

Inside Joke

No
69

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE	PAGE
<i>YIN, YANG, YONI, YUM: forum discussion</i>	69
<i>BENOÎT BÄAL - An Intimate Biography</i>	69
<i>MATHEMATICS FORUM: B-SOMETHING SQUARED</i>	69
<i>THE TONGUE: ORGAN OF THE GODS? Pictorial</i>	69
<i>POLITICAL ESSAY: BUSH SUPPORT</i>	69
<i>"MY LIPS ARE SEALED" Poem</i>	69

• REGULAR FEATURES •

*BANANA DIET FAD- XEROGRAPHY AND THE MULTIPLE ORGASM-
SNEEZING DURING SEX, PART 4: IMPROVEMENTS IN SURGICAL
PROSTHETICS- LIP GLOSS, DENTAL FLOSS CONTROVERSY*



A NEWSLETTER OF COMEDY & CREATIVITY



PRICE: \$1.50 PER ISSUE

M. J. J.

Upcoming Events

JULY 31 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #70
 AUGUST 1 - LARRY STOLTE (32); DON LEIGHTY (38); Jerry Garcia (45)
 AUGUST 1-7 - National Clown Week
 AUGUST 2 - GEORG PATTERSON (29); Peter O'Toole (56)
 AUGUST 3 - Martin Sheen (49)
 AUGUST 4 - Muslim New Year (1410)
 AUGUST 6 - Peace Day (and Hiroshima Day)
 AUGUST 6-12 - Psychic Week (but you knew that...)
 AUGUST 7 - Stan Freberg (63); Garrison Keillor (47)
 AUGUST 8 - Andy Warhol (b. 1920)
 AUGUST 9 - The Big Dick Leaves (1974); David Steinberg (47); Nagasaki Day
 AUGUST 10 - Ian Anderson (42)
 AUGUST 11 - Presidential Joke Day; Joe Jackson (34)
 AUGUST 13 - Fidel Castro (62); Anni Oakley (b. 1860); Bert Lahr (b. 1895); Alfred Hitchcock (b. 1899)
 AUGUST 14 - David Crosby, man (48)
 AUGUST 15 - Linda Ellerbee (45); Lawrence of Arabia (b. 1883); 20th anniversary of Woodstock godhelpus
 AUGUST 16 - Julie Newmar (54); Joe Miller's Joke Day
 AUGUST 17 - Mae West (b. 1892); Davy Crockett (b. 1786)
 AUGUST 18 - Martin Mull (46)
 AUGUST 20 - GOBI (19); RANDY MOSER (22); H.P. Lovecraft (b. 1890)
 AUGUST 21 - DOUG "IVAN STANG" SMITH (36); Ozma of Oz
 AUGUST 22 - Ray Bradbury (69); Dorothy Parker (b. 1893)
 AUGUST 23 - Gene Kelly (77); Mark Russell (56); Keith Moon (b. 1947)
 AUGUST 25 - Walt Kelly (b. 1913); Elvis Costello (35)
 AUGUST 26 - Nineteenth Amendment passed (1920)
 AUGUST 27 - NICK AUMILLER (38); Martha Raye (73); Federal Income Tax declared unconstitutional (1884)
 AUGUST 28 - GYPSY the Feral (6); Jack Kirby (72)

(continued on page 4)

INSIDE JOKE is put on bi-weekly by Elayne "Ridin' on the D-Train Line" Wechsler and many friends, and emanates from the Flatbush area in beautiful downtown Brooklyn, where once again the fabulous Mermaid Parade has kicked off summer in style!
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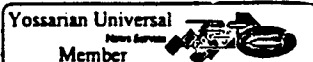
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SOAP

by Dana A. Snow
 How does soap work?
 Why do suds stop most dirt?
 When washing your body
 Or washing your shirt?
 Perhaps it separates dirt
 Making it unmagnetic
 No, watches still work
 So that theory's pathetic.
 Perhaps it rubs dirt off

By process of friction
 No, soaking clothes helps
 So that theory is fiction.
 I must leave you hanging,
 I can't answer the question.
 Perhaps soap works by
 The power of suggestion.
 I wrote this poem
 Not ashamed, I won't hide it
 Just want you to know
 Jay Leno didn't write it.

ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

With summer fast upon us, folks are either laying low (like us) or moving around. Three of our staffers are even now in the process of switching venues. Dorian Tenore has undergone a change of name (she assures us it was not painful) as a result of her marriage to Vinnie Bartilucci on July 14—fittingly enough, she reviews the Miss Manners "On Weddings" video herein. Vinnie and Dorian can be reached at 86 Willow Street, Floral Park, NY 11001, as can their boarder, Tom Deja (taking this issue off during his shift in locale). Meanwhile, Todd Kristel (who's sent us a nice backlog to print over the next couple IJs—thanks Todd!) is heading somewhere else in Pennsylvania; we'll let you know anon. Pru is still sick, and David Serlin is just plain gone, along with the remainder of INSIDE STROKE (I shouldn't worry were I you; IS was not shaping up all that good, anyway); we may hear from him again.

I think everyone else is in attendance, plus a few new folks—welcome to Sara "Plagiaristic Tendencies" Edwards, Thomas Roche, Dave Savona, John See and David Weakly; and welcome back to Max Nuclear (both he and Mr. Weakly have strange cop tales—wonder if this police state writing is a trend), Tammy "Poet's Diet Book" Dwyer and A.J. Wright! Also within is a timely piece by Ken on Jerry Lee Lewis, the first of two parts; Kathy's second fake-news contest; another Zen Brick; and a breather from Mac in lieu of his space-opera segment. We should have enough space left over to afford yours truly two extra columns, a "Fan Noose" update and a review of an Abbie Hoffman tribute. Yes, I know we did two Hoffman-related pieces last time, but he was a great inspiration to me in doing this rag, so I feel justified, and besides, it seems I never get to write anything for IJ any more...I can't imagine, though, why suddenly nobody's in the mood to write us letters of comment any more; this issue's column is again quite short. We need feedback on IJ, folks—what you like, don't like, what inspires you, suggestions for the future, etc. Do write!

I want to thank those staffers—Ken, Mike, Larry O, William and Kathy—who were able to send stuff in camera-ready to save my wrists a bit of pain, and also thank those who wanted to but couldn't because of technical incompatibility. If you want to give it a go, remember, camera-ready copy should be in 12-pitch and measure 5 1/2" (approximately 65 characters on an IBM Selectric) for longer pieces and 4-5/8" (about 55 characters) for shorter ones; space in three to begin paragraphs; and PLEASE, no spaces between paragraphs or sections, as it takes up too much room.

Thanks to Bangor Zack for sending in this issue's only ad—ads are still \$5 per business card size, and that includes the IJ in which it appears, so send us in some today! Also on the selling block, as always, are back issues of IJ, available for \$1.50 each, and for every ten you order, for a limited time (say, till the end of this year), I'll throw in a future issue free! I'm no longer selling IJ caps, as the response hasn't been enough to warrant a (15 minimum) reorder; we'll see around the end of the year. We could always use money, though, and I do thank all of you who've forgone sending coins through the mail and donated the extra 50c per issue to the cause. Thanks also to J.C. Brainbeau, Vernon Grant and all the others whose names I really ought to remember better for their help above and beyond.

INSIDE JOKE can be had for \$1.50 an issue (limit three issues per person, as I only make 150 copies in toto, and Dorothy too), or a 65c stamp only if your submission is published in the issue for which you're paying (as of this issue, I've expanded the 65c "discount" to include letters). Please make it one, loose, 65c stamp, not 3 25's or a SASE—it makes it so much easier! If there is an "X" next to your name on your mailing label, this is the last issue you will receive without payment; please check your label. Advance subscriptions are available for \$12/year for 8 bi-weekly issues; please make checks payable to "Elayne Wechsler, NOT IJ. If you had the Writers'/Artists' Guidelines (available for a SASE), you'd know all that. Advance subs are NON-REFUNDABLE and anything over \$12 is considered donation. The deadline for IJ #70 is July 31; #72's deadline is September 15. Please send letters, written pieces under 1900 words, artwork (comic strips, illustrations, etc.) and any and all money (please do NOT send zines for trade, as I cannot afford to trade IJ for other zines, much as I'd like to):

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

By the way, the editor of INSIDE JOKE's British cousin, as it were, INSTANT KARMA, fellow by name of James Wallis, will be visiting Apartment Third-Eye about the time you receive this issue, so if you'd like to speak with him about copies of Ink you were awaiting but never got, or just to say hello, please call us at the (718) HELP-AT-1 Hotline and we'll connect you!

This issue is dedicated to Andrei Gromko, Dik Browne and especially I.F. Stone; RIP *diver as well*.



DIARY of the ROCK FIEND



by
Anni Ackner

EXIT LAUGHING

Troops, I have to ask you a question in all seriousness, because it's been bothering me a lot lately, and I know that you, of anyone, will tell me the Truth—am I just paranoid, or is there, like, a conspiracy or something going around to take the fun out of everything? Honestly, it seems like lately a Thinking Person can't relax his or her guard for a minute without having some treasured little amusement either removed altogether or eroded to the point where it's no longer worth the doing for the trouble one has to go through before, and the guilt one must suffer after, the fact. I don't like to complain, as you know, but given the condition of the world today, it almost appears that one must either be a Catholic saint or a Jewish mother (which, according to the latter, is more or less the same thing as the former) in order to achieve any level of pleasure at all.

Take sex, for instance, though fewer and fewer people are. Sex used to be rather a nice thing, one way and another, a modest and unassuming diversion in which two people (or more, if you were the athletic type) could indulge on rainy afternoons when the Yankees were out of town, or at night if Johnny Carson had gone into reruns again, or at just about any time, really, depending on the relative newness of the relationship involved and how amenable you and your partner(s) were to the friendly or helpful remarks of curious passers-by. We all liked sex—it was easy, it was fun, it was free (unless you happened to be on Seventh Avenue and Forty-Eighth Street), and pretty nearly anyone over a certain age could do it, sort of like Mother Nature's volleyball. These days, however, things are entirely and regrettably different. In the first place, you have to worry about far too many nasty diseases and the nasty precautions required to prevent the nasty diseases, and which position it is you're supposed to avoid lest the nasty diseases creep up on you unawares. Then, even if you get beyond that, there's the matter of finding a place in which to indulge in this previously delightful pastime—Georgia is definitely out—to say nothing of the problem some few of us have with videotapes that have an unfortunate habit of turning up on *A Current Affair*. Really, sex being what it is in these troubled times, we're just damned good and lucky that no one thus far has been able to take out a patent on cold showers.

Then, there's drugs. Now, I'm the last person—with the possible exception of David Crosby—to say that too many drugs are good for a person but, once upon a time, a mild, occasional indulgence in some of the more benign forms of controlled substances was considered a real pleasure, if not a social nicety. A little marijuana after a difficult day at the office, a touch of LSD to enhance the enjoyment of a musical concert, a spot of Valium to relax the jangled nerves, even a *soupcou* of cocaine now and then—such things were as fine and welcome as a week's vacation, to those of us who could afford no other and I, for one, remember them with wistful nostalgia. And nostalgia is pretty well all we've got left of those lovely times, what with drugs that reputedly cause addiction if one so much as glances in their direction, crime-stopping cartoon bloodhounds, seven-year-olds singing annoying jingles in our ears, junior senators from the more hysterical states pushing for the death penalty for anyone with the temerity to wish to indulge behind closed doors, with the blinds drawn, but within 200 miles of a school district, and Nancy Reagan showing up at one's house at all kinds of inappropriate moments. Even alcohol, that most sacred of American obsessions, is not immune, and there was actually a serious movement afoot—which apparently succeeded—to bar the face of Elvis Presley from appearing on a postage stamp, because of the King's admitted excesses in these matters. It's enough to make one want to cry into one's beer, except that one can no longer obtain the beer to cry into unless one is over 21, not involved in professional athletics or the teaching or healing fields, and not planning to drive a car during the next three or four weeks.

Food, of course, is either fattening, chock-a-block with empty calories, cholesterol-ridden, laboratory-induced or causes cancer; sunbathing causes cancer, to say nothing of wrinkles, freckles and those peculiar looks you get from people who can actually fit into a Kamali bikini; smoking cigarettes rates slightly below defecating in public on the "How to Win Friends and Influence People" scale, besides costing \$1.50 a pack to obtain the items necessary for its practice; and, considering people like those jolly fellows over at Public Image, I don't even want to think about rock'n'roll. Truly, when one considers all the options it does begin to seem as though the only thing left for the Thinking Person to do is take the cloth, or the veil—or whatever garment it is depressed people in those old movies are always taking—and wait for the entire miserable century to blow over.

