Well, I think it's a improvement."

Anna started a quick sketch. "So how did it get green?"

"Rodney dunked it in a paint can, I guess."

CAUGHT LISTENING...to the radio; lacking video; Dance music only? Another cover of an old song. Wouldn't be depressing if it were better, or at least DIFFERENT. There goes another drum machine. When I'm at a movie these days, it's always a game to figure out just how those special effects were done, unless the movie is good enough to hold me. This comes from watching too many movies that haven't got any substance beyond effects and a pabulum story line. Too much product.

Caught listening to the radio...A special feature: Zeppelin and The Kinks. Great sounds; great textures. Falling off a glacier into the Sahara Desert at high noon. The sound of 1988 beats on the heels of handsomely aging rock. What a difference when you put them back-to-back! Towards the end of the Sixties, when guitar virtuosity and classical and folk structures were woven into basic R&B rock, the percussion moved around in tempo and texture with the song. The SONG was the thing.

Then money was being made, and marketing morons of the bigger producers/publishers got more involved. What survived the shift into the Seventies was heavy metal. Easy to produce; superficial enough to market any way you want, selling records, or shoes, or beer. THEN what? Nothing really. Dragging for a few years; something cracked with the disco beat. Many people detested it. I did. It isolated the slick sharp dancer from the music lover. That's the only way to appreciate it: Dancing, if you could, because it isn't good SONG. This distinguishes the love of the sound and the emotions it generates from the gratification of strutting your stuff where the song and its emotional content are immaterial. Ego tripping. This is when percussion in rock began to overwhelm the sound. Unchanging. Pseudo-sexual monotony. Most people are only adequate dancers. Guitar virtuosity scarce; rhythm and beat move into the Eighties. Mediocrity abounding, it's a lot easier to produce this sound. Record companies are reassured that even the WORST white boy dancer can throw off his jacket and tap his foot to this stuff.

Looking at most videos...the performer's failure or success hangs off that steady unchanging beat. They can pretend to be musicians and grimace all they want, graphics and pretty girls aside, the song is still the thing. The Song Remains The Same. - Daza

"Who's Rodney?"

"My friend from the gas station."

"OK, so I'll do two pictures and you can give one to Rodney next time you see him."

"I'm not givin' him nuthin'."

"Well, that's OK." Anna gave Prudence the smurf sketch.

"It's great Anna." Prudence scowled. "Maybe I will give it to Rodney."

"That's OK too. Now c'mon. I want to get y'all painted."

"But I don't want to be painted," said Pink Bunny. "I like being what color I am."

"I think she means paint a picture of us," Prudence said, although she thought she'd quite like to try being some different colors.

Anna spent some time getting them in a good position and turning lights on and off. Then he got out her watercolors. Prudence and Pink Bunny were under orders not to move around.

"I'm bored. Sitting is boring," announced Pink Bunny just a few moments after Anna had begun.

"How about if I tell you a story?"

"Neato." Prudence suggested something about monsters and people made of plastic.

"Sounds interesting. Maybe you can tell it to me sometime. Maybe I'll tell you about Goldilocks and the Three Tigers."

Pink Bunny made a snoring noise and Prudence pinched him on the arm.

"Don't do that, you'll make him turn funny colors that I don't have paint for. Besides, rude little rabbits don't have to listen to the story if they don't want to."

"So. Goldilocks was in the woods playing and she got hungry so she went into this house. And in the house were three bowls of Cream of Wheat. Goldilocks loved Cream of Wheat so she ate all three bowls and fell asleep under the table..."

"Well, that's no surprise. She certainly was a piggy little girl. Goodness knows I'm not the kind of bunny that would just stroll into someone's house and eat all their breakfast. Goodness knows..."

"Of course you're not. Now hush. And stop that bouncing. So. While Goldilocks was asleep the three tigers who owned the house came back. Needless to say, they were pretty upset that someone had eaten all their Cream of Wheat. 'Ay! Someone ate all my porridge,' said a particularly big and stupid tiger. 'I keep tellin' ya, it ain't porridge. It's Cream of Wheat.' A lot of loud screaming and dish-throwing followed. Finally one of the tigers pulled off the tablecloth to make a rat-tail and they discovered Goldilocks. And before she could so much as say hello, they ate her..."

"How?"

"What do you mean, Pru?"

"Well, did they cook her? Make soup? How'd they eat her?"

"Hmmm... OK. The big stupid one wanted to just eat her, so he took a leg and ran off into the woods. It was very tasty but he was enjoying himself so much that he didn't see the hunters from the zoo and now he's living in a little teensy cage in Tulsa. Which just goes to prove that you should always cook your food. The other two not-so-big-and-stupid tigers sliced up Goldilocks and did a nice stir-fry. Sadly, they'd let the stupid tiger do the shopping that week and he'd gotten toadstools instead of mushrooms and they both died of food poisoning which shows that sometimes you just can't win."

"Neat story. Can I move yet?"

"Yup. All finished."

"Oops." When Prudence jumped up, Pink Bunny fell to the floor in a lump. He'd gone to sleep in her lap.

"Wow," said Prudence.

"Yes, this is quite excellent indeed," said Pink Bunny, coming up and rubbing sleep from his eyes. The painting showed Prudence and Pink Bunny sitting triumphantly on a fierce snarling pumpkin that had been captured and tied down.

Anna rolled up the painting and gave it to Prudence. "Now you two better get bookin' 'fore someone gets their butt in an uproar."

"Couldn't I just hang out here with you and eat pizza and hunt pumpkins and paint stuff?"

"Wouldn't you miss yer room and yer friends and yer toys?"

"Yeah but..."

"And wouldn't they miss you?"

"Yeah but..."

"And wouldn't yer folks be all upset?"

"Yeah but..."

"No but. It's no fun maybe. You gotta go home anyway. 'Sides, you got the painting. And this is always now if you want it to be. And ya can call me. Anytime." Anna wrote her number on the back of the watercolor. She gave Prudence and Pink Bunny each a kiss on the forehead and scooted them out. "C'mon, it's almost dawn. Go get some sleep. You'll be leaving soon."

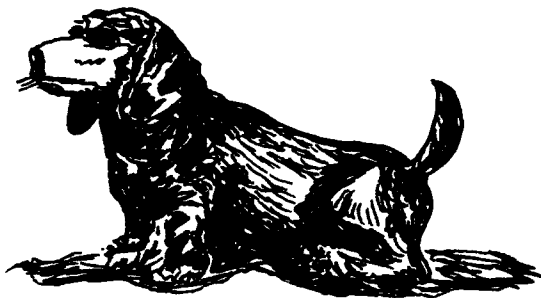
"G'nite Anna." Prudence held her painting carefully and headed across the parking lot. Pink Bunny stopped and tugged on Anna's pants cuff. She looked down.

"Yes, Bunny."

"I just wanted to say that I don't care if you do have all the pumpkins there are. You're still okay in my book."

"Thanks. And yer not anything like a rude little rabbit."

Pink Bunny caught up with Prudence. They both got back and flopped onto the couch where they got no sleep at all before Mummy and Daddy woke up and bundled them out so they could go get the car and go home and find a pumpkin at the grocery store. And that was fine and Prudence slept straight through the gas station and all the way home. And as she slept she smiled.



A Case of Dog Phobia

by Joan Cacciatore Mazza

"Fury" is a seven-year-old, black, male German Shepherd, the only dog of a white couple in their early 40's who are both physicians. They also have a seven-year-old son and live in South Florida. Fury lives in a three-car garage with a flap door which allows him free access to a fenced pen where there is water and shade. When the family is at home, he has free access to the yard and pool area which is on the Intracoastal waterway. He is not allowed in the house due to his shedding and generally unruly behavior.

Fury has been afraid of thunder ever since he was a small puppy. At the slightest rumbling sound of thunder in the distance, Fury begins to tremble. A full storm will cause him to cower and cry and scratch at the door to come into the house even though he is safe and dry in the garage. If allowed into the house, he runs up to the second floor and hides under one of the beds or in a closet, refusing to come out.

There is no known traumatic event in his history which could be responsible for the phobia, nor has he ever been mistreated. Organic disorders have been ruled out and treatment has been the administration of 5-10 mg. of Valium before a storm. He presents a similar clinical picture on the Fourth of July to the sound of firecrackers.

TREATMENT

1. Freudian Psychoanalysis

An attempt may be made to uncover the ID repressions of both a sexual and aggressive nature for which "thunder" has become a symbol. Once he accepts their feelings, his Oedipal conflict can then be resolved and he can begin to desire other female German Shepherds rather than his "mother's" attention in a storm.

2. Psychoanalytically Oriented Psychotherapy

Fury can be encouraged to talk about his fears and his panic attacks during the sound of thunder. An understanding of his insecurities can be accomplished. An examination of his feelings for his "parents'" former dog could be examined in depth. Significantly, the former dog's name was "Thunder."

3. Adlerian Individual Psychology

An examination of Fury's inferiority complex can be undertaken with his strong Will to Power being expressed through an irrational fear of thunder. Also, consideration of his ordinal position in the family constellation is necessary. The seven-year-old son came into the family at the same time and his fear may be an expression of sibling rivalry for the child who gets to sleep on the second floor.

4. Jungian Analytical Psychology

A fear of thunder is likely to be part of the Collective Unconscious as one of the archetypes. An understanding of Fury's artistic productions will reveal the true meaning of his phobia. Particular attention should be paid to a mandala in his fecal scroll.

5. Rogerian Therapy

Reflect affect and content with unconditional regard, i.e., shake, tremble and cry with him during the next thunderstorm. Never ask a question. Do not administer any tests. Do not use a diagnostic label. No interpretations allowed.

6. Berne's Transactional Analysis

Fury's "child" has overwhelmed his "adult" and the situation is complicated by his "parent" being overly critical. The "adult" must win the recognition that some of his fear is okay and normal. Fury is okay. Other dogs are okay. Thunder is okay.

6. Ellis' Rational Emotive Therapy

Cognitive restructuring aimed at irrational belief system, i.e., "The lightning is trying to strike me." "I might die in a storm." "Thunder will make me deaf." "All other doggies must like me."

8. Behavior Therapy

A. Systematic Desensitization (Wolpe) working with a hierarchy of anxiety-provoking stimuli relative to thunder, i.e.:

1. sound of thunder in the distance - thru -
2. storm overhead with loud thunder and lightning.

Related fears may be included in the hierarchy, such as fears of being alone or the sound of firecrackers. Fury should assist in developing the hierarchy.

