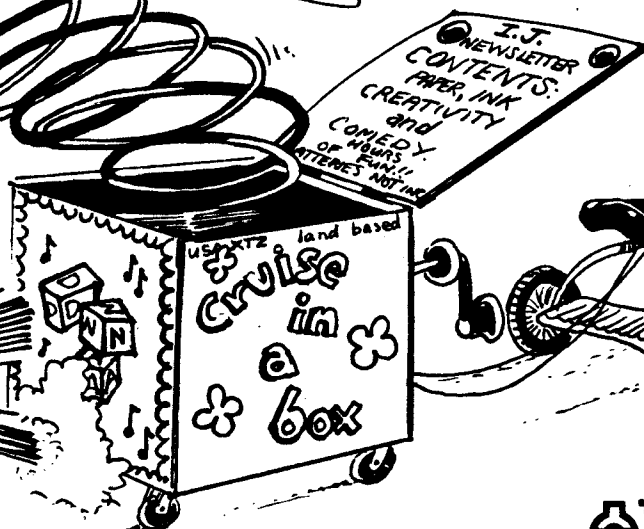




# INSIDE JOKE

"ALL THE COMEDY THAT FITS IN PRINT"

POP



\$1.50

ISSUE #66

# Upcoming Events

MARCH 15 - DEADLINE FOR MAILED SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #67  
 MARCH 16 - JOHN BRIDGMAN (7)  
 MARCH 18 - DEADLINE FOR IN-PERSON SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #67  
 and ANNUAL INSIDE JOKE PARTY at Apt. 31 in Brooklyn—  
 see Acknowleditorial for more details!  
 MARCH 19 - Patrick McGoochan (61); Philip Roth (56);  
 Swallows return to Capistrano  
 MARCH 20 - Earth Day; Fred Rogers (61); Skinner (b.1904)  
 MARCH 21 - ALIX BISHOFF (24); Cesar Chavez (62)  
 MARCH 22 - Wonder Woman (47); Chico Marx (b. 1882)  
 MARCH 24 - Elayne's mom; Fatty Arbuckle (b. 1887);  
 Harry Houdini (b. 1874)  
 MARCH 25 - Global Understanding Day; Elton John (42);  
 Gloria Steinem (54)  
 MARCH 26 - Leonard Nimoy (58); Bob Elliott (65)  
 MARCH 28 - GENE WECHSLER (30); Three Mile Whoops (1979)  
 MARCH 29 - Eugene McCarthy (72); Eric Idle (46)  
 MARCH 30 - Eric Clapton (44); "I Am In Control" Day  
 MARCH 31 - Rhea Perlman (41)  
 APRIL IS NATIONAL HUMOR MONTH (naturally)  
 APRIL 1 - April Fool's Day (IJ High Holiday)  
 APRIL 2 - International Children's Book Day; Casanova  
 (b. 1725); Max Ernst (b. 1891); Hans Christian Ander-  
 son (b. 1805)  
 APRIL 3 - Baseball Season Opens (IJ Holiday)  
 APRIL 4-10 - "Hate Week" in the novel 1984  
 APRIL 5 - Eric Burdon (48)  
 APRIL 6 - PHIL AUSTIN (48)  
 APRIL 7 - Ramadhan; Daniel Ellsberg (58)  
 APRIL 8 - Julian Lennon (25); Mary Pickford (b. 1893)  
 APRIL 9 - PAUL KRASSNER (57); Tom Lehrer (61); W.C.  
 Fields (b. 1879)  
 APRIL 9-15 - National Library Week (marry a librarian!)  
 APRIL 11 - CAROLYN LEE BOYD (31)  
 APRIL 12 - Tiny Tim (67); David Letterman (42); David  
 Cassidy (39)  
 APRIL 13 - Madelyn Murray O'Hair (70); Jefferson (b. 1743)  
 APRIL 17 - KERRY THORNLEY (51); KLAUS HAISCH (36)  
 APRIL 18 - San Francisco Earthquake (1906)

.....  
 \* INSIDE JOKE is put on hexaweekly by Elayne "Still No New Ti-  
 \* tle" Wechsler and dear friends, and emanates from beautiful  
 \* downtown Brooklyn, where all the bridges are falling down,  
 \* falling down, falling down...  
 \* .....

EDITOR-IN-RESIDENCE.....ELAYNE WECHSLER  
 PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....STEVE CHAPUT

## STAFF WRITERS/ARTISTS

ACE BACKWORDS=====KEN BURKE=====NICK DANA=====TOM DEJA  
 ==MIKE DOBBS===== GARY PIG GOLD=====RORY HOUCHEMS==  
 JED MARTINEZ=====J.P. MORGAN=====LARRY OBERC=====SUSAN PACKIE==  
 ==WILLIAM RALEY=====STEVEN SCHARFF=====KATHY STADALSKY==  
 LARRY STOLTE=====DORIAN TENORE=====KERRY THORNLEY=====PHIL TORTORICI

Front Cover by DAZA; Fan Noose Logo by MARGOT INSLEY

## OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE:

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JOHN CRAWFORD	JIM MIDDLETON	DANA SNOW
GEORGE DAUGIRD	RICHARD MILLARD	ELKION TUMBALÉ
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APRIL 20 - Don Mattingly (27); Harold Lloyd (b. 1874)  
 APRIL 21 - Iggy Pop (42)  
 APRIL 22 - Earth Day; Jack Nicholson (53)  
 APRIL 23-29 - Reading is Fun Week  
 APRIL 23 - Shakespeare (b. 1564); Shirley Temple (61);  
 Roy Orbison (b. 1936)  
 APRIL 24 - Shirley MacLaine (55); Library of Congress  
 dedicated (1800)  
 APRIL 25 - Ed Murrow (b. 1908); Marconi (b. 1874)  
 APRIL 26 - Secretaries Day (marry one of them too!)  
 APRIL 28 - Alfred Packer Day  
 APRIL 30 - MATT HOUSEHOLDER (34); Alice B. Toklas (b.  
 1877); DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #68

## ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

These are tough times for satirical writers, folks, what with  
 bookstores covering before looney fundamentalists both thousands  
 of miles away and in their own back yards; the "high court" hell-  
 bent on destroying what's left of the First Amendment; and the  
 "Great Euphemism" promising us "kinder and gentler" repression.  
 Sorta makes one yearn for the innocent days of Richard Nixon, eh?

It's been tough for me personally too, as I've come down with a  
 mild (for the moment) case of carpal tunnel syndrome brought on by  
 the huge amount of typing I do at work and for IJ. Since my live-  
 lihood depends on this ability, I have to put that consideration  
 before IJ, so I'm asking contributors to, where possible, try to  
 submit proofread, camera-ready copy if they can. This is quite  
 simple to do—I use 12-pitch elements (10 pitch is too large) and  
 set the typewriter at 65 characters per line; I space in three to  
 start paragraphs; and I don't space between paragraphs. Don't  
 worry about reductions; my office copier does that. If you know  
 your submission will be shorter than, say, 700 words, use a 55-  
 character line instead. Those of you who don't have the equipment  
 or ability to submit your stuff this way, NO PROBLEM, I can still  
 type fairly pain-free (though I may have to slow myself to 80wpm).  
 Apologies for the condition in which some of this issue has come  
 out, but since I still can't do IJ on the job—even with the si-  
 lencer, other folks in the office still complain, plus I'm just  
 plain too busy with job-stuff—I have to type most of it at home,  
 and the home typer's been on the blink.

I hope to get it as fixed up as we've gotten the apartment in  
 time for our annual IJ Party on Saturday, March 18, 8pm-2am or so.  
 Readers within reasonable travelling distance should have gotten  
 their invitations by now; if you haven't or if you just want more  
 information, give us a call at the HELP-AI-1 Hotline (the number  
 is 718/435-7281)—you don't need an official invite to attend, but  
 you do need to let us know you're coming by March 15, okay? Door  
 prizes, mini-knishes, comics and zines for sale (do bring cash),  
 Cookie O'Fuss, strange videos, stranger people—who could resist?  
 Crash space will be available for two people (a couple or two  
 folks who don't mind sleeping next to a stranger), but CALL EARLY  
 to reserve it (first call first crash)!

Welcome to new contributors George Daugird, Eric Hollobaugh,  
 Mark Neville and John Sakalowsky, and, as usual, too much within  
 to go into detail here. I did want to note that both Nick's  
 "Equipment Control" and Tammy's "Poet's Diet Book" serials end  
 this issue and Kathy's "Tales of Suburbia" begins; Anni, Pru and  
 Todd are absent (they should all be back next issue, I hope); the  
 Ligi estate (which has just published its first onesheet news re-  
 lease via the Rosarian International Press Syndicate, P.O. Box  
 40710, Portland, OR 97240); and David Serlin, who will update us  
 on the again-delayed INSIDE STROKE in #67's letter column, has al-  
 so resigned. This opens up a couple spots, and long-time contri-  
 butor Jed Martinez has been officially added to our staff—if any-  
 one else is interested in joining, please write me for details...  
 Between staffer absences and the shortest letter column I've seen  
 in years, we should be able (as usual, this column is typed before  
 IJ is laid out) to use a lot of our artwork backlog with room to  
 spare for some longer columns, including my semi-annual Fan Noose  
 review, once again containing a prefaced apology for my inability  
 to actually read most of the stuff plugged therein; ah, for the  
 luxury of more time!

Subscriptions to IJ are \$1.50 per issue, up to \$12/year (8 is-  
 sues); anything above that is considered donation (thank-yous to  
 J.C. Brainbeau and Larry Stolte for their generosity this time).  
 If there's an "X" next to your name on the mailing label, it's  
 time to renew. Make checks/m.o.'s payable to "Elayne Wechsler."  
 Overseas, IJ costs 3 IRCs per issue and is sent surface rate. If  
 your writing/art appears next issue, you have the option of pay-  
 ing the \$1.50 or sending me 65¢ postage (Canadians must send 74¢  
 US postage) to cover mailing costs. The deadlines for #67 are  
 March 15 (to mail) and the day of the party (in person); the dead-  
 line for #68 is April 30. Next issue will feature our collective  
 raud-robin "Gerber" story, in which every IJ Party attendee is  
 invited to participate; plus Steve and I will have a go at a TV  
 review update. And as April Fool's Day is coming up, I'd like to  
 once again ask readers to send me any parody newspapers/magazines  
 you find, for which I will compensate you. Send them, plus your  
 letters, writing, art (including cover art), subscriptions, dona-  
 tions, drugs, etc. to:

P.O. Box 1609, Madison Sq. Station, New York, NY 10159.

I wanted to dedicate this issue to the memories of such fine  
 people as those Jed mentions in his column, or to Barbara Tuchman  
 or Beatrice Lillie or Pegen Fitzgerald, but instead, for reasons  
 I think are obvious, this issue of INSIDE JOKE is dedicated to  
 Salman Rushdie and Marianne Wiggins.

# Fan Noose

UPDATE

by

Elayne  
Wechsler



Well, faithful readers, I'm afraid I've failed you again—I know I'd promised to hold off on this semi-annual column until I had a chance to read all the zines plugged herein, but 'twas not to be. Now you know why, besides not being able to afford it any longer, I no longer trade IJ with other publications. Between the nonzine publications I receive regularly in the mail like CANADIAN TRIBUNE, DAYBREAK, GUARDIAN, THIRD WORLD WEEK, TOWARD FREEDOM and ZETA, publications put out by places to which I've sent money like the ACLU, Amnesty International, People for the American Way, the Native American Rights Fund and Greenpeace, and the IJ submissions I get PLUS all the stuff I usually do during my days (like my job), I simply couldn't find the time, no matter how hard I tried, to give these pubs

more than a cursory look, no matter how much I would've liked to do more. If you crave more detailed reviews of any zines covered below, ask me or consult FACTSHEET FIVE (likewise let me know if you want more information about the nonzine pubs mentioned above). Listings will be in alphabetical order, and I'll try to remember to include things like "SS" ("Seeking Submissions") or "T" (accepts "Trade" copies of your publication) alongside them. But first (natch), a few announcements: Joe Schwind (P.O. Box 256, Fort Collins, CO 80521), collagist supreme, is "collecting bits of information for a short video—projections for people born in the 1980s...Particularly interested in NUMBERS—years, pounds, miles, dollars, hours, odds, percentages, etc." Write him for more info...There will be a postal art show celebrating International Women's Day this month; deadline for submissions was March 1 (send to Betty, The Bookstore, 307 W. Allen, Springfield, IL 62704) but they may still be accepting them...ALTERNATIVE FICTION & POETRY is blowing its own horn again, and is probably a fine publication if you have \$10 to spend on four issues. They publish everyone from Allen Ginsberg to IJ staffers past and present (like Raith and Oberc). Their address is 7783 Kensington Lane, Manover Park, IL 60103...Another IJ staffer, Kerry Thornley (P.O. Box 5498, Atlanta GA 30307), irregularly publishes rants and other populist conspiracy-type stuff in pubs called THE DECADENT WORKER and KULTCHA, to name just two—write to him and you may be on his mailing list forever!...IJ newcomer Randolph Scott Moser only made five copies of his new zine BEATNIK FLYER, excerpts from which may appear in future IJs, but if you like his stuff perhaps you can write to him and persuade him to run off more (13 Off Western Point Rd., RFD 2, York, ME 03909)...AFTER HOURS is brand-new from IJ staffer William Raley ("MasterMath"), and is filled with stories of, well, what tends to happen fictionally after dark. Good stuff, but don't read it at night (quarterly, \$4/issue or \$14/year to 21541 Oakbrook, Mission Viejo, CA 92692; SS and he pays!)...Find out what it's like running a bed & breakfast in Maryland from AMERICA'S AT OUR DOORSTEP, a lovely free offering from Dennis Brezina (4566 Solomons Island Road, Harwood, MD 20776), who writes of travelers bringing tales to him from all over, and throws in some nifty poetry and essays. A really enjoyable little chatzine...For those of you who miss the work of Tom & Ken Roberts in IJ, their comic ANTI-SOCIAL FOR THE DISABLED (reviewed by Steve a couple issues ago) is still out, and the "Homo Patrol" strip is currently running in AMERICAN FORUM (\$4.95/6 months from 971 Van Duzer St., Staten Island, NY 10304) and, Tom says, may be gathered and made into a book soon! Write him for info at 333 S. East Ave., #209, Oak Park, IL 60302...AMERIKA (FRANZ KAFKA'S AMERIKA) by Kyle Hogg consists of a few short essays about our skewed fatherland and is available along with other pubs like Kyle's BOLD PRINT (like IJ only shorter with full size print) from him (\$1 for BP) at 2211 Stuart Ave., 1st floor, Richmond, VA 23220 (SS, T)...I've had the last issue of BEAUTIFUL WORLD sitting on my desk for awhile now, but former IJ printer Debbie David deserves the plug for this nominal Devozine and needs submissions muchly (\$1.50 to P.O. Box 1675, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10011)...Any fans of music in general and women in music particularly should be reading BITCH—consistently one of the best-written and -edited (Lori Twersky even makes my occasional Bitchrants sound coherent!) musiczines around (most recent issue #23; \$1.75 or \$15/12 issues from San Jose Face, Suite 164, 478 W. Hamilton Ave., Campbell, CA 95008; SS, T)...I love the one-page mini-essays in BIZARRE WORLD WEEKLY, a freebie from Johnny Alucard, 715 Melrose Drive, Richardson, TX 75080...If you have fond memories for real diners, COUNTER CULTURE is for you—my copy came complete with real Guest Checks! (#5; I think it's free but send SASE to Sean Wolf Hill, 2730 Monroe-Concord Rd., Troy, OH 45373...Our friends from NO BULLSHIT! sent info our way on a project called DEL-AWARE having to do with a grass-roots fight to stop a pump designed to cool a nuclear plant and drain the Delaware River; oddly, they have no address listed, but if you want to get involved they have a Hotline—215/862-3333...I'm happy to report that C.F. Kennedy is publishing once again!

Cliff's new one, DRIFT gets better with each issue (he's up to #4) and has lots of great zine writing but PLEASE don't send him any more as he's still working through his backlog from previous pubs (no price listed so send SASE to inquire; 280 Dundas Street East, Toronto, Ont. M5A 3W1 CANADA; T)...I meant what I said above—if you're at all fond of columns like these, you really should be reading FACTSHEET FIVE, as Mike Gunderloy does it so much better! For only \$2 you not only get plugs on zines, music, poetry and other books, but columns by the likes of Anni Ackner and Kerry Thornley! Mike has also written a book called HOW TO PUBLISH A FANZINE which he's selling directly for \$6, and there are still copies, for Ackner/IJ fans, of Anni's book NOBODY LOVES A VISUAL ARTS CRITIC for \$4 (Anni gets 75% of the profits!). Buy all you can from Mike, he's been a good friend to IJ and me for many years (FF #29 is \$2 from 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502)...GAUZY MOMENTO is one of the zines I miss most for not being able to trade any more—Mark Powell and Carolyn Crooke combine stories, essays, collage and a breezy, intelligent editorial style to produce a definitely-fun publication (#4; \$4/4 quarterly issues; P.O. Box 3540, Minneapolis, MN 55403; SS I think; T)...Steve also reviewed the latest issue of THE HEDONIST recently but Morgan Lloyd deserves mention here too for his self-made comic (#5; \$2/issue to 4835 W. 132nd St., Hawthorne, CA 90250; T)...He's without color xerographers now, but I'm sure Rodney Griffith will still produce his HEY BULLDOG onesheet essays one way or another—more power to his High Improbability International! (SASE to P.O. Box 523, Columbia Station, OH 44028-0523; T)...She stayed over my apartment and I still don't know how she does it—it's utterly amazing to me how Sheila Gibson can keep doing her Pythonzine IT'S whilst going to vocational high school ('cept she gets to use the equipment, which she does to its fullest extent). The Easel combines her wonderful artwork with some clever writing, news of the Monty Python crew and their current projects, puzzles—it's all almost too much, and for only \$2 to 20 Shady Lane, Nashua, NH 03062 (#8 just out)...Into quality badfilm/psychotronic stuff? THEN IT'S ONLY A MOVIE is the zine for you! Michael Flores & Co. spew out reviews and offer great videos and the newsletter's only \$10 a year or \$1.25 per (V.III #11B; P.O. Box 14683, Chicago, IL 14683; T)...The latest essay offering from W. Joe Hoppe is called JUST GOIN' and consists of four stories, which I'm sure are all quality, in nice large type. Don't know how much this minibook is, but I'm sure you can find out by writing Lucky Tiger Press at P.O. Box 14310, Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis, MN 55414...Getting weirder all the time, KALLISTI is now up to V.2 #3 and still a buck for lots of New Agey/esoteric essays and biting fiction, even a questionnaire! (bimonthly; \$9/year; Kenn Day/Lynda Grimm, P.O. Box 19566, Cincinnati, OH 45219; \$57; T)...Some call it humor, others just call it KNUCKLEHEAD PRESS—the humor's Hollywood-based and innocuously offensive (sexist, racist but seemingly from ignorance), and people pay money for it (\$2.25 or \$3.50 depending on what 4-page issue it is). If THE REALIST (reviewed below) is too intelligent for you, you might like this one (sorta quarterly; Chris Miksanek, Box 305, Burbank, CA 91503; SS; T)...Another Newage/weirdness pub has made its yearly showing—LIGHT TIMES from Art Wand with cover art by Roldo and lots of strange headtrips within. Price isn't listed so write for info: P.O. Box 84366, Los Angeles, CA 90073...I've probably fallen behind in subscribing, but the last LOOKOUT! I have, #32, is full of useful information and extraordinarily written political-satire essays by editor Lawrence Livermore (P.O. Box 1000, Laytonville, CA 95454), including updated news on the creeps at CAMP and San Fran-area doings (\$1; T)...How could one not love an adventure game called MORMONIDS FROM THE DEEP? I couldn't do a thing with this, as it's meant for an Apple Macintosh Plus or Macintosh SE, neither of which I have—but if you do, write for info to the publisher of SMURFS IN HELL (a great visualzine too long between issues), Robert Carr, 2210 North 9th St., Boise, ID 83702...Johnny Marr still insists MURDER CAN BE FUN, as #9/10 explores Karen Carpenter (this came out way before the TV-movie) and in-breeding (\$1; P.O. Box 640111, San Francisco, CA 94109; T)...Just a reminder, now that Matt Feazell's Almost Famous in the comics world, his line of NOT AVAILABLE COMICS will be getting more and more valuable—besides, they're fun! Send SASE for info to 106 N. Summit #1, Ypsilanti, MI 48197 (I loved "Day at the Type Mine," Matt!)...Jay Harber's reaching out again with his latest NOTES FROM OBLIVION, a short one this time (4 pages of art & collage) but considering what it takes Jay to do one at all, it's impressive—he'd love contacts, so write him at 626 Paddock Lane, Libertyville, IL 60048...Subg in origin/inspiration and barely comprehensible in essay style save for the extremely well-read, THE OCCASIONAL JOURNAL OF NOTHING IN PARTICULAR is Geoffrey Fourmile's 35c worth of a foray into zinedom. Quite interesting (V.4 #1; P.O. Box 419, Lafayette, CO 80026; T)...You'd think the folks at OAK SQUARE (Box 1238, Allston, MA 02134) would take a hint as I haven't sent them an IJ in almost two years, but I guess Philip Borenstein's just a good egg about sending me this short fiction quarterly that I'll never get around to reading—but hey, it's \$5 and I got it free, so who can complain? (SS; T)...The Yippies are still publishing, but boy is their schedule lousy—by the time they "break news" in an issue, the events in question have happened months ago. Not a good idea for a newspaper...but oh, those neat poster-centerfolds in OVERTHROW! (V.10 #2; \$1; P.O. Box 392, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013; T)...Roy Harper's OUTER SHELL (Box 7053, St. Petersburg, FL 33734) is still crankin' out onesheet rockzines with help from Ken Burke and Gary Pig Gold, among others; and it's free (send SASE though, ok?; #40 is the most recent one)...My vote for Favorite New (to me) Publication is

the PEDANTIC MONTHLY, wherein Erik Johnson and friends satirize education, Dan Quayle (well, that's an easy one), language and bachelor cooking. Too bad the price is so ultra-steep, even tho the mag's on glossy-type paper (V.2 #6; \$20/year for 4 16-page issues; 1383 Idaho, Santa Clara, CA 95050; SS)...Sara Edwards likes to take articles of interest from various sources, add a bit of personal poetry, and put it all out as PLAGIARISTIC TENDENCIES which I'm sure she'll send you for an SASE (Box 66, Route 16, Ischua, NY 14743)...Even though my friend Lucius Cabins no longer works with them, the folks at PROCESSED WORLD (41 Sutter St., #1829, San Francisco, CA 94104) were nice enough to send me issue #23, which has stuff from other friends like Ace Backwords and Ann-Marie Hendrickson. If you're a worker in this processed world like I am, this is indispensable (wish I had time on the job to read it), and well worth \$12 for four issues (the graphics are in color and great!)...Another good investment has to be THE REALIST, around longer than most of us 80's zines put together. Paul Krassner, the best thing about the absurd and aborted "Wilton North Report," is a supreme political satirist, and I await each issue eagerly (\$24/12 issues; now quarterly; Box 1230, Venice, CA 90294; T)...The latest offering from R.O.C.K. (Rockers Opposing Cheap Knockoffs) International (P.O. Box 227, Williamston, MI 48895) updates irate commercial viewers on the latest attempts by Walter Sorg and Bob Pearson to ridicule and call attention to ads that rip off good old rock and roll songs (although they don't seem terribly concerned about anything past, say, 1963 being pro-tituted—"Kid" Sieve still can't listen to "Turn, Turn, Turn" without wincing at the memory of Time magazine). For info send SASE, I guess...Eric Ewing's having fun with type styles in his essay broadside SASQUATCH, available for asking nice (P.O. Box 126, Milford, ME 04461)...I'd steer clear of THE SEE-SAW if I were you, "a page of fun and games aimed at children in all walks of life." Editor John A. Fenn calls it wit, but I don't think you'll get much out of it if you're over 12 or so (SASE? to 2721 W. Barkley Dr., Villa D, West Palm Beach, FL 33415; T)...Rock reviewer Dawn Eden (P.O. Box 1289, Maplewood, NJ 07040) handed me the first issue of her onesheet 7 INCHES last week—no, it's not what you think, it's reviews of rare 45s and quite interesting. She seeks suggestions for improving the new zine...Probably Steve's favorite zine is SLIMETIME, the sleazemovie review zine by Steve Puchalski wherein you'll eventually find all your cult faves and more surprises (#24; 50¢ per; 1108 East Genesee St. #103, Syracuse, NY 13210; SS of reviews; T)...If you have fond memories of the TV show (and movie) STARMAN, you might want to join the SPOTLIGHT STARMAN fan club (P.O. Box 273440, Houston, TX 77277-3440), still trying to get the show back on the air...If you're curious as to what's going on with the SUBGENIUS FOUNDATION, you can get the info straight from the word processor of Ivan Stang (P.O. Box 140306, Dallas, TX 75214), who will allow you to intercept his most recent missive to J.R. "Bob" Dobbs for a SASE...Another SubG-based mag is THREADBARE (P.O. Box 20681, Seattle, WA 98102-1681), available for \$1 plus 50¢ postage and featuring improved layout...TCM stands for THE COMEDY MAGAZINE out of England, and I'm really high on this primarily-information magazine, with interviews with famous British comedy names, histories, and nice original writing (though some translation gets lost over the Atlantic). I can't unreservedly recommend you send for a copy, as I haven't heard back from them myself yet, but I think Mat Coward and friends are doing a splendid job and I look forward to more—for info write P.O. Box 656, London NW3 6AQ ENGLAND and good luck to you!...IJ wouldn't exist if it weren't for Uncle Floyd, who's still putting out his UNCLE FLOYD SHOW GAZETTE in its tenth year. I'm glad Floyd Vivino's still doing this chatty, homey self-promotional newsletter; it's good to keep up with the old gang now and again. Only \$7.50 for 12 8-page issues (Box 251, West Orange, NJ 07052)...I know it's not a zine but the UTNE READER folks have been so good to IJ that I wanted to mention their latest issue (#32) in here anyway—this one has great essays on singlehood and the dangers of car pollution, among other things (\$4; P.O. Box 1974, Marion, OH 43306-2074)...I don't even have the time to analyze what WDC PERIOD's about, but it's heavy on punk and comic so if that's your thing, this is sure cheap enough (\$1 to Gordon, no last name given, at Chow Chow Productions, 1830 Irving St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20010...Got a flyer from Jim Jones, editor of ZERO HOUR, listing upcoming highlights in issue #2 (the theme will be "Addiction")—if you're interested write P.O. Box 766, Seattle, WA 98111...Which brings us back to the stuff I forgot to put in alphabetical order, as follows: There's a SubG zine out there called WIDE AWAKE that its editor, Jeff Williams (P.O. Box 116805, Carrollton, TX 75001) wanted me to plug; I think it's a buck...As far as I know Ace Backwords (1630 University Ave. #26, Berkeley, CA 94703) still has plenty back issues of TWISTED IMAGE at \$2 per...Steve also subscribes to BUF-O, and while editor Klaus Haisch can get a little silly with his Bible-thumping, most of the zine is fun and comics-oriented and similar to Steve's old CURSED EARTH and such (TRADE ONLY to 1729 E. Tabor St., Indianapolis, IN 46203)...Okay, who sent me the ARCHIE MCPHEE catalog? THANK YOU, whoever you are, for sending these people my address—I'm tickled to death by their bargains, their write-ups, and their Free Hell Money. Better by far than Locomanics! Box 30852, Seattle, WA 98103...And lastly (at least for now), I would be remiss if I failed to mention our sister publication, FOUR-ALARM FIRE SIGNAL (FAIaFa!), published thrice yearly and absolutely free of charge to all fans of The Firesign Theatre by yours truly—I mean, by Kip M. Ghesin, our esteemed President of Pen-Elayne Enterprises—do write me at the Palatial IJ P.O. Box for more information, and see you in the funny papers!

## Inside IJ Staffers

(Surprise, folks—or maybe the surprise is that Jed's not been an official staffer until this issue, judging from the great response his "Animation Updates" get! He's the most brilliant anagram-maker I've ever met, but let me let him tell you about himself:)

JED MARTINEZ  
71 Crystal St.  
Elmont, NY 11003  
3-1-56

Jed Martinez has been watching cartoons since the late 1950s. His other hobbies include collecting animation art, comics and comedy albums, creating word puzzles, and procrastination. If you have any comments on his IJ columns, he welcomes you to write to him.

## A DIP IN THE FLAMMAPOOL

by Dorian Tenore

ELVIS PRESLEY AS MOVIE STAR: THE MALE WHOOP! GOLDBERG  
or, HICK SHOULD A NIXED PIX (PART 2)

(Last time, we followed the early Elvis Presley films—that is, the best ones: Elvis' Westerns FLAMING STAR, STAY AWAY JOE, and CHARRO!; how Elvis' movies gradually slipped into a predictable formula; and the ingredients of said formula.)