But wait! Things are not quite as bleak as they may seem. While there is no escaping the sad, sad fact that our major pleasures, pastimes and *divertissements* are being wrenched from us one by one, there are still many delightful minor enjoyments in which we may indulge, relatively guilt-, illness- and lawsuit-free. In my long and somewhat festive career as a sybarite, I have disco-

vered several dozen of these often-overlooked joys and, in the interest of sparing some poor, unsuspecting cloistered order the sight of a couple of hundred of the sort of people I know read this publication descending on it en masse, I shall pass a few of them on to you. Celebrate, rejoice, frolic and frivol, for here comes ANNI ACKNER'S SURE-FIRE LIST OF WAYS TO ENJOY ONESELF IN THE LAST DECADE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

or, Are We Having Fun Yet?

1. Sneer: It's amazing just how much pleasure can be attained simply by practising the gentle art of looking down on one's fellow creatures. Imagine the thrill to be gotten from the realization that you, in fact, are vastly superior in every way possible to the sniveling idiots by whom you find yourself surrounded and, as an added plus, there's such a wide and varying array of sniveling idiots in the world today that one need never become bored with one's superiority. Just picture yourself glancing with refined loathing at a group of so-called adults discussing the merits of liposuction versus Opti-Fast in public, shuddering a delicate shudder at those who seriously consider a Guns 'N Roses tee-shirt to be a fashion statement, and curling your lip in distaste at the antics of the wretched refuse who have somehow come to equate getting a mention in Michael Musto's column with winning the Kennedy Center Awards—I'll bet you feel better already. Of course, it must always be borne firmly in mind that mere arrogance is not enough, and simple condescension is not enough—any fool with a gap in his teeth and a late-night talk show can manage both of those without too much effort—a really good Sneer takes diligence, practise and hard work. It's more than a physical stance or even a mental attitude; it's a way of life, and must therefore be given the proper amount of study and concentration. Apprentice yourself to a head waiter in just about any New York restaurant where they charge by the fork, learn, learn, learn, and enjoy the fruits of your labours!

2. Stay in bed with the covers pulled over your head: Taking to your bed and refusing to leave it for anybody or anything is a sure-fire happiness-inducer by many people's lights. Your bed is comfy, it's cozy and delightfully warm and secure. Reading takes on almost sinful overtones, television viewing rises to new heights of decadence (be perfectly certain that you acquire an industrial strength remote control and keep it in apple-pie order at all times. Nothing can spoil the pleasure of a lifetime spent *au lit* than having to constantly rise and manually switch back and forth between Oprah and Geraldo) and, after the first few feeble efforts, just about nobody drops by to ask you to play Pictionary. For the lovers of nostalgia among us, there is looking at comic books—or *Playboy*—under the blankets, using a flashlight, pretending one's covered legs are the Rocky Mountains and taking Matchbox 4x4's on perilous journeys across them, and those long, lovely conversations with one's Teddy Bear and Barbie Doll. In order to carry off this enchanting lifestyle, it's best to develop, if possible, some mysterious and debilitating, though non-fatal, disease—Epstein-Barr virus will do nicely—but, failing that, a few well-placed hints concerning *Lovers Lost in the War Effort* (which war need not be specified), *Hearts Torn Asunder* and a *General Nervous Decline* should serve to convince even your most cynical acquaintances that you have every right to remain hidden away in your Chamber of Sorrow, renewing your spirits, gathering your diminished emotional forces, and resting, resting, resting, which brings us, very naturally, to

3. Sleep: It's just about impossible to say enough about sleep. The benefits are almost infinite. For one thing, sleep is most successfully accomplished when lying down, which is a big plus right there. For another, despite all the claptrap that's come out over the past couple of decades concerning the advantages of teaching—most of which evidently have to do with its adherents' balloon payments—most people really can't hear taped selections from the collected Leo Buscaglia while they're asleep. Furthermore, provided you've had the foresight to unplug the phone, very few people will attempt to interest you in the marvels of the Viking Pest Control System while you're asleep, and, perhaps best of all, you are not expected to do anything else while you're asleep other than *be asleep*. That is to say, you are, after all, asleep. People can scarcely expect you to be out race-walking at the same time, now, can they? It is my considered opinion that sleep cannot be improved upon. Think of how much better a place the world would be if everyone—C. Everett Koop comes most immediately to mind—spent 16 or 20 hours a day in Slumberland. Just think of it.

4. Set fire to the American flag: It's cheap, it gets a lot of people all sorts of bent out of shape, which can be amusing, and it is—for the moment, at least—absolutely legal. The Supreme Court said so, and about how much Fun Stuff can that be said?

5. Send me money: Priests, ministers, rabbis, philanthropists, social workers, heads of charitable organizations, and Jerry Lewis have all told us, time and again, that nothing can match the warm glow one derives when one gives to those less fortunate and, boys and girls, I cannot stress strongly enough that there are very few people in the civilized world less fortunate than I. Come over and have a look at what passes for my sofa, if you don't believe me. For a moderately warm glow, tens and twenties will do well, to heat things up a bit more, fifties are fine, but for those who wish to really twinkle and sparkle with the Joy of Giving, may I suggest that a couple of crisp hundreds simply can't be beat. There is a \$20 charge for all returned checks.

6. Begin a meaningful relationship with your television set: We are not talking here about the offhand, casual, almost indifferent attitude with which many of us treat our television viewing, or the cavalier, I-can-take-it-or-leave-it-alone manner that some of

(continued next page)

us maintain—going so far as to practise handicrafts, do our household chores, chat on the telephone or even read at the same time as the television is playing—but an intense, committed, concentrated monitoring of each and every broadcast day. An ideal relationship with one's television should begin each morning with the Today Show—in some cities, earlier—and should not end until the final, soul-stirring moments of 20-Minute Workout, or at least Sermonette. In between, one should not, as so many do, watch just any old thing, placing, for example, Growing Pains on the same exalted plane as a vintage rerun of The Brady Bunch—that way lies not only madness and heartbreak but a whooping good case of eye-strain as well—but should choose wisely, select carefully, ever mindful of personality type, mutual interests, depth of understanding and emotion, and degree of heartburn and hangover tolerated. A classic Perry Mason or Leave It To Beaver, the wry wit of Morton Downey, Jr., the scintillating repartee of Pat Sajak, in-depth discussion of Phil Dunhew, literate drama of All My Children or General Hospital—television truly has something to offer everybody, all day, every day. A lifetime of peace and tranquility may be spent, perched on one's sofa or armchair, Fritos by one's side, watching the video adventures of The Bundys, The Huxtables, The Seavers, and The Impossible Missions Forces, and rising only to yawn, stretch—exercise is very important in any relationship—and answer the various calls of nature. In a world of wildly fluctuating mores, changing social values and unstable life forces, a television broadcast day will never disappoint you, offend you—unless you happen to be a 24-year-old mother of two with a postage stamp—or run off with someone who makes money. And now, with cable and VCRs—well, the possibilities are limitless!

7. Go on a diet: If nothing else, this will give you the feeling of belonging to a vast, multifaceted horde, united in righteous martyrdom, which is always comforting; plus, you'll get tons of sympathy and warm fuzzies from your nearest and dearest as you gamely pass over the salmon mousse and baked Alaska in favour of some delectable romaine lettuce drenched in salad dressing. And all the weighing and measuring and planning and judgment calls (can half a Twinkie be exchanged for two slices of Lite Bread? Exactly how do you go about measuring three quarters of a cup of artichoke hearts? What is chard?) will give you something with which to fill your empty days. Naturally, some of you may be thinking that none of this really qualifies as "fun" in the sense of the word, and you're absolutely right—the fun part comes after a week or two of your diet, when you suddenly enter a fugue state and execute kamikaze manoeuvres on a Baskin Robbins. Human beings shouldn't be allowed to have that much fun, believe me.

8. Get pregnant: This is especially effective for men.

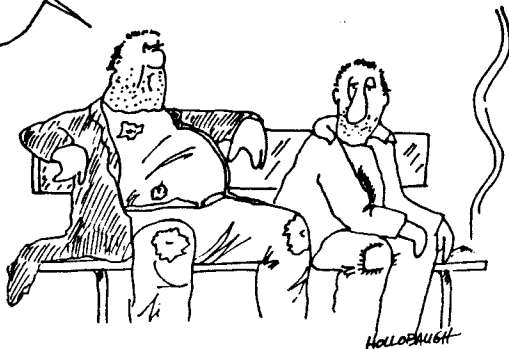
9. Call up an all-night radio talk show host and pretend to be a wild-eyed Commie-pinko fanatic: somewhere around your discussion of your carefully executed plans for kidnapping Dan Quayle and forcing him to don a crimson satin bed jacket and appear on Star Search singing "Ballad of the Green Berets," any self-respecting all-night radio talk show host will hang up on you, after which, see #1.

10. Fantasize: When all else fails, the kingdom of the mind is always enjoyable. Put on your favourite music (assuming the record company hasn't yet melted down all available copies), curl up in your favourite chair, close your eyes and let your imagination take you where it will. Yes, you can strike out the entire starting line-up of the 1927 New York Yankees! Yes, you can make mad, passionate love to William Hurt while the two of you are shipwrecked on a lush, tropical island! Yes, you can devour an entire bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken and never once worry about your cholesterol level! And if you get really, really good at this fantasizing business, you might get so you never, ever have to touch base with reality again, in which case some delightful people might arrange for you to spend all your days in a lovely room with decorative foam rubber on the walls, and never have to be bothered about anything mundane again, and surely nothing could be more fun than that, now, could it?

There, I was right, wasn't I? Things are still fun, aren't they? The world still, in the face of all evidence, affords endless opportunities for mirth and merriment, doesn't it? There's no reason to despair, is there? We aren't licked yet, are we?

Go, troops, and enjoy your lives to the fullest. I'll join you in a moment—just now, there seems to be an open window with my name on it.

I FEEL LIKE
KICKING BACK
AND TAKING
IT EASY.



AUGUST 29 - Shay's Rebellion (1786)
AUGUST 30 - R. Crumb (46); Huey Long (b. 1893)
SEPTEMBER is National Cat Health Month
SEPTEMBER 1 - Lily Tomlin (50); E.R. Burroughs (b. 1875); Plane 007 Shot Down (1983)
SEPTEMBER 2 - ANDY AMSTER (32); MIKE GUNDERLOY (30)
SEPTEMBER 3 - DAWN EDEN (21)
SEPTEMBER 4 - Paul Harvey (71)
SEPTEMBER 5 - Cathy Guisewhite (39)
SEPTEMBER 7 - Buddy Holly (b. 1936)
SEPTEMBER 8 - Sid Caesar (67); Peter Sellers (b. 1925)
SEPTEMBER 11 - O Henry (b. 1862) (b.
SEPTEMBER 12 - ACE BACKWORDS (33); H.L. Mencken 1880)
SEPTEMBER 13 - Roald Dahl (73)
SEPTEMBER 14 - Clayton Moore (75); M. Sanger (b. 1879)
SEPTEMBER 15 - CAROLYN MacDONALD (31); Agatha Christie (b. 1891); Robert Benchley (b. 1889);
DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #71

UPCOMING EVENTS cont'd. from page 2

Todd Kristel presents

AN ALIEN IN HEAT by Michael Morecrock

The cycle of the earth was nearing its end and the human race had at last started to take itself seriously. Having inherited millenia of scientific and technical knowledge, it used this knowledge to produce science fiction stories about the self-destructive behavior of neurotic characters. An earlier age would have been horrified at what it would have judged a waste of resources, an appalling extravagance in the use to which an individual's time and energies were put. An earlier age would have seen the readers of these stories as "decadent" or "amoral," to say the least. But even if these inhabitants were not conscious of the fact that they lived at the end of time, some unconscious knowledge informed their attitudes and made them lose interest in feel-good authors like Kafka.

This particular story is about an obsession which overtook one of these people. And because this person was overtaken by an obsession, that is why we have a story to tell. Of course, if we didn't have a story we could keep going anyway and call this novel "post-modern." What follows, then, is the story.

BOOK ONE

On the island kingdom of Mellonbank all the old rituals are still observed, though the nation's power had waned for one hundred years, and now her way of life is maintained only by checking travelers on the American Express to Galaxy XVI. Are those rituals no longer useful; can the rituals be denied and doom avoided? One who would rule in Emperor Erik's stead prefers to think not. He says that Erik will bring destruction to Mellonbank by his refusal to honor the ritual of the broken MAC machine. And now opens the tragedy which will close many years from now when the fourth book of the trilogy is printed and the ancillary rights have run out.

CHAPTER ONE—BEHOLD THE MANIC DEPRESSIVE

The time machine was a sphere the color of a bleached skull full of milky white fluid in which the traveler, his long milk-white hair enclosed in a cream-colored rubber suit, breathed through a white mask attached to the white hose leading to the wall of the machine, also the color of bone. The sphere shot through a tunnel of time and cracked as it landed while the milky white fluid spilled into the dust and was soaked up by the pulsating earth. Instinctively, Gougayer curled himself into a ball as he sunk to the yielding plastic of the sphere's throbbing inner lining.

Momentarily, Gougayer's eyes opened and closed, then his mouth stretched open and his tongue fluttered and he uttered a group that turned into an ululation.