B. Relaxation Training (Benson) to counteract anxiety.

C. Assertion Training, because everybody needs it.

D. Operant Conditioning with positive reinforcement when Fury demonstrates control over fear behaviors.

9. Glasser's Reality Therapy

Fury must:

- a) Face the Reality that thunder is not dangerous.
- b) Assume Responsibility for his feelings and behavior.
- c) Understand that running upstairs is not Right.

No talking about the past is allowed. Ask Fury what his PLAN is. Devise a procedure for implementing plan.

10. Peris' Gestalt Therapy

Fury is to take his fear in a thunderstorm and relate to each aspect of the situation as he would to elements of a dream, i.e., "I am the thunder; everyone trembles at the sound of my voice." The wishes of topdog and underdog will emerge.

11. Janov's Primal Scream Therapy

Let him scream. (It's a primal, not a tantrum.)

12. E.S.T.

a) Charge Fury \$550.

b) Don't let him go to the bathroom for 48 hours.

c) Call him an asshole.

d) See a miraculous personality transformation.

13. Pastoral Counseling

Spiritual growth can help Fury to understand that God is only bowling.

14. Religious

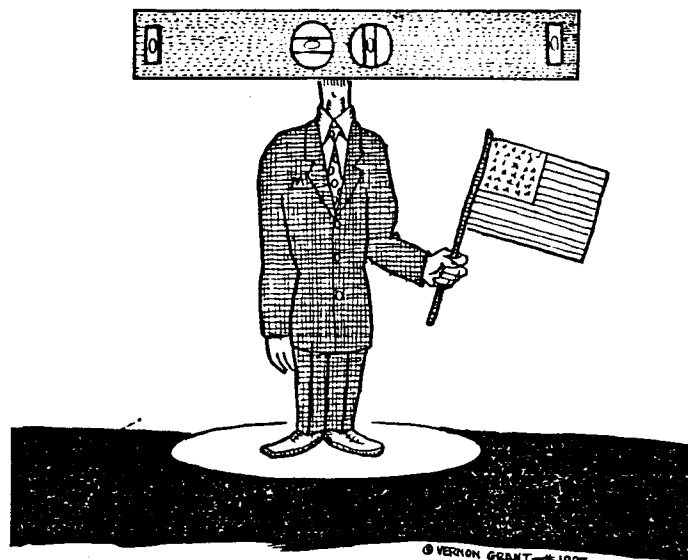
Have him join the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church and be Born Again. Then he can drive believers into non-belief or criticism of organized religion.

15. Political

Have him join (or start) a movement to protect the rights of German Shepherds and other Canine minorities (being Black and a Dog is a double whammy in our society).

16. Educational

Send him to Graduate School at Nova and watch him become a happy, well-adjusted doggy with straight A's!

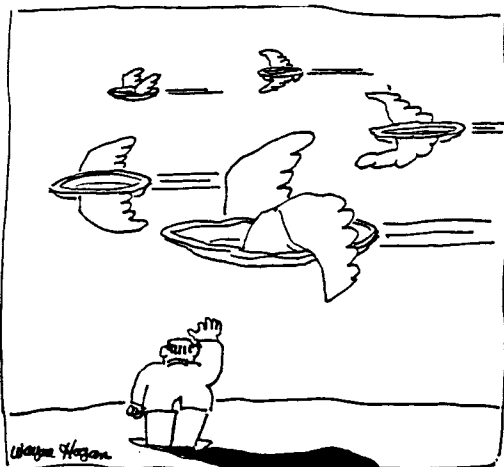


LEVEL-HEADED AMERICAN

AMERICA

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FLYING SAUCER FLY-BY
FIRST OF THE SEASON

THE MESSENGER

by Sarah Totton

He was a happy-go-lucky sort of fellow, the kind of person who, if he saw you dangling over the edge of a cliff, would most willingly lend you his lucky rabbit's foot. Or perhaps, if he saw you hanging from the gallows, he wouldn't hesitate to invite you to dinner, and if he ever passed your enemy on the road, you could bet your life he'd show that man's back exactly what he thought of him.

This was Caxus Ruffbutton, brave messenger during the all-encompassing war between the I-Told-You-So forces to the north, headed by the notorious fashion designer, General I.M. Right, and the See-If-I-Care forces to the south, led by the infamous gossip columnist, General U.R. Not.

At this moment, Caxus the Messenger stood before General Right, who was resplendent in his lavender silk uniform, listening to Caxus' latest report.

"He says you'd better give him back his castle or else," Caxus told him.

"No way! He started it! He took my box before I ever did anything to him, so I took over his castle. Big wow! He never uses it anyway. So we're even, right? So then he goes and takes over my hill!! I use that hill every day, you know. Now he goes and gets mad at me?!" The general began to turn a marvelous shade of pink. "Tell him that if he doesn't get off my hill, me and my men are gonna bust his head. I'm ginna give that guy a piece of my mind!"

"He could use it," Caxus said.

"I want you," General Right continued, "to go over there and tell that general that he's an idiot."

"I think he already knows that, sir."

"Yeah, I know, but tell him again!" the general ordered.

Caxus saluted the general and strode off into the woods.

The forest between the two camps was thick enough to eat with a fork. Once inside the forest, Caxus began to think about what an interesting personality General Right had, and promptly fell asleep.

It was late afternoon when he woke up. Five minutes later, he had arrived at General Not's camp. The general, looking really spiffy in his jean jacket and cut-off shorts, was pacing back and forth in the way that generals do when their men are giving their lives at the front. In this case, though, his men were scattered about the camp playing marbles.

When the general saw Caxus, he stopped and called to him.

"What's the word?" he demanded.

Caxus took a deep breath. "He said: your sister is a lousy dancer, your father is a lunatic, your mother is cross-eyed and all your men have inferior uniforms."

"Well, what am I supposed to do about that?"

Caxus shrugged. "Make fun of his haircut?" he suggested.

The general smirked. "Hey, yeah," he said.

"He also wants you to give him back his hill," Caxus added.

"I'm not getting off his hill until he gives me back my castle."

"He wants his box back too," Caxus put in.

"It's my box. He started this so I get to keep it. Tell him that! Wait a sec!" he said, then turned and called to one of his officers who was deeply engrossed in a Keepsies game, "Captain Shark!"

"What do ya want?" the officer in question demanded, sauntering over. He had a t-shirt on with the caption "Military Consultant" on it.

"We're going to attack!" General Not said enthusiastically.

"But I'm in the middle of a game!"

"We attack now!"

"Can we at least have dinner first?"

"This is an army, not a day care center!"

"General?" Caxus interrupted. "I think I heard them saying something about an attack from the east."

The general's brow furrowed. Captain Shark tried to sneak back to his marble game, but the general had a good grip on his collar.

"Okay," he said, snapping the fingers of his other hand,

"they're attacking from the east. How far away are they?"

"About fifteen or twenty miles," Caxus estimated.

24 "Right! Shark, I want you to get half of our artillery and

fire off to the west. That'll get them to think we're further over than we are. Then the rest of the troops go to the east, where we hide out. Then you guys at the artillery give one big bang and follow us east, and that'll be the signal to attack. We'll go straight north."

"That's brilliant, General!" Caxus piped up.

"Of course it is. Huh! Where does that other general get off calling us stupid? This is a high-class, efficient, organized army. We're not a bunch of insane, runny-nosed kids."

"Can I get back to my game," the military consultant sniffed, "before I lose my marbles?"

"Tell General Right that his clothes look really dumb," said General Not, ignoring Captain Shark.

"On the double!" Caxus saluted and sped off into the forest.

The second he was inside, he settled into a more comfortable stroll, until he saw the raspberry bush. He made its acquaintance and borrowed some fruit from it.

Two minutes later, the See-If-I-Care forces started firing off their cannons. Caxus grabbed two handfuls of raspberries and veered west until the explosions were sounding directly behind him. He crushed the raspberries in his hands and smeared them over one side of his face and down his front. Then he rubbed in some dirt for good measure.

One minute later, he strolled into the I-Told-You-So camp. He had the presence of mind to develop a half-decent limp. He found the general standing over a map scratched into the dirt. Caxus fell on it.

"General," he gasped, "they're attacking!"

"All right!" the general cheered. "Let's attack!"

The troops did not respond; they were very busy doing other things.

"General," Caxus interrupted, "they're going to be here soon."

"Well, what am I supposed to do?" the general demanded.

"I've got it!" Caxus got up, making sure he smudged the map properly. He leaned close to General Right, speaking in a whisper, and put a liberally-coated raspberry hand on the general's shoulder. "I've got a plan, but it'll be dangerous. I'll take a grenade and plant it in the camp where it'll do the most damage. That'll buy us time and make it even easier for us to take them on."

"Great!" the general agreed.

Caxus donated another handful of mud to the back of the general's uniform as he went off to help his men dress up for the battle.

Caxus inspected a wooden chest nearby. Opening it, he found a large amount of money. He put a couple of handfuls into his pocket and grabbed a grenade which was lying in the chest with the money. Caxus started off, his pockets clinking loudly enough to make it necessary that he develop a really nasty cough.

Once inside the forest, he veered east. He had to walk fairly quickly in order to intercept the other force's head. On the way, he met up with one of General Right's men.

"What do you think you're doing?" the man demanded.

"Suppertime!" said Caxus, flashing his winning smile. "The general asked me to serve out the food."

"What is it?" the soldier asked.

"Pineapple. Here, I'll even take the stem out for you."

"Weird colour for a pineapple."

Caxus shrugged. Once out of sight, he removed himself quickly from the immediate area.

On the road, he met up with a wagon carrying the box and being driven by one of General Not's men.

Caxus staggered into its path. "I've just come from the front line! The general doesn't want his box to get stolen so he wants me to take it."

"Oh yeah, right," the soldier replied sarcastically.

"Okay, if you don't believe me...I'm sure the general will really appreciate your disobedience," Caxus said, limping off. The soldier let him go without another word.

Caxus turned and went back, clambered onto the wagon, grabbed the soldier from behind and wrestled him to the ground. There followed a violent fight which ended with Caxus hitting the man with a very hard object: his head.

When he woke up, he realized he'd overdone it; the soldier was dead. Not wanting to waste a good thing, Caxus stripped off his clothes and put them on the corpse. Then he put on the soldier's clothes. Caxus smirked; General Not's uniforms were better after all. At least, this one went very nicely with his eyes. He grabbed the wooden box and took off into the sunset. By the time night had fallen and a chill had come into the air, he was miles away from both armies.

He set the box down and rubbed his hands together. This was it; this was the box for which the two biggest and most mature armies in the country were fighting. He pried it open. Inside lay a small leaf of paper. It read:

This box is my property. Don't you dare touch it. This means you, General I.M. Right.