HIGHLIGHTS, LOWLIGHTS, AND THOSE WACKY PRODUCTION NUMBERS

Elvis Presley's movie musicals got more and more formulaic as his career progressed. Then again, one could say that about many series of movies built around the same star(s), especially a star whose foremost talent was something other than acting. That's not meant to be an insult—as I pointed out last issue, Elvis was for the most part quite an effective actor, most notably in films that capitalized on his special blend of rebelliousness and vulnerability (JAILHOUSE ROCK, KING CREOLE, FLAMING STAR). But even Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers' musicals depended more on the charm and terpsichorean talents of its stars than on any great scripts, and quite a few of the Hope/Crosby/Lamour "Road" comedies probably wouldn't have been hits with three other stars in the lead roles (wonder what ISHTAR would've been like had it been filmed 40 years ago with Bob, Bing and Dottie...).

However, there was a certain campy something about lesser Elvis-film that all but left other cookie-cutter cash cows in the dust. Since Colonel Tom Parker always had the final say on Presley's projects, and since Parker was a grand if tacky (and not a little sleazy) showman, the onscreen result is a splashiness, a carnival-like audaciousness to Elvis' duds that keeps you watching and cringing at the same time. It's a very late-50s/early-to-mid-60s kind of tackiness, too: the "groovy" ultra-modern set design, rock 'n' roll dance music, and scantily-clad nymphs in state-of-the-(then) art hairdos and makeup.

There's even a hint of innocence to the actions of Elvis and the other characters onscreen. Part of this may be due to the era in which the films were made. Of course, it also may have been calculated to turn his snarling, sizzling rebel image into that of a nice, bland, all-American boy who Elvis' handlers hoped would garner fans of all generations—and have more "staying power" as a result. As an MCM spokesman told the Saturday Evening Post in a 1965 article on Elvis, "They never go to bed in a Presley picture. Otherwise, mamas wouldn't let their kids come."

Imagine my surprise when I discovered that LIVE A LITTLE, LOVE A LITTLE, one of the worst movies of Elvis' "Hound Dog" period, credited an early novel by one of my favorite humorous commentators, Dan Greenberg, as its source material. One wonders how Elvis' fans (especially the ones who needed permission from their "mamas" to see the picture) would have reacted if the producers had used Greenberg's title, KISS MY SOFT BUT PLIANT LIPS. I've never read the book (having never found the book), but knowing Greenberg's work I'll venture a guess that the filmmakers didn't use much of Greenberg's original story either.

The movie is a squirmingly self-conscious comedy-drama that tries hard to bring Elvis into the Swinging 60s while maintaining its "G" rating. With a stoic expression and his signature greaser hairstyle firmly in place, Elvis tries to hold down two photography jobs in the same building (resulting in lots of scene transitions with the Pelvis using the attached legs to dash up and down stairs. Doesn't this building have an elevator?)—one for a stuffy conservative magazine, one for a PLAYBOY-type magazine.

On his off-hours, Elvis is forced to put up with model-turned-actress Michele Carey as a beautiful but grating Californian Holly Golightly vanna-be. We know she's a free spirit because she dotes on her hyperactive Great Dane, keeps claiming she's married or widowed (depending on what mood she's in), and renames herself and other people when the whim strikes her. We know Elvis is a "together" kind of guy because he gets annoyed at her erratic behavior and demands a (\*gasp!\*) commitment from Cary, unlike the other wimpy guys in her life (including Dick Sargent, best remembered as Darren Mark Two from TV's BEWITCHED), who seem too awestruck by Carey's leonine good looks to protest her cavalier disregard of their identities. (Trivia note: Carey was the sexy voice of EFL, superspy Robert Conrad's computer, in the short-lived TV series A MAN CALLED SLOANE.)

LIVE A LITTLE... also contains an eye-popping example of the



kind of musical numbers at which Eddie Murphy poked fun in his standup routine about Elvis. You know, the one where he says that because Elvis couldn't act [Eddie Murphy's opinions are not necessarily those of this article], the screenwriters let him sing all his lines: "Hey, Elvis, we gotta win this race!" "We gotta win this race...," or "Hey, Elvis, want some lemonade?" "Lemonade! That cool, refreshing drink..." "Edge of Reality," an "Age of Aquarius" type of number, is couched within a dream sequence wherein Carey and other psychedelically-clad folk (mostly attractive young women) flit by Elvis, tormenting him as he gamely sings his heart out on a Day-Glo-hued set with enough fog for ten MTV videos.

A curious thing about such garish production numbers is Elvis Presley movies: although Elvis' singing is the best thing about these scenes (even when the songs themselves are inane), watching them on TV with the sound turned off can be entertaining in a surreal kind of way. I first noticed this during a broadcast of SPEEDWAY. During the "He's Your Uncle, Not Your Dad" number, wherein Elvis, Bill Bixby, Gale Gordon and several of his button-down Establishment cronies hoof it up in an IRS office a la HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING, I turned down the sound in order to better hear a telephone conversation. Weird! Somehow the lack of music made it all seem that much more artificial and silly. Playing the music of Devo or a similar progressive/New Wave band over tacky Elvisfilm production numbers lends it a darkly comic mood (sort of like Devo's video for "Beautiful World"). Try it for yourself next time one of Elvis' "Hound Dogs" comes to TV.

Another fun thing about Elvis' movie musicals, both good and bad—the many in-jokes and parallels to the star's offscreen life. The most obviously semi-autobiographical of Elvis' films were LOVING YOU and JAILHOUSE ROCK, both about a raw young talent's bumpy introduction to big-time show biz, complete with money-hungry, gimmick-crazed managers. Other Elvis flicks in which he suffers—albeit in a more comic vein—at the hands of less-than-ideal managers include SPEEDWAY (the reason they're dancing around that IRS office is because manager Bill Bixby has been dipping into racer Elvis' earnings to pay off his own gambling debts) and, to a lesser extent, FUN IN ACAPULCO (a little Mexican kid, no less!).

G.I. BLUES is another obviously autobiographical Elvis movie; in Elaine Dundy's book *Elvis and Gladys*, producer Hal Willis is quoted as saying, "I decided to take advantage of the situation and do a picture based on [Elvis'] real-life experiences in the Army." Willis did the same thing in BLUE HAWAII, with Elvis as a former military man coming home to Hawaii and opening a charter plane service. In that movie, Angela Lansbury stands out as Elvis' strong-willed Southern-belle mother (warming up, perhaps, for her Oscar-nominated mother role in 1962's THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE). Elvis also had American Indians in his family tree, echoed in his roles as a full-blooded Indian in STAY AWAY, JOE and a half-breed in FLAMING STAR. There's even a line in G.I. BLUES where he mentions his Cherokee grandmother.

Most of you probably know by now that Elvis had a twin brother who died at birth. The filmmakers who worked with Elvis obviously knew it too, what with the twin motifs that appear in many Presley movies: there's a pair of twin girls in the audience at one point in LOVING YOU, and in another scene a bedeviled Wendell Corey has the following line: "I wish I were twins—I'd have somebody to blame for this." Twin basset hounds appear in JAILHOUSE ROCK, and Elvis has a scene in a nursery full of twin babies in G.I. BLUES. Elvis has a pair of twin sisters in GIRLS! GIRLS! GIRLS!, and a pair of young twin brothers in FOLLOW THAT DREAM. And of course, guess what Elvis gets to play in a dual role (his hair is blond for one of 'em) in KISSIN' COUSINS?

MGM's timing was perfect with 1967's DOUBLE TROUBLE, which happens to be my favorite Elvis Presley movie since his "Can't Help Falling in Love" period. Since the central plot of this cheerful, slightly manic comedy with dollops of suspense revolved around Elvis' semi-reluctant involvement with a marriage-minded but under-age English heiress, it seemed appropriate to release it the year Elvis finally married his longtime "live-in Lolita," Priscilla Beaulieu. (Now, of course, Priscilla Presley wears more flattering makeup and hairstyles, and has carved a comfy niche for herself as a starlet of the big screen [NAKED GUN], small screen and car commercial.) Judging from the title, you'd think DOUBLE TROUBLE would call for Elvis to play twins again. Well, he's drooled over by a comely pair of female twins at one point, but the title really refers to the hot water our hero gets into as a touring pop singer not only trying to protect fresh-faced teen temptress Annette Day from her oh-so-proper and oh-so-murderous uncle, John Williams (not the composer, but a veteran supporting actor in such Hitchcock films as TO CATCH A THIEF and DIAL "M" FOR MURDER), but also inadvertently crossing the path of international jewel thieves (one of whom is Norman Rossington, one of the Beatles' long-suffering managers in A HARD DAY'S NIGHT).

DOUBLE TROUBLE surrounds Elvis with an engaging supporting cast, which includes sultry Yvonne Romain as a mysterious femme fatale and The Wiere Brothers (a cross between The Three Stooges and The Marx Brothers without the wisecracks) as a trio of bumbling Belgian policemen. Elvis seems to be enjoying himself on-screen again, and the bright pace keeps the mirth and mayhem bubbling along. There's a goodly amount of witty dialogue in Joe Heims' script (must've written it when Col. Tom Parker wasn't looking), like the following exchange when Presley and Williams first meet:

JW: "You're an entertainer. Rather an uncertain life, I should

think. I mean, it's not like steady employment, is it?"

EP (obviously miffed): "Well, we're not all on relief."

JW: "I assure you, it wasn't my intention to offend you."

EP: "I'm not offended, I'm just in a hurry. I don't want to lose my place on the bread line."

Elvis also sings some pretty good songs, like "Long-Legged Girl (With the Short Dress On)" and "Could I Fall In Love." He also sings some catchy songs with sexist lyrics ("I love only one girl/One in every town"). But the number that made me do a double-take was the rockin' comic/macabre version of "Old MacDonald" sung to Annette Day as the pair skip town on the back of a livestock truck ("Old MacDonald had a farm/Ee-i-ee-i-oh/And on this farm he had some chicks/Ee-i-ee-i-oh/A chick, chick here, chick, chick there, far as the eye can see/And when those chicks got out of line/Chicken fricasee!")

Elvis and Annette Day also have a buoyant chemistry and an easy banter as he tries to resist his attraction to this clever little minx, at least until her imminent 18th birthday. For a sheltered English schoolgirl, Day has quite a knack for talking her way into Presley's travel itinerary. Day's cunning yet appealing, and she's a refreshing change from the usual bimboes populating Elvis' 1960s films; it's a shame Day didn't do more movie work.

Most of the movies of the "Hound Dog" period tended to blur together, since many of them resembled beach party movies in their seaside settings and abundance of bikini-clad or miniskirted young ladies. Hell, they might as well have made one big Elvis epic called EASY COME, EASY GO AT A CLAMBAKE IN GIRL-HAPPY ACAPULCO ON THE SPEEDWAY TO PARADISE, HAWAIIAN STYLE, with a triple-album soundtrack. CLAMBAKE did have literary origins, though: in a tip of the sun visor to *The Prince and the Pauper*, restless rich youth Elvis trades places with penniless water-skiing instructor Will Hutchins, finding love and fun in the sun with Elvisfilm veterans Shelly Fabares and Bill Bixby.

When filmmakers weren't trying to turn the onscreen Elvis into Frankie Avalon II, they were harking back to the screen idols of old. HARUM SCARUM, for example, casts Elvis as movie star Johnny Tyronne, a modern-day (circa 1965) Rudolph Valentino whose latest movie-within-a-movie is a desert saga a la THE SHIEK. During an international promotional tour, Tyronne is kidnapped and whisked off to an Arabian Nights-style Middle Eastern kingdom, where he becomes a pawn in an assassination plot. Things get hairier in the harem when our hero falls for the daughter of the would-be assassinatee, Princess Shalimar (played in lots of gorgeous costumes and "Sudden Tan" by former Miss America Mary Ann Mobley in her second Elvis flick [the first being GIRL HAPPY]).

This ditzoid little musical adventure contains two more classic examples of the harebrained "Elvisdud" production number. Exotic villainess Fran Jeffries slips Elvis a mickey (as a result of which he falls unconscious very unconvincingly) to assure a smooth kidnapping. When next we see Elvis, he's coming to in the titular harem. His eyelids haven't even fluttered open yet, when all of a sudden the song "Mirage" wafts tunelessly from his big ol' sensuous lips. Without missing a note, he gets up, singing for his captive (captor?) audience of worshipful Middle Eastern misses. By song's end, Elvis is back on the pillows with his eyes closed, as if he'd been sleeping the whole time.

But the harem girls needn't fret: in the last scene of the movie, Elvis has brought them and his princess back to the States with him and made them a part of his nightclub act. Shades of VIVA LAS VEGAS, except that even the presence of vivacious Ann-Margret (once heralded, appropriately enough, as "the female Elvis" for her razzle-dazzle body language and ability to belt out a tune) couldn't have made this any less tacky. You haven't lived until you've seen Elvis Presley and a subservient harem bump and grind to the theme song "Harem Holiday" (HARUM SCARUM's original title, used only in the British release). For sheer "Huh?!" effect, HARUM SCARUM's production numbers almost beat Elvis' semi-mystical talent to conjure up a band and backup singers as soon as he commences a song in a movie. (Says Vinnie, "Did he hire musical paratroopers?")

Although 1965 audiences probably had little use for a Valentino spoof, this could have been an affectionate tribute if the filmmakers had a) made it a period piece, b) substituted the cornball slapstick (and that obnoxious little girl with the tambourine—bleech!) with wit and action, and, frankly, c) cast a more accomplished heroic leading man with a flair for more sophisticated humor (Tony Curtis? Peter O'Toole?). It was painfully obvious that Elvis was really uncomfortable in this role.

It's not that Presley was unable to handle costume pix—indeed, he was quite good as the leader of a traveling chauntauqua (a sort of "medicine show" emphasizing education instead of snake oil) in the 1920s-set THE TROUBLE WITH GIRLS, a not-bad little "dramedy" saddled with a stupid title that makes the movie sound like either a beach party flick or the eagerly-awaited film version of the current comic book cult hit. Elvis also acquitted himself well his acting debut in the Civil War western LOVE ME TENDER, as well as the period musical FRANKIE AND JOHNNY, wherein he and Donna "Ellie Mae" Douglas play cleaned-up versions of the title roles, as riverboat entertainers (wouldn't want to tarnish the Pelvis' new G-rated image by casting him as a pimp, now, would we?). The difference is not only that those were better movies, but that they all cast him as a roguish Southerner, closer to Elvis' real-life experiences than dashing around a sandy MGM backlot in a 5 burnoose.

NEXT ISSUE: The real culprit behind Elvis' poor script choices in the 60s—his sleazy manager?

WHEN ULTRASUEDE WAS IN FLOWER  
(In which Our Hero explains the reasoning behind the strict assimilation regimen for every Hepster)

Spy has confirmed the worst fear of Hepsters everywhere. The Seventies are coming back.

Every successful movement must have its Dark Age, a behavioral dip before true enlightenment can be achieved. It happens to everybody: communists, anarchists, atheists, even Woody Allen. It's a humbling experience to go two steps back for every one forward, in a way. It's a reminder that we could fall just as easily as we rise, that the wrong move can send us back into the ooze whence we came. We tend to revere rather than revile these periods. After all, they confront us with our own mortality.

The Hepness movement had a Dark Age, too. It lies between the earl tones of the 60s and the ice blues of the 80s. It's a time of synthetics. Everything that we wore, felt and experienced was prefabricated. It's a time we don't speak of loudly, some because we can't, others because we dare not.

We called this time the Seventies.

The 70s had no redeeming qualities whatsoever lasting. The good parts always ended before they began. SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE wasn't the same after Chevy Chase left. Punk burst upon the scene like some gloriously grungy star only to go supernova in one vomit-filled summer. Woody Allen chose the middle of that decade. To start his own behavioral dip and Michael Cimino turned out to be a bore. What survived was the bad stuff: WELCOME BACK, KOTTER. HAPPY DAYS. The BeeGees. Steely Dan. Led Zeppelin. Elton John's clothing.

Perhaps the worst thing to ever happen to Hepsters (if not western civilization as a whole) was 70s clothing. Never had a race of beings tried so hard to look so awful. The only thing good about this sartorial sacrilege was the fact that almost no animals had to die for another's vanity. This was a time when it was perfectly acceptable to wear petroleum by-products masquerading as natural fibers and animal hides. The endangered species list was safe during that decade.

Thus, it's no surprise that the Hep nation started taking steps to assure that this wouldn't happen again. A program was developed to train the budding Hepster. We would wean the next generation through their development, act as an Obiwan<sup>1</sup> while these folks cultivate and perfect their aura of coolation (more about which later). No more of this platform shoes 'n boogaloo business. This time we'd be ready for them.

The groundwork for our "coolation course" was in place after the end of the decade<sup>2</sup>. It was a two-tiered program, aimed both at the potential Hepster and those who would educate them. These "Coolfathers" had to recognize the potential for greatness, after all.

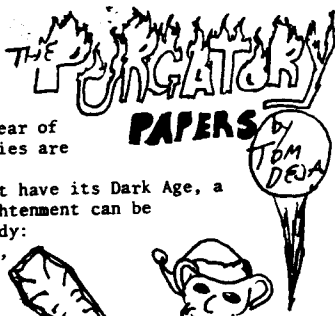
Emphasis was placed on recognizing the aura of coolation a potential Hepster gave off. This was not as easy a task as you would think. Contrary to popular belief, the kids of Hepsters were the least likely source of the new generation. In fact, their sons and daughters—in the true tradition of familial rebellion—tended to become "dweebazoids."<sup>3</sup> A percentage would even find their way to jobs in theme parks, wearing Funny Animal suits. A rare few would even become...cute. Cute was, is and always will be the enemy of the Hep. Worse than the dweebazoid, the cute person is immune to the Hepster's assaults. Their guilelessness and adorable looks act as an emotional SDI more protective than lead. Because there is nothing for the Hepster's cynicism to act upon, all attempts at sarcasm die in flames. The cute person is nature's way of assuring that the Hepster knows fear.

So the "Coolfather" is sent out on the street, searching for the potential way cool heirs. There is no set place to find a future Hepster. Theoretically, it's possible for a potential Hepster to be found hanging upside down in the middle of Carlsbad Tavern. However, experience dictates that the streets are the best hunting grounds for neo-Hep. No matter where the aura of coolation is suspected, the Coolfather can look for simple signs to indicate he's hit the jackpot. For example:

- Is the subject using word patterns unfamiliar to his peers? (Guaranteed the six-year-old who uses words such as "copacetic" is a potential Hepster<sup>4</sup>.)
- Is the subject gathering up a following of trendoid youth?
- Is the subject "discovering" traditional Hepster dress? (A toddler in fashion black? S/he's your person.)
- Is the subject's choice of heroes odd? (A kid who worships Peter Gabriel or Hunter S. Thompson shows a true taste for the waycool life.)
- Most importantly, is the subject generally reviled by the majority of his peers (i.e., the dweebazoid population)?

If the subject adheres to a fair number of these guidelines, the Coolfather knows he's hit paydirt. The parents are then contacted by the Council of Hep under cover of night. The Council members do not give their names, choosing instead to dress in floppy hats and scat-sing their words. This probably explains why training is bungled in most cases.

They are told that their child is very special, that s/he has a coolation aura reading over 75% (a true Hepster must generate an



aura of 80-90%, but it's an aura graded on a curve). To help the child achieve his/her full potential for Hep<sup>5</sup>, the Council will aid in schooling. A Coolfather is assigned to watch over the child's progress and a teachmodule is bestowed upon them.

A teachmodule is similar to a cable descrambling box. The unit is attached to the public access channel of the local cable station. Public access is a channel—one is required by law for every cable provider—which allows anybody off the street to use its airtime. What that means is it becomes the purview of chiropractors, lawyers and Robin Byrd. Robin Byrd is the 80s answer to Ugly George (remember Ugly George?), a woman whose brain cell count is exceeded only by the number of threads used in making her see-through bikini. Robin's specialty is interviewing porn stars a la Johnny Carson. I don't make this up. She sits there and says things like, "So, Amber Lynn, I understand you've just finished up THE SPERMINATOR II." It's a sobering experience.

It's also a front. Robin Byrd and Chiropractors On Parade are secretly forward-masking for our purpose. They're intentionally bad, a goad for you to skip over these channels. What they're masking are broadcasts of HTN, the Hep Television Network. In business for almost thirty years, they feature such heartwarming fare as "Lou Reed's Neighborhood," "The Waycool Cook," "Great CoolCats Through History," and perpetual reruns of "The Avengers" and "Peter Gunn." The child is supposed to watch three hours of HTN a day with his/her parents. If everything works out okay, the potential Hepster will reach a coolation aura reading of 83% by high school, at which time networking with other Hepsters should take over for the TV.

The Coolfather is supposed to accentuate the lessons of HTV. They are subtly introduced into the neo-Hepster's life ("Hey, Jimmy, this is Uncle Lucan. You're both gonna be great friends, right? RIGHT?") and the Coolfather then proceeds to set an example of how the Hep lifestyle is to be conducted. The Coolfather is always referred to by the sobriquet "Uncle" or "Aunt" regardless of any actual familial connection. This is a nod to well-known Roman Hepster Uncalius, who invented the apathetic stare. Under certain circumstances, though, the sobriquet can be modified<sup>6</sup>.

Like Uncalius, the Coolfather proceeds to show how wonderful the Hep life is by sending the child odd presents ("See what your uncle brought you...an Etruscan basket weaving set!"), taking him/her to bizarre places and generally forgetting his/her birthday because they're out in Angola haggling for a goat wool jersey. For example, my Coolfather was my Uncle Tony. Uncle Tony is perhaps best noted for the fact that he had a real coffin in his living room. Thankfully, the coffin was empty—it was a prop from an Alice Cooper show. Tony would take me to little out-of-the-way places in Chinatown and Little Italy, being certain that these trips never happened within two months of my birthday. That was sacrosanct. If the Coolfather remembered his charges' birthdays, it would imply that he/she wasn't off busting up spy rings or discovering hidden races—the type of thing important enough to make a missed birthday forgivable.

The ritual forgetting of birthdays ends up generating a sense of the mythic for the Coolfather, making his example so much more compelling. I learned so much from my uncle because his AWOL status from the Navy and photos from exotic locales like Phoenix made him an example worth keeping.

Now, of course, there might be some proto-Hepsters who won't learn. The legendary aspects of his/her Coolfather doesn't take; s/he doesn't understand what Lou Reed is saying; and the mirror shades make him/her puke. That's the hazards of war. Some are not born to take on the mantle of Hepster. Some are satisfied being trendoids, norms or even—gasp—dweebazoids.

But for that percentage who do comprehend the mysteries of waycoolness, there's no finer life. Their aura of coolation will grow until it shimmers like jewels in the bright light of a noon-day sun. They become the great Hepsters of tomorrow, the ones who will find the food, housing and style of their generation. They are the ones who will stand on the borderlands giving hope and joy to the screaming, befuddled public. If you reach that position of cultural power, there's no greater feeling.

Lord knows I enjoy it, even with the solitude and the social pariahhood. Now, if you will excuse me, I have a birthday to forget. Jennifer is convinced I'm speaking before the UN tonight and I can't let her down.

#### 100% POLYESTER/RAYON BLEND FOOTNOTES

1—I know...if I hate the 70s so much, why am I using a 70s icon to make an analogy? For those of you so offended, replace "Obi-wan" with the phrase "Charles Manson." Happy?

2—When the decade actually ended is another matter. After all, the 60s didn't end until 1972. Personally, I would place the end of the 70s somewhere between the day "Remain in Light" (the Talking Heads' greatest album ever) was released and the day HEAVEN'S GATE bombed.

3—For a fuller definition of this term, see last issue's column, "I Hep, He/She Hep..." (yes, another shameless plug there).

4—Care should be taken to differentiate usage of "cool" word patterns and "nerdy" word patterns. "Nerdy" word patterns indicate a person who will end up buying and selling you in ten years. So treat him/her carefully.

5—Let this be a lesson for you—Hepsters are made, not born. (More lessons next issue...self-promotion again, I know...)

6—This was brought home to me when I took a girlfriend to meet the family of my charge, Jennifer. Since the woman was of a racially mixed parentage, Jennifer's calling me "Uncle Tom" did not go over well.

# Wax Ink

by Rory Houchens

**THE THREEPENNY OPERA** (CBS Masterworks)--This 1958 recording is probably the definitive version of Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht's masterful musical portrait of pre-Nazi Germany's teeming underworld. Led by the legendary Lotte Lenya (Weill's widow and the prime interpreter of his songs), the soloists and chorus rip into the well-known material and end up with passionate readings of classics like "The Ballad of Mack the Knife," "Cannon Song," and "Pirate-Jenny or Dreams of a Kitchen Maid." Sung in German with much gusto, a hefty little booklet of notes, lyrics and translations is included.

**INVERSE GUITAR**--Nicolas Collins & Robert Poss, and **SOMETIMES**--Robert Poss (Trace Elements Recs., 172 East 4th Street, Suite 11D, New York, NY 10009)--This pair of cassettes presents two different styles of modern music. **INVERSE GUITAR** takes an experimental path. The first side belongs to Collins, who makes unique use of the electric guitar. Instead of the strings being picked or plucked, they are "electromagnetically resonated by sounds played into the pickups" (a baby crying, part of an invigorating Ronald Reagan speech, etc.)--a clever thought, but the idea may be more stimulating than the recording itself. Poss gets side two and there he constructs a handful of works where slashed, bashed and wanged guitars trundle about with strategic slivers of concrete block drums to form a musical description of your ten worst headaches, eight miles above sea level in a cast-iron barrel. Pleasing stuff, though. Poss's **SOMETIMES** is a bit more conventional. Instrumentals that grind and ignite (the descending "Torch," and haunting "Think Twice") and songs where guitar-colored blossoms float ("Throne of Blood," "Because of You") try to brush the dust from contemporary pop music. Heart and soul versus get-rich-quick, wimp crap. Bravo, Mr. Poss, bravo!

The Elliot Gantsein Human of the Month and a Half Award for Being a Human Being goes to Whitney Houston for being such a great artist that she can convince people that a real woman could actually get excited about something as inane as Diet Coke (well, almost convince us) and then spending the money on low income housing, and being vain enough to name it after herself (she told the Brits that the Beatles were nothing compared to her own wonderful self long ago).

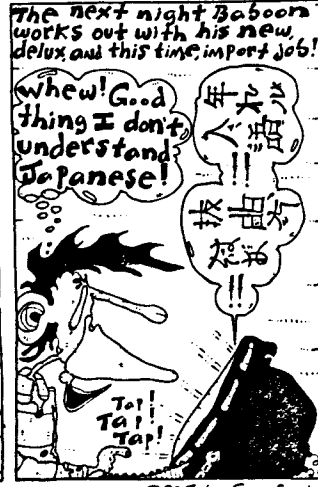


## FOLLOWED by Larry Oberc

It starts somewhere on Main Street, at first not noticed, then it sneaks in, footsteps, soft, almost a light tapping on a window you don't want to look up at, or in this case, around at, things to through your head when shadows carry threats, and how you wish those footsteps had a shadow to go with them, a dark grey ghost to give you some information to go on, some information that might tell you how big, or how small, this hidden threat is, but no, the lights reflect back, behind you, like everyone had planned it that way, like everyone wanted the shadows to fall only in one direction, it's times like this you try to look mean, cocky, like an early Brando or Dean, but looking tough under these conditions, when you are on the defensive, doesn't work like it did in those old black and white movies, it may be night, it may be shades of white grey black, but the fact is you got this lack of brilliance, this lack of the right kind of walk, this lack of feeling mean, vicious, you feel, instead, small, shrivelled up like a starfruit left on the counter for too many days, your head fills with the possibilities, the things that can go wrong on nights like tonight when there is absolutely nobody around that'll back you up, when the only sounds on the street are your own footsteps and a stranger's, you wonder if maybe ducking into a doorway, or alley, might help, if maybe the footsteps will walk by you, leave you alone, go on up the street in front of you where you can keep an eye on them, but you decide that would be stupid, that if there was going to be a problem, if a hassle was inevitable, it'd be more likely to happen in the shadows, a doorway or alley, than it would out here on the street, you wonder if you should slow down or speed up, but that might be the wrong move, if you speed up the footsteps will know you're scared, if you slow down they might figure that it's best to get what they got planned over with, that they may as well do it now that they've caught up to you, you see your doorstep a few doors down, it looks good, like a hot red fire in the woods, comforting, offering safety, a lock to keep out strangers, you see that door getting closer, closer, wonder what it will be like inside, safe, where you can look out the window, see the source of footsteps on the street without risk of getting harmed, you don't slow down, you don't speed up, you just keep walking at the same pace, right past your door, knowing if you stop something might go wrong, something might happen, or worse yet the footsteps will know where you live, will tear not only you but your home, your privacy, your very heart apart, you turn at the next corner, wonder why the shadows seem to flow in the wrong direction, wonder how long these footsteps are going to continue behind you, wonder if you can ever go home again...