He heard himself. He was speaking in tongues, he thought. He had stopped making sense. He realized that the time machine had fallen into a great curve in the time stream and had taken him to the river, perhaps a swamp, on the surface of the planet. A mistake like that could happen only once in a lifetime, he thought.

Fan Noose

by

Elayne
Wechsler



Starting off with some plugs for people I encountered during the Abbie tribute written about elsewhere—Ben & Jerry's 1% FOR PEACE is at P.O. Box 94, Brooktondale, NY 14817; the anti-reactionary COUNTERATTACK CONFERENCE is coordinated through P.O. Box 73852, Washington, D.C. 20056; the home address for REFUSE AND RESIST! is 305 Madison Ave., Suite 1166, New York, NY 10165; REVOLUTIONARY WORKER publishes from Box 3486, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, IL 60654; and the hotline for the Del-AWARE group, as mentioned in IJ #66, is 215/862-3333...IJ star Anni Ackner has a very lovely memorial to Abbie in the latest issue of FACTSHEET FIVE, the small press publication you ought to buy if you enjoy columns of this type, as Mike Gunderloy does it better than I ever could; issue #30 is

still \$2 (\$11 for a 6-issue subscription, as FF will go bimonthly next year) to 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502...Max Nuclear's incredible answering machine is back in business; for 60 seconds of great (or, as Max says, "cheap") entertainment, call 214/368-1987...Dale A. White's Twin Rivers Press is setting out on a small press venture called ENCOUNTERS WITH AUTHORS, "a book of interviews with noted writers collected over the years. Looks like a very interesting project; for more info send a SASE to Dale at P.O. Box 119, Ellenton, FL 34222...Newly returned is Babushkin (aka Larry Bush) himself, putting out a series of postcards on behalf of "special interest groups" like The American Mediocrity Assn., Baby Boomers in Favor of the Forties and so forth; they're \$3.50 for a set of 6. Also available is BABUSHKIN'S CATALOGUE OF JEWISH INFORMATION, for \$3.50 as well. For information write to Babushkin at 30 Old Whitfield Rd., Accord, NY 12404...Here's a neat idea—an alternative-press party line! Dallas Swan (7206 Brookbank Lane, Raleigh, NC 27615) proposes talking/taking over an 800 line (in this case, the Nationwide Party Line, 1-800-999-6666, at 10:00pm Eastern the 15th of every month to talk various small-press weirdness. Caveat emptor—the phone company will charge you 99¢ a minute...The folks in NYC's underground are still combatting the trash police (or was that thought police?), holding various benefits and such to raise money for court defense and such—it's imperative that all 'zine folk know about the problems facing the organization now calling itself STOP PROSECUTING GRASS-ROOTS ORGANIZERS and headed by, among others, Bob Z (who has a nice catalog of his own zines he's still selling), at 125 East 23rd St., #300, New York, NY 10010...Sometimes I just get an ad for a publication rather than the zine itself, so I don't bother giving it a review, I just mention it. Says here "SOLID COPY is a 'fiction without frills' quarterly published by Back Output Unltd., Stacyville, Iowa. Fiction manuscripts may be submitted without query to Dee Porter, editor, P.O. Box 325, Stacyville, IA 50476," and lots of stuff about story length, SASE requirements, profit-sharing (!) and sub price, which is \$5 per issue or \$15 for four. These are the same people who put out THE APPLE BLOSSOM CONNECTION, a mish-mash of so-so and religious poetry and short stories that's just become defunct (you can get back issues for \$2 per)...For other markets looking for writers, valuable information on how to submit writing for pay or (like us) fun, contest announcements and so forth, check out GUIDELINES NEWSLETTER. Editor Susan Nelene Salaki (Box 608, Pittsburg, MO 65724) also publishes quarterly and charges \$15/year sub; for her guidelines collection send an additional \$5...I belong to several worthy organizations with quality house organs. Chief among them is GREENPEACE, wherein every bimonthly issue (\$2) I learn more important information on what we are doing to destroy our planet than I get anywhere else. An invaluable and important publication, which sells for \$1.50/issue alone or free with a \$20 or more donation to Greenpeace USA at 1436 U St. NW, Washington, DC 20009...CIVIL LIBERTIES is put out by the ACLU for card-carrying members, many of whom don't necessarily agree with all the ACLU's stands but are willing to go far to defend their right to speak out in favor of the First Amendment (that's the one the High Court's preparing to disband). Basic membership in the ACLU is also \$20, to AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, 132 West 43rd St., New York, NY 10036...9to5 is an organization dedicated to securing more rights for working women, and they appear to be doing good, although I never see any black women represented in their newsletter (the same weird feeling I got upon reading my first issue of Ms. in many years—"why are there so many white women?"). If you think it might have stuff you don't already know, inquire of 614 Superior Ave. NW, Cleveland, OH 44113...The IJ-recommended publication of the month is the house organ of FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting), EXTRA!, a riveting expose of the double standards, hypocrisy and lies inherent in a mass media beholden to big business and the status quo. I urge anybody who cares about truth and the fight against disinformation send for this bimonthly publication—a basic membership to FAIR is \$30, which includes a year of 4 issues. Write to 130 West 25th St., New York, NY 10001...Some of my favorite leftist papers are

on summer hours now: THE GUARDIAN (33 West 17th St., New York, NY 10011; \$33.50/year; add \$18 US for Canadian subs and \$25 US for other foreign subs) is on a biweekly publishing schedule, and THE NATION. (72 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011; \$36/year; add \$14 US for surface postage mail to foreign countries; the latest issue has a lovely tribute to the late I.F. Stone, a regular NATION contributor) is about to go on a biweekly schedule too for a few weeks. THE CANADIAN TRIBUNE (290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4K 1N6 CANADA; \$18 Canadian per year) is down to 8 pages an issue in the summer. I expect ZETA MAGAZINE (116 Saint Botolph St., Boston, MA 02115; \$24/12 issues or \$25 for foreign subs) to bring out their combined July/August issue any day now, but their usual 100-plus page issues take almost two months to read anyway, they come so packed with wonderful stuff! Normal bimonthly publications like non-alignment advocate TOWARD FREEDOM (209 College St., Burlington, VT 05401; only \$10/year) and feminist NEW DIRECTIONS FOR WOMEN (108 West Palisade Ave., Englewood, NJ 07631; also \$10/year) are still on their normal schedules, although the latter's May/June issue is being sent free to interested parties as a promo...And just about caught up is the quarterly journal of Native American world views, DAYBREAK, after some staff and address changes that have brought them to P.O. Box 315, Williamsville, NY 14231-0135 and sponsorship by SUNY-Buffalo's American Studies Department. Here's hoping the university doesn't co-opt these vital Native voices; subs are \$12/year or \$3 per issue...For all those who've been searching for the quintessential definition of "post-modernism," the latest UTNE READER (P.O. Box 1974, Marion, OH 43305; \$18/year for 6 issues or \$30/two years) looks at it in depth. This is also the first year of their announced Alternative Press Awards, in which IJ, despite having been one of UTNE's Best Publications for 1982, gets nary a nomination (whereas the staunch right-wing AMERICAN SPECTATOR got nominated in the "Humor" category...yeah, some alternative press, like IJ isn't more alternative than yuppie-produced SPY?), so hell with it...Who is ARCHIE MCPHEE? asks "his" new catalog of weirdness, a kitsch collection you have to read to believe—hurry, send for the neat catalog (they say \$2 but will probably ship it to you free) to Box 30852, Seattle, WA 98103...I just got another great catalog, a really useful one for Apartment Third-Eye, Home of Video. This is the CLASSIC FILM INQUIRER, put out by VIDEO-SIG, a subsidiary of a PC mail order distribution company. Really great classics for only \$15 a tape, lotsa good psychotronic stuff and forgotten masterpieces, and much more! The catalog's free, and with a purchase of 3 or more tapes you get their complete book free too—1030C East Duane Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086...Issue #2 of ZERO HOUR looks at addiction—anti-pot hysteria, a junkie interview, the CIA connections, TVOD and tobacco industry exposes, all worth reading and saving and all for \$3 to editor Jim Jones, P.O. Box 766, Seattle, WA 98111...The latest W.D.C. PERIOD (Chow Chow Productions, P.O. Box 50084, Washington, D.C. 20004-0084; \$1.25), #18, tackles local politics, underground comix, Devo, poetry, political prisoners, lotsa music, and contains a stupid review of HIGH WEIRDNESS BY MAIL from a supreme asshole, but otherwise is okay enough (I feel no obligation to give a great review to a 'zine I never asked to receive)...SWELLSVILLE calls itself "a Critical Guide for Consumer Deviants," but is mostly about independent music, with that same "what other kind of zine is there" attitude. It's massive, though over 100 pages of reviews and essays in #8, all for \$2 to P.O. Box 85334, Seattle, WA 98145...CATHARSIS Monthly (P.O. Box 3181, Suffolk, VA 23434) is less wieldy, but homier and angrier and more immediate. I could wish for fewer music reviews and more stinging editorials, but it seems to be free so what more can one ask?...The biggie of independent music review zines, SOUND CHOICE (P.O. Box 1251, Ojai, CA 93023; \$3), is again soliciting new readers and contributors with issue #11; this one's more professionally-oriented and has a wider music range than the others, so be forewarned...My personal favorite music zine is BITCH (San Jose Face, Suite 164, 478 W. Hamilton Ave., Campbell, CA 95008; \$15/12 issues), in #24, continues editor Lori Twersky's marvelous essay "Smashing Cinderella's Slippers" and a look at the kooky Kerista commune in California. Issue #26 will be the "Anti-Prejudice Issue," and Twersky would love contributions for this one!...Still publishing is the music one-sheet OUTER SHELL from Roy Harper (Box 7053, St. Petersburg, FL 33734)—#45 is the "Hendrix" issue—and Roy sends 'em out free (send a SASE tho)...Shout it from the hilltops, THE MONTHLY INDEPENDENT TRIBUNE TIMES JOURNAL POST GAZETTE NEWS CHRONICLE BULLETIN is back! In #62 editors T.S. Child with Denver Tucson makes fun of them wacky Christians, and God, I've missed the Bone Family—in a word, yay! Send \$6 to 2510 Bancroft Way #207, Berkeley, CA 94704. Also out from the Monthly...Bulletin folk is a must-have book, AMERICA OFF THE WALL: THE WEST COAST, by Kristan Lawson and Anneli S. Rufus (same address as M...B, but make checks out to Anneli), for \$10.95 + \$1 p&h...S also good to see the return of THE WEST VIRGINIA SURF REPORT, wherein in "Page Eight, Issue One" editor Jeff once again makes a short story out of the song titles on a particular album—a great experiment, and if you want to see it send a SASE to P.O. Box 77027, Greensboro, NC 27417-7027...Cliff Kennedy (280 Dundas St. E., Toronto, Ont. M5A 3W1 CANADA) surmises that since he has no idea when DRIFT #6 will come out "there's no reason for you to put a plug in," but I never did mention that #5 is still available for the asking (send stamps or money or sump'in, though)...Publishing sporadically once more are one- or two-sheet short stories and experiments under the collective title HEY BULLDOG is Rodney Eric Griffith (High Impro-

(continued next page)

bability International, P.O. Box 523, Columbia Station, OH 44028-0523)—send SASEs for multicolor fun!...There are revelations aplenty to be found in the works of Johnny Alucard, aka John Marshall (Ablative Press, P.O. Box 831321, Richardson, TX 75083-1321), whose literary explanations would take too long to explain or describe but should be experienced by all would-be mind expanders—highly recommended!...IJ staffer Kerry Thornley (Box 5498, Atlanta, GA 30307) has published OUT OF ORDER, the latest Packrat Press infosheet, this one all about Discordianism, which Kerry co-founded...The latest venture from the Mosquito Man himself, David Wellen (see Steve's PCF in IJ #68) is called ANGRY JOE HAMPTON'S MOSQUITO MAGAZINE, one page folded over and chock-full of short stories and comix—lots to fit on one page. Cute stuff, like Steve said, and probably available for a SASE from David at P.O. Box 2355, Southampton, NY 11968...The latest issue of BOLD PRINT by Kyle Hogg (2211 Stuart Ave., Richmond, VA 23220) features a couple bonuses—a tiny "White Boy" chapbook from Paul Weinman (are these things everywhere or what, Paul?) and a cool experiment in phrases called "Lightning Flashes and Other Electrical Impulses," a real winner in which each set of sentences seem like they could form the start of a good story, and many are just hilarious and/or revolting on their own. I love experiments like this when they succeed—send Kyle lotsa bucks for this and BP!...Although I really like her and she's finally writing stuff for IJ, I can't say I recommend Sara Edwards' latest PLAGIARISTIC TENDENCIES (#7), which consists solely of badly-reproed photos of nobody I know. Sara's good people to write to anyway, though, at P.O. Box 66, Route 16, Ischua, NY 14741...Lastly, it's time to plug the stuff Steve gets at our home address. The latest BUF-O from Klaus Haisch (1729 E. Tabor St., Indianapolis, IN 46203) is, compared to some of his others, pretty skimpy to my mind, but he does some nice reviews of old Twilight Zone episodes; unfortunately, three whole pages are taken up by a comic with no discernable plot, drawn by a friend of Klaus'. The zine's much better when Klaus does most of it himself (send him a SASE to inquire about BUF-O)...SLIMETIME #27 (\$3/6 issues from Steve Puchalski, 1108 E. Genesee St. #103, Syracuse, NY 13210) is great as ever, reviewing everything from CIAO! MANHATTAN starring Edie Sedgwick to ELVIRA to ASTRO ZOMBIES—great psychotronic shit all! And the Chicago Psychotronic Film Society's latest IT'S ONLY A MOVIE (\$1.25 from Michael Flores, P.O. Box 14683, Chicago, IL 60614-0683—also send SASE to Michael for his dynamite video list, it's very recommended!) looks at blaxploitation films, including a great overview by the aforementioned Mr. Puchalski and Michael's interview with Rudy Ray Moore! Badass stuff for sure!...Some late arrivals to announce: Wayne Alan Brenner has moved from Orlando to 2008 Oxford, Austin, TX 78704. His writing group Cafe Armageddon has published their first group effort, ANTHOLOGY 1989, an 8½ x 11 spiral-bound-with-card-stock-covers 28-pager filled with poetry, strange short stories, a contest announcement, a recipe, a song—yours for \$3 and mighty impressive!...The latest issue of AMERICA'S AT OUR DOORSTEP, v. II #4, has some good poetry, amusing quotes and its usual hominess from the hearth of Dennis Brezina (4566 Salomons Island Road, Harwood, MD 20776), who will send it to you for the asking...And REFUSE AND RESIST!, mentioned at the start of this column, actually does put out a periodic publication called COUNTERATTACK; write them for info, buttons, etc., and see you in the funny papers!