Signed, General Not (a way better general)

The armies advanced, one to the east, one to the west.

General Not was astonished, but extremely pleased to find that his castle had been surrendered and left empty for him. General Right was likewise surprised to find his hill empty of everything but a few abandoned cannons and one dead messenger. They all held a memorial service in the messenger's honour (after the party), and awarded him with a statue. No one ever saw the box again, but it added a little warmth in Caxus' bonfire that first night after the war.

DOPPELGANGER: THE LEGEND OF GERRY ANDERSON

by Doug "Rock Serling" Pelton, reporting
on all events past, present & future...

Universe Edition #1

Date/line October 2087

Gerry Anderson. 58-year-old Father of Supermarionation TV and films. Then into live action. 30-year SF career, worldwide fame. Took marionation from crude Punch & Judy days of the late 50s and blasted it ten years later into the sleek, slick and polished 21st century, starting with SUPERCAR...1959...first internationally syndicated Anderson SuperM series about dashing young Mike Mercury, early 30s and the title vehicle that could fly travel amongst the clouds and then dive a la submarine into the seas. Used it to counter the recurring evil intentions of Zarin and Master Spy... FIREBALL XL5...black and white like SUPERCAR, but into the further future, title World Space Patrol spaceship piloted by hero Steve Zodiac and assistant Robert the Robot from W.S.P. HQ-base Space City. Anderson team gets feet first wet with planet and alien space situation. Series music by Barry Gray dips into early use of electronics and synthesis. Only SuperM series to be networked in U.S. by NBC in 62-63...STINGRAY...first series to be shot in colour for home use in England, not just for foreign sales. Took super sub of title name into the oceans with Captain Troy Tempest and co-aquanaut "Phones" Sheridan, from World Aquanaut Security Patrol base Marineville in California, to defend surface Earth against marine menace of the Evil Lord Titan and his kingdom of Aquaphibians called Titanica. Regular voice artist Lois Maxwell went on to the Bond films. End titles tune "Aqua Marina" famous crooning associated with series...made in 1962-3...THUNDERBIRDS followed in 64-66 and garnered a gigantic following of the Tracy family and the International Rescue vehicles of the title name in one-hour SuperMarionation rescue-adventures. Tracys had beautiful London agent Lady Penelope and her housekeeper Parker to help. Villain The Hood went to any means to pry the lid off the secrets behind the rescue craft and machines developed by Tracy Island-based International Rescue technical genius Brains...series spawned two United Artist feature films, THUNDERBIRDS ARE GO!-1966 and THUNDERBIRD SIX-1968. The TV series ended Anderson Provis Films era of Anderson productions.

CAPTAIN SCARLET AND THE MYSTERIONS started off the Century 21 Productions "new era" in '67 with streamlined marionettes, correctly proportioned. Scarlet led his fellow masters of Spectrum against the Mars-based Mysterions who, after being attacked upon by an Earth expedition, vow total revenge-based annihilation of all life on Earth. They have former Spectrum Captain Black as Earth agent to recruit men and things to be destroyed first and reconstructed afterwards for tools in the weekly threat against a wide range of targets. Continued growing reputation of the effects designers and executors under Derek Meddings and smoothed out the look of the models and settings. Barry Gray goes whole out on the electronic soundscapes in both music and aliens' sound effects... JOE 90 brought Anderson away from big-scale fights and organizations to the World Intelligence Network and its secret Agent Joe 90 (1968), who happened to be nine years old. Uses father's Brain Impulse Galvanoscope, Record And Transfer computer device to receive "pirated" knowledge of specific experts for specific missions to be carried out against foreign agdnts, known criminals, some rescue situations. Father also hand-built the green, bug-looking MAC's Car that can retract wheels and become a vehicle of speed flight. Scripts and effects unbelievable still to this date...SECRET SERVICE (1969) ended the SuperMarionation era...followed for only 13 episodes a secret agent Priest, Father Stanley Unwin and his vicarage assistant Matthew on missions from the British Intelligence Service Headquarters Operation Priest, or the Bishop. Mixed some live-action, location shooting in with sleek marionation. Unwin carried miniaturised Matthew around to missions in case, left it there to allow Matthew to roam around unnoticed...

UFO (1969-71) kicked off the live action parts of Anderson legend. Took threat of malevolent Alien intentions on Humanity and the Planet into a 1980 reality. Threat became a reality serious enough to form a United Nations-funded secret organization called Supreme Headquarters Alien Defence Organisation (or SHADO) to deal with this both here and on an advanced Moon Base. Setup led by Commander Ed Straker and at first dealt with threat on a shootemup basis then series delved into a more psychological mindbender mode, of mental and physical takeovers by the aliens of humans and animals. Famous for SHADO equipment like the separating Skydiver submarine, Moon Base Interceptors, ground-serving Mobiles, and purple-static-hair-wigs worn by female Moon Base operatives. Stars dashing Ed Bishop as Straker, aggressive Mike Billington as Colonel Paul Foster, George Sewell as second-in-command Col. Alec Freeman and Gay Ellis playing Gabrielle Drake. Last Century 21 old-style series...Robert Vaughn, Nyree Dawn Porter and Tony Anholt came right after in an Avengers-like non-sci-fi-er called THE PROTECTORS in '71, then came (in 73-75, 76-77) the two-year big budget SPACE:1999 with Martin Landau, Barbara Bain and Barry Morse leading the Moon-wandering Souls of Moon Base Alpha in search of a new planet to which to migrate; instead they encounter alien races, beings, planets, ships, you name it, from week to expensive week. Unjustly compared to STAR TREK back in mid-70s. Still causing conventions in US and England. Famous series for the Eagle spaceships...late '70s FIVE STAR FIVE idea never reaches cameras, but it was close!...1983...THE TERRAHAWKS usher in new era of puppet SFing, but more on the "mold" of Hensonian methods

FRANCES FARMER L.A. COUNTY JAIL 1943

by Mike Selender

laying back on a cot
in the black and white
of an old Culver Pictures shot
her hair uncombed in jailhouse light
baby fat lining her chin's soft crease
lost in thought along the double rivet seams
unprim and plain in casual shirt
neutral jacket and cotton skirt
not the 'golden girl'
the blonde haired star
lips flat no curl
she's the woman next door
in black and white
the walls are straw
the quiet eyes belie the scream
of being dragged without a lawyer
to a nightcourt scene
he judge looked down the light upon her
at a communist leaning parole violator
a young smart star with sarcastic ways
he frowned and ordered one-hundred-eighty days

she had rebelled against order
shunned the screen for the stage
and answered dull reporters
with tart flits of rage
was punished with B-movies
shot on foolish loans
she had to attend the right parties
in order to atone

for socials she would shore up
on benzedrine and drinks
so she could smile thru the chatter
without hearing herself think
and mindlessly flatter
until the night she was stopped
while driving intoxicated
she got off on parole sentence suspended
the quiet eyes belie the scream
of the narrow years drawn long like a string
to come inside Western near Steilacoom
with hydrotherapy its ice water sting
the insulin shock pharmaceutical dreams
being dragged down the halls in late night gloom
for clandestine screenings of a golden life
of being held down for soldiers on saturday nights
then for white gowned doctors with the 'big knife'

BROTHERS CAN BE CRUEL

by Richard F. Hay, Sr.

Christmas morning David
and Ricky got up early
and opened their presents.

They set the stage for
their victim, a
younger brother, Greg.

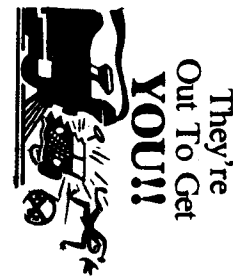
They hid his presents and
wrapped up a lump
of coal in bright, colored
Xmas paper.

Soon Greg appeared.

"Sorry Greg," they said,
"That's all Santa left you."

It all worked out eventually.
However, Greg had trouble
finding any humor in the hoax.

of up-the-arse-end operation, no strings...Series title heroes try to stem android invasions of Earth coming from captured NASA base on Mars, thanks to ZELDA's hordes. Lead hero Tiger Ninestein more in common with Zodiac and Tempest. Series hated for characterisations but loved for effects and model work...1986...Legend tries to continue with SPACE POLICE...New York Police Sgt. played by Thunderbirds' main voice Shane Rimmer relocated to space-bound Precinct #44 with Alien co-workers...Still at pilot film stage, waiting for dollars to go ahead with full series production...have gotten some money from U.S.-based Harmony Gold and looks like a GO FOR '88. The legend continues...stay tuned.



Global conspiracy to keep
those who are "different" silent.
WEIRD MEN ARISE!!
The Future
Revealed
by startling means.
Find out who "They" are and how
to overcome them for big \$\$\$.

Lech Seeks Name Change

GDANSK, Poland (YU) — Citing continued harassment at home and abroad because of his alleged sexual activities, Lech Walesa has petitioned General Balls Wallenchevsky to change his name to Donny Osmond.

Yossarian Universal

summer night in the Sonoran
August drapes
its black wool

serape against my shoulders

as I lean back
into the hammocked evening

to catch a
sip of Chablis
going down

- Sheryl L. Nelms

SPARSE TREK

by Bob Z

arching backwards
breaking boulders—
photon torpedos, kimosabe.

Searching For Perfection

by Sigmund Weiss

The object I once believed perfect was safety pins, which I used to tighten my underpants, but often, the pins pierced my backside. Then I'd tell myself it no longer was a perfect object and, finally realizing it was my finger's fault, I'd keep asking people, "Where can I find fingers so perfect that no job is beyond them?"

I shot this question at a Magician who used sleight of hand tricks in his act. He told me that my question was relative to his magic, and since this was his means of making a livelihood, no answer would be forthcoming.

In New York City, travelling in a crowded subway train, I felt fingers sliding into my back pockets, and turning around I looked that culprit straight in the face, telling him: "Mr. Pickpocket, you have the most imperfect fingers I've ever met. If your fingers were perfect, they'd enter my pockets unnoticed by me." As a result, he gave back to me those things he took out of my pockets, and I let him go.

Afterwards, walking on a sidewalk among lots where people were planting flowers and vegetables, I kept asking them how their fingers managed so well with their planting. The general answer I received was that their fingers were perfect objects for the job; but in looking at their hands I noticed large amounts of earth covering their fingers, so I reasoned that it was not truly their fingers but, if one accepted the philosophy of botanists who are also anthropologists, that it was the Earth in its need urging the fingers to plant the seeds by which the Earth grows objects.

Later, I saw a window washer at his work, high up on the tenth floor of a skyscraper, and I yelled up to him, "You must have the most perfect fingers I have ever seen because your windows look bright and sunny." As he looked down at me, he fell onto the sidewalk, splitting his head into smithereens. Evidently, his fingers were incapable of holding onto the window sill.