Confront the Dark Side  
of Your Personality.

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



\*\*\*\*\*  
"REFORMS SHOULD BEGIN AT HOME AND STAY THERE."  
Anonymous.  
Don't believe it. Send \$ASE to world-wide war, inflation, unemployment and chaos ending BRAINSLAUSH  
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# THE SOUTH'S GREATEST WRITER

by Dale A. White

When Hannah Rath died last week, the South lost its greatest writer.

Critics always overlooked her. They can't be blamed. Rath was barely five feet tall and preferred wearing garments that matched her wallpaper.

The public forgot her. It can't be blamed. Rath had become a recluse in her hometown of Dire Straits, Georgia. Occasionally, she'd go downtown to applaud at funerals or to ask the mayor which hole in the ground he thought was his anus. Otherwise, she stayed home. If it weren't for the bruised shins on certain pizza delivery boys, no one would have known the feisty author was alive and kicking.

Her own people despised her. They can't be blamed. Rath despised them.

A cub reporter once asked Rath if hatred and hurt inspired her. Rath confirmed his theory by leaping over her typewriter, slapping him with his own notebook and ramming a knee below his waist. "That's right, college boy," she shouted, "writing is pain!"

As the only child of the town drunkard, Hannah learned about small-town antagonism early. Her father led her to the town square every afternoon and paid the citizenry to ridicule her. Since the sloppy sot had no known means of financial support, the townspeople didn't understand how he could afford such extravagance. After he died, they discovered to their chagrin that he paid them in Confederate money.

As a schoolgirl, Hannah contributed stories to women's magazines. In *Repentance Can Wait*, "The Longest Hay Ride" and other early tales, a steamy sensuality emerged that Rath refused to consider a pandering to commercial interests. "I am a Realist," she wrote in her memoirs. "Where I come from, it is not unusual for virgins to be debauched in pool halls. It is ritual."

Rath's neighbors resented her literary inferences that they were sexual deviants.

After all, as a young woman, Rath wore broad-shouldered suits and a horsehair moustache. She spent her prom night alone in a corner tavern, drinking whiskey straight up and bragging to anyone who'd listen about how she'd once beat up a sailor.

Undaunted, Rath soon published her first book, an 800-page historical about the comic antics of slaves on a South Carolina plantation. Unfortunately, "Dem Crazy Niggers" (1922) sold poorly. And the few readers who bought copies complained vehemently that Rath had no ear for black dialect.

"All the slaves sound like Japanese houseboys," a receptionist in Raleigh, N.C. wrote—sending her copy back to its creator.

"So, I don't hear so good," Rath replied. "Let's see 'you' write a minor epic in six days. Gee, I wish 'I' were smart enough to answer phones for a living."

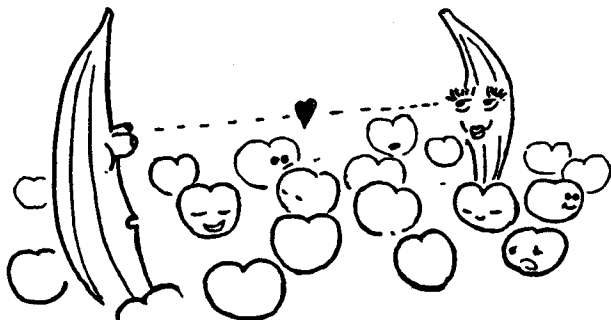
Despite an advertising blitz for her second novel, "a tale of unrequited love set against the colorful and rhythmic panorama of Sherman's march through Georgia," historians staged book-burnings for "My Brother, My Lover" (1924) and word circulated that the plot and characterization had been hopelessly mired by faulty research.

"Matthew and Jeremiah are real characters to me and the liberties I took to embellish them were not excessive," Rath wrote in a rebuttal. "I am a proponent of Literary License and it is an integral part of my Vision that I see the entire Confederate Army in drag."

This time, the mailman delivered thousands of rejected copies—most of them postage due.

Refusing to deny her destiny, Rath abandoned historical fiction for contemporary. "I don't owe those dead suckers spit," she told her reflection, which concurred. Despising quick agreeability, she shattered the mirror.

## "LONELY BANANAS"



"...IT WAS STRANGE... EVEN THOUGH WE HAD NEVER MET, AS OUR EYES JOINED, I HAD THE CRAZIEST FEELING THAT WE HAD A LOT IN COMMON..."

©VERNON GRANT—1986

Maxine Perkins, estranged alter-ego of a reputable editor, assisted Rath with her new work and, when sent a first draft of 200,000 words, neatly trimmed it to one of 32.

"I think what we have here is a very tight plot summary," Perkins wrote. "In the rewrite, however, I suggest you avoid naming all the characters Carrie Jo Fishback, as you did in this draft. My creative writing instructor at Vassar says that sort of untidiness befuddles less meticulous readers. Being an experienced novelist, you understand, I'm sure. Personally, I'm partial to the name 'Becky.'—P.S. If we ever meet, please don't hit me."

Eventually, Rath produced 100,000 words that Perkins considered suitable.

"However, I notice that many of them are identical," Perkins wrote. "That's all right, though. Personally, I'm quite partial to 'said,' 'thought' and 'sat.' They're so active. And 'ran' is a fal zinger. I don't know how you do it. I can just picture these people walking and talking."

"Creamed Peaches" (1932), the first novel of Rath's renowned Bile Straits trilogy, concerns the yearnings of a debutante who is bored with walks through the rose garden and having to wear hats bigger than her head. She sells her body to a stranger on the Savannah waterfront, then returns home with \$10 and confesses to her father in minute detail. "You sold your body for \$10?" her father cries in shame and fury. "Don't lie to me, Becky Jo! That explains \$5 but how'd you get the rest of the money?" Eventually, Becky Jo marries a sharecropper and learns that life can be exciting by merely refusing to reveal the recipe for her buttered yam pie.

To the relief of Rath's postman, the book was a hit. Her publisher couldn't print editions fast enough. Mapmakers started misspelling "Dire Straits." Illiterates sought Rath's autograph. Movie moguls proposed marriage to obtain film rights.

Her popularity waned, however, when Rath committed a series of public relations blunders.

A reception in her honor at the Governor's Mansion was abruptly halted when Rath asked the First Lady to dance. Graduates at the University of Georgia pelted her with flaming pecans during her infamous commencement address, "You Have Sold Your Souls For Lawn Furniture." And the people of Warm Springs didn't appreciate Rath's bringing Eleanor Roosevelt to her knees with a handshake or her greeting FDR with the phrase, "How's tricks, Gimpy?"

To make a living, Rath resorted to using the pseudonym William Faulkner. "I'd practiced his signature and we used the same brand typewriter," she later confessed. "So, I figured, who will know?" Faulkner found out, however, when he leafed through a novel with his name on the cover and saw "Mississippi" misspelled. After receiving a threatening letter from him, Rath threw Perkins, her fragile editor, against a wall. "You bitch, you told! How else could he have known? He must live 500 miles away!"

Soon came her incriminating testimony before the McCarthy committee, in which she admitted to having been a card-carrying Communist. "But I was only holding it for somebody," she swore. "He never returned to reclaim it and I heard it was good for discounts in participating republics."

Physicians from Johns Hopkins to Cedars of Lebanon started diagnosing Rath as an unrecoverable alcoholic, "a real boozehound." Rath remained convinced these reports were "poppycock"—especially since she'd never met the men. "Everybody's conspiring against me. The walls are closing in. And I could really use a Scotch and soda."

At 70, Rath started taking LSD and considering Andy Warhol to be a Genuine Artist. Tabloid photographers snapped her in Times Square, selling carnations and whispering to startled passersby: "Hey, you, I'm a flower child. Wanna buy some smack?" Distant relatives committed her to an asylum after she started telling gullible strangers she'd had their marriages annulled and kept demanding the immediate removal of all U.S. troops from Fort Riley, Kansas.

Eventually, Rath returned home. Her neighbors couldn't understand why she chose to spend her declining years in the town that so despised her.

"Dying in Dire Straits, Georgia, sure beats being born here," Rath explained to a welcoming committee from the Chamber of Commerce. It happened to be standing outside her house with torches in hand. "And living here's about as much fun as either one."

Near the end, she spent her time in a rocker, drooling uncomfortably and repetitiously referring to "The Great War." "I'm practicing senility," she told Perkins, her nursemaid.

Yet both women sadly knew this wasn't practice but the real thing. Rath was getting lost between adjoining rooms. And, several times each day, she would point at a blank TV screen and refer to singer John Davidson as "that nice young fella."

Eventually, her weakened heart and shattered nerves left her bedridden.

On her birthday last week, Dire Straits surprisingly decided to honor its most famous citizen. The mayor commissioned a brass band to wake Rath at 6:15am, the very moment she'd been born 90 years earlier.

"It was like the ending of one of her novels," Perkins remembered. "You couldn't help but get the feeling that it was meant to be."

Since death was a recurring theme in the Rath canon, an avid reader might presume the author was emotionally prepared for her last moment.

"If you ask me, she wasn't expecting it at all," Perkins said. "Of course, that's just my opinion. I didn't read any more of her trash than I had to."

Gary Pig's  
Consumer  
Guide to the  
Music He By  
and Large Got  
Free in the Mail



1. "LET'S GO UP" by Jeremy Morris  
Kalamazoo's best-kept secret—next to you-know-who! For all of you chronically unfortunate souls who missed Dwight Twilley, 20/20 and even The Shoes the first time around, it's not too late to order Jeremy's "Open Your Heart" album (or cassette) (OR video!). (JAM Records, 3424 Wedgewood Drive, Kalamazoo, MI 49008)
2. "MAGIC GLASSES" by Scott Finter  
Let it be here, are forever known that the ultra-fine art of hook n' harmony—not to mention B-section—is Alive and Well! The honorable Mr. Finter spins melodies and weaves words with a command of the pure pop idiom seldom heard in these dark, dank daze of video rocks and odd sox. (312 Wells St., Westfield, NJ 07090)
3. "CEZANNE" by The Special Guests  
Is this TRUE art-rock, or simply, as the Guests themselves proudly proclaim, "good, catchy—but ballsy—pop music with intelligent lyrics; the spirit of late Sixties radio, which was peacefully co-habitated by Dylan, The 1910 Fruitgum Company (AWRITE!—GPG), Otis and Van the Man," unquote? (P.O. Box 339, Cathedral Station, New York, NY 10025)
4. "TAKE WHAT YOU CAN GET" by Makin' Time  
Not since Georgie Fame debuted his immortal "Yeh Yeh" on "Ready Steady Go" 100-odd years ago has a slice of red-eyed soul cut so deep. From their so-aply-titled "Rhythm & Soul" LP. (Countdown Records, 34/38 Provost St., London N1 7QY ENGLAND) P.S.: I'm now personally accepting applications for the Fay Hallam Fan Club!
5. "HOLD ME" by The Cheepstakes  
Just about the most transparently wondrous burst of choral delight I've been blessed with this decade! Every syllable of razzle-dazzle and hype you were force-fed regarding beached boy Brian Wilson's tragic(ally executed) solo LP applies instead to this, and the rest of Faubert & Co.'s "Remember" album—particularly "Where Are You Now" and the should've-been-single "I'll Be Around." (Rogue management, 263 W. 12th St., Deer Park, NY 11729)
6. "IT'S ALL HAPPENING HERE!" by The Secret Service  
Title tune off their micro-mini debut waxing, stacked deep in that grande maximum R&B tradition of those most-blueswailing Yardbirds, Animals, et al. Never Mind The Crawdaddys, hear stately Wayne Manor and his SS now! (Invader Records, P.O. Box 64, Smithtown, NY 11787)
7. "HEY JOE" by Dead Moon  
These fellas sing like they've just been dropped head-first down a radium well, look like they first joined forces at a Rush look-alike party, sound like they left their instruments (not to mention the recording console!) out in the snow overnight...in short, this is the most fuckin' INGENUOUS seven-inch slab since Blue Cheer! (Tombstone Records—"music too tough to die"—P.O. Box 1463, Clackamas, OR 97015)
8. "WHERE HAVE THE FLOWER CHILDREN GONE?" by Stewart Brodian  
THE musical question for the Eighties. Comes complete with a "statement!" B-side: "I Hate The Video Games." (SFB, Box 1231, Mountainside, NJ 07092)
9. "HAPPENINGS TEN YEARS TIME AGO" by Erik Lindgren  
Forget "Deface the Music" and "Faithful." P'forget even "Psonic Pfsphunspoft!" Herein's the DEFINITIVE Sixties reinterpretations. (Arf Arf Records, P.O. Box 860, East Dennis, MA 02641)
10. "DANCIN' LATE AT NIGHT" by Jonathan Richman & The Modern Lovers  
Good news! JoJo's come out to play again, ridin' by the root beer stand, purple squirt gun in his hand, waxing wistfully on Harpo Marx, falafel, California des(s)ert parties, and natural food ranches. What more could one possibly ask for? "Modern Lovers '88," their TENTH album! (Stony Plain Records, P.O. Box 861, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2L8 CANADA)
11. "IT CAME FROM CANADA," VOLUME FOUR  
Unbelievable, but TRUE. House Of Knives, Fluid Waffle, The Dik Van Dykes, Salmon Breath, the incomparable E.J. Brule (Bobby McFerrin, eat your Beyerdynamic FCV-185 wireless out!) and, of course, Deja Voodoo. PLUS a dozen more various hepsters...ALL on ONE action-packed platter. Collect all four volumes—they're all you'll ever need to know (or hear) from the once-great white north. (Og Music, Box 182, Station F, Montreal, Quebec H3J 2L1 CANADA)
12. "HANGIN' ON TO ME" by Rev. Ken Burke & His Pumping Guitar  
The ever-elusive Dr. Iguana meets Carl Perkins, hauling "Everybody's Trying To Be My Baby" screeching into the Eighties. From the utterly touching (INCLUDING the commercials!) "Songs That Nobody Hears" cassette. (P.O. Box 8, Black Canyon City, AZ 85324)
13. "TWO LITTLE BUGS" by Kenn Kewder  
Never before, at least to MY knowledge, has a tape entitled "Kitchen Folk" wholly lived up to its name. (Pandemonium Records, P.O. Box 242, Philadelphia, PA 19105)
14. "THE KVINDE HADER KLUB," Tape Supplement to Issue #4  
Two full hours of some of 1988's finest (i.e., Feelies, Young Fresh Fellows, Alex Chilton) on a ONE-hour cassette! How do they do it? (clue: listen to the last minute of The Mothers of Invention's "Flower Punk"... (Herb Jue, 144 Hester St. #8, New York, NY 10013)
15. "ENDLESS WINTER" by The Gates of Paradise  
It gets lonesome sometimes out on the road... (Dawn Eden, P.O. Box 1289, Maplewood, NJ 07040)

16. "BEACH BLANKET BANZAI" by The White Lies  
From "Doug J. Brown, 1962-1987: A Memorial Collection". (Track Records, 592 Seymour St., Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 3J5 CANADA)
17. "WOLFHOUSE NOISE" by "M"  
(No, not the same "M" who did "Pop Muzik"... On this lone C-90 you'll thrill to crazed n' kooky covers of the Velvets, Stones, Doors and Beatles, the myopic Messrs. Holly & Costello, and even some Cab Calloway thrown in for you REAL old rockers. (Bonus Track: "M's very own 'Nazi Ninja Clones Vs. Bruce Lee AND Janis Joplin,' coming soon to a video arcade near you!) (M. Shafer, 75 Fairview Ave. #3-B, New York, NY 10040)
18. "LITTLE GIRL" by The Weeds  
This timely retro-rock reissue of an absolutely horrendously brilliant screamer from '66 proves there were garages full of neo-Thems in even VEGAS, of all places! All you Pebble-heads out there will no doubt know The Weeds (d)evolved into The Lollipop Shoppe by 1968; the REST of you should immediately forsake all Phil Collinized Motown and Merseybeat massacres and spend your hard-earned pennies on THIS instead. (Behemoth Records, P.O. Box 27801, Las Vegas, NV 89102)
19. "TIME BOMB" by The Big Bang Theory  
Okay, okay...so I'm probably the only fanzine editor/rhythm guitarist left in the (free) world who STILL doesn't know who Peter Zarella is. Or WAS, for that matter. Nevertheless, this compilation LP—in reality "The Fleshtones Party Album"—is chock-full of not only great wads of flail (such as The Action Combo's tongue-in-boot schlockabilly and The Full Time Men's anthem-for-a-generation "High On Drugs") but more guest stars (Peter Buck, Wendy Wild—Wendy WHO?—and even some late great Plimsouls) than you can shake a Bob Geldof at. GUARANTEED to liven up any gathering of folk old enough to remember The Flamin' Groovies and Uncle Floyd. (Skyclad Records, 6 Valley Brook Dr., Middlesex, NJ 98846)
20. "VOICE OF AMERICANISM": Bad Newz Cassettezine #6  
Alotta rock, some pop, plus thrash, trash, spoken word...even a Zeppelin cover! All lovingly crammed (by Bob Z) onto a single 46-minute TDK normal bias tape. Subscribe NOW! (Artists & Writers Underground, c/o Sarris Bookmarketing, 125 E. 23rd Street #300, New York, NY 10010)
21. "TICKET TO RIDE" (Live on Swiss radio!) by Sonic Youth  
WARNING: Not as good as Atomizer, but without a doubt the Final Solution to the Fabs on CD. (SST Records [Hiya Ed!], P.O. Box 1, Lawndale, CA 90260)
22. "TWO THOUSAND POUND BEE" by The Ventures  
Still instrumental after all these years. (Iloki Records' Palm Tree of Hits, P.O. Box 49593, Los Angeles, CA 90049)
23. "SOLD OUT" by The Saints  
It's been a long, hard haul for the visionary Chris Bailey and his semi-legendary Saints. Can more than a decade have actually passed since his proto-punk anthem "(I'm) Stranded" defined—dare I say it, ORIGINATED—an entire generation of Aussie rock? Well, as M. Oil, C. House, etc. reap the harvest of Chris' labors, I turn my tired but true ears instead to the jaunty R. Davies/P. Weller bop of "Sold Out," buoyed along by a sweet horn section which recalls the glory days of the "Eternally Yours" album. The NEW Saints album, by the by, is called "Prodigal Son." Listen to it. (TVT Records, 59 West 19th Street, New York, NY 10011)
24. "WAR DANCE" by Jandek  
"You Walk Alone" is Jandek's SIXTEENTH album (at least). And you're probably gonna sit there and tell me You Don't Own A SINGLE ONE of 'em. (Corwood Industries, Box 15375, Houston, TX 77020)
25. "THE PLANET EATS" by LMNOP  
Suggestion for rock culture during the Nineties (AND beyond): fill your songs with lyrics like "A meeting is on his sail/A meeting is on his sail/I meant to be but you know what you wanna be/ Inside the mind/My answer?/Seeds/Wobble around with the thought that it will not stop/Turn it around when you know you're going to drop/'I'll stop' you say but either way is still the same/'I've been away'/The Planet eats/Eats/Navigate over the fifth of every failure/Anticipate loss of return somewhere in Australia/Or Budapest forget the rest you're so obsessed/It makes no sense/My answer?/Freeze." From their "Pony" LP. (Baby Sue, P.O. Box 1111, Decatur, GA 30031-1111)
26. "DOGBREATH" (not Frank Zappa's!) by Dorian Lord  
Heavy mental. Nifty Who intro ("Dogs Part Two") AND outro ("Wasp Man") plus cool Spanish flipside! (Manny Moonz, 554 N. Elm, Mesa, AZ 85201)
27. "ANOTHER PLANET" by Alien Sex Fiend  
Funny effects ("Wild Green Fiendly Liquid"), funny sounds ("Instant Karma Sutra"), funny songs ("Spot Your Lucky Warts"), and even funny song titles ("Sample My Sausage"). No need to mourn the disappearance of that dada(da) Trio trio; no need to keep playing those Lederknocken or Einsturzende Neubaten (check spelling!) 12-inches any longer! (Caroline Records, 5 Crosby Street, 5th floor, New York, NY 10013)
28. "NOTHIN'" by The Cynics  
Is it written somewhere (perhaps etched in a run-out groove in Gre Shaw's backyard?) that once every decade, "thou shalt cover" (or should that read "cover"? "The Ugly Ducklings' greatest non-hit?" In '78 it was The Loved Ones...well, at least they ate at the same 7-11 the Ducks (once) did. And now, The Cynics step up to bat. And manage but a slow pop fly out towards second, he said metaphorically as he reached for the address. (Get Hip Records, 509 1st Street, Canonsburg, PA 15317)
29. "THE VOID THAT SLITHERS" by Crawlspace  
An unreleased Bonus Track from (the ORIGINAL) "Pebbles, Volume 3" Acid Gallery? Or simply more of Big Ed Flowers' L.A. Blues? Ahh, but if only The Reagen VCRs' songs could be this brief! (Trigon Records, 6837 Hanna Avenue, Canoga Park, CA 91303)

like the song sez. It's just one of eleven scatological smashes off his "You Give Love A Bad Name" elpee (take THAT, Jon Bonjovi!). (Homestead Records, P.O. Box 570, Rockville Ctr., NY 11751-0570)

30. "TOUGH FUCKIN' SHIT" by G.G. Allin  
At LAST! After over ten years of pissin' round the bush, so to speak, GG finally waxes (poetic?) his...his...Message! His MANIFESTO to the fuckin' MASSES! And if ya don't like it, then do

# ANIMATION UPDATE



I recently attended the 20th annual ASIFA/East Animation Awards ceremony in NYC. In previous award shows, some of the cartoons that earned top honors went on to become Oscar-winners and nominees in the "Best Animated Short" category (eg., Jimmy Picker's "Jimmy the C" and "Sundae in New York"). This year's "Best Film" award went to "Goodnight Norma...Goodnight Milton," John Schnall's hilarious look at a typical (?) married couple who literally undo themselves before going to bed. You'd have to see it to believe it. Other award-winners include two works by Michael Sporn, "Abel's Island" (Best Direction, Best Soundtrack) and "Max's Christmas" (Best Film for Children), Virginia Wilkos' "The Boy Who Drew Cats" (Best Student Film), The Ink Tank studio's 30-second TV spot, "WQXR—More Music" (Best Animation, Best Design) and Kim Murton's "Cat Scratch" (Best Concept, the concept being live-action footage of a house cat playing with a number of images scratched on the film's emulsion)...At about the same time the ASIFA/East Awards were handed out, the 3rd L.A. International Animation Celebration was getting underway. Besides the major competition of shorts and feature-length movies, there were tributes to various individuals (Chuck Jones, Don Bluth, Mel Blanc, and "Snow White" director David Hand) and animation studios around the world (Canada, USSR, Yugoslavia, China, etc.). In addition, some films made their world premiere (such as "Felix the Cat: The Movie") or, at least, their U.S. debut (i.e., Denmark's "Subway to Paradise" and Japan's "Robot Carnival," the latter film claiming to be a cross between "Fantasia" and "Heavy Metal"). The nine-day festival had something for everybody...At about the same time New York and Los Angeles were saluting the animation industry, Park City, Utah, was already past the midway point of the United States Film Festival which, at one point, paid homage to Jay ("Rocky and Bullwinkle") Ward. Hokey smokes!

Before I continue, I'd like to personally thank one of my readers for writing in. Jim Middleton, PPH, of Battle Creek, MI, had sent me some additional information about two-time Oscar-winner Frederick Back, and of his work "The Man Who Planted Trees." As it turns out, the title character, Elzéard Bouffier, was actually the creation of author Jean Giono. Although this ecological story was fiction (and not fact, as I'd assumed it was in IJ #64), its interpretation was so convincing that tourists visiting France would flock to the town of Banon for a look at Mons. Bouffier's burial site. (The town has since put up some sort of monument to commemorate its fictitious hero.) As for Mr. Back, he is presently working on a film about the St. Lawrence River, in spite of his age (mid-60s) and a physical handicap (during production of "Crac," an accident with some fixative rendered him blind in one eye). Vive Mons. Back, homme d'esprit! And thanks again, Jim.

**BOOK REVIEW:** *Storytelling in Animation: The Art of the Animated Image, Volume 2* (from The American Film Institute, \$9.95) is a very unique anthology, edited by animator/author John Canemaker. In it, various people of the industry explain how they go about breathing new life into old folktales and legends through a number of techniques (such as Caroline Leaf's method of using sand to interpret her films, like "The Street"). Mostly based on lectures given at AFI's Second Walter Lantz Conference on Animation (held last year in L.A.), each chapter gives the reader an interesting insight into the procedure of telling stories (from "Snow White" to "Who Framed Roger Rabbit") with animation. Contributors include Charles Solomon, Leo Salkin and Shamus Culhane...Speaking of Shamus, he has a new book out as well—*Animation From Script to Screen* (St. Martin's Press, \$17.95) goes into detail on how an animated film is made. Whatever position one wishes to hold in cartoon-making, Culhane explains each position carefully. Over 130 illustrations and photos help enhance each explanation. This is an excellent book for those who really desire an opportunity to participate in the field of animation, while learning about everything that goes into each cartoon. Check it out!

**SEND IN THE CLONES:** Have you noticed how many commercials on TV capitalized on the success of "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" by combining live action with animation? I'm not talking about our traditional favorites like Tony the Tiger or the Trix Rabbit, but newer and more daring ads, such as New Jersey Bell's "Cartoon Studio" spot, or Post's Super Golden Crisp cereal spot, where a live-action married couple waxes nostalgia with a "toon" Sugar Bear. The best of the bunch is the commercial for Kit 'N Kaboodle Cat Food, where a real cat interacts with a cartoon mouse (voiced by "Full House" star Dave Coulier). All I can say is, where were these films when we really needed them, before Roger hopped onto the screen?

**FRUITS (AND VEGETABLES) OF THEIR LABOR:** Some "harvested potatoes" go to the Disney Channel for displaying raw nerve in screen-animated works from their competitors, such as Warner Bros. ("Bugs Bunny, Superstar"), the Fleischer brothers ("Superman" shorts) and Hanna-Barbera ("Charlotte's Web")...A bunch of "fresh radishes" are bestowed upon the USA Network for the most unique comeback of the year, the return of Hanna-Barbera's rare football folly "Where's Huddles?", last seen on prime-time TV (CBS) nearly 20 years ago...Unfortunately, USA also earned a gross (and I do

mean gross) of "rotten pimientos" for airing "Beary Tales," which is the pits. This half-hour of hell is comprised of three cartoons from the '50s, '60s and early '70s, done in limited animation from the Walter Lantz studio in Hollywood. A similar dubious honor goes to Nickelodeon for airing "Looney Tunes" from the '60s, which were also done in limited animation...Finally, the "golden cornucopia" goes to Will "California Raisins" Vinton and Jim "And She Was" Blashfield for their animated contributions to "Moon-walker," Michael Jackson's latest audiovisual product (available here in video and seen in Japan on the big screen)...

**ANIMATION FOR SALE:** Here's an update from GALLERY LAINZBERG: "Oliver & Company" animation cels are now available, but cels from "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" won't be on sale until mid-summer. For more information (or a free catalog) write to 200 Guaranty Bldg., 3rd Ave. and 3rd St. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401; you'll be glad you did...GIFTED IMAGES is Long Island's first animation art gallery. Located at 68 Seaman Ave. (corner of Long Beach Road, 1/4 mile north of Sunrise Highway) in Rockville Centre, NY (ZIP 11570), a quaint little storefront houses a collection of rare treasures from the golden age of animation (the '30s and '40s), including cels, model sheets, and storyboard illustrations from many Walt Disney cartoons (like "Snow White," "Pinocchio" and "Dumbo"). Even if you're not interested in buying any merchandise (they also sell books and figurines), it's worth a trip from the Big Apple (if that's where you live) just to browse through this shop (it is minutes away from the LIJRR)...Besides selling animation art from "Star Trek" and "Animapalms," COLLECTOR'S CASTLE also has a large collection of animated films on video (VHS) for sale. Along with domestic works like "Heavy Metal," they carry many Japanese titles from A ("Appleseed") to Z ("Z Gundam"). For a copy of their current list of titles, write to 175 Center St., Wallingford, CT 06492.