Forward Into the Past

by Larry Stolte

If you thought 1995 was the Year of the Gadget, think again. 1996 has all kinds of goodies to tantalize you. True, many don't exactly qualify as stocking stuffers, but they're sure to grab your attention. Here is a run-down of what will hit the market next year:

In this age of interfacing, it seems almost impossible to protect your computer from the thousands of computer viruses that seem to be going around. And of course, the Computer Automated Immune Deficiency Syndrome (CAIDS) virus ensures that no system is safe any more. Remember, it's irreversible and 100% terminal to your terminal. Protect your software with the new WANG Computer Condom. It stops bad bytes and keeps your system user-healthy.

Is it live or is it science? It's the President Quayle Life-Sized Hologram. Amaze your friends; they won't know the difference. Insiders say even Marilyn was fooled for an entire day.

Do you have trouble figuring out Swedish movies? Has Woody Allen's finest left you nonplussed? Sony's Metaphor Alert VCR will change that. It lets you know by means of a tiny, unobtrusive red light when any metaphors or similes occur during a movie on your VCR. Subtitles, dubs extra. Special allegory adaptor for certain systems—consult your electronics dealer.

You've left the office and are firmly embedded in rush-hour traffic. Suddenly you realize that you forgot to send that letter to your lawyer. If he doesn't receive it today, you do hard time for white-collar crime at the Attica Racquets Club and Detention Center. Don't panic. You have Jujitsu's Pocket Fax, and you can get hard copy off anywhere people can read as quickly as reaching for your wallet.

Does it bother you that many scientists much smarter than you say that SDI (or Star Police Actions) will allow some missiles through its net? How can you sleep? Now you can be doubly safe with the new Home Version SDI. Any missile that makes it through the first shield will never penetrate your home SDI, completely fabricated to your house's specifications. Next year, the Mobile Version SDI for your car. NOTE: SDI is in the testing stage, but if you order now, you could see results as early as 2015.

Men—tired of that razor taking divots out of your face? This year's it's the Gillette 8-Trak. The first two traks search for each whisker, number 3 gently heats up the pores, 4 and 5 bore to the follicle, 6 and 7 gently massage the hair out, and 8 caulks up the hole. The closest shave ever.

Tired of not knowing how much things cost in a check-out line? Now there's the Budget Deficit Tax Calculator so you can tell at a glance exactly how much tax you will be paying on each item. Remember, not all items are taxed the same rate. Even Einstein would have trouble shopping without one.

Afraid to take that vacation in the tropics? Relax. The sun isn't a problem any more with Port O Zone—the portable ozone in the bright yellow can. Just spray 24" over your head and Port O Zone creates your own ozonosphere, which absorbs most dangerous ultraviolet radiation. The best part is, you can still get a tan. Remember those?

It's hard to to anywhere in this country any more without running into some form of riot. Be prepared next time with The-Liquor's-In-It Molotov Cocktail. As fashionable riot gear stores everywhere.

Gee, can you possibly fathom a guess about whom Time will choose its Man of the Year? Granted, no suspense. But how would you like to go see him in concert? That's right, Worldtron is offering Elvis Tickets for the Elvis World Tour, the first since his short-lived death and ensuing resurrection. Dial 1-800-THE-KING for good seats today.



EDITORS NOTE:

I apologize I couldn't fit more than one submission per contributor this issue (I'm sorry especially to our fine artists!), but some staffers ran over 1900 words (they know who they are) and, of course, I took up more room than usual with "Fan Moose" and the Abbie piece—more space next issue, promise!

A DIP IN THE PLASMA POOL

by Dorian Tenore

WHOSE WEDDING IS IT, ANYWAY?

or, Judith Martin, Rudness-Buster

I have a terrible confession to make. Most of the time I couldn't give a hoot about etiquette. I figure that as long as I'm not frightening children and animals, and as long as food isn't dripping down my face, who really cares where my elbows are, or what fork I use? *Baily Post*, Amy Vanderbilt and their ilk put out prettily laid-out etiquette books, but their (or their ghostwriters') dry, prissy writing style did little to perk up my interest in the "proper" way to do things.

Then etiquette columnist Judith Martin, better known as "Miss Manners", came into the *Newsday Sunday Magazine* and into my life. Miss Manners wasn't like the others. For one thing, she has a gleeful, rapier wit that makes Noel Coward look like a humorless drudge. (When Vinnie and I were prowling the bookstores on Charing Cross Road in England, we weren't at all surprised to find both books of Miss Manners' collected columns in the "Humor" sections.) For another, while she's essentially a traditionalist, Miss Manners readily acknowledges changing times and societal roles when doling out advice and referring to herself in the third person to the "Gentle Readers" (her customary salutation) who write in.

But the quality that won my loyalty, driving Vinnie and me to buy both of Martin's books as well as read her weekly column aloud to each other, is Miss Manners' gracious but steadfast refusal to suffer fools gladly. Someone once wrote in to ask, "What should I say when introduced to a homosexual couple?" Miss Manners' suggestion: "How do you do?" "How do you do?" One reader, after dinner *à deux* with a noted philosopher, wondered what the proper answer should have been to the dinner guest's question, "Do you think I will be remembered as an Erasmus, or a Luther?" Miss Manners felt that the best response would have been: "Absolutely, and your taste in wine is superb."

Another time, Martin deftly made mincemeat of a vindictive young bride-to-be who wanted to know if it was okay to humiliate her father's second wife through such petty rudenesses as excluding her stepmother from pre-wedding parties and saddling her with "a corsage that isn't as nice as my mother's." Highlights of Martin's reply: "Miss Manners' heart goes out to your husband-to-be and your mother-in-law-to-be. She is tempted to give you all the wrong answers and let you demonstrate to them your approach to family life...Keep this up and you will fail your blood test."

It was only a matter of time before Miss Manners translated her acerbic appeal to the television screen. Her hour-long 1986 videotape, *MISS MANNERS ON WEDDINGS (FOR BETTER, NOT WORSE)*, from Kartes Video Communications, was tough to track down (or rather, it was tough for Vinnie to track down -- he gave it to me as a Valentine's Day gift), but it was worth it. Judith Martin's talents are given a delightful showcase in this subtly satirical, yet very practical, look at wedding protocol.

No dry "how-to" manual-on-video, Judith Martin has put her considerable writing talents (she has also published a novel, *GILBERT* and the stream-of-consciousness nonfiction book, *COMMON COURTESY*) to creating the family mindrama of an all-American, though very 1980s, young couple. Blonde, fresh-faced Samantha Hope Applegum and her tall, dark, saturnine-expressed Dirk Dearborn, are at their wits' end -- and each other's throats -- thanks to wildly differing attitudes towards the forthcoming wedding festivities being thrown by her parents (Dirk: "Why don't you just give us what it costs, and we'll get some terrific video equipment?" Sam, in a shrill fit of Bride-mania: "Who asked your opinion? It's *my* wedding, dammit!").

Nor does it help that their families and quasi-relatives won't behave and try to fit their square-peg selves into round-hole traditional nuclear family-type roles. Sam's stepdad, who's footing the wedding bills, resents her wish to be given away by her "biological daddy" (who offered to pay for beverages and then wanted to have a cash bar). Dirk's bitter mom doesn't want to be anywhere near Dirk's father's new wife or Grandpa's young, sexy girlfriend. Sam's obnoxious teenage half-sister ("And half-wit," Sam can't resist adding), Fiona, insists on participating in the wedding party clad in a pink tuxedo. And where can Dirk's kids by his previous marriage fit into all this?

This looks like a job for Miss Manners! Happily, Martin brings her column character to life as crisply and wittily in the flesh as she does on the printed page. With her trademark bun hairdo, tasteful suit and vaguely Ann Landers-esque lisp neatly in place, Miss Manners starts from the marriage proposal (which should be more romantic -- perhaps even old-fashioned -- than a brusque "Let's do it, and if things don't work out, just remember that the CD player's mine.") and helps Sam, Dirk and crew jump all those sticky etiquette hurdles while avoiding hurt feelings and a broken engagement.

Like a distaff Rod Serling (even utilizing camera pans and transitions similar to those used on *TWILIGHT ZONE* -- and you thought Miss Manners wasn't hip!), the columnist never fails to materialize just in time to save the well-meaning couple from such *faux pas* as shelling out big bucks for unnecessary

Shark Shortage Sparks Miami Beach Violence

MIAMI, Fla (YU) — Three people died and six others were injured today as shark watchers continued their rampage along the beaches of this tourist and retirement town on the South Atlantic Coast.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Police Chief Buford Pusser, "usually we got sharks clear up into the motel swimming pools, and people have plum got spoiled by how easy it was to see an attack, I reckon."

No one has died from a shark at-

tack in Miami since July, 1983, when the body of Carmine DeSapio washed up on the beach, headless, and full of puncture wounds. He was believed to be the victim of a rogue great white.

Yonassarian Universal

THE NEWS BELONGS
TO THOSE WHO CAN
AFFORD IT - Steve Chaput

monogrammed party favors or trying to phase out pregnant would-be bridesmaids and family members who don't fit neatly into "those little charts in the bridal magazines." ("Then why don't you hire a chorus as bridesmaids, and some interesting old character actors to play your relatives?" quips Miss Manners sweetly.) Miss Manners also nixes the notion of personalizing the marriage vows with details of the couple's courtship ("Bragging about your sex life is not only...boring, it's redundant"), assuring Sam and Dirk that "tradition is quite as beautiful as anything you could think up on the spot."

"We just wanted the wedding to be perfect -- to be about us," explains a starry-eyed Sam. "And you're going to do it by excluding everyone you know?" replies Miss Manners. That brings us to another nice element of this tape. In addition to dishing out useful advice, Miss Manners stresses that a wedding is not all about a big, expensive, rigidly-planned party; it's supposed to be the celebration of a happy milestone with the people who are truly dear to you. Indeed, she suggests that one could have a perfectly nice *smaller* wedding reception with sandwiches, punch, and cake. (Obviously Judith Martin did not grow up among boisterous Italian-Americans as did Vinnie and myself. Our families are the sort of fun-loving folks who believe with all their hearts that, to paraphrase another Miss Manners *bon mot*, "all the wedding guests must go home with heartburn in order for the marriage to be legally binding.")

Nor are the invited guests immune to Miss Manners' jibes and/or advice. Case in point: Dorcas and Leonard Mulch, the sort of distant relatives that everyone loves to hate. Gossipy, whiny, and cheaper than Scrooge before Christmas Eve, the Mulches have barely had time to tear open the invitation before starting in with the wedding gown snickers ("I know of at least three reasons besides Dirk that she shouldn't be wearing white!"), judgments about the propriety of having a big wedding (Those kids have been telling us for years that they don't need no piece of paper."), and their own plans to bring plenty of their own relatives (but no present -- then again, Miss Manners does point out that presents are not a mandatory ticket of admission to a wedding) and have their own party-within-the-party, despite the fact that the invitation is addressed only to the two of them.