By the time I came home it was early evening. Then I noticed shadows of tree branches in front of my house fingering my window.

"By Jove!" I exclaimed, "those are the most perfect fingers I have ever seen."

JUST LIKE LOT'S WIFE BLUES

by Deborah Benedict

Well, I looked back
and got turned into a
Pillar of Salt.
Looks just like me.
You know what this
is doing to my blood pressure, don't you?



26 JOANIE SKIPS LUNCH!...

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Ward's Last Note

BONN (YU) — Sean Connery, David Niven (deceased), George Lazenby, Timothy Dalton, and Roger Moore.

Face It

by Richard M. Millard

"You realize, Mrs. Blacklor, that your husband has been in a very serious accident," Dr. Bemice stated as he leaned forward on the desk. He pushed his glasses up with a thumb and forefinger and rubbed the bridge of his nose.

"Call me Helene," Helene Blacklor smiled from her chair on the other side of the desk.

Dr. Bemice let his glasses fall back into place and cleared his throat. "Yes. Well, Helene, the accident has disfigured your husband's face. Terribly disfigured it."

"I see," Helene nodded. "So what can be done?"

"We can do some reconstruction," Dr. Bemice replied. Helene nodded and smiled.

Dr. Bemice nodded back. "Yes. We can perform reconstruction. But—" He paused.

"But?"

Dr. Bemice tugged at his tie. "We can reconstruct a face for your husband, all right. But, in his case, there's been so much damage that I'm afraid the new face would not look anything like, well, his old face."

Helene smiled. "I'll bet Walter was drunk when he fell through that window, right?"

"Yes."

"Walter didn't always drink," Helene continued. "He used to be quite happy. And smile a lot. That's what I loved about him. But then things started to go wrong at work, and he began to hit the bottle."

"I'm sorry," Dr. Bemice offered.

Helene shrugged. "I wouldn't have minded if Walter had been a happy drunk. But he wasn't. Never smiled any more. Always mean and drunk. Or drunk and mean. We were, rather, I was even talking about a divorce."

Dr. Bemice folded his hands. "We can't help you with his disposition. But, as his wife, you do have a say as to what his new face will look like."

"Really?"

"Really," Dr. Bemice replied.

Helene nodded, and then smiled.

Several days later, Dr. Bemice was standing outside a hospital room with a smaller man, Dr. Catloff.

"So, how's the wife holding up through all this?" Dr. Catloff asked as he looked at the chart in his hands.

"Just fine," Dr. Bemice smiled. "By the way, did you see the new face she picked out for him?"

Dr. Catloff shook his head.

With a nod, Dr. Bemice motioned for his colleague to follow him into the room.

"Walter, are you awake?" Dr. Bemice softly asked.

The body on the bed stirred.

Dr. Catloff's mouth flew open. His knees began to buckle. But Dr. Bemice grabbed his colleague's elbow and steadied him.

Walter Blacklor stared at them with his new face. A face that was a bright yellow circle with two dots for eyes, and a very large smile...

TREMBLING

by Bob Z

tumbling breaking rocks
splitting earth spitting air
hot laser light
parallels that never meet

eyes closed tight
furious pounding
the visitor here
knocks the door down
moves near near
the visitor
is fear

Recently, after an illegal, if not immoral, relaxation break, I found myself contemplating some of the most significant questions of our world. "Will we destroy ourselves with nuclear weapons? Why are we here? Is there a God? Where does Michael Jackson go when Janet is popular?"—Wait a minute. Where did that thought come from?

"Yeah, where is Janet now?" My thoughts were flowing with a new energy. In a kaleidoscopic collage I relived all of my Michael-Janet Jackson experiences. I knew then that I was on to something.

I thought back to Michael's "Thriller" Tour, and a startling thought came to me: "Janet wasn't around then." Actually, I didn't even know of Janet's existence.

Another thought came to me in that brief flash of images. During the party to celebrate "Out Of Control," Janet's smash album, Michael did not show up. No congratulations, or "way to go, sis," nothing. He did, however, send that stupid chimp of his.

A myriad of thoughts came to me then: "Have others noticed the same things that I have?"

I began calling several of our mutual friends. I told each of them about my revelations. They agreed with startling conformity.

One friend relayed a recent experience he had at Michael's house. It seems that Michael spoke for several minutes in a tone strikingly like Janet's. When he realized his mistake he quickly regained his voice and said something about a "practical joke."

Another of my acquaintances tried to defend Michael-Janet. This friend mentioned Janet's brief, if not illustrious, acting career. My counter was strikingly simple. "Where was Michael during this period?" My friend's reply was weak, and fell before my deep observations in minutes.

My search has led me to a revealing discovery. Janet Jackson is the alter-ego for a confused and repressed Michael Jackson.

I've since spent a great deal of time trying to prove, or disprove, my theory. I have not had success in proving my hypothesis. But, then again, I have not been disproven.

Recently I had an amusing experience at Janet's house. I asked her where Michael had been hiding while her fame was so rivalling his. Her reply was vague, and included tales of lonely, faraway places.

Since that conversation I've been excluded from the Jackson circle. Even Tito has adhered to this silent blackballing. Could this be a further sign of my theory's apocalyptic accuracy?

Now I spend a great deal of my time wondering. I think about how society would be affected by the truth of my theory. After all, a society that allows Ry Cooder to disappear into the depths of recording oblivion while elevating Whitney Houston to icon stature would surely feel such a blow to musical virtuosity.

In a final exposition to support my vision, I will now give the results of my most recent observations. In the past three months, Michael's newest album is rapidly becoming a classic. Janet has not been seen nor heard in the short time that Michael's been back. I now ask, wasn't Janet the rage just five or six short months ago? Is she now hiding in some remote land? Allowing her "brother" time to bask in his success, free from the competition of an equally successful "sibling?" Or is Janet now sitting in some not-so-distant closet, awaiting Michael's eventual return?

These are questions only you can answer for yourself. I cannot answer them for you. Look at the facts and make your own observations. Think about it—where is Janet now, anyway? — Michael Lenetsky

No Man Rules the Stars

by Larry Blazeck

A lad once went to have his fortune told. The tribal shaman made strange manipulations with his hands and some odd bits of bones and feathers. At last, the shaman frowned and refused the lad's coppers.

On his way home, a bully beat him and took his coppers and his cloak. He bound his hands and began to lead him off towards the hills. The knot was poorly tied; the lad slipped the knot and ran away. He hid in some thorn bushes and was terribly cut. He drank from a pool of water, then noticed a dead rat floating in it. He became very ill. It was nearly dark when he stumbled into the clay hut where he lived with his family.

His father began to scold him, but when he saw the terrible condition in which his son was, he had one of his wives cleanse his wounds and rub healing herbs into them, whilst a younger wife fetched a herbal infusion for his sour stomach.

The lad began to spill out his miserable story, but his father held up his hand and cut him short.

"The stars have been cruel to you today, lad."

"What have I done to deserve such cruel treatment?" whimpered the lad.

"Once there was a great king. He gathered riches about him. Tribute and praises came to him from many far places. He lived well for many years; many people came to think of him as a god. Eventually, he thought of himself as a god. When he died, there was a great sadness in the land. He was buried with his riches."

"Did he, then, rule the stars?"

"Not even a man-god rules the stars. Even this great king was crushed beneath them."

"What of his riches? Did he enjoy them in the next life?"

The lad's father smiled. He beckoned, then he unlocked an old chest and showed his son a great mass of wealth, and gave his son a silver ring.

"No man rules the stars, and no dead man guards his riches. Our clan dug into the grave and took his riches not a season after he was buried. That ring I took from his finger when I was your age. His hand was already rotten."

The lad dropped the ring as if it were a white-hot stone.

"Surely those riches are cursed!"

His father laughed. "Not any more than any other riches."

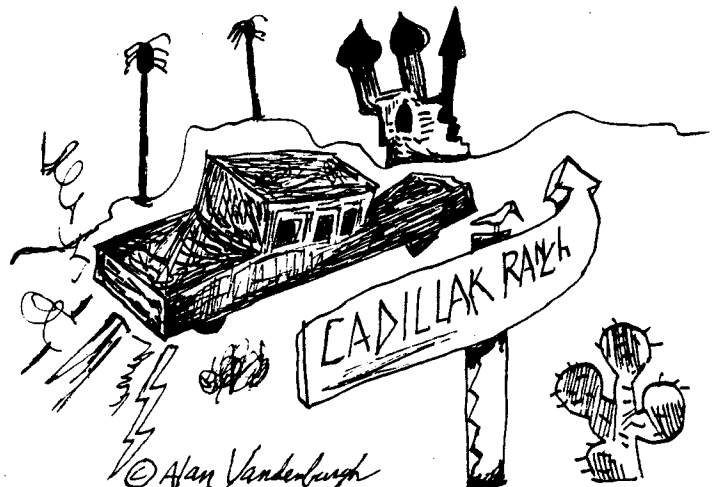
Just then, one of the lad's uncles came to the door.

"Greetings, brother," he said. "I came across this and I believe it is your son's." He held up the lad's cloak.

"Uncle!" cried the lad. "Where did you find it!? Where did the blood stains come from?"

"A blaggart tried to sell it to me. I recognized it and I cut his throat," smiled the uncle.

The lad picked up the ring and put it on, smiling. "No man rules the stars!"



RECORDS ARE MADE TO BE BROKEN

by Larry Stolte

The following should not be read by diabetics or persons with weak stomachs. The subject matter, recorded crime, is sickening. It is the author's intent to not let anyone deny these crimes or forget that these atrocities ever occurred. We must make sure that they never happen again.

This is a transcript of the long-awaited results of the KWUS Listing—the wussiest songs of the seventies:

KWUS (pronounced kay-wus), the radio station that plays only the songs that make you sick, would like to thank all of the listeners who sent in their nominations for the most pitiable tripe that has ever been spun on striated vinyl and warbled out through the airwaves. Nominations were legion and quality, excellent. Due to the number and caliber of the entries, our mail-opening volunteers had to work rotating shifts of not more than thirty minutes at a time so as to keep them from vomiting on the mail. We managed, with the help of a computer (the WUSS 2000), to select the top five—the sick picks.

First, an explanation of what we look for in a top five contender. But, in order to do this, we must define "wussy." Actually, we must go straight to the word—wuss. What is a wuss?

A wuss is a pathetic pushover—a sweet, fawning, terrified, spineless pool of jello. And this is when he's showing off. He couldn't ever be considered cool or fascinating even if he hung out with Clint Eastwood and drove a Jaguar. One notch below wimp, the wuss got beat up every day in high school by Pee Wee Herman.