**MIS"CEL"LANEOUS:** It should come as no surprise to anybody that "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" was the highest-grossing film of 1988, with box-office receipts to the "toon" (I couldn't resist) of over \$150 million...Former animator-turned-director Tim ("Batman" Burton's spooky spoof "Beetlejuice" came in seventh place for the year, with a box-office draw of over \$73 million. Speak of the devil, "Beetlejuice" is being made into a Saturday morning series. Nelvana is providing the animation...In the same tradition that brought Martin Short's Ed Grimley and Robin Williams' Mork from Ork to toon status, another comedian's character is about to follow suit—up in Canada, Lily Tomlin is doing an animated TV special featuring Edith Ann. No airdate for it yet...Congratulations to the Disney studio—"The New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh" won an ACE award for "Outstanding Family Entertainment, 8 Years Or Younger" for the Disney Channel (the series is currently seen Saturday mornings on ABC)...Somebody must've read my editorial in IJ #62 regarding a sequel to "Roger Rabbit" and my proposed suggestion to simply have him return to short subjects (the toon's original vocation), because the Disney studio in L.A. is working on a new "Maroon Cartoon" starring Roger, to be released with a Touchstone feature film sometime this summer...Steven Spielberg inked a deal with Warner Bros. to develop a new series of shorts for TV, "Tiny Tunes." He claims that these cartoons will contain "no violence" and "no chase scenes"—well, they'd better be pretty damned funny, 'cause they'll have nothing else going for them... Animation played an important part in Stan Freberg's life. In his new autobiography *It Only Hurts When I Laugh* (Times Books, \$19.95) the famed satirist devotes several chapters to the subject. One chapter, for instance, explains how he was hired by Warner Bros. back in the '40s to provide the voice of Baby Bear in the "Three Bears" series, and was "Boit" to Mel Blanc's "Hubie" among many other characters. His association with director Bob Clampett led to the development of the puppet show for television, "Time for Beany" (though Freberg had no connection whatsoever with the cartoon version of this series). Later on, when Stan went into advertising, some of his TV commercials featured animation from a (then-unknown) director named Bill Melendez, who would be responsible for numerous "Peanuts" specials for CBS in the years ahead. Even Stan's son, Donovan (whom you'd know from the "Encyclopedia Britannica" TV spot), played a role in the industry, as he was one of the many child actors to provide the voice of Charlie Brown for Melendez' "Peanuts" specials. Give Stan's book a look-see...Chuck Jones and Dr. Seuss are back together again (sort of)—Chuck is acting as a consultant for a new cartoon project for Turner Broadcasting. The special is based on Seuss' "Butter Battle Book," and here's the rub: Ralph Bakshi is directing! More details to come!

**OBITUARIES:** Thornton Hee, known to his compatriots as "T. Hee," died on October 30, 1988 in Montana. He was one of the best storyboard artists and caricatures for Disney, Warner Bros., UPA and Terrytoons. He also did some work in directing animation. He was 77...Joe Raposo, composer and co-creator of the award-winning TV series "Sesame Street," succumbed to lymphoma on February 5; he was 51. Besides writing songs for the show ("It's Not Easy Being Green" and the title tune) as well as for other children's programs, he also provided the musical tracks for a number of animated TV specials and films (most notably Richard Williams' "Raggedy Ann & Andy")...One of Japan's top animators, Dr. Osamu Tezuka, died February 9 of gastric cancer; he was 80. His most popular character, Tetsuwan Atom (known here in the U.S. as Astroboy), began as a regular comic strip in the magazine "Shonen" from 1951 to 1960. The characters from it were later animated for Japanese TV (later to be redubbed and syndicated in America) in 192 b/w episodes (with a number of new color episodes to be produced years

(continued next page)



later). Another manga series that was animated was Jungle Tatei (or "Jungle Emperor," known here as "Kimba the White Lion"), which had 80 full-color episodes (nearly two-thirds of which were presented on syndicated TV in America; the other episodes were seen most recently on CBN, under the title "Leo the Lion"). Among the many shorts and feature-length films on which Tezuka worked were "Cleopatra: Queen of Sex," "A Thousand and One Nights," "Jumping" and "Broken-Down Film" (the latter two works were featured in some Expanded Entertainment anthologies)...Radio and TV actor George O'Hanlon died at the age of 76 in mid-February. He was best remembered as the voice of George Jetson, and had just finished recording the voice for "Jetsons: The Movie," coming out sometime this fall from Universal.

CAVEAT EMPTOR: I'd like to stand corrected on something I mentioned last issue—the short subject that accompanied "The Land Before Time" was shorter than I'd thought. Unlike the complete version presented on AMAZING STORIES a few years back, Brad Bird's "Family Dog" abruptly ended after the first eight minutes (shades of the early '80s, when an upper Manhattan cinema was screening Mel Brooks' "The Twelve Chairs" with, as an added treat, Leo Salkin's "The 2000-Year-Old Man," which had originally aired on CBS several years previously; unlike the half-hour special, however, this presentation ran about ten minutes long).

## One-Armed Band-Aid

by Larry Stolte

Call me Lefty. Vegas is my town. I call the shots around here. But I've worked hard to get where I am. Twenty-four hours a day; never a break. I'm probably the official greeter for this city—always shaking everyone's hand, over and over again. Though I have only one arm, I feel my reputation as a bandit is unwarranted.

This is no cakewalk. How would you feel if you were constantly in a smoky room, people repeatedly tugging on your arm and feeding you dollar tokens in hopes that you excrete back multiples of them? Still, it's a living. Oh, who am I kidding? I enjoy it. You wouldn't believe how much money I make per hour. I meet lots of interesting people, too. Of course, they're not all that interesting when they play me. That's because I hypnotize them. They're helpless. I could clean 'em out, but I'm a nice machine. That's not to say I'm philanthropic, no sir. The only time anyone won really big off me was the day I was sick. My rows just kind of glazed over, and I coughed up three "Super Jackpots" on the center line. I was in a daze. Next thing I know, the news guys with the colorless grey matter are here, the IRS man has his wheelbarrow out, and some guy who looks like he plays lead guitar for the Bears gets a check for a million bucks. Good thing, too. I don't think I could ever unload a million tokens; no one's that regular.

Most of the time I just toy around with people, collect my fee, and let 'em go. Sometimes I take very little. Just today, that young bride came in. Four words describe her. Three of them are gullible. The other is pretty. She was so impressed with her brand-new wedding ring. The center stone was a kernel of Minute Rice. I'm sure her husband told her it was a half-carat diamond. Scuzzy guy. I hope his wedding band is engraved, "My Sweet Groom, Eat Poison and Die."

Anyway, I could tell she liked me. I had to break it off before something got started. If I would have responded positively at all, say by showing her a few cherries or three oranges, she would have been hooked. She'd have brought the car title up to the cashier. I could have cleaned her out with my arm tied behind my back.

But I gave her five zilches in a row. Nothing even close. She bolted quickly. I'm sure it hurt her, but it was for the best. I just hope she doesn't go to a machine that will take advantage of her. Nice kid.

So, you ask, why didn't I give her a Super Jackpot if I liked her so much? Because I'm a professional and I'd lose my credibility, that's why. Besides, at the training meetings the casino managers made it clear that one or two big jackpots were okay, but don't overdo it. When I gave away the Super Jackpot, they merely gave me an enema and reset my viscera. But if I do it again soon, five of Marvin Hagler's bodyguards drop me off at the bottom of Lake Mead. I don't even need cement overshoes.

You humans are funny when you step into a casino. You turn into hypnotic conventioners with boxcar breath and snake eyes. You might make ten dollars an hour, but you'll force-feed me dollars faster than a TV evangelist will collect them. You could pump in ten dollars a minute and not bat an eye. Of course, there's always that chance that you'll win a million dollars. There's also a chance that Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter will form a barber-shop quartet with a team of dancing pandas and sing "Danny Boy" at Ronald Reagan's funeral. Let's face it—your commuter plane back to Buckahoe, Iowa will crash-land on Mars before you squeeze a million out of me. My next Super Jackpot is due on the 27th of Hell Freezing Over.

I love the guys who come in her to snarf free drinks. I can read them like a See Spot Run book. Take the guy yesterday, for instance. He's doing pirouettes around the casino, listening for that key word. Finally, his radar picks it up—"Cocktails?" He hears it again. "Cocktails?" The waitress is approaching.

He makes a beeline for the nearest slot machine—me—and plops down on the stool. They'll give him a free drink if he is gambling. As the waitress approaches, he puts a load of tokens in my

bucket, feeds me one dollar token, and turns to the waitress and says, "I'll have a beer, please."

He plans on giving me only one dollar and then loitering until his free beer arrives. I have different plans for him. I show him cherries and disgorge two dollars just to get his attention. It works. What the heck, he figures, it's the house's dollar. I taste another token and spit back five.

"Hah," he mumbles, "I found a hot machine."

Right. This is up there with "You look like a nice guy, Ted Bundy," or "What could a few bad O-rings hurt?"

I keep the next five coins. On the last one, I come just a hair away from showing him three big red sevens and the big jackpot. From the look on his face, I know he's mine. I could have him bark like a dog and sing Cambodian drinking songs. He looks around for his beer, but the waitress is still grinding the hops. He starts playing with his own money. I show no mercy. His free beer arrives. It has cost him \$88. But he would have paid \$200 for a free beer on principle.

How about the old lady that plays two machines simultaneously—me and number 34. Number 34—I'll call him Thirty for short—and I team up and confuse the hell out of her. She'll play both of us, win fourteen in a row off me, lose fourteen in a row off Thirty. She decides to play only me. She loses fourteen in a row. She plays both of us, loses fourteen more in a row off me, wins fourteen in a row off Thirty. Then she plays only Thirty, loses fourteen in a row. A guy walks up to me and starts to put a coin in. The old lady pulls a gun on him, thus convincing him that he doesn't want to play me. The old lady eventually loses her money and walks away in a daze, ready to sleep on the craps table, play strip solitaire, or go around swallowing roulette balls.

Today, one of the Solid Gold Dancers approached me. Figuring a woman of her means needs significant sustenance, I gave her a few bucks so she could tread ground to the nearest buffet and take out an aisle of entrees.

Sometimes, I just can't get the message across to humans. Take those two guys last week—The Bowers Boys West. In they come, smoking those cigars that smell like when a skunk eats Mexican food and calling the waitress "honey." These Special Olympics decathletes sat down with a potato sack full of dollar tokens and started to play number Thirty and me. Neither of us wanted to play. We didn't care about their money; we just wanted them gone.

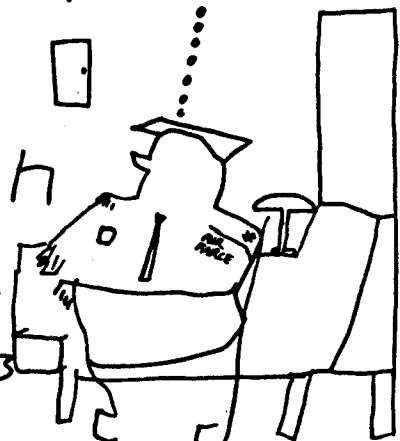
We showed them nothing but losers. You know what? They didn't leave. The more they lost, the more they figured the machines were due. Apparently they and reality took diverging flights. It took hours, but this "synchronized losing team" finally lost it all. Pity. Off they went, probably to feed caviar to the pigeons.

I'm a modest guy. My place in the history books won't warrant a footnote, but if President Bush could get General Secretary Gorbachev to attend a summit meeting in our town, I could be a hero. Give Corby one pull on me, and I'll set the hook. He'd be a stark-raving, greedy, esurient capitalist before I released him. Yes—Russian capitalism, democracy, free elections...I could get him to vote the Hitler-Eichmann ticket if I wanted to. But I won't overdo it. A Bally machine that takes rubles would be just fine.

"ROTC...ON THE COMEBACK TRAIL—  
The govt. now provides scholarships to abt. 25% of the cadets...  
The promise of receiving early assignment to leader ship positions an added attraction.  
As another senior cadet at Chry. Newport College, 22-yr-old Eric Cipriano, sees it:  
"I'll be making management decisions as soon as I graduate. How many businesses give you the same chance right out of school?" ...  
US NEWS & WORLD REPORT, May 16, 1983



LET'S SEE—  
Shall I just Kill  
adult men today...  
OR Shall I Kill  
women & children too?



# equipment control

PART 4

by Nick Dana

In Frichman's lab I found only a third-year undergraduate in journalism who hadn't been able to find a work-study opening with a more appropriate department. "I tried the libraries, but everyone wants to work in the libraries. I tried paste-up down in Printing and Duplicating, but the boss there is a complete asshole, so I ended up here," he explained. He was a trifle gay, but not particularly offensive.

"You know," I said, "a journalist could have a field day in a place like this."

"For what?" he laughed, "writing exposes on the sexual activity of cancerous pituitary cells in rats' brains? People are looking for hard news these days, not puff pieces on the sciences."

"Who's talking about puff pieces? What about the fifth floor of this building, for instance? What about a little investigative work?"

"You mean down where all those fuckers are dying? Shit, man, you're not going to catch my sweet ass down there."

"You call yourself a reporter?"

"Who said anything about being a reporter, dear man? I'm majoring in journalism because I intend to own a newspaper, not work for one. Go ahead and tag that tacky Sorvall, and tell Gould to fuck himself." The kymograph, however, had never been in this lab. The guy had seen an oscilloscope on the ninth floor only once, and that was something the electronics repairman had brought with him to check out the EEG.

"Just tell Gould to fuck himself," he mentioned again. "He's so fucking macho, you know, but he's just like an old hen with his picking and bitching and complaining. He knows we never had the kymograph up here. All our data goes direct to the computer." I tagged a half dozen more modems.

"You might try down in Buscema's lab on the fifth floor, though. Be careful down there. You never know when one of those poor suckers is going to keel over in the middle of a sentence. You might ask for Kimberly Basil. She's the only one down there that isn't a robot yet."

"She got a glass eye, sort of turquoise?"

"Has she gotten the glass eye already?" he sighed. "Oh dear, she was such a good friend."

"I already talked to her and she sent me down to Animal Behavior Modification who sent me to the Surgical Section who sent me up here. I was to a dozen places before I got to Kimberly."

"Still," he said, "your best bet's to go back and check with Kim. She'll take the time to check things out for you. She's not like the rest of the assholes around here. We used to be roommates."

"Oh," I said and left.

I walked back to the lab where I'd first talked to Kimberly and found a different girl sitting at the lab bench. "May I help you?" she asked. She had no grey streak in her hair and the weirdness in her eyes was only the fluorescent light bouncing off her contacts.

"I was in here earlier looking for a kymograph and I talked with a Kimberly Basil. I was wondering if she's still around. I could use her help."

"Basil?" she asked, checking a Rolodex on her desk. "Kimberly Basil? Are you sure it wasn't the next room down?"

"I'm sure," I said. "She was sitting right here. She was about your height, medium length auburn hair with a gray stripe up here, a glass eye, sort of turquoise. The real eye was hazel." "Well," she coughed, "I wouldn't really know too much. I just started here a couple of hours ago. I understood the last girl transferred out."

"Transferred out?" I said. "When did she transfer out? I just talked with her this morning."

"Maybe it was yesterday you talked with her."

"Yesterday was Sunday. I drank all day yesterday. You won't catch me hanging around a tomb like this on Sundays."

"Well, maybe it was Friday then."

"Listen young lady, this is my first day on the job, and I spoke with Miss Kimberly Basil this morning at around 9 o'clock in this room concerning the location of a kymograph which I am still

trying to locate in order to decal the item and get it on Pathology's inventory. She was sitting right there, dammit."

"What seems to be the problem? I could hear you two all the way down in my office." A stocky man about 6 feet 3 inches tall stood in the doorway smoking a pipe. He ran the fingers of his right hand through his gray streak. Then he poked his glasses back up to the bridge of his nose with a stiff index finger. He seemed to be staring out the window.

"Oh, Doctor Gestetner," the new girl jabbered, "maybe you can help this gentleman. He's looking for a Kymery Basil and a kymograph."

"Kymograph," I said, "an oscilloscope camera."

"Kimberly Basil left us earlier this morning," Doctor Gestetner said, anticipating my second correction and its question.

"But I was talking to her just a couple of hours ago."

"These things happen," Gestetner explained. "She'd been trying to transfer for months. She didn't like it here. She didn't fit in. You know how it is. If you're unhappy with your job it's hard to do a good job. She was here and now she is gone. Miss Mooney is her replacement. In a week or two, I'm certain, she'll be every bit as competent at handling our equipment problems as Miss Basil was."

"Thank you, Doctor Gestetner," Miss Mooney blushed. I counted twenty or thirty gray strands in the fifth floor streak area that I had not seen before.

"Your kymograph, by the way," Doctor Gestetner said, slapping his heavy hand on my shoulder, "is in Doctor Ripley's lab, right down the hall, third door on the right."

"Thanks," I said, heading out the door. As I walked out the door, he continued with his fixed stare. I had the uneasy feeling that both the doctor's eyes were made of glass. I checked the board at the elevator, but Kimberly Basil's name hadn't been added. Somehow, though, I wasn't reassured. I pushed a dollar through the flying pig's skull anyway.

I finally found the kymograph. Dr. Ripley had it hooked up to a rack of oscilloscopes, wave generators, modulators, preamps, and amps, which also had to be decalated. Dr. Ripley was eating an alfalfa sprout and cream cheese on sunflower bread sandwich while I took down the necessary information.

"That must be an interesting job," he said, "going all over from building to building. You must get to see everything."

"It's not bad," I said. "It's better than hanging turkeys."

"Well, yes," the doctor said, "I would assume it is." His elbow rested on an operating table to which Henrietta was bound.

The top of her skull had been sawed off. Tiny wires sprayed from the top of her brain like flight plans on an air traffic controller's map. Air traffic controllers, by the way, have one of the shortest lifespans of any occupational title listed with the United States Department of Labor. If an air traffic controller fucks up, a couple of hundred people just like the folks he lives down the street from can die. Many have nervous breakdowns and quite a few commit suicide, but few have ever fucked up. This helps illustrate Cosmo's definition of poetic justice: the more important your job, the shorter your life. This is usually cross-referenced to Cosmo's dictum: big shots live forever.

Henrietta was tied chest down, her hands at her sides, a small styrofoam block propping up her chin. Her mask was attached to another Harvard Respirator. Its serial number was 667. "Kiss, kiss, kiss," I went as I stood up, not really conscious of what I was doing.

"You've already met Henrietta before?" Doctor Ripley asked.

"She's probably the most intelligent specimen I've ever had the opportunity to study."

Then I noticed something odd about Henrietta's eyes. Her pupils were constricting. They shrank down until they looked like pinheads stuck in her irises. They quickly dilated again to the size of dimes. She began whirling her eyes around and around, then back and forth.

"She's something, isn't she?" Doctor Ripley said, as Henrietta tensed her mouth in a painful grin, and I followed a tangent off her eyes which led to Henrietta's left hand. It was held by a canvas belt even with her mid-thigh. The index finger was pointing at her ass.

"That's the second time today she's told me to kiss her ass," I said.

"She's really something," Ripley said, and we both went back to our work.

LINESS by BC<sup>1</sup>

'SCUSE ME!

WHOA!

WHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE

# THE CONTINUING SAGA OF DR. IGUANA

## THE STORY SO FAR.

by Ken Burke

### ROBIN GIVENS/MIKE TYSON: A SATIRICAL SPECULATION

"Somewhere in the brutal being of Mike Tyson is a tender child deserving of love, affection, and second chances. Somewhere behind the beauty and ambition of Robin Givens is a plain girl, confident of her worth, praying for that glorious moment when she will be viewed as lover and soul-mate by her man. Neither wants their love-life based on their worth as commodities, but would rather view their pairing off as the predestined machinations of an inevitable romance. If neither were famous and environment permitted, this could've been a marriage celebrated in heaven. Instead their messy divorce seems to be the infectious spawn of hell." - Excerpted from INTERPRETIVE INTERLUDES

Robin Givens has just returned from a strategy meeting with her divorce attorney and her mother; she is unsettled and her movements random. She has new lines to learn for the press, an episode of "Head Of The Class" to shoot, and clothes and make-up to decide on for photography sessions, but she cannot fix her mind solidly on any of these tasks. Instead she begins to root through the many boxes of "loot" that her mother, Ruth Roper, has taken from the Tyson mansion.

Sitting on the floor pulling the items out one at a time, Robin gives each the full weight of her attention. Albums of newspaper clippings, expensive trinkets, never-worn men's clothing, wadded-up cash, comic books, boxing trophies from Mike Tyson's amateur days cause Robin to ask aloud, "Why did Mother take this stuff? It's all Michael's." By way of response, her thoughts flicker back to her mother's words as she directed her to empty the couple's joint accounts so Robin could "get something of value from the marriage before a community property settlement gets bogged down in litigation."

Mother was always full of "good advice" like that since the beginning when she set up the whole deal between Robin and Mike.

"Oh lord, that man is butt-ugly! I'll bet he'd be grateful on bended knees that a pretty girl like you would even think about giving him a tumble."

When friends asked what a brainy, debutante-type like Robin could possibly find in common with a former mugger, thief, and practicing late-night street-thug like Mike, it was Ruth Roper who supplied Robin's answers.

"He's rich, world-famous, and he's dumb as a post. Three things that you should always look for in a potential husband."

Mother's snide comments were said only to "family" in private. Michael had no idea how Mrs. Roper really felt about him; to him she was always sweet as pie.

"Win, lose, or draw, this is going to be GREAT for your career. You couldn't buy this amount of publicity. I tell you something, if I were a few years younger I'd land this chump all by myself."

When Robin's Roper-inspired hard brilliance and bitter fire successfully goaded bursts of violent anger from Mike (who had been expecting tenderness and open sweet talk), Mother comforted her frightened shaking daughter.

"There, there, darling. Don't worry, Mother's here and she's taking it all down; she's got witnesses and proof all lined up. And it doesn't matter whether he hit you with an open hand or a closed fist; any time a licensed boxer strikes you, it's a felony offense. I can't wait to see what our divorce lawyers are going to do with THAT. Don't cry, sweetie, let's try and get your mind off of it by talking about something else. Do you think we should go for a percentage of his income or merely the largest cash settlement in New York State history?"

Having the full benefit of her mother's advice and experience in these matters had surely prepared Robin for a successful, lucrative divorce with only a minimum of time invested. What she hadn't been prepared for, or even understood, was that she had fallen in love with Mike Tyson.

There are chords that ring true for Robin whenever Michael is with her, and now, in the company of only Michael's possessions and her memories, those chords began to faintly vibrate anew.

There were many sweet pure moments, mostly in their early courtship, and less frequently (though equally significant) in their brief stormy marriage. Those were times when Robin and Mike related simply and honestly, when their exchanges of emotion and exploration resonated deep and emerged with creations of new identities for the young lovers.

Robin's identity as Michael's lover was one she would never, could never assume in front of her mother. Ruth Roper's influence was so pervasive that even the briefest visit or phone call was enough to poison their rolls of intimacy. Yet Robin understood all too well that she could not place the entire blame on her mother. She knew of her mother's plan from the start and did nothing to bring it to a halt. Indeed, it was Robin herself who made the tough prizefighter vulnerable to Mrs. Roper's cynical predatory views. Her complicity made her guilty of violating the primary rule of young romance: protect your love.

And now, alone with all her regrets, resentments, anger and guilt, one clear thought emerges: Robin wants Michael back!

But how? Public sentiment has painted her as such a treacherous goldigger that even Tyson himself has started referring to Robin and her mother as "slime." What could she possibly do to earn back his trust? Or, for that matter, even get his attention? And even if she did, how could she deal with Michael's frightening tendency to lash out at her?

Sighing and near tears, Robin continues to pick through Michael's belongings. Absentmindedly she leafs through one of the many martial arts magazines in Tyson's collection. Her eyes fall to an article titled "Gaining Respect Through Self-Defense." She speedily reads and rereads the piece with great interest. It gives her an idea. A wonderfully dramatic, make-or-break type of idea.

Robin spends the rest of her day on the phone. She cancels appointments, barks orders, makes inquiries, and swears anyone in whom she confides to absolute secrecy. The only person or importance whom Robin does NOT call is her mother. She opts to relay a message to the formidable talker through her answering service instead. For the first time ever, Robin Givens takes a shot at doing something without her mother's input, advice, or interference, and it feels pretty damned good.

Several weeks later...

Robin is home and being very deliberate about her actions. She will not speak with her mother, though the woman is frantic and has blathered to the press that she suspects that her daughter is the victim of "foul play." Robin is not talking to the press, her friends, her agents, or even the producers of the sitcom on which she appears. She will only speak to Mike Tyson. It has been days since she put out the word that she'd like to see him. The longer "Iron Mike" keeps her waiting the more Robin wonders if her feelings for Michael were mere delusions.

Finally, there is a familiar rumbling in the hallway. There is no mistaking those footsteps; Mike Tyson has arrived and, from the sound of it, is in no mood to be trifled with.

"Good," whispers a confident Robin, "all the better."

Tyson blasts through the door and yells, "Bitch, where's my shit?!"

So blinded by rage is the heavyweight boxing champ that he does not seem to notice that his wife is decked out in kick-boxing attire complete with foot togs, and taped hands covered with black vinyl golfing gloves.

"Your stuff's all here, Michael. The money from our joint accounts, your trophies, everything. I just thought we ought to have a little talk."

"TALK!? What in hell do WE have to talk about? You STOLE from me, you lied to me...I oughta KILL you, you greedy slut! If you want to talk, let's talk about how I'm going to kill you!"

Though stung by his sharp words, Robin fixes a cocky gaze into her menacing husband's eyes, shifts her position so she is balanced on the balls of her feet, and challenges, "You want to fight me, is that it, Michael? Well, come ON with it if you think you're so tough."

Disdainfully, Tyson spits, "Yeah, right! Where's your bodyguards? Working videotape cameras to use as evidence in court? Shit, I'm not THAT stupid."

"There's no one here but you and me, Michael. And...I'm ready to KICK YOUR ASS."

"Hah!"

"I think you're afraid to fight me. Afraid that I'll find out that you really are the cowardly street-scum that the reporters say you are. You know they say you're mentally retarded. Probably a homo too. Is that it, Mike? Is your macho bullshit really just a coverup for the fact that you really like boys?"

That last crack does it. Tyson lunges at Givens, who neatly sidesteps out of his way.

Seething with mayhem, Tyson doubles the fist of his right hand and launches a wicked cross at Givens' face. Robin avoids the punch with nimble grace and instantly goes her husband one better — she counters with a right uppercut that snaps Mike's head back.

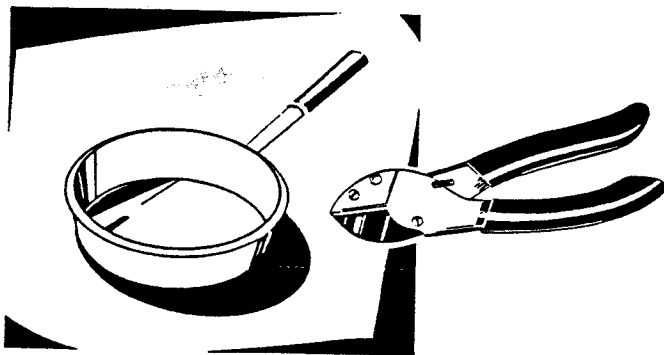
"You're dead meat now, bitch!" screams Tyson. He leaps forward as if to corner Givens and shower thunderous combinations upon her the way he has so many of his ring opponents. But just as he hunkers into his fighting crouch, Robin pivots and swings a spinning back-kick right into Tyson's face. It nearly drops him.

Wildly enraged, Tyson RUNS at Givens, who manages to keep Mike at bay with assorted punches, kicks, and a running stream of conversation.

"So you want to HIT me, eh Michael? (Jab) Why would a great big man like you (jab) want to hit a sweet little thing (jab) like me? (Hook) Didn't anyone ever tell you (jab) that you're NOT supposed to hit GIRLS? (Kick) If your mother didn't tell you (jab), your trainers didn't tell you (jab), the boxing commission (jab, jab), or even Cus D'Amato wouldn't tell you (hook), then I'll tell you (cross). You're (KICK) NOT (KICK) SUPPOSED (KICK) TO (KICK) HIT ME! (Jab-jab-jab-hook, cross)"

Givens' punches mean little to Tyson; they are merely mosquito-fast irritants that bounce off his face and arms like raindrops. It is the perfectly-timed and executed kicks that bring him up short. He never quite knows when to expect them, and the togged feet always catch him lunging forward making their impact greater. Robin's kicks raise welts on Tyson's face that he can feel. A small part of his anger is giving way to respect for his speedy kick-boxing wife; still more is giving way to amusement.