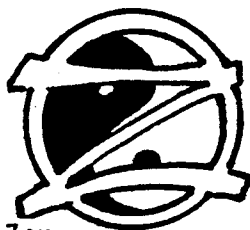
Enter Miss Manners, her pointed wit all the sharper with her gentle delivery: "Did I miss the part where you said, 'Oh, how nice'?...One should have a few warm thoughts about (the hosts) before cutting them to ribbons." She sure sets the Mulches straight, informing them that a white bridal gown "is not supposed to indicate the condition of the body in it" and painstakingly guiding neophyte Dorcas through the writing of a brief RSVP note. (Oh, didn't I tell you? Miss Manners mentions early on that pre-printed response cards are gauche and that people who can't be bothered to write a note of response probably won't mail the response cards anyway. Sounds good to me, but again, try convincing my relatives of that!)

Of course, all roads lead to, if not a picture-perfect wedding (and what fun are those, Miss Manners suggests, since no amusing anecdotes to tell future generations would result?), then certainly a relaxed, happy, fun, and yes, *proper* one, shared with the people Sam and Dirk love (yup, even the Mulches). One "plot" loophole: how come we never get to see Dirk's children, about whose presence he made such a fuss during guest-list composition?

Annoyingly, the end crawl listing the cast members does only that: the post-production folks didn't bother to match up the names of the actors with those of the characters they played. I especially would have liked to know the name of the versatile actor who assayed a multiple role as various pushy wedding vendors (i.e., Cockney chauffeur, Gloria Vanderbilt-like bridal *courturier*, pretentious caterer, photographer who "needs to have the meaning of the word 'candid' explained to him") that would have had Peter Sellers gasping for air. However, I'm fairly sure that Jacobina Martin, the real-life daughter of Judith Martin (Martin's 1983 book, *MISS MANNERS' GUIDE TO EXCRUCIATINGLY CORRECT BEHAVIOR*, is dedicated to "Nicholas and Jacobina") is probably the young actress playing Fiona -- she's about the right age, and she has a speech impediment similar to that of the columnist.

If you can track down this loopy little videotape, even if you're not planning a wedding, do give it a look. Vinnie bought it at Mega-Movies on Rt. 110 in Huntington, NY for \$29.95, but the price may be down by now. (Indeed, I'll be happy to provide you with a copy of *MISS MANNERS ON WEDDINGS* myself. Just send me a large SASE or stamped, addressed Jiffy Bag.) And remember, folks: your wedding shouldn't be the happiest day of your life. After all, you have to save some happiness for the marriage itself!

Zenarchy STORIES



by Ho Chi Zen
STICKS AND STONES

Alan Watts says, in *The Wisdom of Insecurity*: "Your body does not eliminate poisons by knowing their names. To try to control fear or depression or boredom by calling them names is to resort to superstition of trust in curses and invocations."

CHOP WOOD, CARRY WATER AND...

This concise version of the story of Roshl Bobo is from *Chop Wood Carry Water* by Rick Fields, et. al (Jeremy P. Tarcher, Los Angeles, 1976):

Bobo roshi was a perfect monk as a young man. He got up earlier than everyone, and sat in the garden long after everyone else had gone to bed. He never climbed over the monastery walls to visit the geisha houses, as the other monks did occasionally. He lived this way for fourteen years, working on his koan without a break. He did everything just as it was supposed to be done, and more. But he still couldn't find the answer to his koan, no matter what he did.

Suddenly, late one night, when he had been sitting on a rock in the garden, he decided to leave the monastery. He stopped concentrating on his koan, stood up abruptly, and climbed over the monastery walls. For the first time in years, he walked through the streets of Kyoto aimlessly, until he found himself in the floating world of the pleasure district.

A woman gestured to him through drawn shades. He went into her room, she served tea and then saké, and then embraced him. Everything fell away as they made love, and when the monk [reached] the height of his pleasure, he found that the universe fell away too, and the answer to his koan, which he had stopped thinking about for the first time in fourteen years, suddenly flashed into consciousness. He wept and laughed with joy, gave the lady of the night his rosary beads, and went back to the monastery, where his satori was confirmed by his astonished abbot.

IMAGINE NO PHILOSOPHY

In *The Fourth Way* P.D. Ouspensky said: "There is no need of philosophy; take it simply. We must first apply discrimination to simple things. Imagination plays a very important part in our life, because we believe in it. The real can grow only at the expense of the imaginary. But in ordinary life the unreal grows at the expense of the real."

TWO SOLITARY SAGES

Alan Watts said in *The Wisdom of Insecurity*: "On the one hand there is myself, and on the other the rest of the universe. I am not rooted in the earth like a tree. I rattle around independently. I seem to be the center of everything, and yet cut off and alone. I can feel what is going on inside my own body, but I can only guess what is going on in others. My conscious mind must have its roots and origins in the most unfathomable depths of being, yet it feels as if it lived all by itself in this tight little skull."

Lao Tzu said in *The Tao Teh Ching*: "The rest of the universe is joyous as if at a great feast or strolling on a terrace in spring. I alone am still and expressionless, like a baby who has not yet learned how to smile, listless as if homeless. Everyone else seems prosperous; I alone seem poor. My mind is blank, like a fool's mind. Most people are clear; I alone am drowsy. Most people are alert; I alone am muddled. As calm as the ocean and like a wind that always blows, most people have a purpose. I alone am foolish and unlettered. I alone am different and value feeding at the mother's breast."

HER FATHER'S HOUSE

When I was living in the New Orleans French Quarter in the early 1960s, there was a young woman who roller skated the sidewalks carrying live crayfish from the pond of the Court of Two Sisters to another pond a few blocks away, and back again a day or two later—evidently to make sure these creatures did not become bored with the same old pool of water all the time.

Never venturing to speak to her myself, I don't remember her name if I ever knew it and my impression was that she was not noted for coherent conversations.

But one day a tour guide took a busload of sightseers into the Saint Louis Cathedral where she happened to be seated alone at the time in meditation or prayer. "GET OUT OF HERE!" she yelled at them. "YOU FUCKING PEOPLE DON'T KNOW A GODDAMNED THING ABOUT RELIGION! GET OUT! GET OUT OF HERE!"

CRISIS by Roger Coleman

Dr. Bockoff took the emergency call while at lunch.

"Mrs. Angst, with your chest pains and other symptoms,

8 you must call the paramedics immediately; don't wait!

Wax Ink by Rory Houchens

THE GIL EVANS ORCHESTRA PLAYS THE MUSIC OF JIMI HENDRIX (RCA/Bluebird)--Hendrix died before he and Gil Evans could collaborate on an album, so Evans had to content himself with interpreting some of Jimi's classic tunes, and this record is a reissue (of sorts) of material recorded fifteen years ago. With capable help from Peter Gordon, John Abercrombie, David Sanborn and a handful of others, Gil pumps big band jazz life into "Up From The Skies," "Voodoo Chile," "Crosstown Traffic," and a searing "Angel." Good, hot stuff.

JAPANESE FOLK MELODIES--Jean-Pierre Rampal (CBS)--There's something a bit unsettling about a French flutist playing ancient Japanese folk songs, but once you leap that low mental hurdle, it's relatively smooth sailing. At times, Rampal's tweeting can be stiff and soulless (as on "Song of the Beach" and "Trifoliate Orange Blossom"), but more often than not he can sprinkle some Oriental spice over the dusty notes ("Moon Over the Ruined Castle," "Baby Crow"). Fair to middlin'.

EARLY ELLINGTON (1927-1934)--Duke Ellington and His Orchestra (RCA/Bluebird)--The stunning stuff on this album may be eligible for early retirement, but it can nevertheless generate the old heat. A lot of the cuts are as familiar as your own nose, like "Black And Tan Fantasie," "Creole Love Call," and "East St. Louis Toodle-0o." And whatever hasn't pressed a musical fingerprint onto your soft brain ("Daybreak Express," "Stompy Jones") is a treat long before Halloween. Archaic, but essential!

IN A WAVE

by Larry Oberc

Of hysteria she lets loose this scream that makes everyone on the subway think about getting off, but there is no way to get off, no way to change cars inbetween stops, and nobody wants to move for fear it might draw her attention to them, it doesn't look good, this nonsense caused by people gone mad, she lets loose with a long drawn out wail, something right out of a horror flick, everyone looks in any direction but her's, the stops move far apart when you are held prisoner in these tunnels, if she was drunk, a junkie hitting up, a young couple having wild passionate sex, we might look away, make eye contact, even smile, but here is something nobody knows how to deal with, something that doesn't have an easy defined plan, something too damn unpredictable to make a safe move against, her next sound, not quite crying, not quite a scream, a guttural sigh of inner pain calming, is drowned out by the car pulling into a station, she looks innocent, people sit down next to her, not sensing any threats, any danger, most of the people stay in the car, they assume it's safe, that this woman has regained a sense of reality, of composure, as the car doors slam shut, as the train begins to pull out of the station, she lets loose this scream that makes everyone on the subway think about getting off....

I'll see you at the hospital right away."

"No, I don't trust them. I've got to see only you, Doctor."

"Well, can your husband bring you to my office at once? I'll meet you there in ten minutes, then," Dr. Bockoff asked.

"Yes, we can do that." Mrs. Angst gasped for breath. "By the way, Doctor, I've also got a rash. Would it be all right if I stopped off on my way at the dermatologist next door to your building?"

(MORE) IT'S IN THE NEWS! (Really!)

by Kathy Stadalsky

Well, kids, here we go again! Contest column number two in our ever-continuing quest to provide you with quality, informative, educational, intelligent, thought-provoking material to stimulate your thought processes and get your creative and mental juices flowing.

As before (or not, for those of you who are new to IJ since #65, when the first contest column appeared), what follows is a "find the fake" contest.

Below, you will find ten "news items". Nine of these items have been gleaned from such newsworthy and reliable sources as the STAR, NATIONAL ENQUIRER, NATIONAL EXAMINER, WEEKLY WORLD NEWS, GLOBE, etc.

The other one is a phony. A fraud. A fake, charlatan, ringer, impostor, pretender. An unreliable, even totally truthless "made up" and "sensationalized" headline created by yours truly.

Your goal is to find the fraud, and be the first to notify me via post card or letter.

All entries will receive a consolation prize just for playing. And the winner will receive his or her very own post-it pad, and a custom-made certificate of merit and commendation, AND will have their name printed in an upcoming issue of IJ for all to see, just like MasterMath's was in #68!

In the case of a tie, the winner will be drawn by random selection from amongst all correct entries. Runners-up will receive an honorable mention prize.

The decision of the judges (me and Bob, God of Ohio; and Anna; Maggie and Amanda) is final, and all entries become the property of POINTLESS VENTURES, ETC. All prizes guaranteed to be awarded. Odds of winning based on number of entries received. Total cash value of prizes in excess of \$5.00.

Send your entries to me at 933 State Route 314 North, Mansfield, Ohio, 44903-9807.

Good luck!

1. **HUBBY LOCKS UGLY WIFE IN CELLAR 3 YEARS!**

She survives on dog biscuits

Tired of looking at the same doggoned face across the table every day, an irritable husband, sickened by what he considered the unsightly mug of his long-time wife, tossed the pitiful woman into the equivalent of the dog house.

2. **SUPERMARKET SPIRITS REFUSE TO CHECK OUT!**

Dead Chickens Dance and Burgers Fly in Haunted Store Built Over Site of Old Graveyard!

GHOST BUSTING PRIEST IS CALLED IN!

A ghost-busting priest is trying to rid a supermarket of silly spooks who make dead chickens dance, slam hamburgers against the wall and pinch customers in the check-out lines.

3. **SEVERED ARM FOUND AT McDONALD'S DOOR**

Big Mac Attack?

A McDonald's restaurant manager had trouble opening the front door of the fast food chain one morning--because a human arm was leaning against it.

4. **RUSSIANS WILL MICROWAVE AMERICANS IN WWII**

We'll Burst Like Eggs!

Soviet willingness to agree to nuclear warhead reductions in Europe will be explained by the massive Russian buildup in other weapons technology--the kind that could make them victors of WWII and turn the rest of the globe into an instant graveyard.

5. **VAMPIRE STARVES TO DEATH AFTER VICTIM PUNCHES FRONT TEETH OUT!**

Not a Myth!

Lacking the essential tools to get nourishment, a vampire shriveled away after a disgruntled victim let loose with a knuckle sandwich into the neckbiter's choppers and put an end to his sucking abilities.

6. **Foremost University Scholar Reveals How...**

ROCK MUSIC IS DESTROYING OUR KIDS!

...And is Wrecking Our Families!

The jungle beat of today's rock sounds with lyrics that espouse sex and hate are numbing an entire generation and robbing it of cultural refinement and intelligence.

7. **SCIENTIST ADOPTS DINOSAUR AS HOUSE PET**

...After it hatches from 70-million-year-old egg

He's not from Bedrock, and he's never even heard of the Flintstones, but a Chinese archaeologist has something in common with Fred and Wilma just the same--a pet dinosaur, just like Dino in the popular animated TV show.

8. **NANCY ADDICTED TO "DOWNERS"!**

Former First Lady Admits Shocking Habit

A startling confession will appear in Nancy Reagan's soon-to-be-released autobiography: the "Just Say No" matriarch was addicted to downers in her college days!