A wussy song is one that is sickeningly sweet or sentimental, a catalyst for nausea—a song that an out-of-work Pip wouldn't shake for for all the money at Columbia Records and eternal rhythm.

Wussiness is indeed subjective, but if you actually like any of our picks, please consult your psychologist or Ozzy Osbourne immediately. Each of our top five selections passed the government four-phase wussiness test. The principals for the test were laboratory rats (as opposed to the bourgeois rats), and the results, predictable and consistent, are as follows:

When rats listen to a truly wussy song for the first time, they giggle uncontrollably. If they listen to the song twice in a row, they start to weep and throw up repeatedly. Three times consecutively sends them running head-first into walls and trying to pierce their eardrums with plastic cocktails toothpicks. Four times causes brain cancer and death is imminent.

Now then, what did we look for in the wussy entries?

1) Badness, of course. But for wussiness, there is no pejorative. In other words, wussiness is badness. There is no such thing as a good wuss. It's like having good hemorrhoids.

2) They must induce a person to either gut-wrenching screams or blind rage. Stomachs constantly do U-turns.

Our apologies to Helen Reddy, Olivia Newton-John, Andy Gibb, The Captain and Tenille, the "after" version of Elton John (including the hits "Island Girl" and "Philadelphia Freedom"), The Archies, one-hit David ("Hutch") Soul with "Don't Give Up On Us Baby," Phoebe Snow, Marilyn McWuss and Billy Davis Jr. giving us the immortal "You Don't Have To Be A Star, Baby, To Be In My Show" line, and David Cassidy. Though they failed to make the list, they should be given honorable mention. Each has made music a four-letter word and added to the world of wussdom greatly. Also, special yodels go to Neil Sedaka as he was given the annual Beach Boys "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" Award, thus catapulting him into the Wuss Hall of Fame.

It is time. The moment you have all been waiting for is upon us. Wellness is fleeting. Here they are, the five wussiest songs from the wussiest decade in history. Picture a drum roll and a person drawing winners out of an airsick bag.

The fourth runner-up is: "Billy, Don't Be A Hero," sung by Bo Donaldson and they Heywoods. "And as he started to go/We said, 'Billy, keep your head low-6-6/Billy, don't be a hero, come back to me.'" Yes Billy, come back to me so I can glue your tongue to the L.A. Freeway during rush hour.

The third runner-up is: "You Light Up My Life," sung by Debby Boone. A family tradition, though her father looks good in comparison. Sorry to have to bring back this memory. In the fall of 1977, this song was at the top for ten weeks. People got so sick of this, they turned to disco. We must ask ourselves, "Could this ever happen again?" What a year.

The second runner-up is: "Lovin' You," sung by Minnie Riperton. This is a valid selection because it has dug to the nadir of music in two ways—1) The song is unsavable. Even if Bruce Springsteen or Mick Jagger sang this, it couldn't get out of the radioactive wuss level Stage Four Alert. Though, if you're depressed, picture Mick singing this. It will lift your spirits. 2) Minnie had a voice that could shatter diamond. Only Tiny Tim being given a popsicle enema could ever come close. Deaf people cover their ears.

The first runner-up is: "You're Having My Baby," sung by Paul Anka. There was a rumor going around back then that this song was a political statement against abortion, written for Paul by the chairman of the Right to Life with Brain Cells in Absentia committee. Supposedly, this noise was loaded with subliminal messages which may have worked had anyone been able to listen to the entire song without turning both blue and the station. You may question the validity of the rumor, but not the stench of the muck itself. The rats skipped stages one and two altogether on this one.

And the winner is: "Afternoon Delight," sung by The Starland Vocal Band or the Moonlite Tinkle Band or the Sunlit Dipschitz

Band or the Vienna Boy's Choir with rhythm. You get the picture. Sure pap. It palls, it sickens, it sounds like a Dairy Queen commercial. A milestone in wambling cuteness. The standard to this day by which to measure excessive wussiness.

This unbelievable list leads one to think that Beethoven and Mozart would have built nuclear weapons if they had known that music would take this kind of turn.

Hypocrites

by Andy Roberts

That's what he said, that they hate what you're doing but they sure love your money. They'll keep quiet about it though, long as the money's coming in. Mine were the same way. Like one time the old man went out for a case of beer but he didn't have no money. So he asked me for it. I said wait a minute, Pop. Johnny D was at the door. When he left I gave him the money. He didn't ask no questions. He knows all about Johnny D—hates his kind—ought to lock 'em up and throw away the key, he says. Can you believe it!

Like he was telling me one time he had a phone put in, back ages ago—a separate line. Good idea says the old lady, but you got to be unlisted, I won't have my name tied in with that muck. Muck!—you hear me—Muck! she says. He bought her a microvave in three weeks. Business was booming, man.

But they wouldn't have nothing to do with me after the bust. His were the same way. Said you made your bed now lay in it. Didn't surprise me—you learn about people in this business. But your own parents, man. Jesus!

I let the poor bastards die of starvation the year I got out.

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

by Michael Polo

(As the curtain goes up we see a large, ornately furnished British drawing room, a davenport located center stage. A tea service is on the low table in front of the davenport. Enter LADY ACTINGHAM, stage right. She pours herself tea. Shortly, there is a knock upon the door, stage left.)

LADY ACTINGHAM: (singsong) Who's there?

VOICE: (offstage, also singsong) Banana!

LADY A.: (laughingly) Ha, ha! Banana who?

VOICE: Knock, knock!

LADY A.: (surprised) Well, I should say we've been through this before! Now tell me who's there! (There is a touch of vehemence in her voice.)

VOICE: Banana!

LADY A.: (getting annoyed) I say, that's all very well, though you failed to mention "Banana who."

VOICE: (stammering) Kn...kn...Knock, knock!

(Lady Actingham retrieves a cigarette from a box on the low table, snaps a lighter and ignites it, pausing before answering.)

LADY A.: Parlor games are all very well in their place, whoever you are, yet this is quickly becoming no laughing matter. Who's there?

VOICE: (pleadingly) Banana!

LADY A.: Well, we never had a Banana on my side of the family.

I'll give you one more chance. Banana who?

VOICE: (with a cry) Knock, knock!

LADY A.: I'll stand for no more of this foolishness. Now tell me who's there or I'll call the constable!

VOICE: (soberly) Very well, it's Orange!

LADY A.: But...but...but...

VOICE: Yes! Sir Grovesby Orange the Second!

LADY A.: But that was twenty years ago!

VOICE: Exactly. Sir Grovesby Orange, his wife and five-year-old son were lost in the jungle. My beloved father and mother took ill of jungle fever, and I was raised by Borneo tribesmen after they had died!

LADY A.: Then what was that nonsense with the knocking and the bananas?

VOICE: You'll never understand, I fear. The Borneo woman who raised me used to playfully cosh me on the head with a banana while they said "knock, knock." When I came to adulthood in the tribe, my tribal name became "Knock Knock Banana." You have obviously never been coshed with a banana before.

LADY A.: (laughing) And I hope I never shall. Your story is simply impossible! Now tell me, who's there?

VOICE: (firmly, and with conviction) Orange!

LADY A.: (with scorn) Really? Orange who?

VOICE: (with emotion) Orange you, Lady Actingham, glad I did not say...Banana?

(We hear the sound of footsteps softly fading in the distance. Lady Actingham sobs and throws herself on the davenport.)

- CURTAIN -

Sayz-U!(Letters)

Dear Elayne:

My "critique" of the past couple INSIDE JOKES:

IJ #54—Anni Ackner is consistently amusing; I'm impressed. I enjoyed D-D-Dorian T-T-Tenore's description of the Max Headroom taping. Carol Magary's "What If Dr. Ruth Were An Art Therapist?" was great. Consider the possible sequels: "What If Dr. Ruth Were An Auto Mechanic?" "...A Tour Guide At Disneyland?" "...The Judge on People's Court?" (Carol's piece will be reprinted in BITCH, by the way—thanks Twersky!)

IJ #55—I was inspired by INSIDE JOKE to watch Dr. Science and I was quite entertained. As soon as I found the show, WNYW moved Dr. Science to a different time slot! Are they trying to hide the show in their schedule? (It's now seen Sunday mornings at 10, I think; I should have more information about Duck's Breath in upcoming IJs or perhaps even in Kip's "Four-Alarm FIRE SIGNAL.") "The Purgatory Papers" and "Commercial McClue-In" are right on the money (what a silly expression). If J.P. Morgan is interested in psychotronic movies, I suggest Scared to Death (1947) and the Dutch film A Question of Silence directed by Marleen Gorris.

IJ #56—I enjoy what I've read so far. INSIDE JOKE must get more television-related mail than TV Guide. (Well, certainly more intelligent TV-type mail.) Speaking of TV, have you seen Morton Downey, Jr.'s talk show? It's closer to pro wrestling than Phil Donahue. I don't know how much Downey is overacting or if he's really that...well, the show does have camp value. I recommend SNUB-TV for "underground music" fans. It airs during "Night Flight" on the USA cable network on alternate weekends. And I've heard that Bob Dole's tentative 60-90 second spots on the Financial News Network (starting Jan. 1) represent a "breakthrough"—in other words, now even cable won't be safe from presidential candidate commercials, which could spread to other channels in major advertising campaigns. Dole's first cable commercials might contain excerpts from an 18-minute Dole biographical video (that must be really exciting viewing). I wonder if the video mentions how Dole was President Nixon's most ardent supporter during his first term in the Senate.

I'd better end this letter before I digress even further.

Sincerely,

TODD KRISTEL

1140 N. 24th St.

Allentown, PA 18104

Hey, Elayne & Steve!

Got IJ #56 a week ago and finally got to read it! (Yes, of course I know how to read.) Hope this letter gets in under the wire...

"Rock Fiend": Yes, Anni is perfectly right about moving to a new place, especially the part about the Apartment Monsters.

"Snowstorm Halloween": A fine evocation of spooky snow.

Glad to see two Pink Bunny & Prudence tales here again!

"Creativity" was a surprising piece...good for some controversy, here.

I liked "Clowns Aren't Always Funny." The simple act of making the protagonist a clown changes the tone of the resentment-at-father theme.

"Four-Color Fiend": Ever notice that Marvel and DC are like Republicans and Democrats, respectively? Marvel pays vast amounts of money to insure loyalty, demands that the party line be slavishly followed, and is run by smiling liars who must be deposed (like Shooter)...while DC isn't quite as bad, but often seems to be racing to catch up, what with all their Russian-baiting and multiple tie-ins, not to mention their new Piranha Press division (which is supposed to be taken as "alternative," but keeps all rights to the creators' works).