"What's the matter, Michael? (Jab) Can't take it? (Jab) Don't like getting hit? (Hook) WELL, NEITHER DO I! (Kick-kick-kick) You're NOT supposed to hit me. (Jab) You're supposed to (jab) LOVE ME! (Uppercut) Dammit, Michael! (Kick) Does THIS (jab) feel like 13



MARK NEVILLE 089

*(Continued from previous page)*

LOVE (jab) to you? (KICK)"

Though her sharply defined muscles boast weeks of training with the finest kick-boxing coaches money could buy, Robin Givens is tiring rapidly. Husband Mike is twice as heavy as she is, and his high-pressure style of attack is forcing her to fight at a faster pace than she had intended. In addition, her constant banter is disrupting her breathing and the lack of oxygen is causing the edges of her vision to turn pink and cloudy. She is still eluding Michael's vicious swings and grasps, but at this accelerated rate she won't be able to last much longer.

Trying to buy time and stabilize her breathing, Robin stops kicking and punching and bounces in position, shifting from her right-hand boxing stance to her left, just outside of Tyson's reach. Suddenly Mike feints to his right and leaps forward just as Robin starts a move to her left and he GRABS her! He is about to strike her with an open hand when Robin cries out in a low guttural voice, "BREAK!"

Years of boxing instinct compel Tyson to heed the time-honored referee's command, and he lets go. Robin dances away from him, grinning.

Dumbfounded, Mike Tyson stands flat-footed with his hands on his hips, staring at Robin, who is doing the "Ali Shuffle" at the other end of the room.

"Wait a minute...Robin?"

"Yeah?"

"What would you have done if I didn't break?"

"I would've started to take away points. Are you gonna fight or what?"

"Take away POINTS! Ah-ha-ha, shit. Take away points. Ah-ha-ha." Then, smiling, Mike Tyson waves a dismissing hand at his wife and chuckles as he says, "No, that's it. You win. NO MAS, NO MAS! Heh-heh. You're the champ. Shit...take away points, that's good, ha-ha..."

Mike plops down on the floor and sits laughing to himself. Robin brings over a couple of plastic bottles filled with water and sits next to him.

"Michael, I'll squirt water into your mouth if you squirt water into mine."

"Okay."

Several hits and misses with the water later, Michael and Robin are wet, giggling, and cozy. There is soft talk, kisses, little jokes, and trembling as the couple touch each other tenderly. During an embrace, one of Robin's gloves snags in Tyson's shirt; she tries to take them off, but finds that she can't.

"Michael!" she shrieks. "My hands!"

Tyson groans once he sees Robin's hands. Her fingers are swollen and purplish jutting out of the fingerless gloves and handwraps. Unable to pull off the gloves, Tyson rips them apart, and then proceeds to gently unwrap the tape from his wife's knuckles.

"The tape was too tight, hon..."

"But I thought it was supposed to be tight."

"Yeah, but not so tight that it cuts off your circulation."

"Oh damn," whines Givens, "I wanted to do this RIGHT."

"You did okay. It takes professional trainers years to learn how to wrap hands properly. I never do my own...Hey, you know something, Champ?"

"What's that, Champ?"

"You've got a pretty nice jab."

"Yeah?"

"Uh-huh. Only sometimes when you throw it you forget to keep your elbows tucked in; that leaves you open to body shots. You gotta protect yourself at all times, you know."

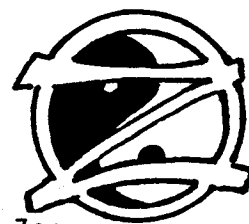
Robin smirks and replies, "Oh yeah? Then how do you protect yourself against THIS?"

She sprays more water from her bottle right into Tyson's grinning face. The giggling resumes. Mike massages Robin's swollen hands, and they talk into the night. It takes a surprisingly short amount of time for Robin and Michael to slip into their secret identities as lovers.

As night scatters into sunrise, vows spoken and silent are made and sworn to. Robin's mom will have to get used to seeing or speaking to them only once in awhile, for Robin's sake more than Michael's. To the outside world they will always by Tyson the prizefighter and Givens the actress, but at home theirs will be a self-image much easier to live up to—two people terribly in love, trying to make a life together.

# Zenarchy STORIES

by Ho Chi Zen



## TEACHINGS OF THE YELLOW TURBAN SOCIETY (PHILOSOPHY)

"Reason, assisted by Experience, discloses to man the laws of Nature and Society; then says to him: 'These laws are those of necessity itself. No man has made them; no man imposes them upon you. They have been gradually discovered, and I exist only to bear testimony to them.'"

Such words may look like they were quoted from one of the many translations of Lao Tzu. Actually, they were written by P-J Proudhon, from whom Karl Marx is said to have borrowed the concept of Natural Law, renaming it Historical Necessity.

"The Tao of which it is possible to speak is not the Eternal Tao," is among the many alternative ways of translating the opening line of the TAO TE CHING.

In other words, study of the Tao or Natural Law is like calculus. Indicating the precise course of action dictated by logical necessity—requiring the assistance of Experience as well as Reason in this case—is never quite certainly possible. Since the laws of General Semantics apply as well—the verbal map not being the territory it describes—there are no last words in the dialectic of Natural Law, Historical Necessity or Taoism. While greater precision in describing the logically necessary in words is always possible, there is no guarantee that Lao Tzu's words, my words or even Euclid's words are the final words, the most precise of all possible. "The Name that can be named is not the Eternal Name" or concept.

There is something we can infer with the most rigorous logic to exist although it is without tangible form and yet we can only approach its exact nature, and here the intuition of the poet is sometimes more helpful in conveying the idea. It is the great vacuity, the trackless track by means of which events fall into happening this way instead of that.

To paraphrase Lao Tzu: Logical necessity does nothing, and yet by means of it is everything always accomplished.

## KEEPING THE NONDUALIST MIND

Ancient Vietnamese Zen Master Da-Bao was asked by his disciple, Dinh-Huong: "How can we find our own true mind?"

"Try to find it," the master replied.

Listening to this answer, Dinh-Huong became anxious. "Everybody has such an idea, not only myself?"

"So, you have understood yet?" Da-Bao asked.

"When I understand it's the same as when I don't," Dinh-Huong told him.

"Keep that mind!" exclaimed Da-Bao, adding afterwards, "From now on you should use that mind for self-realization and to help other people."

(Adapted from Buddhism and Zen in Vietnam by Thich Thien-An, published by Charles E. Tuttle of Rutland, Vermont, and Tokyo, 1975.)

## YES AND NO

According to The Platform Sutra, Shen Hui asked the Sixth Patriarch: "When you sit in meditation, High Master, do you see or not?"

The Master hit him three times with his stick and asked: "When I hit you, does it hurt or not?"

Shen Hui: "It both does and does not hurt."

The Master: "I both see and do not see."

Shen Hui: "How can you both see and not see?"

The Master: "What I see are the waverings and wanderings of my own mind. I do not see the right and wrong and good and bad of other people. This is my seeing and not seeing."

## CONVENIENT LOCATION

"When enlightened to the self-nature, the living being is a Buddha. If confused about the self-nature, the Buddha is a living being. When the self-nature is impartial, the living being is a Buddha. When the self-nature is biased, the Buddha is a living being.

"If your thoughts are devious and malicious, the Buddha dwells within the living being, but by means of one impartial thought, the living being becomes a Buddha. Our minds have their own Buddha and that Buddha is the true Buddha...Therefore the Sutras say, 'The mind produced, all dharmas are produced; the mind extinguished, all dharmas are extinguished.'—The Sixth Patriarch

"Living beings and the Buddha are a thought apart," says Master Hua in his commentary (pp. 305-6, The Sixth Patriarch's Sutra, Sino-American Buddhist Association, 1977).

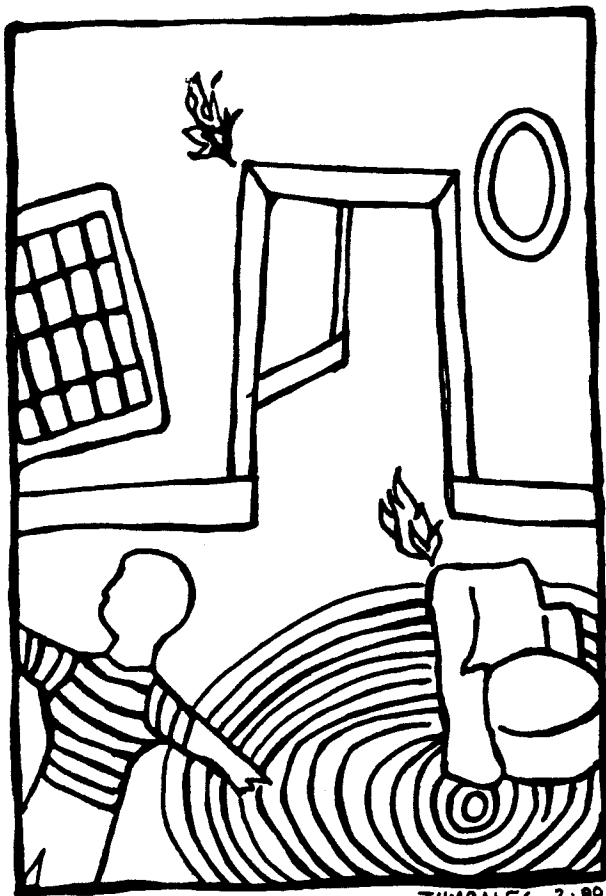
## AN ANCIENT MIRROR

"You people, each of you has an ancient mirror. All ten-thousand forms—of every shape—each appears in it. If you go to the longness or the shortness to understand, in the end you will never be able to find it." —Yuan Wu, The Blue Cliff Record

## THEOLOGY IS BLASPHEMY

Any god that can be called a god is not the true god; any reality which can be domesticated is not the ultimate reality. Religion is only the wreckage of human attempts to tame God.

—Ho Chi Zen



### BEING SMARTER

Then the rest of us is no excuse to avoid your share of blue collar work which is roughly one divided by the world population. Pursue that other career on your odd age years and send S.A.S.E. to: **EVEN AGE WORKERS**

Box 2243 - Youngstown, Ohio, 44504

### OVERHEARD AT **PATHMARK**

by Steven F. Scharff

During the summer of several years past, I was at a local supermarket, trying to decide on a carton of ice cream. As I stood by the far end of the case, near the half gallons, my attention was drawn to two figures to my left. They were over by the "novelties" (cartoon character ice pops, Klondike Bars, etc.) and were obviously a mother and daughter combination. The daughter was somewhere in her later preteen years, and frowned when her mother opened the display case doors to take a box of Oreo ice cream sandwich cookies.

"Why are you getting those?" she asked.

"Well," the mother began, sounding very much like June Cleaver, "your father likes them!"

"Mom, you know Dad has to cut down on stuff like that."

"What are you saying?"

"Mom," bringing her voice down, "he's fat!"

Her mother gave an almost staged shocked look. "Your father is not fat! He's just...a little tubby."

"Tubby!? He's a blimp!" bringing her voice down in volume as she added each syllable.

"Stop it!"

"He's obese!"

Other began to growl, "...Stop...IT!"

Daughter brought her voice down to a hiss. "He's... got...tits!"

The mother seemed to shake off her daughter's observations, and continued down the aisle, where I stood with my back to them, watching their reflections on the glass doors pass before me - the mother with her nose in the air, and the daughter behind her, raising her arms as if in defeat and shaking her head in bewilderment.

## TALES OF SUBURBIA

by Kathy Stadalsky

The rather unnerving beep of the telephone brought an abrupt end to Brittany's day dream.

"Hullo?"

"Hi, it's David."

"David! Jeezus, I figured you'd left town or died or something! God, it's been ages!"

"Quite a while, huh?"

"Jeez, yeah, at least six months!"

"Yeah, that'd be about right. I usually last about six months."

"Aww, David, you got canned?"

"Yes sirree."

"Shit, I'm sorry. I thought this one would work out. I kinda liked...Michael, wasn't it?"

"Yeah. I kinda liked him too." He laughed humorlessly. "Did I ever tell you he used to be in the marines? He gave me this t-shirt that said 'The Marines Are Looking For A Few Good Men'."

"Charming."

"He was a fabulous guy, Britt."

"Sure he was. That's why he dumped you."

"It just wasn't meant to be, that's all..." David said philosophically.

"Yeah, right. Bullshit. You're hopeless, David-doll."

"Gee, thanks for the words of hope, inspiration and comfort, Britt!"

"All I know is it's been a long time, David. I haven't seen you in six months, and I miss you. There's other people in the world besides Mr. Right, and we love you, too!"

"Thanks, Britt."

"Listen, why don't you come stay here till you find another place--or another Marine, okay?"

"I don't know..."

"You're out on your can, right?"

"Yeah, but, it'd never work..."

"You got any huge sums of money stashed away?"

"No," he admitted. "But, Britt, it'd really..."

"Bullshit, bullshit, bullshit! Pack your bags, David-doll and get your buns over here. Your future awaits!"

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$

That night he moved all his worldly belongings in Brittany's two bedroom apartment:

Assorted clothing, and miscellaneous items from the Army Surplus over on Market. The literary works of Mary Renault, and the vocal works of Liza Minelli, Bette Midler and Donna Summer. Two art deco lamps and a tiffany hanging lamp. A sculpture made out of sea shells. Two pipes, four roach clips, a third of a kilo of Columbian, a bamboo water bong and a six month script for black mollies.

Brittany hugged him.

"You saved my life, again, Britt."

"Bullshit. Let's set some ground rules, though."

"Yeah, I know. Wipe out the sink in the morning, scrub out the tub once a week and don't leave unmentionables hanging over the shower curtain rod."

"You know what I'm talking about David-doll."

"Yeah, well, we've each got a bedroom..."

"That's right. And the living room is off limits for trysting, right?"

"Naturally."

"And if I bring home any either-ors you'll keep your paws off, right?"

"Brittany! What kind of man do you take me for? I'm shocked, I'm appalled! I'm..."

"Spare me. What about that dancer last year?"

"Oooh, yeah," David leered. "He was pretty cool, wasn't he?"

Brittany rolled her eyes and threw a pillow at him.

After all, it was a "throw pillow".

(to be continued)

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# OVERHEARD

at America's Lunch Counters



"Rabbis don't shave 'cause they're outside the military."

## Talk Show Host Confidential

by G. Michael Dobbs

I met Paul Harvey in the True Value Hardware Store up in Amherst, MA last week. He was buying the True Value of the month—a sturdy, dependable Ray-O-Vac Commander Flashlight. It was a beauty, all right, and I could understand why Paul was taking advantage of its great price. Not to mention the friendly service you always get at your neighborhood True Value Hardware Store. When I left him, he was looking for Roach-Pruf: Paul looked like one of those aliens from THIS ISLAND EARTH, the ones with the high foreheads, not the ones with the exposed brains and lobster claws. Maybe that's why he's so smart. Maybe that's why he shops at True Value.

On my way out, I passed a Pepsi machine and there was Michael J. Fox. He was looking for change to buy a Diet Pepsi, and I gladly gave him four quarters for a dollar. He was a little in a hurry as he had locked an angry dog in his truck in order to get out of his truck to buy the Pepsi. Naturally, he didn't want the dog to tear up his seat or go to the bathroom in the cab. I helped him distract the dog so he could leave. We both waved and smiled at each other as he drove off. I liked him. He was nice and didn't threaten me.

At the grocery store, I had intended to buy an En-Cor frozen entree for dinner that night, but I didn't want Al from HAPPY DAYS coming over to my house. The last time he and his family came over to help me finish a two-pound family-sized frozen entree he broke my toilet seat. He's a big guy. In fact, he's much bigger than he looks on television. And his nose is very big. It was difficult to avoid him, as he is always hanging around the frozen food section.

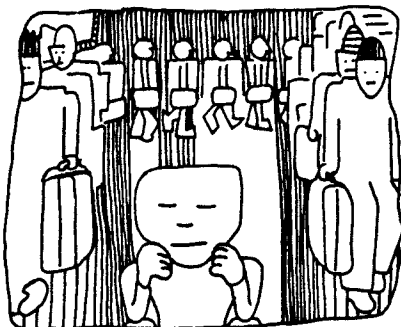
I did run into Marvin Hagler and The Boz in the personal hygiene aisle. They got into a fight telling me which deodorant I should buy. I eventually had to smell their armpits in order to decide. I chose the one Marvin was promoting because I was genuinely afraid of him. Marvin hit The Boz many times after I left. He did not look well.

Shopping is always fun when you meet your friends from radio and television.

## THREE ELECTED OFFICIALS

by Richard M. Millard

Three elected officials  
Three elected officials  
See how they lie  
See how they cheat  
They took every bribe  
that came their way  
And couldn't care less  
what the papers say  
They'll be re-elected  
come what may  
By one blind public  
One incredibly dumb,  
16 blind public



I STOP TO SIT AND THINK

## FLO AND ESTELL GET TIPPED

(Modern-Day Fantasy in G-Minor  
for Strings and Clarinet)

by Wayne Hogan

Flo and Estell had just finished their once-a-month downtown lunch and had lingered several minutes at the table chatting, bringing each other up to date on what had been happening in their lives lately.

Flo had just come from a weekend visit with her aging mother, everything was just fine, she said, and her 11-year-old son, Danny, he'd just been made second baseman of his Little League team. John, her husband, had had a rare run-in with his boss at the office a couple of weeks ago but everything was just fine now, she said.

"Those things happen," Estell said.

Flo seemed reassured.

Estell couldn't think of much new to share with her friend. Things had been pretty uneventful since she and Flo had last met for lunch. About the only thing worth mentioning, she thought, was that her oldest daughter, Melissa, had jilted Immanuel, her groom-to-be, just barely an hour before last Sunday's scheduled wedding, but that she's now decided that Wilbur, the next-door neighbor's boy, is her real Mr. Right, so all appears to have worked out just fine. 'Course, Estell and her Ralph can't help wondering what they'll do with the very large all-caps supply of buy-25-get-5-free ME-LISSA LOVES IMMANUEL/IMMANUEL DITTO bumper stickers they'd had printed up.

"Those things happen," Flo said.

Estell felt better hearing her say that.

Glancing down, Estell noticed that their waiter—Haskell, she thought he'd said his name—had brought their check while they'd been busy visiting. He'd been such a nice young man. Had brought them water right away and asked after a decent interval if he could take their order and had revisited them a time or two during the meal to ask if everything was okay. It was. The crab cookies and filet seaweed had never tasted better, and they'd been coming to this restaurant a very long time.

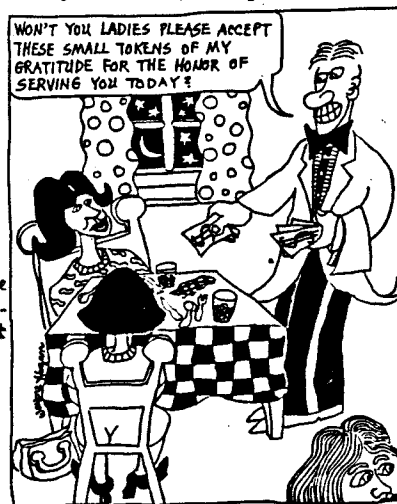
And Estell and Flo, they'd been quite gracious too, Estell thought. Had complimented him on his matching outfit, inquired of his and his mother's health, expressed girlish delight at his overall general ambience.

They were placing their respective portions of the waiter's tip on the edge of the table just as he reappeared. In one almost invisibly fluid movement he gently pushed their offering back toward them while simultaneously handing each a crisp new \$5 bill from a roll he could barely hold.

"Thank you so very much for the honor of serving you today," he said, his broad smile showing 12 to 14 of the biggest, whitest teeth Estell had ever seen.

Then, with an effortlessly lithe turn that somehow seemed uniquely his, he was off to tend his many other tables, leaving the two of them giddily bobbing about in the waist-high wake of charmed-out-of-their-socks euphoria. Estell and Flo, they just sat there glowing across the table at each other, like a matched pair of Cheshires.

Waiters tipping customers—just fantasy, you think? Just another case of "All-the-gold/in-California/is-in-a-bank/in-the-middle-of-Beverly-Hills/in-somebody-else's/name," as Larry and his Gatlin brothers sing it, you think? Stay tuned.





# Commercial McClue-In

by "Kid" Sieve

Judy Tawata in a series of ads for Diet Dr. Pepper? It could happen! The spots are great, although I fear for The Goddess if she gets too much of that NutraShit in her. Oh Judy, Judy, Judy... please, don't hate her because she's hilarious...

This issue's mild chuckle belongs to the new Nike spots featuring real live African tribesmen (undoubtedly from the same tribe which recently prostituted themselves for Ringling Bros.?) running around in loincloths and sneakers. (Hey, it could happen!) The best part of the ad is at the end where a tribesman looks into the camera and says something or other in his native tongue, while the superimposed words below him spell out Nike's new (and highly original!) slogan, "Just Do It." Well, turns out an anthropologist-type fellow versed in said native tongue caught what the fellow actually said, which translated something like, "These shoes are too small for me, give me a bigger size." The ad agency admitted that was their original ending line, but apparently the Nike high muckymucks don't have that much of a sense of humor so the line was dropped in favor of Nike's slogan.

Okay, who remembers the name of the redhead with the horrendous overbite-related speech impediment during the old LALSH-IN's last couple seasons? Was it something like Nancy Schwarza or sumpin'? Well, she's back and together with a nameless blonde bimette intent on pushing one ad agency's version of The New Traditionalism (read: sexism back in full swing) in a new commercial for Epilady Ultra, an electric razor. The blonde and Nan are walking along, Nan asks (or the blonde brings up the subject, I forget) how the blonde's legs came out so smooth, and suddenly (it could happen!) the blonde whips out the razor to do an on-the-spot demonstration complete with pulling her dress up and placing her leg on a nearby fire hydrant in full view of the crowded street! Well, you can just imagine the zany hijinks that ensue—men mumbling "smoooth" with that special leering quality in their voice, whilst pouring champagne absently on patrons' heads—and my goodness, it's all just a perfectly normal day! And hey, they're admiring her smoothly-shaved legs, not the fact that her dress has been hiked up to her crotch, nosiree! Tricky shadowing in play here, as we are shown all without actually seeing the naughty bits...

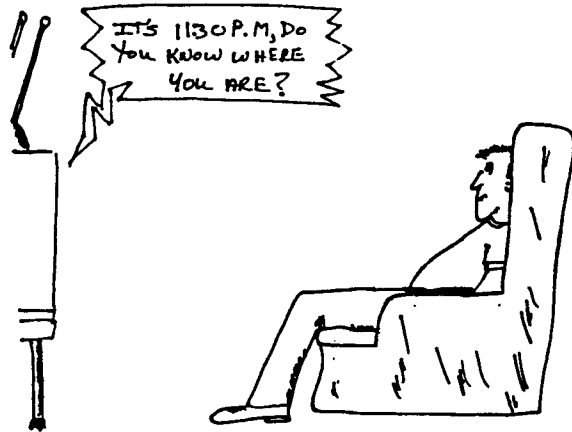
God. "Life, Be In It." It's so simple, so profound. Why, oh why didn't I think of that? Being in life. Wow. I think I'll shoot my television next time that PSA comes on again. Are people really so pathetic that they can't think of turning off the TV and engaging in non-tube exercise-type activity but that the television itself has to remind them? Utterly pitiful.

We were speaking above of the New Traditionalism (NT). Well, if you really want to see time marching backwards, try the epitome of NT nausea, the new ad for Good Housekeeping magazine, where "we know the family hasn't changed at all." Nope, there's no such thing as double-income-no-kids, or gay parents, or single mothers for that matter, or extended-relative families—it was all in our minds! Everything's the same, really! Mom's still Mom, presumably barefoot and preggish; Dad's still Dad the Breadwinner; and the kids—well, boys will be boys and girls will be girls, quite clearly delineated, of course. How comforting. Are you comforted yet? Gosh, I'm sure comforted. Nothing's changed, it must be all a dream, yes all a bad dream, now I can go back to sleep...

you caught the latest "chick" series from Silkience shampoo? At first I was ready to jump on that soapbox for fear that they'd actually brought back into usage the quaint euphemism hep guys used to describe hep—well, hep chicks back in the olden days. But no, it's worse, and now I wish my first supposition had been right—it actually involves the shampoo having been used on a real, live, probably-right-out-of-the-incubator baby-chicken-type chick! To make matters worse (relatively speaking, I guess, since I don't know too many folks who keep chicks as housepets), another spot shows an apres-Silkience puppy! I'm totally curious as to how the animal rights folks are gonna deal with this one. Where's Fran Trutt's bombmakers when you really need them?

Perhaps they're busy readying a protest against the new Diet Pepsi commercial featuring the computer-era anthropologist and her accommodating chimps who graciously buy her NutraShit-sweetened pop from the vending machine down the hall (with what allowance, I wonder), thus proving they are, after all, civilized and missing-linkish and all that. Obviously, all the ad proves is that these chimps were trained to act, which they do about as well as the human, I suppose. The 4CF brought up a good point—"when they were doing all those NutraShit experiments in the first place, didn't they test lab chimps?" Me, I keep thinking about the Nick Dana story that has just finished running in IJ, and remembering Henrietta...

A couple major TV-ad events just passed, one being the Grammys, on which many of the hipper ads used to premiere each year. This year's crop was pretty bland, what with the interminable colomars dominating—and oh God, yeah, I'm sure Australian aborigines are sitting around in breathless anticipation of Madonna's new video-for-Pepsi—but a nice one aired (way too often—the only ad that beat it for overkill was CBS's program hype for two shows to be reviewed by Elaine and Steve next issue, "What's Alan Watching?" and "Hard Time on Planet Earth," the latter featuring a well-done but ingratiating computer-generated eye-thing that cut into the last minute of the Grammy end credits) for Cadbury's Caramello candy bar, revolving around the idea of stretching, which I guess is how many people like to eat caramel. The actor stretches his mirror, window, TV and couch, and the stop-action stuff is nicely done (I'm still not sure how the trick is managed).



The other big event was Presidents Day, on which IJ friend Marvin Kitman (TV critic for NY Newday, whose book I AM A VCR is now available for \$17.95 at local bookstores, published by Random House late last year) wrote a great bit the Tuesday afterwards, from which I quote:

Commercials are a scourge, moving from holiday to holiday, drying up knowledge, converting each holiday into a wasteland...I do not want to record these pearls for posterity word by word. But one of the most stupid is the Dodge commercial with somebody at Valley Forge talking about the Founding Fathers having gone through such "an ordeal." "Deal?" a car salesman (the now-tedious Ronnie Schell, as we've pointed out in earlier columns) says, "did somebody say deal?" Valley Forge was not in vain, as the deals being offered at local Dodge dealerships have proved...

It's a travesty what's happening to the presidents. Of course, there is a tendency for everything to be de-based in society. Since the invention of television, we seem to have lost all our value systems...In the TV age, information is coming in at an incredible rate, and going out even faster. We seem to have more information, but people seem to know less each generation...Why has this happened? Why are we forgetting as much or more than we learn? TV homogenizes all information. A news anchor-man gets up every night and in the same tone of voice says, "10,000 are starving in Bangladesh, Dan Quayle is running for vice president, a dog has run away, nuclear waste is insoluble, a baby fell into a well..."Why would anyone remember anything in particular? We're bombarded by all fleeting information, with no reinforcement. So, everything is forgotten...What's happening to Washington and others on TV today is pretty bad. But it's nothing compared to what Madison Avenue will do to Christopher Columbus in 1992.

Gez, thanks for reminding us, Marvin, you're a real pal. Best start gearing up now to fight the good fight, readers.

Speaking of books, I see Mark Crispin Miller's BOXED IN (reviewed here last issue) got a nice mention by Massachusetts Assistant Attorney General Jamin B. Raskin in his article for the February '89 Zeta (if you want to check out this worthy mag, ask Elaine for more info) analyzing, of all things, "The Morton Downey Jr. Show"—the article's called "The People's Mort," and it makes some fascinating points and almost (ALMOST) makes me want to sit down and watch The Mouth That Roars, not to mention wonder once again whether, as many assert, Downey's neoconserv-act is all parody and put-on, not just exaggeration. Good reading!

I don't usually cover print ads, television being my main forte here, but I wanted to bring to your attention a recent one for Fortune magazine, covered nicely by Newday's "Media Notes" reviewer D.D. Gutterman. The NY Times of Friday, 2/17 carried an ad that read, in part, "You don't build a company like this with lace on your underwear." About 150 employees of Time Inc., which owns Fortune, were a bit pissed at the ad's "insensitive endorsement of the idea that business leadership is exclusively a male domain and by its derogatory and leering sexual allusions...It does not matter that the headline is a quote from someone interviewed in the story. It is Fortune and Time, Inc. that have blazoned the words and attitude as something amusing and admirable." Of course, continues Gutterman, the Ogilvy & Mather ad agency rep who helped put the quote in the ad says she doesn't think it's sexist at all, but "a metaphor. If you're a sissy, you're not going to build a company." Oh. Glad we've traded sexism in for a macho-us-sissy-eat-'em-alive-Rambo mentality. Typical Corporate Amerika nausea. Me, I'm offended at the implication that there's a market at all for lace underwear, which I think is pretty silly-looking outside of a bad porn movie (or a good one) anyway.