9. **When victim of split personality looks for a mate...**

MAN MEETS FEMALE SELF THRU DATING SERVICE

Matched with the girl of his dreams through a computer dating

THE DRINKING STRAW WRAPPERS WAR

by Wayne Hogan

Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.

—William Shakespeare, Othello, 1604.

Every time I start telling folks my views on drinking straw wrappers they almost invariably interrupt to say, "Oh, yeah, 'Strawwrappers,' that's that new religious rap group everybody's talkin' about, isn't it?" I guess by now I've responded with the same one-word negatory at least 11 gazillion times.

But seriously, folks, drinking straw wrappers have fairly recently become the very bane of my existence. They go a very long way toward ruining whatever good day it is that's chanced my way.

My straw-wrapper troubles started (I personally don't use the darned things, but I often get fast-food Cokes for my wife, and she won't drink one without a straw) when I spotted the see-through-plastic-drinking-straw dispenser that usually sits alongside or between a couple of prominent napkin holders (they're, by the way, another bane of mine, but that's another story for another time).

First off, as I'm sure some of you who use drinking straws will agree, those plastic dispensers are two parts illusion and barely one part straws. They've got that narrow little cutaway slot along their sides where the straws are supposed to come around to when the dispenser's been properly rotated. Only it's nigh impossible for a fella like me with less than 20/20 vision and hardly any dexterity to speak of to be exactly sure when a drinking straw's sufficiently lined up for plucking from the opening. That's the first problem. Another's being too proficient at the alignment task and winding up with a hundred or so straws cascading to the floor at your feet at something approaching the speed of light.

But these two problems are as nothing compared with THE difficulty I've experienced with drinking straws--getting the danged things out of their wrappers!

My theory is that today's drinking straw wrappers have been anonymously designed by Calvin Klein, almost certainly patterned after his well-known line of bone-tight blue jeans, or vice versa; the difference between them being that you can, however doubtful it may at first seem, get out of a pair of bone-tight jeans, but that it's demonstrably all-but-impossible to get a straw out of its wrapper.

I don't know how other folks are dealing with this perplexing (aw, hang it, I'll say it--uncivilized) problem, but what I've discovered is that you can't get enough of a grip on the wrapper to tear it off with your fingers, and it fits the straw's contours so snugly that you can't cut an end of the wrapper off with a pair of scissors or even a Swiss all-purpose hunting knife without snipping the straw, too, and thereby winding up with one that's far too unfashionably short for the cup in which it's meant to stand up, a situation up with which one should not have to put.

The only solution to this vexatious problem that I've found so far is to forget trying to peel the wrapper from its straw, opting, instead, for pricking a small hole in one end with a safety pin or some similar other sharply-pointed object smaller'n your standard-size screwdriver (which I admit having used on occasion, but only as a desperate last resort).

You might think you'd be able to bite the end off a mere paper wrapper, but you can't, believe me, unless you've got a Grand Prize pair of buck teeth that've had their ends sanded down to points that're smaller'n a bat's bicusps. 'Course you could set fire to the wrapper, but then, assuming it's flammable, which, to me, isn't altogether that safe an assumption, certain questions would at that point arise as to the straw's future prospects qua straw.

"Oh sure," you're probably saying right now, "anybody can find fault, but coming up with solutions that're commensurate with the industry's profit-and-loss goals and the consumers' desired blood pressure levels, well, that's a horse of a whole different color."

I'm afraid you've got me there. I'm momentarily at a loss for horses. So at least into the near future I'm thinking of taking the ungentlemanly way out by letting my wife get her own drinking straws. She's been trying to cut down on her daily Coke consumption. This just might do it.

Now, about those napkin holders...

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

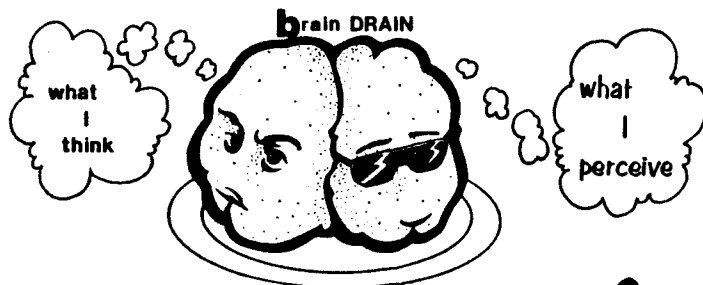
service, a lovestruck bachelor faced the painful experience of being stood up--that's because he was hooked up with his other self, who happened to be a beautiful woman!

10. **Parents confirm: Superstar guided their dying child to Heaven's Gate!**

FANS FEEL THE AMAZING POWER OF ELVIS FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

King's psychic energy is STILL reaching thousands!

It's incredible but true: The spirit of Elvis Presley continues to bring hope, comfort and joy to devoted fans ten years after he died!



LEFT B. INSIDE

The National Enquirer
Neil Simon
Hunter S. Thompson
Anni Ackner
"Earth vs. The Flying
Saucers"
The Jetsons
"Batman" (tv series)
Daryl Hannah
Yoko Ono
Morton Downey, Jr.
Dick Cavett
Orson Welles
Ami Dolenz
Josie & the Pussycats
The Mothers of Invention
Microwaveable cheese
popcorn
"The Satanic Verses"
Whitley Streiber
Abbie Hoffman (RIP!)
Roman Polanski
Chuck Barris
J.F.K.
XTC
Tom Poston
The Silver Surfer
Keds
7-11
White Castle
Black Canyon City, AZ
Tammy Bakker
Jimmy Swaggart
Kathy Stedalsky
AM
UHF
45 rpm
Super-8
The Three Stooges
Sandra Bernhart
Debbie Gibson, even!
Madonna
M&Ms
Doo-wop
Lisa Bonet
Captain Kangaroo
Dr. Seuss
"My Sharona"
Chocolate shakes
Andy Kaufman
Sam Kinison
Lenny Bruce
Harpo Marx
"Twisted Image"
"Diner"
Gary Hart
"Welcome to the Jungle"



JOKE

People Magazine
Paul Simon
Ted Koppel
Fran Leibowitz
"Star Wars"
The Who
"Batman" (movie)
"Mannah and Her Sisters"
Roseanne Barr
David Letterman
Tom Snyder
Ted Turner
Ione Skye
The Bangles
Frank Zappa
Crack
"The Andy Warhol Diaries"
Albert Goldman
A.J. Weberman
Rob Lowe
C.I.A.
L.B.J.
REM
George Bush
Mike Love
Adidas
McDonald's
White Mouse
Disney World
Jim Bakker
Rob Lowe
"thirtysomething"
FM
VHF
CD
Laser Disc
"Three's Company"
Madonna
Madonna
Sean Penn
Smarties
Rap
LaToya Jackson
Captain Kirk
Doctor & The Medics
"My Brave Face"
Strawberry shakes
Andy Rooney
Eddie Murphy
Sam Kinison
Richard Marx
Twisted Sister
"American Graffiti"
Rob Lowe
"Don't Worry, Be Happy"

(logo by
Jaza)

"There will never be a zine for Uncle Gus - Eric Esling"



"WE COULD BE HEROES..."

You can tell a lot about a person by whom they consider a hero. It's like that pop psychology quiz whereby crucial aspects of your personality are revealed by which Beatle you most identify with. Likewise, anyone who thinks Oliver North is a hero, you can pretty much lay odds that that feller is one shit-for-brains.

Ahh...where have all the heroes gone?? You sure can't find 'em on the front page—that's reserved for victims, crooks, scandals, plane crashes, and losers. If you want heroes you gotta leaf to the fantasy sections—the movie listings and the sports pages.

Ever wonder why men pore over the sports pages? They're searching for heroes—that dynamic fellow who SAVED the day with his heroic deeds and then was carried off the field on the shoulders of his adoring teammates. It's such a pity that there are so few avenues for heroes in everyday life.

When I was a kid I was heavily into the superhero comic books. Superman, Aquaman, the Martian Manhunter (what a cool name...). And how 'bout Flyman and Fly-girl, the Shield, Blackjack, Bouncing Boy and the zillions of other obscure heroes? I even drew my own superheroes, designing their outfits and secret origins. My favorite was Inventor Man. Yes, this looks like a job for...INVENTOR MAN!!! I remember he had a light bulb on his chest logo and he would capture crooks by using his super brain to come up with brilliant, crime-stop-pin' inventions. Not only that, but he drove around in his Inventormobile, and lived in his secret lair the Inventor Cave. His comic book was called "Best Cellers" (geddit?...he put the crooks in jail cells).

When I was in the second grade, I had an elaborate heroic fantasy involved with impressing Charlene Hamilton, this cute li'l babe in my class. This big, bad villain would storm into the classroom and threaten us with a gun. Before he could shoot Charlene I would bravely jump in front of her and take the slug myself. Then I would single-handedly pummel the thug into submission with my fists in front of the entire awe-struck class. After subduing the thug I'd be rushed off to the hospital, gasping for air on my death bed. And Charlene would be there by my side, holding my hand as I milked my last words for all they were worth: "I—gasp, sputter, wheeze—did it all f-f-for you, Charlene...UHHNNN!" What a hero! What a performance!!

Judging my my roommate's 12-year-old son, today's modern heroes are decidedly less pure than the ones of my generation. His particular faves—guys like The Punisher and the new Batman—are more akin to psychopathic vigilantes than the pristine goody-two-shoes moral-do-gooders of my day. I mean, in all those years Superman never actually KILLED anybody. It's a disturbing trend that today's heroes aren't so much standing up for what is right as they are getting revenge for all that's wrong. There's a difference.

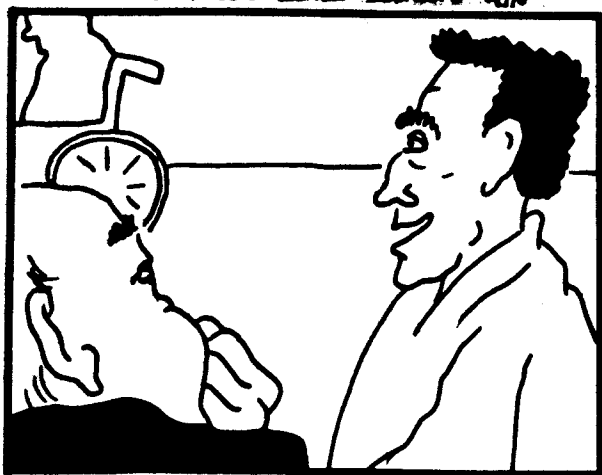
After Superman I graduated to John Lennon as my next hero. I'm sure that's one of the prime reasons I got into the whole art biz, the path I've followed to this day.

Today my heroes are R. Crumb and Charles Bukowski. Both artists set, to me, the highest standard of artistic integrity. Not only are they incredibly gifted in their chosen fields, but they both have the balls to SAY the truth as they see it, whether the rest of society agrees with them or not, and regardless of whether society will REWARD them for those truths. You'd be surprised how few people have the guts to stand alone.

I'd like to take a poll in the letters section and find out just whom my fellow IJers consider their heroes.

OVERHEARD

at America's Lunch Counters



"The Red Cross wants you to donate blood. Before they start on me I tell them ahead of time, 'you can take my blood but I'm full of wine and whisky and mission stew and I don't want to hurt nobody.'"

**BEWARE
THE CHURCH
of the SUBGENIUS**
If you think you're strange, try
The SubGenius Foundation and
find out what "strange" is.
Send \$1 for intense pamphlet

**The SubGenius
Foundation
PO Box 140306
Dallas TX 75214**

ARE YOU A REAL WRITER?

(A QUIZ) by Anne Ellsworth

(Check only one answer for each question.)

- What was the reaction to your first attempt at a short story in fourth grade?
 - Your teacher found it "very promising."
 - Somebody made a fighter plane out of your manuscript and shot the math teacher.
 - Every kid in the class loved it, but then the principal contacted your parents and suggested they start looking for another school for you.
- When you were given the assignment to write an essay titled "Our Class Visits a Home for the Elderly," did you:
 - Write a heartwarming essay about the happiness in the old folks' eyes?
 - Tell the teacher that your dog chewed up your ten-page work?
 - Concentrate on the incident when Jodie tripped over an old man's cane and dropped her bag of Tootsie Rolls?
- Why would you join a writers' group?
 - To improve your writing style.
 - Because, according to Cosmo's latest survey, that is a good place to meet eligible bachelors.
 - To watch other would-be writers make out with the eligible bachelors.
- How do you feel when you get another rejection slip?
 - You learned from your writers' group that each rejection gets you closer to being a real writer.
 - You feed it to the dog.
 - You smile, knowing that the next editor will appreciate your story of how Jodie met an eligible bachelor at the home for the elderly.

YOUR TOTAL SCORE:

Mostly a.: You could make a cozy living writing greeting cards for all occasions.

Mostly b.: Change careers before it is too late for you and your dog.