Kid Steve: The AdWeek requests for readers' votes on bad commercials seems more like a marketing tool: i.e., the bad ones are the ones you remember, so that means they "worked"...let 'em just wonder, I say! The Reader's Digest—oops, I mean Rolling Stone's "perception/reality" stuff was pretty ill; Lord, please let that waste of trees fall over and die, already! And 15-second commercials—shit! Glad to hear that Olliemania fizzled out, though.

"Kaldor's Vengeance" was great: short but deadly!

"The Adman is the Frogman of the Brain": a swell depiction of a character who's gotten all too familiar.

"Homo Patrol": funny writing and superb artwork. I kept hearing Jack Webb-type theme music. Hope we see more of this!

In "Sayz-U!", Anni and Rodny pick on the Snide Critic for no reason at all. Oh well. Ken Burke says the fake Golden Turkey film is MY OFFICIAL WIFE. Tom Deja says it's DOG OF NORWAY (Ed.: See below). I'm more confused than ever. Now what?

Have a nice Winter Solstice,
JOHN P. MORGAN
185 Seabreeze Ave., #4
E. Keansburg, NJ 07734

Greetings from Purgatory, Pals 'N Gals.

IJ 56 just got dropped down the chute just in time for Thanksgiving (isn't that too wonderful?) and some things were raised I felt I had to comment on.

ITEM THE FIRST: Ken Burke's answer to the "Golden Turkey Ring-er." Now, Ken, I do think you're aces and I appreciate your good and decent comments on my work, but you're wrong. A year or so ago, my friend Michael Weldon (of Psychotronic fame) went to work on the problem and I'm afraid our solution is different and was confirmed by the Medveds. The ringer is DOG OF NORWAY. Our evidence is as such:

a) The Republic Pictures Concordance, which lists all directors,

actors and technical personnel involved in all Republic pictures, does not list either DOG OF NORWAY or any of the artists involved in the film (with the obvious exception of Constance Moore).

b) In the entry on DOG, the Medveds print a picture of the dog alone. All other pictures of entries in the category of Worst Animal Actor (Blue Boy in STATE FAIR, Ducky in EVERYTHING'S DUCKY, etc.) feature the animal with a recognizable actor from the film.

c) In interviews with other people who tried to crack the code, the Medveds constantly dropped hints to the tune of "For a clue, look at the authors' picture. One of us is phony."

d) In the intro to Son of Golden Turkeys, the Medveds mention a pet dog they named...Mulki.

Now, I went back and reread the entry on MY OFFICIAL WIFE, and I have to say that the story does in fact read true. Trotsky was in fact an exile in New York until the revolution and the scenario the Medveds present is indeed very plausible. However, whether it's true is unknown. Maybe the Medveds liberally littered the book with ringers in a fit of sheer maliciousness.

ITEM THE SECOND: MILLENNIUM did suck, didn't it? After seven issues of pseudo-mumbo-jumbo, we are treated to five more SUPER CHARACTERS? I'm sick of super characters. I couldn't care less about these "Chosen" now that they've become nothing more than super-heroes. I thought DC would be a bit braver and make them relatively unchanged plainclothes people who just happened to be special. Oh, well...I for one am chomping at the bit for the new ACTION. I am a big fan of the Secret Six and am dying to find out who Mockingbird is (I tried to wheedle it out of some folk, but they're mum).

ITEM THE THIRD: Speaking of things sucking, I couldn't stand Trying Times. It was pedestrian, unfunny stuff with very hip people (Steven Wright, David Byrne, Spalding Grey) doing very unhip things. It was terribly formulaic with the grey backgrounds, "true confessions" and forced wackiness. The one episode you cited was bad—I only laughed three times despite my respect for Steven Wright and my crush on Catherine O'Hara. (Well, I thought it was quite amusing, but to each their own, I guess.) The only one worth its salt was "The Visit" by Christopher Durang, which eschewed that forced happy ending and mangled the grey background stuff to unrecognizable forms (I thought the "fight" between Jeff Daniels and Julie Hagerty—the ultimate Durang girl, by the way—was the best handling of that stupid device).

ITEM THE FOURTH: Where was "...Or Not TV"? I really missed it... (Duh, Tom. We only do that column at the beginning of a new season, not every issue of IJ! I mean, duh, y'know? Anyhow, as you know, I've promised that your Ground Zero Club can do an appropriate follow-up for the "replacement" season next issue.)

ITEM THE LAST: Larry Oberc's piece struck me as very petty, self-centered and maudlin (look who's talking!). I really felt it fairly uncalled for and more than a bit nasty. (Larry has already explained/apologized via personal letter; we all get into bad moods sometimes, after all.) My feeling on creativity in relation to IJ is this: by writing for a magazine, you are being invited to play in somebody's backyard. By accepting that invitation, you agree to abide by certain rules put down by your host (in this case, our editrix). If you don't feel like following these rules, you do not have to stay. Being able to write for IJ is not a right—it is a privilege extended to you by Elayne. Elayne has a right to lay down certain rules in accordance with her policy. That's not censorship—that's just the way things go. In my opinion, Elayne has been more than fair in her policy. I have had no restrictions that I consider unduly harsh placed upon me and, if I feel one of my pieces is about to break the boundaries of what she considers publishable (the Kathleen Sullivan piece was one of these), I have contacted her and worked it out. You make her sound like an unreasonable ogre and it does nothing but make you look very bad. Creativity is not war—it's more like birth, a birth where we know we have to give up the children and it's our responsibility to assure that the children get placed with the right people—not the people's responsibility to conform to the child's behavior.

SCATTERLINGS: Loved Anni's column (who doesn't?)—it had me laughing out loud frequently. Mary Ann Henn's piece was very nice and touching. I wonder if the Kid has seen these mondo-bizarro John Wietz ads that have popped up on bus billboards all over New York. (The Kid professes to taking New York busses, but aside from reading the neat stuff from the Winston Network inside them, she sees no point in glancing at the outsides. Besides, in her column she does try to keep her reviews as broad-based as possible for the benefit of those IJ readers who do not live in New York.)

Thanks for letting me have the floor. Take Care.

TOM DEJA
50-56 96th Street
Corona, NY 11368

Dear Elayne:

I have to admit that this is not the optimum time in which to write you. For one thing, I have recently entered one of those hideous phases of my life that come upon me, without warning and without reason, every now and again, during which sleep becomes as elusive and therefore as desirable as, say, a dream date with John Larroquette (I don't care—I think he's cute), or the perfect dish of sweet and sour pork. During these periods, in those dark, dark hours just before the dawn (I've heard that somewhere before; I know I have), when other, more sensible people are snug in their beds, sleeping the sleep of the righteous (I've heard that somewhere before, too), or else out in some intimate little after- 29

hours club, trying desperately to get their names in *La Dolce Musto*, I am lying, with wide open eyes and tortured mind, peering into the darkness, interrupted by visions of Ed Begley, Jr., listening to sad songs on the radio (have you heard Sting's new record? I mean, really), and willing to sell my soul for an hour or two of sweet unconsciousness, or at least a Seconal. In short, Elayne, I have not properly slept for at least a week (by "properly slept" I do not count those 15 or so minutes I manage to catch now and then from which I waken in a cold sweat after dreaming of Bryant Gumbel), and it's beginning to tell on me (though I should point out the weird look of this sentence has less to do with lack of sleep than with That Cat choosing to leap upon the keyboard). Beyond that, NBC, for obscure reasons, has chosen to air *St. Elsewhere* at 9:00 this evening, which not only adds to my sense of confusion, but forces me to watch, at 10:00, *The Bronx Zoo*, a show so unrelentingly politically correct as to turn even this diehard kneejerk liberal into a devoted follower of George Will, so you see the situation that surrounds me. Nevertheless, the deadline has loomed before me so large as to have left me behind a week ago (I know I've never heard that before, and for fairly obvious reasons), and so I press on.

About IJ #56: You know, I read the entire thing while having what was dubiously called Breakfast at the local Burger King (yes, yes, Sausage on a Bagel—what else would a renegade Jew eat, particularly one who doesn't care much for bacon?) so it did get rather botched with grease, and I stayed so long that those nice girls in their perky caps began making rude little noises at me, but it was all worth it. A very nice issue, indeed, though I must admit that I was rather puzzled by the first paragraph of your Acknowleditorial—I mean to say, I see what you're getting at, and I do agree that people ought to be decent to each other all year round instead of just at Christmas, but I don't see why enjoying Christmas in the face of slaughter in Central America is any different from, say, taking an hour off from worrying about the homeless to have a laugh at IJ. Actually, I've noticed that, on the contrary, the Christmas season usually has the salutary effect of arousing people's feelings of guilt, and their consciences, so that they'll give to charities and think about things that they ordinarily wouldn't. Having a bad conscience may not be the best reason for attempting to help people out, but it feeds some of the hungry nevertheless, and occasionally a Christmas do-gooder becomes an all-year-long activist, so where's the harm in that? Besides, foregoing a Christmas tree doesn't do anything towards keeping the U.S. out of Nicaragua—the Christmas tree merchants would all be out of business if it did.

On a lighter note, there were tons of good stuff in #56—two Prudence stories (thank you for explaining the intense feelings of déjà-vu I had while reading "Son of Mighty Joe" Infirmity—I knew I'd heard that somewhere before), each one delightful; the estimable Dr. Iguana (he's not the first to warn me to steer clear of Hasil Adkins, but he's the most convincing); "Commercial McClue-In"; all the usual goodies. I must say, though, that I don't think it would hurt Larry Oberc's creativity one bit if he picked up a few minimal rules of punctuation (and they accuse me of run-on sentences) and, by the way, while there's a certain amount of literary precedent for his idea of "creativity as war"—the Surrealists, for instance, loved it—until he can write as well as Guillaume Apollinaire I wouldn't give myself quite so many airs.

But that's quite enough out of me when I'm in this state. Forgive me if I run off and make a few devotions to Morpheus—I simply don't think I can bear another evening with a mind stuffed full of media images.