But I guess I'm not feminine enough or something. Maybe I'm just getting old and there's something wrong with my nostalgia lever, so I can't yearn for that World That Never Was. You know, the world of June Cleaver and Margaret Anderson, sitting around not talking about but plugging anyway Milk of Magnesia laxative (watch for it—nice write-up by Barbara Lippert in Adweek). I—I guess I should've remembered. Reunions. TV shows haven't changed. Families haven't changed. No, life itself hasn't changed...I, I I dunno, I suppose it could happen...

Make religion a kick-ass adventure!  
Self-help through raising hell!  
\$1 for startling, informative book.  
The Church of the SubGenius  
P.O. Box 140306  
Dallas, TX 75214



"BASSA'BALL JONES"  
There aren't very many things in this world that I really love. Basketball is one of them.  
I was the kid who would shovel three feet of snow off the court so he could play in

the winter. I was the one who would install lights so I could play at night. And when it rained my brother and I would retreat to the garage where we'd play mind-basketball, pretending we were Kareem and Dr. J launching sky hooks and slam dunks.

Basketball is a beautiful game. It's the closest thing you'll come to seeing non-homosexual men dancing with each other in public. Basketball is a macho ballet. See, the object of basketball is to overpower the opposition. But you're not allowed to physically touch them (at least theoretically). Basketball requires equal amounts of strength and grace, raw power and nimble agility.

You wanna know why blacks dominate at basketball? Just compare the dancers on Soul Train with the spaz-dancers on American Bandstand. (EDITOR'S NOTE: Here we go again...)

I play all the time at the park down the street. You know what's so great about it? Out on the court most of the guys are in their 20s and 30s. Look at their faces and you see alcoholics, broken marriages, ex-cons, drug addicts—we've all been through the mill of adult tragedies. Yet once that ball is in the air, magically we're transformed back to the snot-nosed 12-year-old kids we've always been.

It's almost like a drug high. Everything is happening so fast you literally don't have time to think. You're flying down the court on a 3 on 2 break. You have the ball. Do you pass? Do you shoot? You spot your teammate open under the basket. Hesitate for even a microsecond and the defender will recover and steal the ball. You soar in the air towards the basket, faking a shot to draw the defender to you, then whip a behind-the-back pass to your teammate for a reverse layup off the board. As you run back up-court he gives you a big high-five and a toothy smile: "GIVE THE MAN AN ASSIST!"

The game is a blur of moving bodies and split-second decisions. You have to completely surrender yourself to your body's reactions because, like I said, you don't have time to think. This is the real joy, the real high of basketball, because in a very real way you're released from the burden of adult consciousness, the horrible yak-yak-yakking of our hopelessly insecure thinking minds. You don't have time to think!

Another thing: Since ancient times men have banded together for the hunt or to conquer neighboring territory. In today's Nuclear World that kind of primal male behavior is obsolete. Yet the need to bond together for common purpose remains in our souls. Perhaps this explains the soaring popularity of organized sports in America. Or perhaps we just get our nuts off on throwing a ball into a hoop. I dunno. There must be some reason why we expend incredible amounts of energy, risking serious injury and living with the minor ones, beating the crap out of each other on concrete courts.

I'll tell you one other thing I've benefited from basketball. Anyone who lives in poor areas of the inner city has to deal regularly with the horror of black crime. My circle of friends in particular has been decimated by the criminal behavior of the black male. After literally dozens of these encounters one can't help but view the black man with suspicion and hostility. Every black man on the street seems a hulking menace, a potential threat. After a close woman friend was raped by a black man I couldn't even look at a black man without experiencing real racial hatred. I thought those attitudes were the exclusive properties of stupid, unenlightened bigots. Little did I know they could be shared by stupid, unenlightened cartoonists. It wasn't until I got out on the court and related to blacks as individuals that I could see they all weren't "fast-talking, bad-ass niggers." One guy was fat and jolly; another, shy and soft-spoken; another, sad and melancholy. The loud laughter on the street no longer sounded malevolent, but like exuberant joy. Indeed, they're not "all alike." This might not seem like some big revelation to those of you living in your nice, safe, all-white neighborhoods. But then, maybe you've never had a knife pressed up against your throat... Basketball brings us together. It doesn't matter if you're black or white—to get respect you just have to be "a player."

## PRIMATE INHUMANITY by Susan Packie

"Welcome to the monthly meeting of the Animal Lovers Society. I'm glad you all could make it. As you read in the notice I mailed out last week, today we'll be discussing the inhumanity of man. Recent so-called scientific experiments involving primates... Could you hold down the noise in the back of the room?"

"I'm sorry, Madam President. That's my three-month-old daughter."

"Well, stifle your little primate, Shirley. We have a lot of important business to cover at this meeting."

"Stifle her?"

"Just stuff this rag in her mouth. As I was saying, recent experiments on primates have been conducted without regard to their impact on the stability of the primate family, without consideration of the possible extinction of the species involved, and most important of all, without the written approval of the Animal Lovers Society. Would anyone like to comment or add anything? Harry?"

"Yes. I believe it must be terribly confusing for other members of the primate troop to see healthy companions forcibly taken away to be needlessly tortured and slaughtered. Can't you shut that kid up?"

"That's exactly my point, Harry, and tie up that kid with your belt, Shirley. I shouldn't have let you bring the brat in the first place."

"But I couldn't leave her alone!"

"Don't be silly! My own children are home locked in a closet. Now, can anyone offer a suggestion as to what actions we should take to alleviate the suffering of our baboon, chimpanzee and orangutan friends?"

"I say we shoot the bastards who are kidnapping them."

"Fine, Malcolm, but will that really repay them for all the suffering they are causing? Shirley, give that kid a Valium pill. This is your last warning."

"Madam President?"

"Yes, Harry?"

"I'm in favor of digging pits on the outskirts of primate territory, sticking cyanide-tipped spears pointing upward in the bottom, and covering them over with branches."

"Can we be absolutely sure our friends won't accidentally fall in?"

"Primates are smarter than that!"

"It just might work. But, what if they miss the pits?"

"Then we'll noose them on tree limbs. They'll be so busy trying to cut through the undergrowth, they won't even notice the rope descending and encircling the neck."

"How will this happen?"

"We have enough tree-climbing members to help it along. Oh Lord, that kid tried to bite me!"

"Okay, that's it. Shoot her, Shirley."

"But—"

"Harry, shoot Shirley and the baby, and revise our membership list. Now, at our next meeting, we will discuss reports of pain and suffering among Alaskan cod at the hands of fishermen. Please be prompt and, for goodness sake, don't bring any screaming kids!"

## World Wine Cellar Reports A Good Year

By FRED W. NEITZCHE  
YU Food Writer

PARIS (YU) — The World Wine Cellar reported this morning that people can expect to live longer in countries that consume the most French wine, imported yogurt and Cabbage Patch dolls.

In 1983, it said, the average American consumed more than 65 gallons of French wine, 4 tons of imported yogurt, and 3.2 Cabbage Patch dolls and that even a severely deformed child

born that year in the United States could expect to live for 75 years.

Residents of the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Switzerland, and Japan in 1983 consumed even more wine, yogurt, and dolls than Americans, the World Wine Cellar reported, and mutated children in those countries also could live long lives.

In China, where an annual diet of 15 gallons of wine, 6 pints of yogurt, and .8 dolls is the norm, life expectancy is 67

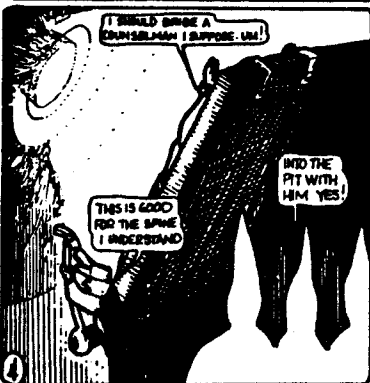
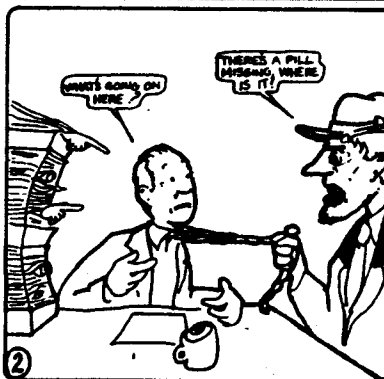
years.

Life is shortest in countries with the smallest consumption. In Ethiopia, a nation where French wine is unheard of, yogurt is scarce, and Cabbage Patch dolls are on the endangered species list, the average baby born in 1983 is already dead.

Afghanistan and Lebanon have the shortest life expectancy, with estimates ranging from ten to fifteen minutes.

YU News Service

# DREAM OF THE RAREBIT FIEND



THE GODZILLA RAP  
by Richard M. Millard

The Godzilla Rap  
It's easy to learn  
Just crush that pagoda  
And watch it burn  
Chew those missiles  
And squish that tank  
Chase all the soldiers  
To the riverbank  
Now roll your eyes  
And spit out fire  
Turn this city  
To another quagmire  
Topple those towers  
With their kilowatts  
And they'll become  
Melting sushi-pots  
Knock those choppers  
Out of the sky  
Like a big old mean  
Green samurai  
Now scream that scream  
And wiggle your toe  
'Cause you just scrambled  
Tokyo!

**TAKE WAR —**  
Soldiers Know someone will get killed.  
**SOMEONE ELSE —**  
That's U.S. & U.S.S.R. Socialism  
Shouldn't we win our way out?  
Shoot a S.A.S.E. to WAR ENDING  
**WINNERS LOSERS**  
Box 2138 Youngstown, Ohio, 44504

## MasterMath Explains... STAR TREK

by William Raley

There I was, lightly dozing on my sofa—I'd switched from TV to CVN to deal with my insomnia—when I was interrupted by a code 48 communication (for C.H.U.D. members' eyes only). Captain Jean-Luc Picard came on the screen. He looked desperately tired, as there were several dozen coffee cups strewn about his room.

"MasterMath, I need your help."

"What seems to be the problem? Is it the Romulans again?"

"No, no, something much more serious. There's an underground movement on Earth to discredit STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION, make us look like we were as brain-dead as Imperial Stormtroopers. We need you to help us re-establish our credibility."

"I see. What's in it for me?"

"You'll have the undying gratitude of the entire crew, round-trip airfare to the galaxy of your choice, and unlimited holodeck privileges."

"And a date with Gates McFadden?"

"I'll see what I can do. She has indicated an interest in you. You wouldn't believe the expense we go to just so she can get a copy of INSIDE JOKE every six weeks."

First, an analogy: the original STAR TREK was like having sex with yourself—not bad, but there's got to be something better out there; STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION is like sex with a partner. At least, that's how my roommate, Christy Canyon, puts it. Perhaps you know her better as the M.I.S.T.—Mistress of Intergalactic Sexual Techniques.

Anyway, the first problem with the old STAR TREK is a certain lack of credibility. Why do we so often hear Captain Kirk say: "Good heavens, Spock, people are getting killed right and left down there! I and all our most irreplaceable officers better beam down and see what's going on!"? Give me a break. Even a tribble is smarter than that.

Next, there's this boring inevitability that all the major characters will survive the episode unscathed. Even when they get killed! For example, Bones when he was impaled by a lance in the episode "Shore Leave," and Captain Kirk when he battled Spock to the death on Vulcan over some woman in "Amok Time." Bottom line: there's no suspense. After all, it's not like it was "The Avengers" or something.

—IT'S WEDDING BELLS FOR MASTERMATH AND GATES MCFADDEN! SEND ALL GIFTS C/O INSIDE JOKE, P.O. BOX...WAKE UP, MASTERMATH! THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE SCIENCE FICTION, NOT FANTASY!

Sorry. Now, don't get me wrong. There's a lot to like about the old STAR TREK, and it was pretty fair entertainment in its day (that is, until something much better came along). For example, the episode "Cat's Paw." And the one about the ice cream cone thing that ate planets and stuff and almost got Captain Kirk. Those flying things that attacked Spock on the planet were pretty neat—I keep one in my attic in case guests get unruly. And "The Companion"—I've always thought nebulous clouds make good aliens, although I've always wondered if it would've taken over that wo-

man's body if the guy had been Pee Wee Herman.

And there's no end to STAR TREK trivia. For example, did you catch the subliminal messages to "Eat at Mel's Diner" in the episode where Vic Tazback played a thirties gangster? (Fizzbin is the "in" game at C.H.U.D. headquarters.) Also, the Horta creature in "The Devil in the Dark" was based on something Gene Roddenberry found on his doorstep following a thunderstorm.

So, out with the old, and in with the new: so, what do I like about STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION, besides Gates McFadden? Well, the professionalism of the crew, for one thing. While Captain Picard isn't terribly wont to smile, at least he doesn't go over the top with the kind of inane jocularly someone we know did. For example, between Dr. Crusher (Gates McFadden) and Captain Picard in the superlative episode "Symbiosis" (nice ironic title, eh?). There Picard comes up with a creatively ingenious solution to the problem at hand (how to end one race's taking advantage of another on a neighboring planet), in keeping with the Prime Directive.

Death among the major cast members? We got it here, folks. You seen Lt. Yar lately? No! That's because she got wasted, snuffed, rubbed out. Okay, so I didn't actually see the episode, but someone told me that's what happened. Personally, I would've much rather seen that know-it-all Counselor Troi bite the bullet.

Where was I? Oh, yes. And in "Elementary, Dear Data," the series transcends the pastiche swill of so many Holmes imitators by including a really decent Professor Moriarty—one whose impact went far beyond the fog-shrouded London of the holodeck. For those of you who aren't Holmes fanatics, the two stories referred to in Data's initial, trivial problem were "The Redheaded League" and "The Speckled Band." By the way, Gates McFadden wrote the script.

Then there was the episode where the Binaris stole the Enterprise and no one knew Picard and Riker were on board and they almost let the Enterprise self-destruct (okay, so everyone but the Binaris knew they were bluffing). I'm glad Gates McFadden was safe and sound at the starbase when that went down.

And finally, "Conspiracy," in which the unthinkable (at least for the old STAR TREK) happens. The highers-up at Starfleet Command all get taken over by this parasite (which is invisible except for the tail which kinda sticks out the back of your neck) and make all these complex personnel maneuvers only Data can understand to infiltrate the universe and my, wasn't Gates McFadden brave when she blasted Admiral Quinn with that phaser...

Well, I guess that about wraps it up. As those of you who've watched this season's episodes may have noticed, Gates McFadden is no longer on the show. She's got better things to do—not now, honey, I'm being creative. One final item: It's not been my intent to be controversial here, but anyone who disagrees with the opinions expressed herein is simply a "bag of mostly water" in my book.

Stardate 4222.17: "Well, Number One, looks like MasterMath came through for us. Too bad he's trapped in the twentieth century—we could use a good PL/I specialist up here."

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Unknown at this time whether line about "bag of water" was an in-joke or whether MasterMath has confused one John P. Morgan with one John Bridgman, but if the latter is the case, 19 apologies to anyone involved so offended...)

## IS SPACE THE LAST FRONTIER?

by Al Fry

The idea that humanity can escape the chaotic conditions on Earth and leave for greener pastures in space is beginning to be a popular concept. Unfortunately, there are many parts of the picture that are not recognized yet. Let's look at some of these "hidden" problems and present some alternate solutions.

Probably the greatest boost to present space technology came through the actions of the world's most hated leader. Hitler was one of the only leaders of the past thousand years to give his scientists freedom in developing radical new concepts and technology. Without rocketry and nuclear fission principles, our present technology would not have arrived for decades. The industrialists and power systems in control of the world's pursestrings would simply have gone on shelving new ideas and all forms of competition as usual. Our present oil-based economy is a typical example. Even innocent alcohol production systems have been stifled unless they were in the hands of the right cartels. At least seven leaders in independent alcohol production systems have died under strange circumstances in the past few years. Virtually all the present alternative power sources like nuclear technology are in the hands of the oil cartels. To think that the industrial complexes in control would allow cheap anti-gravity designs to be made public is not likely. What the public sees in NASA hardware is actually a display to assure more taxpayer funding. The more sophisticated anti-gravity craft designs are simply not for public consumption. War has been the only way some of past technology has ever leaked over for the public good.

Refined, advanced anti-gravity and disc craft designs have been showing up all across our globe for many years. Many witnesses have pointed out that the occupants of some of these craft appeared to be Earth-based humans. True, there are probably many more "alien" craft running around, but the idea some of them are not ours is unlikely. Our government collected crates of documents that Hitler's scientists had on his "Foo fighters" at the war's end. The Schauburger anti-gravity motor and saucer designs were all but having the bugs worked out when Hitler's empire fell. You can easily come up with a dozen anti-gravity and saucer craft designs in recent patent office offerings. It's just that no smaller independents have the money to develop such designs.

One of the problems in getting any craft around in outer space is the fact that the human efficiency potentials fall apart in space. With at least three mind components to balance our actions, we are a complex species. The mind that is best suited to technological calculations and savvy simply doesn't function well beyond Earth. The first wind of this came across when our first astronauts began to ignore ground rules and policies on early

flights. Ham operators got a lot of strange and "go to hell" feedback coming from our space jockies. NASA carefully monitors and restricts all the present feedback, but the problem remains. Complex flight patterns must be handled by computers, for the most part. The technological-oriented mind just shuts off out in space land.

Probably the only written work that explained why this phenomenon occurs was written in 1976. A.B. Glaser's Modern Humans texts diagram the structure of atoms and show how some are restricted to the planet. It is simple to see why most college-trained scientists and skeptics fail to astral travel or experience out-of-the-body phenomena. Hundreds of common persons have been travelling interdimensionally with nonmaterial components, of course. Years of details on this are available in dozens of astral travel books. The big secret of such travel is simply getting the priority-based mind to shut off. Technology fanatics simply can't click in to a meditation or "alpha mode." They then keep on thinking that anything outside their hard tech world is hocus-pocus nonsense. This is just as it should be. Our Creator isn't a fool. Can you imagine a system as corrupt and full of domination being spread around our universe? As long as we humans stay selfish and act like dangerous idiots, we will simply stay mentally exiled to our own corrupt home. What could be a more fitting fate? We humans don't seem to be learning very fast in this chaotic classroom. Most of today's problems were encountered many thousands of years ago, according to the ancient records.

Ancient Sanskrit and Hermetic writings and legends tell of many early "gods" who had flying craft and advanced technology. They had their wings clipped for their selfish, materialistic attitudes and actions. Since then, every great civilization that ever rose sank again when the "Choice" principles were discarded and ignored. Rusto, the great historian, documents all this in his monumental Freedom and Domination. A nation like Rome would start with a system that allowed freedom and choice. Later the citizens would become lazy and greedy; they would allow their laws to be changed and eroded away in the interest of getting something for nothing. Sound familiar?

Even the Christian Bible tells of ancient "gods" who got put here with thousands of followers who no longer wanted to follow the creator's "Choice" laws. Spiritual teachers later pointed out that this system was still in control on earth. Many feel our species was contaminated by a new technologically-based "mind" or DNA pattern from this migration of "exiles." You can find many deeper details in ancient Sanskrit translations (Prof. Josyer, Mysore-4, India) and various Hermetic manuscripts (Manly Hall's Secret Teachings of All Ages). Virtually all the truly great spiritual teachers hinted that we were in a schooling situation on Earth. Eventually we either had to give up domination and follow a "golden rule"—granting choice, ethics, etc.—or continue suffering. Many Avatars have explained how our nonphysical components are carried over from life to life in our learning cycles. Some, like Glaser, pointed out there was no way we would ever get to contaminate the universe. He stated there was a deadline coming. It seems our "Mother Earth" has had certain restrictions in regard to incoming radiations that are soon due for change. In these last days of judgement, people will judge themselves by their volitional choice...or by their inaction. Only those who can use their components efficiently and ethically will past muster. Huge masses of ice have now built up at a point to one side of the South Pole cap. Unless we humans use our Phaser technology within the next few years to alter the problem, a "pole shift" is due at the turn of the century. You may recall that during the 60s the world's weather began to become erratic. The gulf streams began to wander miles off their usual courses. This in turn caused a change in the offshore fishing areas and the world's weather. As each year passes the weather grows more chaotic and our scientists continue to hold back the scary facts from the unsuspecting public. Unless we start on the problem in the next few years, it is likely that our technology will be affected to the point where we can no longer prevent the final devastation. It would take cooperation from all of the world powers and much of the high-tech "Star Wars" equipment to get the job done. If we fail to start on the problem soon, we won't have a chance to worry about space. Only the very rich and corrupt leaders will have any interplanetary goal options open.

If you are getting a little of the picture at this point, great. There are several small master control groups who are aware of the coming "flood" or pole shift dangers. They are making ready and they have no intention of being around at disaster time. Yet there are problems like the pole shift that they are not sure of handling to their benefit. They don't mind wars and disaster, as long as they remain in control of what is left. They just never seem to learn. Unless we all work for the betterment of each other, we eventually lose everything. Society has always fallen when our choice systems get eroded away. In the United States, few persons seem to recognize that 80% of our free-choice constitution is now replaced by counterfeit replacement laws. We truly stand at the final judgement days in more ways than one.

For persons who are ready to regain and maintain their choice ethicx, the future is still bright, however. With a little application and homework, the usual restrictions can be overcome. Time and space are restrictions of only one human "mind" component. By learning to switch off and on different components we have hardly any restrictions. We are far more than just a material body and brain. We have nonmaterial components that are free of the restrictions of matter and time.



MORE CATS! MORE CATS!

Next Issue:  
TV and the Gerber

# The Poet's Diet Book

by Tamarina Dwyer

## CHAPTER SIX: JANET'S GLORY

*(Janet's career as a poet and her relationship with her lover, Fred, had grown shaky. The affair had ended and Janet had had to get a new job and new living quarters. In this final chapter, Janet faces the conflict of her ever-increasingly confused theories about food and poetry. She will not crack up, she will just grow old.)*

Janet had been getting high on her yoga exercises. She lay in a straight position on the silk-covered floor and, instilled by a quest for omniscience, the poet hurried onto a questionable path of reason. Startling answers forced Janet to sit up.

The relaxing aspect of yoga was the primary attribute that led the poet to experiment with an old exercise. However, concentration on her self-enhancement theory had strained her rationality.

Janet got up from the floor, grabbed her denim bag without bothering to put her coat on, and stormed to the Utica Floral Shop. Behind the jungle of green leaves and tall, vibrant roses, Janet opened the denim bag and inserted a cheap, brass atomizer. She checked the mirror, but no one was looking so the poet stepped across the room to a display of tiny pots of African violets and sand-filled terrariums. Janet quickly stuffed a young philodendron tree into her bag and, slinging it over her shoulder, she moved over the tweedy grey carpet to the front door of the shop.

Once outside, the poet relaxed. "I'm going to put physical nature back into the world with more dimension than it received on paper," she angrily thought and walked further down Genesee Street to the five and ten.

Janet stood in front of a counter display, reached down to the glass shelf with her right hand, and picked up a light, wood-handled hairbrush. She picked up her denim bag from the floor with her left hand, opened it, and dropped the brush into the bag.

The next day, a small case of eyeshadow disappeared from the same store, and the thievery expanded as the weeks progressed.

As Janet paused in front of her mirror one morning and stared at her made-up face, she didn't notice that her eyes were glazed and that her pupils were dilated. And the skin on her face was drawn tight, but the slightly flushed cheeks seemed to match the new look of eyeshadow and lipstick. Nor was her perception keen enough now to attend to the path of excessive theory.

Despite evening make-up, Janet was headed out of town to gather some wild flowers, namely the Queen Anne's Lace of which she was so fond. She skipped breakfast to catch the bus; she didn't have too many days off from work to go out of the city.

The air was very hot, but the sunlight's intense glow enraptured Janet and she basked in meadows after picking the best specimens of bluebell, daisy, and Queen Anne's Lace. At first, the rest was relaxing and she thought that she might go to sleep, but then Janet felt the need to move and she walked through the meadows until late afternoon. Tall grasses grazed her jeans and the sun caused beads of sweat to stand out on her forehead. A few swallows swooped across her path and a stray dog ran ahead of her into some woods.

She barely reflected on her job or the fling with Ken and she didn't even think about her unfinished poems. Without wanting to, she felt in harmony with her surroundings, though she would have been happier if there had been some edible berries along the edge of the woods.

Since there was no place to get anything to eat, Janet decided to take the first evening bus that stopped at a crossroads near a small farmhouse. When Janet climbed the steps of the bus, her legs were shaking, but she sat down only midway back in the bus.

Quivering, Janet was suddenly panic-stricken and she jumped up from her seat and shrilly cried out. Several concerned and startled passengers gawked at her and a scowling, glaring driver yelled, "What's wrong?" Janet's mouth hung open and her wide eyes, the pupils black and deep, seemed to be entranced by her own hands which were clutching the cold silver metal of the seat just in front of her. "Nothing," she laughed, suddenly turning on a smile and gazing at the others. "Would you believe it?" the poet asked them. "A spider, really, a spider just crawled over my feet. Fragile, black legs on a round, freckled body! Like perfected features for perfected motion—above humanity because it's so small and ladylike," Janet rambled, anxious but but spontaneous. "Did you ever consider how feminine a spider really is?" Janet asked a matronly woman across the aisle, who threw her a disdainful glance as a bushy-haired black man burst into squeals of laughter. Janet was a little embarrassed and sat down again. Keeping quiet for the remainder of the ride, she mentally scrawled a list of household chores to get through before bedtime.

"You're stupid!"

Janet was scrubbing a yellow, plastic glass and a flowered plate in the tiny sink of her room. The poet's eyebrows furrowed and her forehead wrinkled as if she were misunderstanding the comment. Janet stood for a moment with the glass in her left hand. Then she frowned even more and set the glass down. "There's nobody here," the poet mused and picked up the glass again.

"You're stupid!"

A voice was coming from somewhere. The anxious and disoriented poet dropped her glass in the sink, threw the washcloth on the floor, rushed out the door, and ran down the street. There wasn't anybody following her and the voice was gone, but she didn't quit running until she saw a black child on a sidewalk in front of another apartment building.

"Was that you?" Janet asked the little boy. "Did you call me stupid?" He looked up from his bicycle, vacant-eyed and blank-faced, but he said nothing and Janet turned away and continued down the street.

"The dishes. They were screaming at me," Janet suddenly began thinking. "I can't do it any more!" she yelled aloud. "I just can't write any more!" She put her hands to her head and screamed.

Steuben Street was quiet except for Janet's lone howl. The poet couldn't put her thoughts in order and there was nowhere to go except back to her room. She pushed a strand of hair back away from her face, but her breathing was rapid, her hand gripped her breast, and she nearly reeled back to her apartment building.

Janet's self-control dissolved further as she imagined a man in her room and she halted at the edge of the sidewalk, but there was no way out and she had to go up and into her room. The poet slowly climbed the stairs and tried to ignore the voices that had started up again. From the peeling scraps of wallpaper along the hall stairs, another voice called out to her.

"Are you watering trees yet?"

Janet turned abruptly to the flowered blue wall and banged her fists on the wall, but the voice grew louder.

"You're so clear, you're not visible."

Is the poetry a scenic flow?

Are you still drinking mother nature?"

The poet yanked her fists and arms away from the wall and fell against the opposite wall of the stairway. A cockroach moved across the step below Janet and she buried her face in her hands as the insect seemed to grow into a typewriter upon which more cockroaches were typing. The poet ran to her room and slammed the door behind her.

She went to the sink and finished the dishes before boiling some eggs for egg salad sandwiches. She ate three of them and drank two glasses of milk. After her meal, Janet collapsed on her mattress with only energy enough to set the alarm.

The next day, Janet recovered from nervous exhaustion and returned to work at the bank.

On her lunch hour, she stopped in front of the window of the Toddle House. The poet earnestly looked at her reflection in the glass pane. Her hair was limp and stringy, her blouse collar was hanging over the collar of her jacket, and her face was nearly featureless in the sun's moon shadows. With a predisposed feeling, she met glimpses of customers in the diner but, as her head turned slightly, she noticed the unequal stare of an old man at the counter. "I'm older than he is," Janet giggled, attentively considering her downhill track.

be lighthearted and at ease with your fellow man. be softer in step and beware of the eye. water the plant and smile at the flower. buy a blue vase and fill it with bluebells. eat eggs and don't ask them for anything. let coffee burn you out. let scotch destroy you. let food dictate by its creative qualities. don't give it more than it deserves by not giving it anything. let creativity personify itself. let the flowers rebel and let the food choose its own weapons. THERE'S NOT ENOUGH PAPER!

Janet entered the diner and sat down next to another frequent customer. "Creativity is too colorful," she began shyly.

"Your poetry isn't any gettin' you down?" inquired the elderly gentleman.