Mostly c.: You've got what it takes to be a REAL writer. Don't let the next few hundred rejection slips discourage you.

SORRY, BUT IT'S TRUE

by Mary Ann Henn

I have
been there twice
It's a family bar
beside a lake
and they only sell
mixes, pizzas, pop no
liquor you have
to bring your own
the kids play videos
the first time I was there in a bar

the barmaid had to check
a table where 4 guys
were talking loud 4-letter
words she said they'd have
to tone it down or leave
not because I a nun was there
they have a special kind
of beer pina colada
which I love not much
alcohol so you see
you're wrong I was
in a bar

The Bare Truth

by Susan Packie

"Look at those ankles! Look at those legs! Look at those hips! Look at that waist! Look at--oh no, I can't stand this any more!"

"Control yourself, Big Red. Haven't you ever seen a woman in a bathing suit before? Just casually saunter over and introduce yourself to her."

"I can't, Hank. You're better at this kind of stuff than I am. I get all tongue-tied."

"You want me to come over and introduce myself to her?"

"No, dummy, I want you to introduce me to her!"

"Sorry, but you'll have to do that yourself."

"Oh well. Here goes. Miss, uh, miss?"

"Is something wrong?"

"Wrong? No, of course not! I mean yes, you've dropped your, beach shovel."

"How thoughtful of you to bring it over! Unfortunately, it seems to belong to that screaming little boy."

"Oh sure, of course. May I sit down and help you put suntan lotion on your back?"

"I would really appreciate that."

"You're so pale, you look as if you don't get out in the sun much."

"No, I don't. I work long hours."

"That's too bad. Would you like to take a break this evening and go to a disco with me?"

"A disco?"

"Yeah. Music, dancing, booze, pot...whatever turns you on."

"Yes, I know what a disco is. I'm afraid I don't know. I'll have to ask father."

"You live at home? Tough break! Maybe I can sneak you out, like Romeo."

"I'd better not."

"Well then, how about a movie?"

"I think that would be all right."

"Fine. I'll pick you up at eight."

"Eight at night?"

"There is no movie at eight in the morning."

"That's rather late. I rise at five."

"Rise? Oh yeah. I can rise all day and all night. You mean...come?"

"Come?"

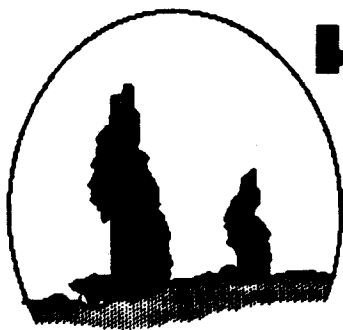
"What I mean is--"

"Sister Ursula, it's time to return to the convent."

"You're a...nun?"

Sister Ursula smiled, nodded affirmatively, and whispered, "Eight sharp. Second floor, southeast corner window."

Big Red swallowed hard and nodded. So that was what nuns wore under those somber black exteriors!



HOWLING AT THE MOON BY MIKE DOBBS

My marriage almost ended the night I called Elvis...well I didn't really call Elvis direct.. I mean Elvis is dead, isn't he? I did call the 1-900 telephone service which really allowed me to listen to a purported taped interview of the King. My wife didn't want me to waste dollars upon dollars on this call as she actually buys the whole "death" of Elvis, and threatened me with the usual violence.

Ever since then I've been thinkin' about those 1-900 telephone numbers. These are the ones usually advertised on MTV or USA cable channels and feature everything from wrestling updates to listening to horror stories. Well, in my goal to become disgustingly rich and famous, I've devised a number of other services described below. These have been designed to reach very specific markets...

1-900-OPRA: Call this number daily to find out what Oprah Winfrey and her best friend, Gayle King (the most publicized Best Friend in the history of modern media) are talking about. Since Oprah wears her heart on her sleeve and doesn't hesitate to telling her audience everything from her lost loves to the severity of her period, I'm sure people will delight in listening to her recorded phone conversations.

1-900-METAL: Learn about your favorite heavy metal bands touring schedules, lifestyles, groupie preferences and how to tell the difference between groups simply by their haircuts by calling this number. I'm going to run ads on it from the Beltone hearing aide people because this is their future market.

1-900-JASON: That's right, why should Freddie Kruger have his own horror hotline while that fascinating character Jason Hockey Mask be without one? Since Jason doesn't talk, I'll save a bundle by just taping screams of his victims! The geeks who actually like the FRIDAY THE 13TH movies won't mind at all.

1-900-MORT: Any day now, Morton Downey Jr. will lose his talk show, so I'm going to sign him up to recorded a daily two minute torrent of abuse. Since Mort's fans are all masochists, they'll need their daily fix of insults and crude remarks.

1-900-BOBB: I have to give J.R. "Bob" Dobbs two "B's" just to get him a telephone number! Why in the name of IT there hasn't been a Sub-Genius telephone service I will never know! This is a natural! A daily 15-minute rant that will cost its listeners at least \$30.00! And they'll pay it because they know of the Church's "triple-your-money-back-if-you-don't-get-salvation" guarantee.

1-900-TRUMP: I'll present America's fighting hero, Donald Trump, everyday with a different message on how to make it in this wonderful country...beauty tips from Ivana, too. This telephone service actually is designed to break people into my new idea for a cable television channel...the 24-hour Trump Network.

Flirting with the Famous

by Steven F. Scharff

A number of years ago, a friend of mine invited me to accompany him to his school to see a documentary on horror film mogul George A. Romero. Seems his film teacher at the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan had gotten together his students and some grant money a few years earlier and made a critical retrospective on the man.

I had just seen Dawn of the Dead recently, so why not Document of the Dead? I went with him on the appointed day, entering the school in the shadow of the Flatiron Building, and we took our places in the seats of the classroom. My friend introduced me to the teacher when he entered, and told me that the red plaid shirt he wore was the one he wore as a zombie in Romero's film.

As the projector was being threaded, another teacher entered the room. What struck me was the size of the man. He was easily 6'2" and weight close to 300--well, more like 275. His bald spot poked through grey hair on his temples, and his clothes were so conservative they seemed to be making a statement. He wore a white button-down shirt, thin black belt which held up black slacks, and well-shined black, low cut shoes.

He walked directly to the teacher's desk, and softly asked a question. The younger teacher looked at a list on his desk and said, "Wnnn...nope. Not yet."

The elder gent gave out a deep sigh, turned, and slowly walked out of the room.

After he had left, the younger teacher turned to me and said, "That was Will Eisner."

I gasped. "...Who?"

"Will Eisner. Y'know, 'The Spirit' comic strip?"

I was taken aback. A major figure in the evolution of the comic strip as a dramatic medium...and yet he looked so...regular.

We saw the documentary, traded comments on gore films, and went our various directions. My friend told me later on that both Eisner and Art Spiegelman (prior to his internationally acclaimed "Maus") both taught cartooning at the school.

On the train ride home, all I could think about was that brief minute-and-a-half that I saw Eisner, not knowing it was him, thinking he was just another teacher.

Some things just can't be accepted at face value.

Apologies to Steven for misplacing the above piece, which should have been in our last issue



THE CONTINUING SAGA OF DR. IGUANA THE STORY SO FAR.

by Ken Burke
THE JERRY LEE LEWIS REPORT.

"Is it possible for a former United States senator...to have the face of Abraham Lincoln and the soul of Jerry Lee Lewis?"

There was one picture of Hart pounding marimba and looking crazier than Jerry Lee Lewis...and that was it: There was nothing else to say. He was crazier than six loons."

-Hunter Thompson on Gary Hart. Gonzo Papers Vol. 2.

'THE RETURN OF THE MEAT MAN' (KICKSTOOL 101): This is probably the most brazen/satisfying bootleg CD I've ever come across. First there's the cover. In an amazing collage, Jerry Lee Lewis and his piano are floating above a small 1950's town. He is aflame with the hellfire of redneck boogie as he beats the living music from his keyboard. The stage at his feet resembles a flying saucer delivering him from another world. At bottom left, teenagers are bopping down mainstreet, having the times of their young lives. The girls have bouffant hairdos, they are screaming and swooning. The boys are wearing leather jackets, jeans, white socks, and penny loafers. As they comb their greasy hair, cartoon balloons allow them to exclaim "Go Man GO!" "Dig it!" and "Real Cool!" Clearly Jerry Lee Lewis has come to earth just to rock for them. At bottom right, a group of very straight looking solid citizens (who have poorly concealed skin-mags, whiskey flasks, and vials of prescription drugs jutting out of their pockets and purses) are just leaving their local church. Their facial expressions are contorted by the terror they view from above. One particularly hysterical woman is shown clutching a hanky to her chest as she screams "JESUS CHRIST! It's JERRY LEE LEWIS!!!"

This is the only LP/CD cover I've seen that has so accurately mythologized a performer's impact on his audience.

Then there's the liner notes. The authors openly ADMIT stealing the master tapes of these performances from a major record label. Indeed, they seem PROUD of it. The label in question isn't named, but the session dates (late 70's/early 80's) would place these recordings at Elektra Records. The author's notes tell of Lewis' last sessions for that company, particularly the live segments, which were done at the insistence of Jerry Lee. Their tale of his struggle to re-assert his musical persona bears repeating here.

"Jerry Lee felt his records were being over-produced and that the company was ignoring a very large segment of his audience: Folks who buy his country LP's to hear the rock songs on them. Jerry believed in recording 'live' in the studio with little or no over-dubbing. He wanted to record more rock'n'roll and felt his country material should have a simpler sound, like the stuff he did for Smash Records.

It was a major difference in perception really. The label execs wanted to respond to an existing market situation (strings, choral groups, etc.) and Jerry wanted to revive or create a market. We're convinced that Jerry's arguments with the A&R department were the determining factors in his being dropped from their roster. They cited poor work and slow sales, but Jerry had a Top Five hit at the time they fired him. So you know that was just bullshit.

Jerry Lee left behind a finished studio LP and several tapes of live shows; they were never issued, probably out of spite, because the market was always there for this type of material.

What angers us most is: They waited until Jerry was sick, near death in a hospital before they announced their decision to drop him. We consider this the height of corporate cowardice."

If it was their intent to embarrass Elektra Records by showing the wealth of material they've held back, or to shame them by revealing repressive industry practices, then the bootleggers have accomplished all they set out to do. This whole package is apt object lesson as well as an amazing musical document.

The music. There are 34 songs on this disc! 15 studio cuts, and 19 live tracks. The studio work alternates between being fairly uninspired and wildly brilliant. The best numbers are 'Keep My Motor Running,' 'Teenage Quenn,' 'Mona Lisa,' 'Hadacol Boogie,' and a potent country re-working of Frank Sinatra's 'All The Way.' On many of the remaining songs, Jerry's voice sounds raspy and tired. Perhaps the sterile Nashville backing is adversely affecting him because there are superior live versions of most of these numbers in the concert portion of the disc.

Live, Lewis recaptures much of his dissipated artistry. His piano is mixed well to the front of a five piece band and he performs with great verve and emotion. There are TWO versions of Lewis' cult classic 'Meat Man,' both containing entirely different lyrics than the one Jerry's fans know. Lewis' roots at SUN Records are paid tribute with a 'Rockin' Ray Smith medley,' and two Elvis Presley tunes ('That's All Right Mama' 'Mystery Train'), and a wild live version of Jerry Lee's own 'Lovin' Up A Storm.'

Since these live tracks were carefully selected from different concerts, there isn't a bum performance in the bunch. Also, each song is smartly edited into the next to create an illusion of the type of momentum that 'The Killer' builds in his shows.

Jerry's band, The Memphis Beats, seen able to read their leader's mind and always provide the proper accompaniment to any musical mood he creates. As good as his band is, Jerry Lee is even better. Each song is a storm of rhythm, passion, and showmanship. When Lewis is not inciting his audience by punching, slamming, raking, or kicking his piano, he communicates the full power of his rich vocal gifts on a variety of song styles, and makes each tune sound as if it were ripped from the pages of his life. This isn't just a fine Lewis offering, this some of the very best work Jerry Lee Lewis has ever done!

Besides the historical significance of this CD (one of rock's founding father's asserting his true artistic sense), there is also the importance of timing in relation to Jerry Lee's career. Shortly after recording these remarkable tracks, Jerry Lee's stomach lining tore open. This began a cycle of torturous hospital stays and life-threatening complications. Being near death many times since then, Lewis seems sapped of his greatest asset as a performer; confidence. His performances now are only as good as his fragile health will permit, and his once indomitable ego seems wounded by the continual threat of illness and pain. The recordings compiled on this bootleg CD capture the last moments when this great artist viewed himself as the invincible, inexhaustible 'Greatest LIVE Show On Earth' - Jerry Lee Lewis. And my friends, THAT is something!

"I called up Jimmy Lee (Swaggert) and said, 'What's the deal here? I thought we had an understanding - You stay away from my kind of women and I'll stay away from yours.' He didn't laugh."

-Attributed to Jerry Lee by Ken Tucker, NPR's 'FRESH AIR.'