Not forgetting John Lennon,
ANNI ACKNER
P.O. Box 18
Reading, PA 19602

Heyah Elayne:

Well, I've totally blown the deadline this time, fersure. But I've finally gotten 'round to reading #56. And it was a cookin' ish. Glad to hear thatcha don't think ya'll have to go to \$2. But ya gotta do whatcha gotta do, doncha? So here's my questionaire. I'd made a serious effort to be less smartass than last time. Altho I still think "defenestrate the pope" would make a crucial board game. Anywayze, wot I liked bout #56: Anni's column (one of the best ever), Tom Deja (it's true—he is gettin' better and better AND I've done some time on Long Island too and it's just like that), J.P. Morgan's cartoon, can't wait for the conclusion of WHAT'S THE POINT? (primo stuff!!), Pru's rewrite of INFIRMITY (yeah, it was a bit rough in spots but still grand fun), Dorian's trip to cholesterol-land (auuughh! and I'm leaving and may never see these wonders cos they'll prolly be closed by the time I get back—hey, one of the major tragedies of 87 was the failure of Fat Burger to catch on in NYC—why not? I went all the time—jeez...). Special note to Ken Burke: I used to have a lot more respect for Connie Chung till I got a good look at her hubby, the ever-enthraling Maury Povich. Oiks!!! Have gotten some response on SHCQ (lotsa positive feedback but in small numbers) but there will be a #2 in March, so get on it y'all. And, yes, that's what I said, I'm leavin' NYC for a while. Starting in early January, y'all can find me at the address listed below. Too thrashin'...WEEEEEE!!!...LOVE & ROCKETS is still the best comic in the known sky. Just thought I'd pass that along to alla youse. Mojo Nixon will be the next Pope. This is my prediction for 88. Everyone in the NYC area should immediately go see Buster Poindexter and have a wunnerful time. That's it kids, I is outta here. (OH YEAH... more Mike Gunderloy!!)

let's tear the walls down,
30
RODNY DIOXIN
1140 S. St. Louis, #11
Tulsa, OK 74120

Dear Elayne,

Ever got drunk in the afternoon? I mean, plastered into incoherence at, like, say 3:00pm? It's finals week at school, and I felt I owed it to myself. I don't know where this concept of rewarding oneself with drunkenness came from, but it was hanging around the fringes of my cerebral cortex at about 2:30 this aftie, so... Anyway, now it's about 2:30am, and I'm hung over and feeling nauseous.

I peeled open IJ #56 to take a closer peek inside—I read it about a week and a half ago when it arrived but invariably I forgot the gist o' the contents. IJ is such a wonderful little thang. It's like one of those cheesy, ill-focused black & white photos you get in a photo booth in K-Mart with your best friend when you're young and in elementary school, or when you're stoned and in high school. You hold on to that picture, and you pass it around at parties or reunions. I've never met anyone on the IJ staff (except Carol, but we've been friends since 2nd grade), but I feel enamoured with all of them. Is "enamoured" the right word—or has my afternoon Bacchanalia gotten the best of my vocabulary?

Anyway, #56 is a great issue, full of admirable bits of good writing and such. Prudence's "Infirmity" piece/continuing saga has become the little buried jewel of recent IJs; like staying up when you were little, just to catch Johnny Carson's monologue. Prudence is perfectly in touch with her childhood, and I think it's a wunnerful thing. However, I seem to sense a growing maturity in little Prudence—the one scene where she tries to ignore Pink Bunny seems to point to higher vistas of adolescence. I can foresee li'l Pru shoving Pink Bunny in the closet soon and reaching instead for her Barbie make-up kit. Atlas, alas.

"Pigshit" was great—Peter Sellers is my favorite actor of all time, so to see him enshrined in Gary's article was a real pleasure. Gary's writing seems very effortless, as if he might talk that way on the phone. Aren't we all aspiring to have off-hand witticisms at our disposal, like Oscar Wilde or G.B. Shaw? (Are you kidding? I built a college career around that theory!)

I tend to agree with your response to Larry Oberc's "Creativity" piece, Elayne. The whole notion of "art as rebellion" presupposes that art is something more than it actually is, which is just personal expression and the fermenting of creative juices. Lately I have been toying with the notion that the idea of individuality is a bad and inherently corrupting thing—it draws us away from the core of our togetherness as a whole race. Art should glorify the human experience, rather than one person's experience vs. "the world," etc.

Maybe I'm a cynic, but Curt Simmons' "Revelation" was kind of a let-down at the end. What began as a frustrated humor piece turns around with a divine message or some such undercurrent of "purpose"—yeah, I am a cynic. And only 15 more shopping days 'til Xmas! I did have a humiliating experience with a friend of mine exactly as described by Curt, like his about the boy with leukemia. A girl in my high school, who was undergoing chemotherapy at the time, refused to wear a wig, thus exposing her shaved scalp. My friend Carl, unknowing her medical situation, said (in a rather loud, cruel voice), "Look at that girl! This punk thing has gotten out of control!" or something equally obnoxious. The girl gave Carl the kind of look that transcends all normal interpretations of the emotion of being hurt. It's enough to make you cringe.

Brian Catanzaro's piece was good, if only because it quotes an XTC song. Michael Polo's "The Big Shlep" was just the kind of thing that deserves to be in every IJ—fun, quick, witty and enjoyable. Of course, the fare dished up by IJ's resident hipsters—Ackner, Burke, Deja and "Kid" Sieve—is always a pleasure. Elayne, you do realize that kinship with these writers alone would be sufficient to merit a price increase in IJ.

My roommate Mike thanks you for printing his story—we both expected a flat-out refusal from you. Not that it falls into the MTINTK furnace, but that it was just a little too, a little too—oh, I dunno. Not a holiday story, by any means. I hope the spiritual out there were not offended. I hate offending people with my writing—I prefer to tap them politely on the shoulder. The mouse that roared, etc.

So that's it, Elayne. I wish you and yours a Happy Holidays (I do not designate myself as celebrating Hanukah or Xmas—I prefer to be a Generic Holiday Guy), and a terrific New Year to boot. By the way, as of August 1988 I will become an official Pennsylvania resident—I am moving for at least the next few years to Philadelphia, poimenently (sometimes my abuse of the English language should be subject to imprisonment and a very biased trial by uptight white men in Mississippi). This means frequent trips all over the northeast, including a long-overdue visit to the now-revered Ides O' March party given by you and Steverino... (Thanks for bringing it up, David—time for our first reminder that the party will be on Saturday, March 19 at Apt. Three-Eye, 8pm or so until whenever, etc. etc. More details to follow!)

Peace Piece (a great piece of music by pianist Bill Evans),

DAVID SERLIN
Box 107, Jones Hall
Ontario St. & Park Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19140

Elayne,

Some brief comments on IJ 56. How can I not comment on "Creativity"? Much as I hate to admit it, Larry Oberc does raise some good points. However, it does, as you pointed out, carry things too far. Particularly troubling is the de-gender-fication issue (but you didn't know it has become an issue!). If a character has been created who is chauvanistic or feministic then the appropri-

ate pronoun should be used whether it is "he" or "she." However, if the character's development is not hindered by neutering the person, why not neuter it? But the problem is drawing that subjective line. Obviously Larry will say that every alteration is a hindrance. And in some respects he is right. A story told in the first person is still developing that first-person character. It is still an extension of that character's beliefs/values. Included in that extension is his use of pronouns. But, as I just illustrated, there are times when a neuter pronoun is acceptable and much less clumsy. (I'm glad you used the example you did, Michael; my point was never to change the gender of an already-established character, but rather to neuter the gender of any theoretical one, or of an object with no reason to have a gender [as opposed to, for example, objects about which Pru sometimes writes, which usually have definite genders]. Your sentence "Included in that extension is his use of pronouns" could just as easily been "his or her use" or, as I prefer to write it, disagreeing with number rather than gender, "their use." That's all at which I was trying to get, really.)

But, the funny thing is, the whole discussion is moot. When it comes right down to it, the editorial policies of any magazine, of any publication, are a reflection of the editor. No one is forced to contribute. And if they contribute it is (or should be) understood that their contributions are subject to editing to coincide with the 'zine. It is also hoped that the readership knows this too. (Well, yes, and I've heard this from others, but I know a lot of the flak I sometimes get results from the fact that I prefer IJ be run as a collective, with everyone being able to voice their opinions, and that there are just a few things I won't or can't type for them, for which they should look to other 'zines.)

Well, enough of that. On to cheerier things. Thanks to Anni for a timely article, though I just vacated my "solo" apartment. "Purgatory Papers" was a blast (need a housesitter?). I liked "Clowns"—although I expected a clichéd story, it held me. Maybe it was the fact that Mary Ann called him "Clown." Oh, oh, oh, is "Real Man" great and true! Oh, oh, oh again...Elayne, listen to Dorian and eat at Fuddrucker's if you haven't already. (Yes, we have—Dorian and Winnie dragged Steve and me, not kicking nor screaming, at their first opportunity.) I had the pleasure of sampling it in the original in San Antonio. They used to give round dishes like plastic trays that have since served more purposes. However, Sweet Cravings (being 3 miles from my parents' house) has always seemed overpriced to me, relatively mediocre-tasting ice cream with a cute name as a gimmick.

Whitney writes! Well, almost. Looking forward to the conclusion.

Why continue when you probably can't read any of this anyway? (Well, it was an uphill battle, but I think I got most of the words right...) 3 AM. Time to sleep...

MICHAEL BULLER
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P.S. Why all (or most) poems on one page? Kind of hits you hard. (Because I had a lot of longish poems in my backlog and it would have been tricky to fit them on the other pages with our regular layout. I will do this every now and then, but I probably should have warned anti-poem readers in the editorial, sorry.)

Dear Elayne,

Hiya hiya. It's been awhile since I last wrote and since #56 was my last IJ for the time being, and since it's close to the due date for questionnaires, I thought I'd make an attempt at communication.

Quite frankly, I have been enjoying the devil out of these IJs of late. Hey kids, remember Devil Shake? Pepsi's answer to Yoo-Hoo? Anybody remember Shake-A-Puddin'? The instant pudding you shook up in a cup? Enough 60's digression. I enjoy getting IJ regularly and may even subscribe. So now you've got the price changing from month to month as well as the publishing schedule? Just kidding... It's one of the things I enjoy. Acknowledgment is like a soap opera sometimes. Will IJ become a real business, as subversive as it is? Stay tuned! In fact, I will definitely subscribe sometime during the new year. Maybe even advertise...

Life is creatively mundane. It goes on and on. I've been playing music for 20 years. I've been doing art on and off also forever. For little or no money. Somehow, we survive. These days mental health has become an issue. My wild existentialist days are over. Being a late bloomer is hard as hell. I don't recommend it. Teach yer children well. Here we are, happy golden days of yore, is what the thing says. Can you still trust yourself over 30? Only your hairdresser knows for sure!

An impressive "Upcoming Events." I was surprised to see Mike McGear's birthday. He did an album for Warners back in '74 with his brother that is so much fun to listen to. All those music people in there, real heavy hitters. Annie Lennox is almost a month older than me.