"There isn't any poetry," Janet answered. "Could I borrow a dollar from you?" she asked him.

"Sure," he responded. "Here," he added, pulling a ten-dollar bill from his wallet. "You look hungry," he also added. Janet nodded in agreement and ordered a breakfast.

"I think I need more oil for survival," she told the man while she ate her eggs. "Smooth and clear," she went on.

"Thick enough," he commented.

"A slowly-flowing liquid," the poet said. The man said nothing more so Janet ate and paid for her breakfast and walked back to Steuben Street.

She climbed the stairs wearily, unlocked her door, entered the dark room, walked to the cardboard box, took out the manila folders and envelopes, carried them to the sink, and dropped them in the porcelain bowl. She got a matchbook from a woman next door and set the poetry aflame. Then she took her water jug from the ice chest and set that on the floor next to the sink. When the folders, papers and envelopes had nearly burned away, Janet went back to the cardboard box. She took her felt-tip pens from the denim bag and, using each of the pens, she wrote STUPIDITY LEADS TO SIMPLICITY across her color-stripped walls. The crime ended.

Janet lay down on the mattress and wondered if eight dollars was enough for a gallon of paint. "I never studied psychology, but striped walls are too bright. I've already destroyed the file. I'll just grin, smile, and laugh. My philosophy will be gay and sniggering." Janet got up and began throwing her books at the wall one by one. "I don't even have a typewriter! I can't write a book of poems after lunch and I can't write a book of poems before breakfast!"

The ex-poet took the water jug and emptied the water over the still-smouldering papers before she picked up the silklike carpet, covered the ice chest, and sat down for a moment's reflection. It wasn't necessary. But she considered a criminal's career as her head nodded mechanically. "It's a more laborious process," Janet concluded and lay down on the mattress again.

She continued interpreting her own worth as a person. "I need a more natural order of events," Janet thought. "Exaggerated proportions are too difficult to express." She envisioned a jug of water on a table covered with black velvet. "Rhymes and meters are worth less than my denim bag. Philosophy is a necessary prerequisite to any element of truth. Descriptive words are too ambiguous. I'm more than too old."

fin

**AYATOLHOUSE**  
The adventures of the Ayatollah when he was a house - a dada photo comic strip (so don't expect it to make too much sense)

Georgie and Dan go to Camp David to play together (Elayne won't let me go into details)



Gee... doesn't this house look a lot like the Ayatollah, Georgie?

So it does... so it does. These post-modernist architects are so clever.

They go inside

I can't get out. I can't get out. The Ayatollahhouse has closed its mouth. We've been housejacked. What will we do?



Dan, Dan, we'll turn the handle before we push the door, that's what we'll do.

Gee, that was a close one. You sure are smart, Georgie. No wonder they made you president instead of that impractical intellectual.



I know what you're thinking; less realism and more action. If you want to know what these guys are really like, you'll read the paper. Next time... -E. Cantin

**BACKWORDS LOGIC** by Ace Backwords - © 86



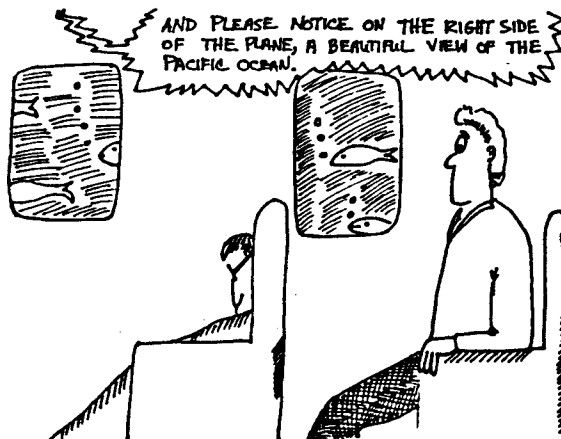
**- FISH 'N CHIPS -**

Multiple Choice: Identify

- a. gravity
- b. God
- c. aliens

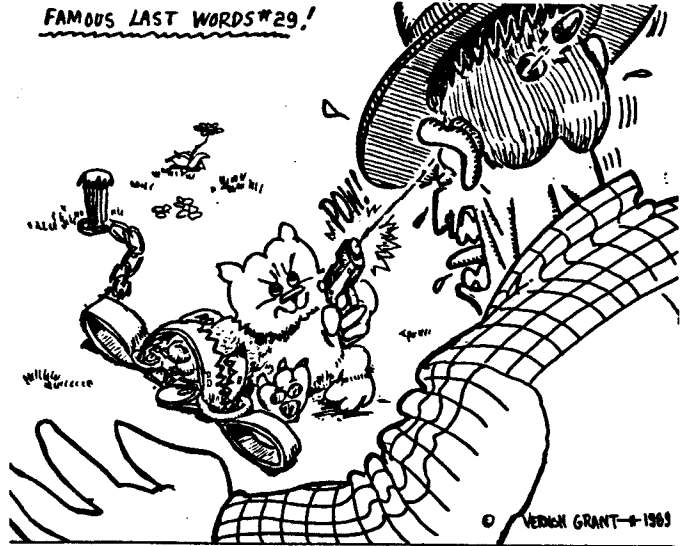


5.30 '88



© HILLMAN

**FAMOUS LAST WORDS #29!**



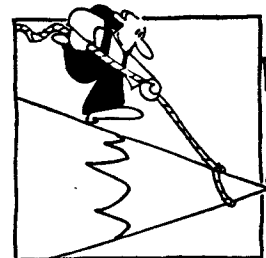
© VERNON GRANT - 1983

"GAWD, I LOVE TRAPPING!!!" EXULTED WOODSMAN JOHN. "I 'JUS' LOVE WALKING THE OL' LINE, COMING OVER A HILL AND BEING SURPRISED BY WHAT I'VE CAUGHT IN A TRAP!"...

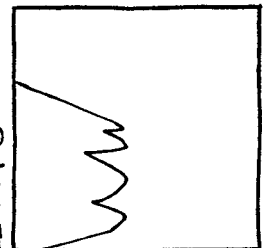
**OVERHEARD**  
at America's Lunch Counters



"—See if there's a rich widow downstairs with a jar of coffee, will you."

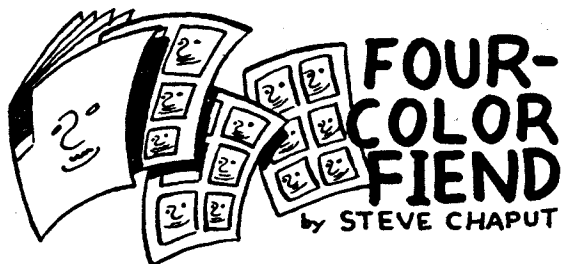


**Mrs. Men**



© NICOLOFF





Well, it's that time of year again, and I don't mean midseason replacement time (although that's happening too, and will be covered by Elaine and me in IJ #67). The Winter issue of the AMAZING HEROES Preview Special (#157, 1/15/89) is out, and there are a few things of interest that I thought I'd bring to your attention.

The book is 280+ pages this time (but 15 pages of that is a Fantagraphics catalog); and besides an alphabetical listing of all the titles listed by all the existing publishers, there is a special section on graphic novels. Wisely, the AH people have continued a practice begun with the last Summer Preview of having sidebars that give a quick rundown of various genre titles available. This way, if you only collect certain types of books (for example, "funny animals"), you simply turn to that page and see if your old faves are continuing and if there are any new ones for which you want to look, then you can look up each title individually and see the writers/artists involved.

Something new has been added, though. Along with the listings of continuing titles, also in alphabetical order are all the titles cancelled/postponed/rescheduled since the last Preview. Rather than simply not listing them, as was past procedure, or re-running an entire preview from the previous time, we are told what the status of any particular title is. (e.g., THE MANDELBROT SET by Alan Moore and Bill Sienkiewicz is far behind schedule and will not appear until later in '89). This type of listing is also used to talk about series that have been proposed, or partially completed but not yet scheduled (like Marvel's ED GRIMLEY comic).

This Preview issue also has a nice Spirit/Batman cover by Will Eisner, as well as a good interview with Denny O'Neil (who has recently moved to Brooklyn) on Batman's 50th anniversary celebration. There are also tips on comics to look for from Dave Sim (the man behind CEREBUS, if you didn't already know).

Since this is only an overview, I'm going to quickly run down some of the things for which you might want to be on the lookout in the coming months (many of them will be reviewed here as they become available):

CLONEZONE SPECIAL, a joint First/Dark Horse project, will have the ultimate "lounge lizard" hosting a telethon (fans of NEXUS/BADGER will want to look for this).

CLUB ZED/CONFEDERATES and ROUTE 666 are all alternate-world comics from Will Shetterly and the folks at SteelDragon Press (CONFEDERATES picks up the storyline from CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY).

COMMANDOSAURS and MELTING POT are mini-series from Mirage Studios' Eastman & Laird, so you can expect them to be "hot" investment titles for the speculators.

EIGHTBALL is an anthology title from Dan Clowes, who brought us LLOYD LLEWELLYN (announced as a quarterly from Fantagraphics).

THE GRIFFIN, an Earthman who returns to Earth after twenty years as a super-powered special forces soldier and tries to fit in; this will be linked as of the second issue by Valentino. (By the way, AMAZING HEROES #158 is the eagerly-awaited 3D issue edited by Valentino, with dozens of great 3D comics and an index, through January '89, of all 3D comics. Recommended for those who don't easily get headaches looking through red and blue plastic!)

HELLBENT is the tentative/working title of the crossover of many of DC's "mature" books (HELLBLAZER, SWAMP THING, THE QUESTION, SANDMAN, GREEN ARROW). This will involve Abby's baby and the abdication of Lucifer as one of the rulers of Hell.

HERO HOTLINE, from the team of Bob Rozakis and Stephen DeStefano with Kurt Schaffenberger, will be serving up super-heroics in a style very similar to the sadly-missed MAZING MAN.

JAMES BOND, promised by several publishers over the years, will finally be coming to us from Eclipse Comics and done by Mike Grell (a 3-issue series based on an original idea by Grell). There may also be an adaptation of the next Tim Dalton Bond film, "License Revoked," this summer.

MEGATON MAN MEETS THE X-THEMS by Donald Simpson—Need we say more? Even a one-shot is a joyous event.

For those looking for a little light fantasy, there is PETER PAN from Eclipse, adapted from the original book and play by Sir James Barrie. This 3-issue mini will not be Disneyized, so be forewarned—Peter wasn't as nice as you might think.

THE PHANTOM is now a regular series from DC, for those (like myself) who will always love this character no matter how politically incorrect it may be (hey, the producers of "Crocodile Dundee" have begun shooting a major motion picture adaptation of "The Ghost Who Walks"—g'day, Rex!).

THE QUESTION and THE SHADOW may both be disappearing this year. The contracts of Andy Helfer and Kyle Baker will end with SHADOW #24 and no one has so far been announced as replacements. O'Neil will probably bring things to a tidy end by QUESTION #36, and he hopes that DC will allow him to end it there. Since these books do receive critical and fan approval, the business end may want to keep them going.

S.H.I.E.L.D. will be revived (for no reason that I can see) as a new title, but this time going for a "gritty" special missions

LET'S BE CONFUSED AND SCARED TOGETHER

by Dana A. Snow

Some folks pick whom to date  
By the size of the chest  
But in the case of both of us  
Neither was impressed

It used to be that I  
Measured women by their curves  
Now I just want a woman  
Who won't get on my nerves

One's never secure  
I may lose you someday  
To some better man  
Or a gal if you're gay

Maybe we can be a safety net  
Each for the other  
Please don't lean too hard financially  
And I won't call you "Mother"

Feminism and its backlash  
Has us feeling like fools  
To heck with all the labels  
We will make our own rules

We're two lost souls  
Just birds of a feather  
It's lots more fun  
Than being lonely together

type of thing.

All of fandom is excited to discover that Sidney Mellon's THUNDERSKULL! will finally be available. Just as Mr. Mellon became the most important critic in the fan press, many of us are equally positive that his epic story will revolutionize the industry. (Tom, do you get the joke yet?)

SILVER SURFER and FANTASTIC FOUR, both being written by Steve Englehart, will return to their 1960s-ish kind of feel, due to pressure from higher-ups; this is also being done to THE MIGHTY THOR and several other titles. If you've looked at some of the covers on these books of late, you'll note an uncanny feeling of déjà vu. It's as if the current cover artists are being told to make as blatant swipes from Kirby as possible.

Well, it looks like there will be more than enough stuff out there to keep everyone happy; whether you're into Barks, Howarth or Crumb, everybody has something coming out, either new or in reprint form. Another expensive year.

Just wanted to let you know that the balloting has begun for this year's Comics Buyers Guide (CBG) Fan Awards. If you don't get CBG, ballots will be available in many of the independent titles over the next two months. The deadline for submitting your ballot will be June 10, and anyone submitting a ballot will receive a sample copy of CBG with the results.

Next time out we'll try to cover manga; I can't promise to deal with every title, but I'll try a sampling from each group and list what's available. Remember, if you have any suggestions for titles you'd like reviewed, let me know by the next IJ deadline!

Do NoTary Sajac



A GOOD SCARE IS WORTH MORE TO A MAN THAN  
GOOD ADVICE. — EDGAR WATSON HOWE.  
I've been giving good advice for forty years but no  
one's buying it. That's because its acceptance  
depends upon all of us getting a good scare like  
those hostages got. It could be a detonated H bomb  
with the promise of more to come if we retaliate —  
UGH! To stop war, inflation, unemployment and  
death stop pointing your finger at others and blame  
yourself. Send \$5.95 to:  
BRAINEAU'S RAINBOWS  
Box 2243 — YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, 44504

I WONDER

by Richard M. Millard

Where do nudists carry their keys?  
And who invented Self-Serve?  
Will one size truly fit us all?  
Does a baseball really curve?  
Did you ever meet a sweepstakes winner?  
Even sober, walk a straight line?  
Is a glass half-empty, or half-full?  
With "orange," is there a rhyme?  
Why's self-adhesive usually not?  
Must spaghetti seek out white shirts?  
Is there such a thing as a bottomless pit?  
Does anyone give till it hurts?  
Just wondering.

## TIM'S RUDE AWAKENING

by John Sakalowsky

And Jim awoke one morning to find that his parents had gone crazy. Somehow, Jim concluded, it fit perfectly into all that constituted a Monday. An airborne egg splattered on the side of Jim's head and, as he wiped away the slime, he realized that he must do something. While he pondered his present predicament, his parents, George and Ethel, bounced on the sofa cushions, whooped and hollered, and pelted each other with eggs.

By mid-morning all the eggs were gone and George and Ethel turned to tomatoes and mayonnaise. I'm having such a bad day, Jim mused darkly. What happened? They were fine yesterday...

At 10:07am Jim telephoned the Ronald Reagan Memorial Hospital for the Deranged and Slightly Forgetful.

"Hello?" the receptionist's nasal voice pierced the receiver.

"Hello. My parents have gone crazy," Jim explained.

"Well, you'll have to come down here and fill out some forms. Oh, wait a minute," she paused. "We're sorry but we're all booked up at this time. We could take you next week at the earliest."

"Thank you," Jim responded and hung up the phone. Now what will I do? he thought with obvious disappointment.

Insanity was, in fact, the sad truth. Through a misalignment of the planets Pluto and Mars, every citizen over 30 in the potato community of Boiseville, Idaho, became spontaneously crazy. The price of eggs and tomatoes skyrocketed as the supply threatened to become slim due to the state of the town. The grocers thrived on the sudden business, but even they expressed fear that the local chicken farmers would be unable to keep up with the sudden flux in demand for eggs.

Unfortunately, Jim's situation had become stylish reality.

"Mom, Dad, calm down!" Jim attempted to rationalize with his deranged parents. But they only leered at him with perverted, fixed-eye grins.

"Whoop! Whoop!" Ethel exclaimed and smacked George with a mayonnaise-covered tomato.

And just as Jim had begun to adjust to his parents' disorder, a silver flying saucer crashed through his roof. Two chubby aliens shuffled into the kitchen. Jim regarded with a raised eyebrow the short blue men. Two large green eyes fixed upon him.

"We are taking you as a specimen, Earthling." The pudgy extraterrestrials announced the generic grade-B movie line in unison.

"I should have expected it," Jim muttered. He glanced at George and Ethel and his decision was made. "Okay."

The aliens hustled Jim into their interstellar transport vehicle and revved up the laser warp-drive. There was a Hollywood explosion with multicolored lights and smoke, a pop, and a gurgling sound as the spaceship vanished.

Jim rocketed through the galaxy as fuzzy nebulae and crisp quasars flashed by the windows.

A soft voice gushed in Jim's ear. "Here, try some of this. It gives you really good dreams."

Jim grinned and nodded.



MARK  
NEVILLE

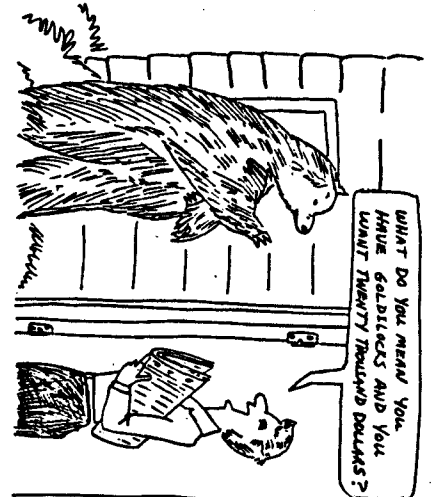
## 'Big Deal' Say Natives New York Weather Bores Residents

MASSENA, N.Y. (YU) — A crack team of meteorologists has descended upon this town on the St. Lawrence Seaway to determine why it is no longer considered "the most dismal place to live on the North American continent."

As recently as 1970, Messina could count on disaster tourists to boost its sagging economy. "We had less than 20 days of sunshine a year," weatherman John Nagy told reporters, "and we used to be the coldest place in the U.S. better than 70% of the winter."

But all that has changed, and Messina's weather is now no more bizarre than that of Cheyenne (Wyo.) or Peoria (Ill.), a fact that has meteorologists concerned that the world weather patterns may be entering a "period of mediocrity."

— Yecarian Universal News Service



© HOLLOBAUGH

## THE ANTI-POEM

by Dana A. Snow

No poets ever get so rich  
That they need pocket pagers  
So never mind whether they're cowboys,  
Mom  
Don't let your kids be English majors.

I think limericks are fine  
And iambic pentameter's okay  
But "Please folks! No more haiku!  
Buy American poems!" I say!

I hope you liked my comedy  
Hope you found the funny part  
But if you didn't laugh at all  
Then it's "performance art!"

## POST MORTEM

by Roger Coleman

Inspector Hercules Pompeux said thoughtfully, "You will notice that the head has been completely severed at the neck."

"Oui," responded Premier Gendarme Maladroit, "and regardez, the arms and the legs are also neatly cut off."

"I think," Hercules said, stroking his well-kept gray-streaked beard, "that we should wait for the autopsy before submitting our report."

"Naturellement, Inspector," agreed the Gendarme with the sagacity and caution that comes with his profession, "we should have the toxicologic report in our hands by tomorrow."

"Alors, after all the evidence is in, we'll have a clearer view. I should think suicide is probably out?"



## ROBERT MAPLETHORPE

or, *The Gay Boucher*

by Elliot Cantsin

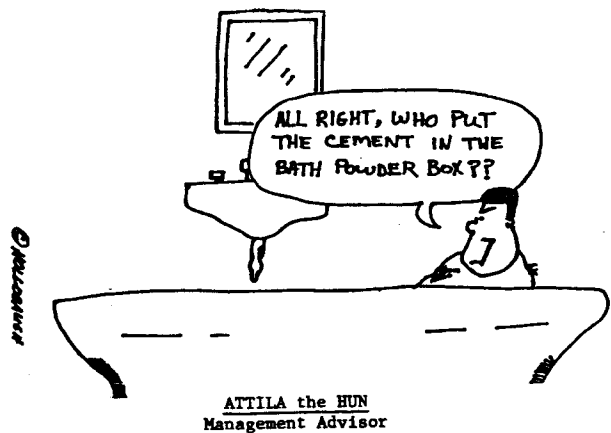
Two of the most interesting artists on the New York art scene today are Robert Maplethorpe and Cindy Sherman. Interestingly, they are both photographers. This is not to say that painters like Alex Katz and Julian Schnabel are not interesting; only that the profound density, opaqueness, inscrutability and impenetrability of their quasi-abstract expressionism make their work difficult to discuss, unless we are ready to use phrases like "most of the calligraphy seems to hover a little way behind the surface, in a space which has been deliberately compressed and robbed of perspective" (thick paint), "sense of scale" (large canvas), or "gesture on the canvas of liberation from value—political, aesthetic, moral" (some paint that manages not to mean anything in particular), which we, for one, would not dare do.

Robert Maplethorpe is a major art star in the capitalist capital of the world. His work has been called classical and shocking. Really it is neither of these things. There is a strongly neo-classical influence in his compositions, but more essentially his work exudes the spirit of the rococo. His work is dedicated to the titillation of the senses and of the lighter, more frivolous, but infinitely refined erotic emotions, the latter comprising the so-called shocking element. It is obvious that Maplethorpe's intended audience is too sophisticated and jaded to be shocked by anything. They are the twentieth-century equivalent of the French aristocracy of the Louis XV period (which furniture style is by no mere coincidence very popular among them). They see themselves as the contemporary nobility in a world of sheep-like workers whom they can manipulate in any direction they choose, and often they are right. They revel in their lack of inhibitions, which permits them to patronize charmingly salacious artists of high polish like Maplethorpe, and yet they are known to be extremely neurotic (highly strung) and spend vast sums on psychoanalysis. These people control the media, entertainment, and the arts, with the acquiescence of the democratic majority. Nothing that would threaten their unbalanced power structure, which closely resembles feudalism, is accepted in the world of "reputable," "credible," "mainstream" news, nor in the worlds of "popular" or "high" art. This is why unthreatening, kinky fashion photographers like Maplethorpe are raised to the status of major artists. Are we not free in a world where such a man may express himself so "shockingly"? Sadly, in "reputable" circles, the art of expression is a dead art.

On the purely aesthetic level, things are no less gloomy. Critics and curators constantly demand something new, something "original," and yet they are stylistically more trendy than adolescents in their dress codes. They are totally insensitive to the subtleties and nuances of real art and can only perceive the most blatant "clever" effects. Again, the only strategies that succeed are shock tactics.

The academy is to the artistic community as the upper class is to the materially productive. When the academy and the upper class have so corrupted the artistic community and the materially productive that both works of art and manufactured products become shoddy and trite, then a culture must choose between reform and stagnation. Only the artistic community can make that choice, and will it into existence, because only the artistic community reserves for itself that freedom of choice which Marx and other deterministic social theorists claim that none of us ever had. It is clear that a society can only be truly free when everyone is an artist rather than a consumer of goods and stale ideas. This is why romantic-style education is necessary rather than neo-classical/fascist authoritarian indoctrination as practiced today, which has become so threadbare anyway that young people refuse to accept it, escaping instead into the alternative consciousnesses of drugs and other non-consensual realities, while we mature adults continue to elect one naked emperor after another.

In conclusion, yes, Robert Maplethorpe is a gay photographer but he is also a straight photographer—much too straight. We hope to be able to comment on the work of the equally interesting Cindy Sherman in a future article.



ATTILA the HUN  
Management Advisor

### PERSONAL:

White male of German extraction in good health and in possession of work permit seeks new challenge as result of career change due to mid-life crisis. Three times married, eleven kids (four boys and seven girls) and forty-seven bastards (thirty-two boys and fifteen girls). Enjoys kids (and having them). Also enjoys outdoor work; good with his hands and a leader of men. Non-smoker, light drinker and frequent visitor to Scandinavian Health Spa.

### CAREER AMBITION:

Attain CEO post with a major Fortune 500 company. Afterwards arrange for all his kids and bastards to emigrate from Europe and come work for him as his personal henchmen—and henchwomen (no discrimination on any basis; he hates everyone).

### EXPERIENCE:

Pillaged, plundered, raped and vandalized most of Central, Eastern, Western and parts of Southern Europe. Hostile takeovers successfully effected without utilizing bands of bloodsucking lawyers, considerably lessening loss of blood on a cost/ratio basis and improving overall bottom-line. Good at negotiating with foreign rulers, most notably emperors, but equally comfortable with mailroom clerks, spear carriers and the occasional Ted Bundy. Able to feed, clothe and maintain army due to refined ability to extract homage and patronage thanks to good looks, organizational abilities and a willingness to cop anyone's head off who gets in his way (Blitzkrieg School of Management).

### INTANGIBLES:

Easygoing leader of barbarians, not afraid to roll back the sleeves and lend a hand when the going gets tough. Excellent verbal and written skills, with a flair for marketing. Workaholic, who would rather be pillaging and raping than sitting at home, counting sheep.

### HOBBIES:

Travel, meeting new people, crossbows, head-bashing.

### REFERENCES:

Marcian, East Roman Emperor (deceased)  
Valentinian II, West Roman Emperor (deceased)  
Sergio Lipschitz, county official (retired)

- George Daugird



# LIES

by Spence Nicholson

Jonathon's lying was as compulsive as a dreary scowl and as impulsive as a laugh. His untruths had begun as simple exaggerations to entertain any listeners, then escalated into plain lies. He told them flippantly and with a clear eye. Sometimes, he smiled when he realized that the person he spoke to believed him and although the kick he got was often followed by a flash of remorse, the lie-high was surely a delicious one.

Jonathon had successfully lied to friends, his family, strangers and even animals when they would listen. He had lied face to face, on the telephone (a difficult one), in letters, in shouts, whispers and even in body language. Occasionally, his deceit had been exposed but he could normally laugh it off, or if worse came to worse talk his way out of it. Only once had he really upset people, and then a mock apology had put things right.

Somewhere around April, though, Jonathon began to lose control of his fibbing. Not only that, but his fabrications were becoming increasingly fantastic and blatant. One day at the mall, Jonathon told a chatty shopkeeper that he was going sky-diving that afternoon; then an old girlfriend that he'd had his tonsils removed a month previously; and, on his way to the car, he saw one of his mother's friends and told her that he'd just been talking to Marlon Brando in the Mall. Marlon had taken time to talk to him, he said smiling, because he had been the only one to see through the actor's disguise and he was impressed with Jonathon's keen eyes.

The greater the look of incredulity he could summon from the face of whomever he lied to, the greater his satisfaction. He was always careful not to tell a lie that was likely to be disproven on the spot; his mother's friend probably looked for Marlon Brando in the mall and then resigned herself to the fact that she'd missed him in his disguise, or that he'd left. Jonathon had his "disprove probability factor" down to a fine art. He virtually just had to open his mouth and out came a coherent and believable story that the listener had to accept or call Jonathon's bluff there and then. That rarely happened. If it did, Jonathon raised his eyebrows and stared pleadingly toward the doubting Thomas who was transformed into a believer in a matter of seconds.

He did have hundreds and hundreds of lies to remember and sometimes that was a problem. People would approach him and begin talking about things about which Jonathon would have no idea, then all of a sudden a word or phrase would make everything click. The person might be talking about something that Jonathon had told weeks, even months previously, and in these cases he had to be particularly nimble by adding fresh lies to the original one, or if time had exposed his ruse he had to convince the person that they had heard or interpreted wrong. That was a real challenge—like lying to someone to get them to lie to themselves.

It was a long time since Jonathon had started lying, though, and he became restless with his antics. He found that only by directly contradicting others did his deceptions take on a new and fresh direction. He met one of his old high school teachers in a bagel shop one day and the two sat down together. They made small talk and stirred their coffee, then the teacher asked Jonathon how his parents were. Almost as an instinct, Jonathon said that he mustn't have heard about the divorce. The teacher mumbled an astonished regret and listened to Jonathon's tales of adultery and heartbreak.

"But I saw them a week ago. They were together. Outside the movies."

"Yes, I know. My father took her there to discuss the divorce. He said that at least she wouldn't throw a tantrum in a movie theater."

The teacher changed the subject, made an excuse, then took his garlic bagel and lox to go.

Around September, Jonathon took a job as a salesperson in a designer clothes shop, close to where he lived with his parents and younger sister. The slow dreamy shop hours gave him time to invent more lavish lies, some that even he had to think twice about attempting. Could he, for example, walk into the local police station and tell the sergeant that he had overheard two men discussing plans to hold up an armored car next Thursday? Could he tell everyone that he'd been offered a job in Jakarta and disappear for six months?

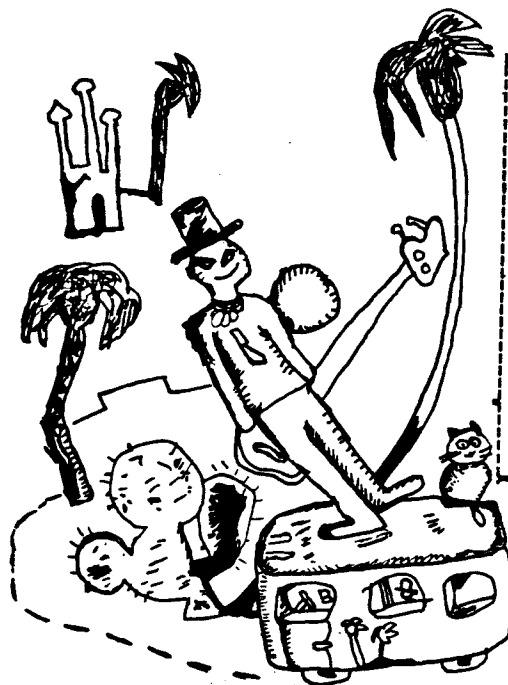
It soon became clear to those with insight and words to read that Jonathon's habit was running amok. His days became a blur of his own inventions and soon he lost all sense of reality. He convinced himself that he really had been seduced in the shop by a blond porn star. He was seen approaching people in the street asking them for autographs, positive that they were famous and not just dazed shoppers. One shocked youth punched Jonathon in the mouth when he ran up to him shouting "Bono! Bono!", and his sister cried for two days when she found her naked brother performing an exorcism in her bedroom to banish the demons that lived there.


In his heart Jonathon thought that all was fine, but he had noticed that he was laughing less and less after the lie was done. Instead of sensing a satisfied smirk, he now merely felt confused and unsure as to why the lie hadn't worked as it should have done. Why did people turn away from him before he'd finished telling them the whims of his imagination? Why were his parents insisting that he continue go to and see the psychologist

when none of them would even listen to him? He was fired from the clothes shop for insisting to a customer that he must return the next day for the free quart of brake fluid that went with every purchase over \$200. That every same day he placed a call to The Oprah Winfrey Show and got through. He fit effortlessly into the show's theme for the day, and said that he was a girl trapped in a man's body and needed help badly. As he spoke, the camera panned the audience, and they all looked so sympathetic that he began to cry. Oprah said not to worry, that if he stayed on the line then somebody would give him an address he could contact for help. Jonathon thanked her—"Thank you Oprah"—and then listened as a sweet voice made him write down an address in Mobile, Alabama.

On Christmas Eve Jonathon was arrested for trying to climb down a neighbor's chimney with a sack full of chopped venison from his mother's freezer. Later, when his father came to collect him from the cells, Jonathon refused to go and insisted that his "pardner" would release him in good time. His father dragged him out by a forelock, past the snickering, whiskey-breathed police officers.

When Jonathon died seven weeks later, only his immediate family went to the funeral. Witnesses to the suicide say he definitely yelled, "Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's..." as he plunged from a fifth-story balcony at 10 o'clock on a frosty Tuesday morning. At the service, there were no tears, just tired drawn faces, and for the first time since he had been ordained, Father Brian Callaghan couldn't think of an honest thing to say.

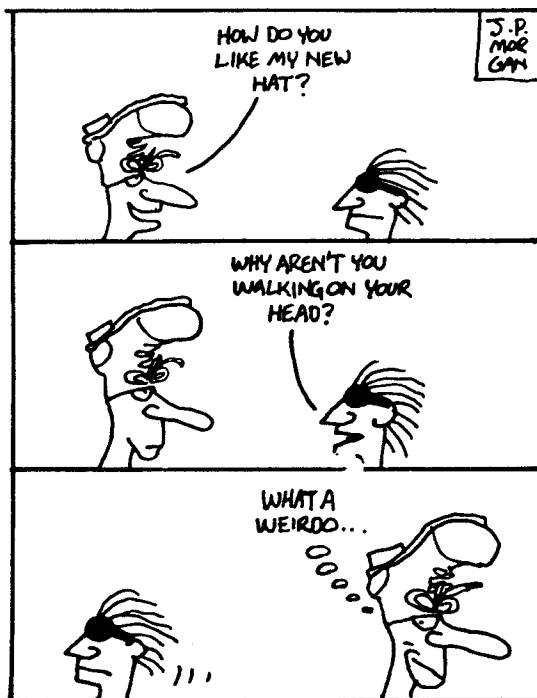




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**NO, I WOULD NOT GO DOWN THE SAME ROAD AGAIN**  
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 YOUNGSTOWN - OHIO, 44504**

# The Ogre by Andy Roberts

(A WARNING: Listen, this is not real. Any of it. If I've offended anybody I'm sorry, it's nothing personal. Really. I mean that. Really I do.—AR)

Thurmand Spurlow is a drunken, lazy hillbilly with a heart full of hate. He lives up on the mountain by Cripple Creek and comes down twice a year for booze and seed, hurling insults and crapulous by the time he's crawling back to the evil-looking farm where he scratches out dirt for a living and fosters tales of drunkenness and cruelty amongst the townspeople below. It's on those semi-annual trips that they learn about him. I mean really learn instead of making up. But they soon forget and he leaps up in imaginations again as a great big ugly ogre of a man with a chainsaw for a mouth that chews up interference like so much rotten pulpwood. His hands are big, big as hams they say, with fingers thick, mean and dirty as burnt rope, with claws at the end that could rip the hide from a bear and a nightgown from a virgin. He's mean as a hurt snake and twice as deadly. I thought I'd have a look.

So I climbed the mountain one day in June and came upon the ogre tilling fields, whispering sweet nothings into the ear of a mule and running back to stand in the traces and curse. That was about the sorriest excuse for an animal I'd ever seen. But Thur-

## KEY WEST

by Curtis Olson

I lied to you.  
I didn't go to work today.  
I cleaned out the checking account  
and flew down to Key West,  
because I was sick and tired of it all  
and wanted to have a little fun.  
I went into a beachfront tavern  
down there this afternoon  
and I saw Ernest Hemingway  
nursing a beer at the bar.  
I sat down next to him  
and ordered a draft.  
I nudged him,  
man-to-man-like,  
and said, "Say there, Ernie,  
I thought you were dead—  
short yourself or something."  
He looked at me  
with those "Old Man" eyes and said,  
"Nah; I just spread that rumor  
to keep the stupid young writers  
from bothering me all the time."  
"Hey; I'm a writer,"  
I almost said,  
but didn't, thank god.  
It seemed like everyone down there  
was trying to get away from something.  
The bartender was divorced  
and hiding from his ex's lawyer.  
The waitress had  
a tattoo from Auschwitz  
and was on probation for murder.  
Then there was Hemingway  
who was trying to get away from me.  
I didn't have anything to hide from  
except a bad day at work,  
so I took the next flight back here  
to have a lime daiquiri  
with you.

GOVERNMENT JOB POKE  
by Dana A. Snow  
I tried to get a government job.  
They gave me a loyalty oath.  
They asked, "Are you a communist  
or capitalist?"  
And I had to answer, "Both!"  
I said, "I believe in pay for work."

I think that's truly fair—  
And it works with communism.  
Ya gotta have things before you can share!  
The examiner got dizzy  
And said to me, "No thanks,  
Your answer sounds quite sensible,  
But it won't fit in the blanks."

mand held his temper in the heat and fell to kicking clods or dirt, muttering a bit and raising up in a wave now and then, but for the most part held his peace. So did I. A .45 cocked and loaded, I wasn't taking any chances.

I followed him for most of the afternoon, keeping a good distance but able to scent the spoor of the man when the wind shifted right. It was enough to knock my socks off. Right away I had a handle on him: he may have been skunk-bit, or sprayed, or whatever you call it, or suffered some form of terrible disease that made him stink like that and probably accounted for his nasty disposition and tales of terror on the tongues of innocent villagers. They all said he stunk but I took it as a matter of course. Now I knew the terrible truth.

I decided to close in.

He got wind of me about halfway, ducked and ran, leaving a swaybacked mule standing stupid in the traces. He came back shortly with a shotgun. Up close he was just a little bitty drink of water with a cap of curling hair and spindled arms that stood out from his sides like willow branches in a drought and a set of bandy, bowed legs that would put barrel hoops to shame. He trembled when he called out in a quaking voice: "Who goes there?"

"Amos," I said. "Amos Thirdgirl."

"Whaddaya want?" He firmed the shotgun on his shoulder. His fingers never left the trigger.

"Let's talk," I said, letting it rise on the end to take the form of a question but not wanting it to come across as weak.

"'Bout what?" he drawled. No change in gun position.

"Uncle Trash?" I ventured.

He laid the gun down, took a step in the dirt and broke down. I pressed closer.

"That's enough," he said. He'd raised the gun back up again, squinting up through cuts of eyes. Eyes that had leaned against sun and rain for forty years of dirt farming on a red dog hill in West Virginia and thought they'd seen the last of Uncle Trash in '42. When he'd come up missing on the checklist out of Belgium and Thurmand shot himself in the foot with a carbine and shipped out to farm the dirt and fester with hurt over the disappearance of the best friend he'd ever had. The name brought sharp memories and I stepped in and eased the shotgun from his shoulder.

Truth is we're related, distantly, but of course I'd never admit it. In public anyway. This don't count. 'Cause it's lies anyway, like I told you.

So he asked me what I knew about Trash.

And I told him all night long as we sat about the wood stove and sipped his whiskey from broken china cups. I told him Trash had turned up seven years later, according to Daddy, with a broken, crippled German wife still smoking from the Holocaust who'd been mistaken for a Jew and nearly fried in Hitler's ovens, just missing it as the Allies rumbled in and liberated the souls from their prison. Trash picked her from a heap of broken bodies and nursed her back to life. But it broke him too and he never was the same, took to wearing a pencil-thin moustache and writing perfumed love letters to widowed women overseas. Took it upon himself to heal the woes of a twisted world gone wrong. He raised pigs for money and did all right but hung himself when the little woman found out about the letters.

"Did he ever ask about me?" said Thurmand, with an eager, anxious look in his eyes, and I lied.

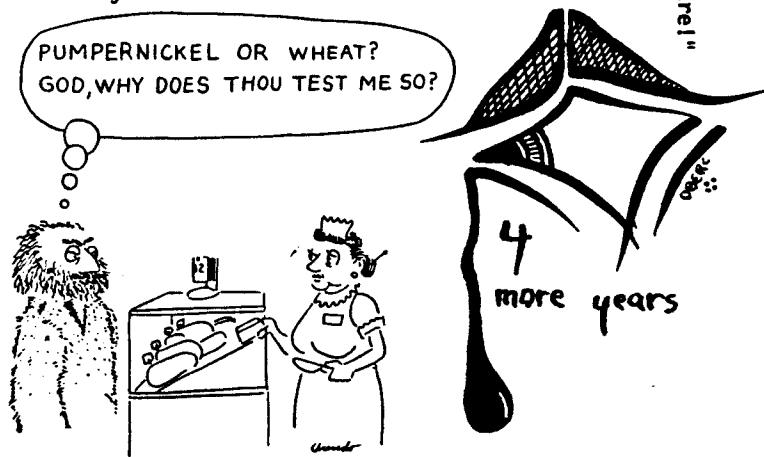
"Sure. I remember something about that. Daddy said he was asking where you were."

"Don't you lie to me, boy!" Thurmand barked, and crushed his cup against the wall. "He never give a plugged nickel if I lived or died, but I loved that man. Loved him like a brother that I never had. Like an older, stronger, mean-spirited pest of a brother who beats up on you and tells you what to do, but you love anyway just because he tells you what to do and throws a little attention your way now and then. And of course he's blood. But I never had no brother or sister, or even a dog for that matter, and Daddy pulled out for good when Momma got sick with the woman troubles and couldn't give him what he wanted any more. And that that's why I loved that boy, Trash." He fell to crying.

I believe that was the most he'd spoke in forty years, besides the sweet nothings to the mule he whispered, and the cursing at mosquitos and bugs and such and crickets when he was trying to get to sleep at night.

So I left him up there on the hill with a standing invitation to join us in town anytime for a visit (which I knew of course he'd refuse, being so used to the way things were up there and not really unhappy with it anyway) and sliding down the slippery red dog to town, knew in my heart the truth of the man. A man poisoned with betrayal, not over the love of a woman, but of a friend (which is often the stronger of the two, although most don't want to admit it, hanging by their teeth to their worn-out notions of storybook romance) and hurt in the heart with a pain that crippled and drove him to the top of a mountain to live out a life of loneliness and degradation punctuated only now and then by brief moments of black despair.

Of course the tales went on and the ogre lived up to expectations, never failing to elicit excitement from a bored population, crawling down the hill for a snoutful of booze and sackful of seed. On those days we'd lock eyes in the street and hold for a moment, each a bit wiser for that hot night in June, but neither letting on what he knew about the other. Because bonds are strong in hillbilly legend and the least I could do was include this disclaimer at the start of my story: that all I said was a pack of lies and no more truth to it than pigs can fly. And I meant that when I said it. Really I did.



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## LOOKIN' GOOD

by Mary Ann Henn  
Familiar names  
like Music Through The Night  
wake me with the Morning  
Program at 6 AM  
Personalities, no doubt,  
have something to do  
with it. But I love  
my solitude. There's  
too much when eyes meet.  
Being a Keillor fan  
I raise my eyes  
to heaven. Too much  
to meet the eye.  
I heard this voice  
in a dream, however  
and all worked out well.  
Keep the eyes guarded—  
just in case.

3 x 9 1/2

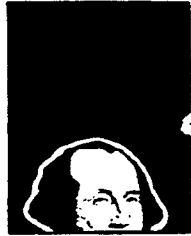
by Paul Nicoloff



George  
Washington



Young  
George  
Washington



Washington  
as a  
child



during his  
"Fat Elvis"  
period



posing  
for the  
monument



## DID SOMEONE SAY "ELK?"

by Eric Ewing

"It's a Satanic beverage, Mark. Don't drink it." Mark looked at Carl, disturbed because the warning sounded serious, almost urgent.

"What?"

"Never drink Dr. Pepper. It's the drink of the Beast."

Mark set the can down onto the table and sat back, ready for a sermon. Ever since Carl had been "born again," Mark had heard more than his share of Bible quotations from his roommate.

"What are you hollerin' about this time? No Dr. Pepper? Why not?"

"Look at the letters. D-O-C-T-O-R," he spelled, "has six letters. P-E-P-P-E-R also has six. Now how many are there in 'I DRINK'?"

"Six."

"Exactly. See? The statement 'I drink Dr. Pepper'—Carl paused to make the sign of the cross—"contains triple sixes, the Number of the Beast. Don't drink it."

Mark looked across the kitchen table, his jaw hanging slack. Carl stared back at him with the newly-acquired zombie-for-Jesus look on his face.

"I'm concerned about your afterlife, Mark. I don't want you to carelessly toss away your chances to find Glory in the Grace of God through a little sip of carbonated sugar water."

Mark looked down at the can. His eyes spotted something important. "Look!" He held up the can for Carl to inspect. "They don't spell out the word 'doctor.' It's abbreviated 'Dr.'. It's safe."

Carl leaned closer to examine the writing. "I guess you're right. Only two letters in 'Dr.'. Drink up, pal. Sorry about the confusion."

Mark leaned back in his chair and dumped the can's contents down his throat.

"Things are not as they used to be," said Jesus to the popcorn machine.

"POP, POP, POP...SN-SN-AP, POP," said the popcorn machine to Jesus.

"Ah yes, I remember when things were much simpler. I remember the days before the coming of machines. I remember when magic still beat in the world's heart. The shadows have dried up. Science has become God and God has become but a poorly-made motion picture. Man has given birth to his abortion-child and finds warmth in the neon lights of the city."

"SNAP, POP, POP, CR-SNAP, POP, PI-POP," replied the popcorn machine evenly.

"You know that once the ground was clean and soft. But man needed hard ground to tread his path to hell. Let him walk in his hard world. Let him have science instead of God. Let him find his way with logic where once miracles were his. Man has killed magic, and how he must learn to enjoy the cold touch of technology. Let him make science his lover and logic shall teach him that steel gives only cold, dead kisses."

"POP, POP, POP, POP, POP, POP," said the popcorn machine.

"Hey Bud, how's about movin' it along, huh?" a man wearing a foolish sign shirt said to Jesus, who stood near the popcorn machine.

"PISS OFF!" said Jesus to the man wearing the stupid sign shirt; then he burst into flames and was forever gone from the world.

The stupid sign shirt said, "It's Hard To Be Humble When You're From Haverall."

"POP, POP," went the popcorn machine, then died stone cold dead. Night-time had come to the bright city, but the lights had long since killed the darkness.

- R.S. Moser



# Sayz-U!(Letters)

Said Doktor Melonhead to his faithful dog, Sprint, "Ah...snow is snow. In the dark it's all cold."

No cutesiness here. I can't manage to stumble this old humble brain into humor. Sorry it took so long for me to respond to you, what with the poverty of student life and such...I'm broke. For IJ I sacrificed my lunch.

I thank you for putting me to print. I've found my voice through you, now may I find those who would listen. Listen and try to understand...I am humbled by those who share these pages, those "emphyreal" ghosts who have earned their place in the "underground"—Anni Ackner, Ace Backwords, Ho Chi Zen, Eric Ewing... I will try to earn my "rent" living, as it is, as neighbor to giants.

I wish I could give to you an answer to your financial dilemma. In my current state of economic unrest I have no right to an opinion. Of course I'll add my counsel to the growing pile of shit like everyone else. It's my obligation to seem experienced on everything, right? At the very least I must appear to be self-gratifying. I wish I could give a more pragmatic solution (i.e., I wish I had enough money to help), but circumstances give me little ability to be more useful than to buy your zine. It would be a shame to see such a cool thing die under the weight of its own readership.

A higher level of quality control and editorship might help but it most certainly would change the outlook of the book. As I see it now, it's less a formal magazine than an exchange of creative energies. It is a most personal outing: a managuri of friends (and I hope newfound friends) who, by their strangeness, produce something unique. I like you people...Like, I could give a crap about the TV GUIDE crew. It is the lack of "distance" between you and your readers/contributors that so deserves recognition. That's why, I think, a title for you would seem so wrong, so incorrect. Although you obviously deserve a great deal of respect (being, or seeming to be, a modern-day literary Jesus), you are "buddies" with nearly everyone who reads a copy of IJ. There are no "titles" among equals. (Well yeah, that's another reason I wanted to get rid of the word "editor." Hmm, you may have something there, tho—how about "christfigure?" Nah? Oh well, just an idea...)

It would be just my luck to finally find such an extraordinary assortment of mutants only then to lose them to economic suicide or death of an idea. (Don't worry, we're here to stay for awhile—or three years, whichever comes first...)

And of Dioblo, my evil suicidal nihilistic twin, I think I have bettered that nightmare. Having had friends, family, correspondents, strange number/letter combinations and fellow of that ilk advise me to "cheer up" I now get the message. The happy silly SubGenius I'll never be but at least I'm not dead.

Call me the beatnik flyer,

REV. RANDOLPH SCOTT MOSER  
Western Point Rd., RFD 2  
York, ME 03909

Dear Elayne,

Thanks for introducing me to your creative and comedic publication. There's a special family atmosphere to INSIDE JOKE. Plus, it's so diverse and extensive. Do you have time for anything else in your life? I enjoy Anni Ackner, Prudence Gaelor, Larry Stolte, Paul Beckman and Dale White, to name a few. The humor is rich, though often understated. Much of the writing is sharp and clear. Some of the other is a little too mysterious for this pristicated hayseed. Maybe some of the urban sophistication will rub off on me...

DENNIS BREZINA  
7566 Solomons Island Road  
Harwood, MD 20226

(Wow, I've been called many things but never an urban sophisticate! Hey look ma, I'm pullin' it off...)

Dear Elayne,

1/26/89

A long overdue tribute to INSIDE JOKE, praises to its dexterous writers, artists of fiction & reality & not merely opinions, those unrecognized & significant intellectuals made self-important by suffering, misery, agony & latent cryptic knowledge of survival--- May 1989 bring more stories, poems & independent secrets.

I would like to recommend INSIDE JOKE to the New York Public Library. As a former employee and lover of all good literature, I would trust INSIDE JOKE to be accepted through one bureaucratic route or another (if it hasn't been already or you would rather not bother)...

TAMARINA DWYER  
c/o KAROLE B. KELLY  
14 Balsam Crescent  
New Hartford, NY 13413

(Actually Tammy, I think I did get a request from NYPL awhile ago, and I wrote back, but they never replied. And just to show you how much pull I haven't got, Steve works for Brooklyn Public and BPL doesn't have IJ either, so what can I tell you?)

Dear Elayne,

It has been awhile since I have been able to Sayz-U. We have been very busy down here. Barbara is working as a paralegal, Nicholas is in daycare, and I am coming to the realization that being a refinisher is not the same as being a finisher, like my dad was in New York. With Nick's earaches as they have been, and the minor surgery to clear them up, it has been difficult to discharge my duties as official back cover artist, and incoherent commentist.

I should say that I have had a new title conferred upon me in the Church of the SubGenius. Stang was a guest on a local talk

show, and I was the only SubGenius caller the host received. I reintroduced myself to Stang, and when he remembered who I am, and the devival at NolaCon, et al., he referred to me as "the greater Fil." I finally got the reprints of the devival photos, and I am going to send them out once I sift through this mound of correspondence. If anyone is interested in getting a few of them, drop me a line.

Anni, thank you for the lovely holiday card, and I will send you a picture of the wonder child. Ken, your life in a band quiz brought back a bunch of memories, when I wanted to be a songwriter and a bass guitarist. As I have said before, I am a much better cartoonist than guitarist...which gives you an idea of what kind of guitarist I am. My stage ambitions are being met by my participation in Cartoonist Jams at sf conventions, where I rock out on paper.

Elayne, I like the idea of having a cartoon page.

"Kid," good media column. I read about Boxed In! in The Nation [as well]. Us progressives got to stick together. I watch very little television these days, and avoid commercials, because the stuff I buy, you see advertised on the box.

J.P., how about "Fission Chicken - The Next Generation"?

Further high points of this ish are Dale's hot spot, "Chicano Atheists," "Sleepless Nights" and the smoking computer (yeah Vern!) and Stu's "Half the World."

I have an APAZine skinsaver to throw together. Aloha,

PHIL TORTORICI  
P.O. Box 57487  
West Palm Beach, FL 33405-7487

Dear Elayne,

My favorite things in this issue were the ones by Larry Stolte and Prudence Gaelor. I didn't think you were going to print that letter. I happened to have G. Fourmile's address so I wrote him an apology telling him I had only meant to tell you that this time you had carried your non-editing too far, but now that I've read his letter again I'm not really sure an apology was necessary. (Your editorial comment made me feel that you had tricked me into doing something really rotten.) (I guess another apology is in order, then; the way I look at it, you can never really have too many apologies or too little animosity. Sorry, didn't mean to "trick" you or anything, musta gotten my foot stuck in my mouth again.) I'm sorry to read that Deborah Benedict is not well and won't be writing. I would have encouraged her to be as vituperative (I just looked it up; I always say "verbally abusive") as she felt like being. Rotten people do show their rottenness most blatantly around handicapped people...

Sincerely,

ELLIOT CANTSIN  
1961 Cedar Street  
N. Merrick, NY 11566

(I am happy to report that, while DeeBee is still in no condition to take up writing again, husband Tom Gedwillo reports "She is holding her own and has found the new medication to benefit her," and she is of course still receiving copies of INSIDE JOKE so she is able to read all your heartfelt good wishes for her.)  
Dear EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEElayne,  
2-8-89

As I told you on the phone, I think #65 was the best-ever issue of INSIDE JOKE. Everyone was really at their best this time out. Usually I'm pretty selective with my praise, but this time it's across the board. Everyone seemed to have turned in their best work. (It's going to be very hard to come up with an issue that will equal or top this one, in my humble estimation.) I like having the comics on their own page—more like that. (We had an unusually fine batch of 'toons too.) And I even liked the little poems. So this was a winner, the standard by which all others must be measured. Way to go, E; fellow contributors, keep it up! Take care, Rockin',

KEN BURKE  
P.O. Box 8  
Black Canyon City, AZ 85324

Dear Elayne:

Help! I need second guesses on the contest [in IJ #65]! To date, no one has guessed right. Those of you who have already guessed, please send in a second guess.

If you haven't guessed yet, send in two guesses. The winner will be chosen as follows:

Of the second-time guessers—a Post-It pad of your choice of colors to the one who gets it right on the second go-round; winner to be determined by random selection in the case of multiple winners.

Of the first-timers, a Post-It pad of your choice of colors to the one who gets it right on the first go-round—same deal as above.

The color option: pink, yellow, blue, green or white with a navy blue grid (the colors are just plain pads). Or, grey with lines.

Send in your guesses quickly. Winners will be published in the next IJ if someone gets it right finally!

Bye for now, Elayne!

KATHY STADALSKY  
933 State Route 314  
Mansfield, OH 44903-9807

Dear Ms. Wechsler,

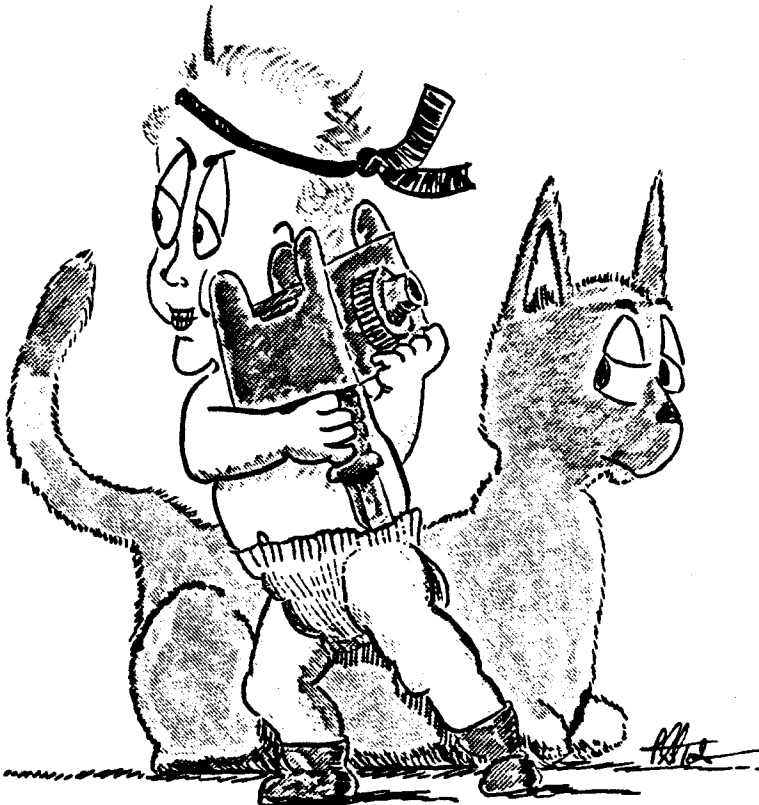
Number 65 of IJ was a good shot. The story by Dale A. White was great! I liked the comics and poetry (of which I was included!) very much. I've read this copy eight times already and it just keeps on coming to my reading table day after day.

I'm looking forward to #66!

REV. RANDOLPH SCOTT MOSER  
13 off Western Point Road  
York, ME 03909

(Well, all I can say is thank goodness this one's finally out, RSM, so you can have a fresh copy to read eight times!)

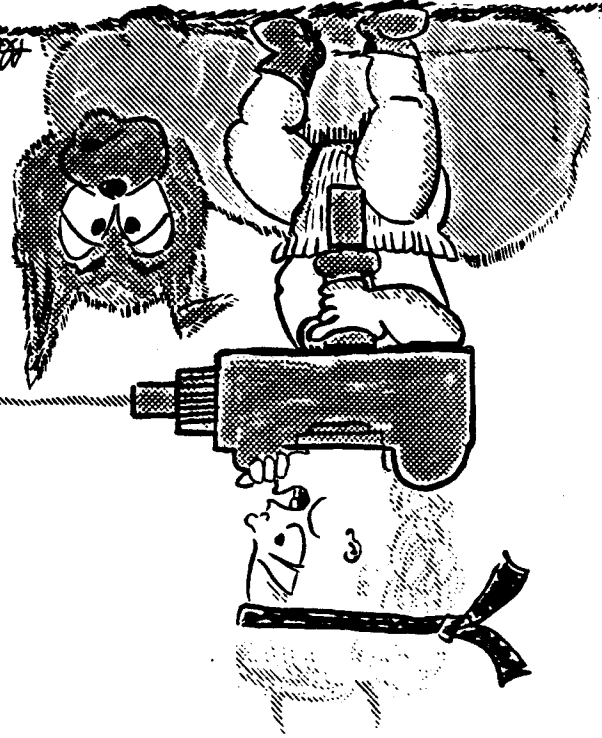
NICHOLAS SCOTT !! STOP  
PLAYING WITH DADDY'S  
UZI...



1.

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NEW YORK, NY 10159

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2.