You know, you once asked for a comment on the "Harmonic Convergence," which would have been a good thing to write about because there was enough media coverage. Let's just call it the "non-event of the decade." People participated, but nothing spectacular happened. However, enough participated to put us into the beam. I believe the necessary number was 440,000. As far as the resurrection of Quetzalcoatl, a friend of mine who is an astrologer is having a divination game published featuring Mayan symbols on cards sometime this year. So the Harmonic Convergence requirements have been satisfied with minimal hoopla. There's supposed to be a real good Japanese video documentary on UFOs. I don't know about reincarnation, but it would be a plea-

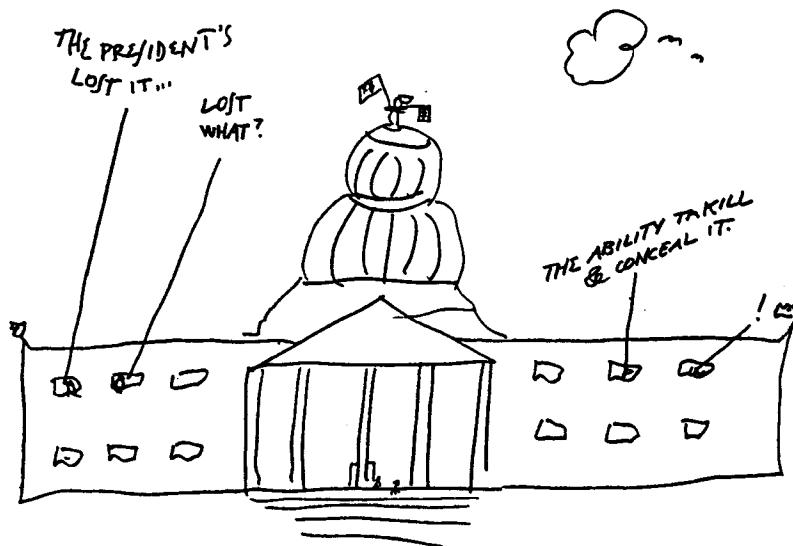
sure to meet some aliens. No, no, no, that's too wild and existentialist, isn't it? Here comes the neighborhood...I hope you don't mind these random (fandom) musings. This is just a relaxing friendly letter. One more thing about the Convergence: the people who participated have little or nothing to do with Yuppies. I make that statement based on friends' observations of what went on where and with whom. I did not participate. At the time I noticed several newspaper articles. They just sort of jumped out at me, 'cause I rarely pick up the papers. I was not aware of Jose Arguelles' book. But two weeks before noticing the first article I read an amazing tabloid documenting the appearances of the "BVM" (Blessed Virgin Mary) to some children in a little town in Hungary. The tabloid came out of Alabama (the Bible Belt). The author started out as a journalist on assignment, then made tabloid publishing his full-time thing. I believe he was always Christian. Weird, amazing stories were sort of building up all year. Several months earlier I went to a Robert Anton Wilson lecture. He talked about everything being connected by a string of coincidences, and demonstrated how you can relate anything to anything and can reduce it to ancient lore and symbolism. Fun and fascinating. The last bit of psychic intrigue I was involved in was the Tarot. I was starting to get pretty good, but had to stop for awhile and got out of practice. It is really helpful. I have to get a good book on it and get back in shape.

What I'm really into how are herbs. Herbs work. They can soothe any ailment. You just make tea and feel better. Soothe your throat. Clear your sinuses. Tone your blood. Make you sweat. Clean you out. Get rid of your headache. Make you sleepy. Get you a buzz. There, that got your attention, didn't it? Well, there are several legal highs to be had. All those ads in STONE during the 60's and 70's were true. According to my book, catnip tea is a mild hallucinogen. Smoke Lobelia and mellow out. The FDA prohibits over-the-counter Lobelia sales but you can mail order. There's a smoking mixture called Yuba Gold that ends up costing about \$3.50 an ounce and you can get a real good buzz. It's a laugh, but it's true and legal. See "The Magical and Ritual Use of Herbs" by Richard Alan Miller (Destiny Books, NY).

So those are my secret subversive passions. But with music, art/school and work, time is limited...IJ has been going on a long time and I feel fortunate to be able to share a small part in it, so I'll be in touch...

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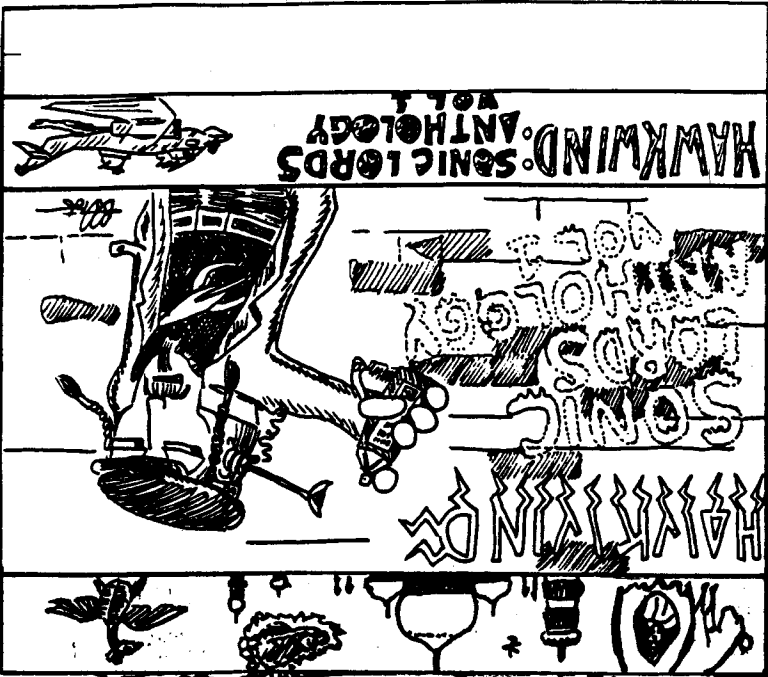
(Thanks for the fascinating letter, Brian, and I hope I haven't printed anything intended for strictly personal consumption...I can see your point about legal herbs, against which I have nothing per se, but as the line between legality and illegality is so arbitrary and usually decided upon by staid people who haven't a clue as to herbal benefits vs. detriments in the first place, those "illegal herb" users among us probably prefer not to make such distinctions. I must say, though, thank goodness for chamomile tea [and thanks, Anni], which does wonders to soothe an upset stomach and comes highly recommended from ye editrix.)



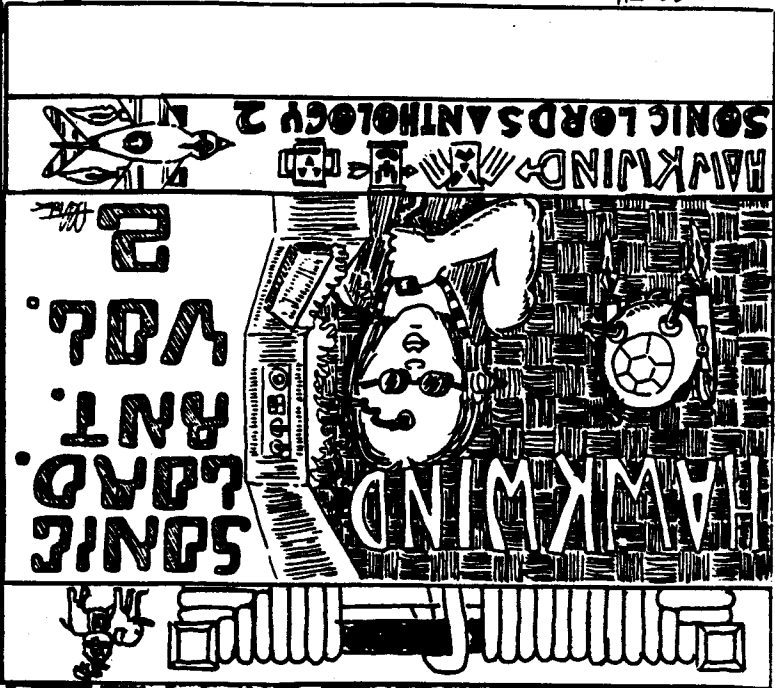
Early by Sheila E. Murphy

Daybreak littered shallow particles of awareness over objects in my name. I clutched the leash, walked close to where I thought they were. Saw each one only in relation to myself. Knowing I was with them capable of being moved. Warming past initial thoughtflecks, I posed for a photograph, hoping for stasis to depend upon. That would not stagnate. Feeling the tightrope and oblivion close by. Knowing pulse clarifies. The moments huddled in spare light fracturing a larger darkness that would disappear yet be remembered.

Memory's slow pitch dissolving animation color coded to the future



erved notice on the legal profession.
n closer to the people, HALT
MORE COMING
THESE CASSETTE COVER STOPS FOR YOUR CASSETTES
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Just the way it is.
At the urging of HALT and other citizen-oriented organizations, the D.C. City Council's Judiciary Committee wants to revise the probate law to make lawyers describe in detail their work in settling an estate. In addition to problems with fees, many estates are mismanaged by attorneys, judges or "personal representatives" appointed by the court to handle the probate process. "The bungling and fumbling that goes on is beyond belief," said D.C. Superior Court Judge Margaret Haywood, who handles many of the court's probate cases.

It is a sparsely furnished of the Capitol to see the public that much to earn money is not rare. The "underground" as HALT (Help Abolish an organized lobby group) first anniversary of its really leading an off legal profession. The leaders of the with Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, President Carter and the former attorney general, Griffin B. Bell, a sense of uneasiness about the direction of the lawyer-client relationship and the traditional "professionalism" of the legal profession. Some members of the American Bar Association also have the same concerns.

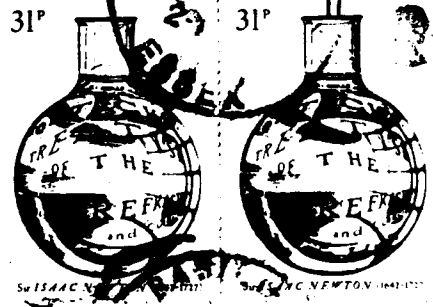
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San Francisco Chronicle
Charles McCabe
Clean Up Their Act

support two-thirds of all the lawyers on earth. These figures are provided by a Washington-based outfit called HALT, for Help Abolish Legal Tyranny. HALT takes a very radical and in my view almost completely justified



(lawyers) can fit. No wonder in red tape decide



you are enormous. from your utility bill to the cost of clothing and medicine — is made more expensive by lawyers. You support lawyers through higher taxes. Everywhere you turn, lawyer increasing your cost of living.



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