"Oh that's ALL we need! - To live our lives according to Jerry Lee Lewis!"

-'Julia' to 'Charlene' on CBS-TV's 'DESIGNING WOMEN.'

'HANG IT IN LIKE GUNGA-DIN' 'KISS MY ASS ON YOUR WAY DOWN' (SHAKIN' RECORDS): Another live bootleg. Not much info on either the label or the picture sleeve of this 45 rpm extra-play single, but the condition of Jerry Lee's voice suggests that this was recorded in the mid-70's. The sound quality indicates that these tracks were professionally engineered and recorded.

Lewis is in unusually aggressive form on 'Hang It In Like Gunga-Din (You Muthahumper)'. It is a fast rocking boogie that has the 'Killer' changing keys and playing with increasing fury on each succeeding verse. The lyrics are suggestive, funny, and shockingly autobiographic. This is the type of song and performance that you would neither want your children or your parents to hear. Advocates and detractors alike could use this recording as testament to Jerry Lee's genius or his madness.

After bashing down the last notes of this uncompromising, hard-rock ditty, Lewis is heard to say "Aww, ol' Killer just made that one up as he went along..." Amazing.

The second track is the C&W standard 'Pick Me Up On Your Way Down' apparently re-touched on the spot to fit Jerry Lee's mood. Lewis smolders with a fine honky-tonk rage as he assails the woman in this song (who clearly has risen above her station in life) with ugly redneck prophecies, arrogant sorrow, and the sneering hook-line commandment "Kiss MY ASS On Your Way Down!"

The remaining tracks are instrumental jams which contain the only recordings I've ever heard of Jerry Lee playing electric fiddle! He's a passable fiddler with a well-stocked fund of licks at his command, but like his occasional turns at guitar and drums, Jerry's forays on fiddle derive value from the novelty that Jerry Lee Lewis is doing something besides pumping a piano.

This EP is a fabulous entry in the Lewis legacy of recordings. It is also very collectible though its origins are mysterious. My copy was expensive (\$8.75), but the title track is worth that alone. The rest introduces previously unreleased aspects of that complex musical personality we call 'The Killer.'

"I bitched at him for giving a lackluster performance one night. He just nodded grimly. The next night I saw him put on the greatest rocking show ever done in this club. For two and a half hours he was WAILIN'! Everybody was going bananas...cheering, stomping their feet, chanting his name. WOW! I went backstage to congratulate him...and there he was, puking up blood into a waste-basket."

-Steven Rod, owner of 'Roddy Bop's' An Ohio Nightclub.

'I AM WHAT I AM' (HALLWAY PRODUCTIONS): Produced for GLOBAL TV in Canada by Gregory Hall and Charlie Dick, this video/documentary takes on the un-enviable task of portraying the life of Jerry Lee Lewis in a fair/even-handed manner. They succeed in avoiding sensationalism, but in their drive to seem impartial, they miss out on what Jerry Lee's story is all about.

I suppose your acceptance of this video/bio will depend on what you want out of a documentary, and whether you think the pros outweigh the cons.

PRO. Jerry's early life, from his beginnings in Ferriday, Louisiana, through his days as Elvis' chief rival as the 'King Of Rock'n'Roll,' to the scandal that ended his days as one of rock's first superstars, are accurately reported.

CON. Much of his struggle to reclaim his audience and his

(continued next page)

dramatic comeback in Country Music is glossed over. This is important because most people in the U.S. would not have taken interest in the early portion of his career if it were not for his groundbreaking re-emergence on the Country charts.

PRO. Rare TV appearances are excerpted showing Lewis in his full youthful glory, through mid-career, to his later years as one of rock's elder statesmen.

CON. The Dick Clark 'Great Balls Of Fire' clip is shown twice, and while that appearance is historically important, the Steve Allen clip is markedly superior. Also, the rare 'Breathless' clip and a later 'What'd I Say' performance are cut away from for pointless narration/montage scenes just as Jerry Lee was getting wild and frenzied. Inexcusable!

PRO. Fan home movies, news broadcasts, newspaper headlines and some re-enactment footage are used to good effect to tell elements of the Lewis story.

CON. A great deal of archival footage from other documentaries is re-used. Jerry's film appearances are not used or mentioned. Nor is his stint as 'Iago' in Jack Good's version of "Othello" CATCH MY SOUL. (Lewis did a soliloquy from this on the 'Joey Bishop Show.' Why couldn't THAT have been found and used?) Also missing were Jerry's guest shots on 'Shindig,' 'Hee Haw,' 'The Midnight Special,' 'Johnny Cash,' etc., as well as lengthy interviews on Tom Snyder's 'Tomorrow' and Geraldo Rivera's media-bullying on ABC's 20/20.

PRO. Friends family and many famous names (Chuck Berry, Dick Clark, Steve Allen, Ron Wood, Burton Cummings, Tom Jones, Ronnie Hawkins, Mickey Gilley, Jimmy Swaggert, Roy Orbison, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Paul Anka, etc.) provide testimonial to Jerry's greatness as well as amusing anecdotes.

CON. The big names, while offering promotional value, do little for this biography. Those who really know Jerry Lee and his story (Kenny Lovelace, Cecil Harrelson, J.W. Whitten, and Linda Gail Lewis.) are given short shrift and their knowledge goes untapped in favor of quick meaningless sound-bites. Also SUN Record's producer Sam Phillips, and Lewis' MERCURY Records producer Jerry Kennedy are never allowed to comment on how Jerry worked in the studio, his music, etc.

PRO. The producers do not flinch when it comes to mentioning the many controversies that have dogged Jerry's life and career, and to their credit, they interview Lewis to get his version of these incidents.

CON. The cause and effect of these incidents are largely left unexplored. Likewise the conflicts and frustrations of Jerry's religious background and psychological make-up.

PRO. The 50's era and the circumstances which brought about the first blasts of rock'n'roll is nicely portrayed. Likewise the backlash against rock that contributed so heavily to Jerry Lee's downfall.

CON. The producers omit much needed material about the state of music and Jerry's career in the 60's, 70's, and 80's. (The rock'n'roll revival of the late 60's/early 70's isn't mentioned nor is Jerry's return to rock in '72, and the subsequent usurping of his place on the Country charts by his sound-a-like cousin Mickey Gilley.) Neither Jerry Lee's last three record labels or his many hit records for those labels are given mention.

The end result is a technically well-produced video-tape that is accurate but superficial. The TV clips are strong, but the full story of Lewis' career is simply not told. After viewing this tape, I came away thinking that the average Lewis fan knew more about 'The Killer' and his career than the producers of this documentary do.

'I Am What I Am' is available through ERNEST TUBBS RECORD SHOP (P.O. BOX 500, Nashville, Tennessee, 37202.) It costs \$29.95. It's 77 minutes long.

"THE JERRY LEE LEWIS REPORT"
will continue in IJ #70
(Part II is much shorter!)



SNIDE CRITIC
REVIEWS
J. P. MORGAN

Oh boy, loyal readers...it looks like it's going to be another one of those columns again...you know, one of those jobs where the S.C. hems and haws and carries on in a diffuse, drawn-out manner about the films he hasn't seen. And why not? It's a perfectly reasonable reaction to what they're serving up at the local Umpty-Ump Plex Theatre, where hordes of naive moviegoers, lacking the sharply-honed powers of observation of certain film critics, permit themselves to be herded inside to be subjected to More of the Same Old Thing. And there's lots of it, you betchum!

So...what is the Snide Critic not gonna see this summer? Well, he's sure not seeing INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE, that's for sure. For one thing, it appears to involve (again) Nazis and superduper religious icons, and for Pete's sake, we saw it all ready in the first Jones flick! Besides, the fact that Spielberg is heavily involved with the Disney Empire takes away a lot of the

appeal his stuff once had—they've got a Mickey/Jones Adventure display somewhere in DisneyZombieland, yes? And they're coming up with a Star Wars theng for 'em, too...no, no, I've had just about enough of the products from the Disney/Lucas/Spielberg axis, thank you very much (Sean Connery notwithstanding)! And Yours Truly isn't seeing STAR TREK: THE FINAL FRONTIER either, and my reasons for this go back to the first Trekkie movie—it was so lousy that it blunted any appetite I might've had once for this stuff. It picked up a bit with WRATH OF KHAN, but that flick was so Reagan-(Dark) Age military—the crew had these new crimson Cossack-style uniforms—that I called it quits on this Trekkie fodder series. Of course, they went on to the ol' Spock-is-daid routine, and then the Save-the-Whales picture, and now a mish-mash of religion in the new one...and come to think of it, the new Indy Jones thing is supposed to be sorta a New Testament whoop, as opposed to the Old Testament storyline of the first...humm. In fact, GHOSTBUSTERS II, while not reputedly religious as such, features (the S.C. has heard from reliable sources) a kinder-gentler-America storyline, with pink slime welling up from the subway because New Yorkers are so mean and nasty to each other, and of course I ain't gonna see this one either, so there. And so we come to BATMAN. Fuck BATMAN. I'm sick of BATMAN. I've been sick of him for some time now, what with Frank Miller's DEATH WISH-style version getting heavy promo in rags like Rolling Stone and the tube, the phone-in-to-snuff-Robin hokey that got heavy coverage, the assorted Batman "graphic novels," Batman this, Batman that, and I've had enough Batman, and I couldn't care less who plays him or the Joker and I don't wanna see Kim Basinger in anything at all! That's right, I'm just an old sourball who doesn't like anything; NYEEAHHHH!

I suppose the Snide Critic really ought to actually review something here, though...to keep his hand in, if for no other reason. Well, what we got here to review is not a movie, not a book about movies, but a sound recording: a cassette of Stephen King's story THE MIST, a ZBS production done with a Kuntatoph rubber head that is supposed to "hear" sound much like a human-type head, thus resulting in a more 3-D sound. Well, it does sound pretty nice, with the monster noises and tearing flesh coming across well, but this tape story comes out sounding awfully silly...see, there's the corny dialogue and silly characters often found in King's work, and while they can often be glossed over in print, in a spoken medium forget it. A mysterious mist comes from the lake, see, and it contains all these giant spiders and other nasties, and a crowd of Just Plain Folks is barricaded in a supermarket, and there's a religious fanatic who naturally wants to sacrifice the Innocent Child to God to stop the weirdness. People bicker in a rather soap-opera style as they consume brand-name goodies...boy, do they ever consume brand-name goodies! In King's printed stories it's bad enough, but at least the brand names can be inserted into the narrative in a relatively natural manner; in the tape, the characters must ask for this brand, announce that brand, kill the bugs with one brand, stuff themselves with another brand...geez, it gets so it's like one of those old MAD Magazine parodies, or sci-fi stories where the advertisements are inserted directly into the dialogue because advertising has gotten so totally out of hand. Except that this is a for-real production and thus it has a somewhat Golden Turkey feel to it; you might want to check it out for a goof. I found a copy at the local library, thus this review.

Say now...it seems that the Snide Critic left some vital information out of last issue's column! During my Laurel & Hardy book review, I meant to mention the Sons of the Desert, a nationwide L&H club dedicated to preserving the spirit of the famous two. You can get a free sample copy of their 'zine (a nice production) by writing them at 5151 White Oak Ave., #127, Encino, CA 91316!

Hey, remember how, a few months ago, I was pointing out how remiss the TV listings were in the paper? How they described the excellent film ISLAND OF TERROR as 10:05 TBS "Island of Terror" (1962, science fiction) Peter Cushing; Edward Judd, Karole Gray. A scientist's experiments produce bone-sucking creepers. Directed by Terence Fisher. (2 hrs.)

Ha! A vast improvement over "giant turtle monsters," wouldn't you agree? Yessir, the squeaky wheel gets the grease! Of course, that station there is a different one than the one that gave us the earlier, misleading listing. Time will tell...

It's a general rule of good writing that you should never conclude your pieces with "Let me conclude by..." Well, too bad. Let me conclude this piece by anticipating "Kid" Sieve's reaction to my anti-Summerflick rant above by recalling the old Abbott & Costello routine where Lou refuses mustard for his hot dog, and Abbott upbraids him for putting all the people who make mustard out of work, ruining their lives, wrecking the economy, etc., to which Lou rejoins, "You mean all those thousands of people are makin' one little jar of mustard just for me? Well, you can tell 'em not to make any more, 'cause I ain't eatin' it!"

(The Kid replies: Huh? Actually, you mis-anticipated, JP, as I wasn't planning to take you to task on your Summerflick "reviews." INDY was more or less the same old thing, but I always thought that was the point, it being a tribute-to-40's-serials series. STAR TREK was pretty bad, mostly male bonding stuff and pretty trite. I liked BATMAN but can see where overkill would be a bit much for the weak of constitution. Frankly, though, I'd not begrudge Miller one bit of heavy promo—the man's pretty heavy himself, metaphysically speaking. I don't even plan on seeing GHOSTBUSTERS II or KARATE KID III or GREAT DEAL OF BALLS or even JASON TAKES MANHATTAN—but I will see DEAD POETS SOCIETY and the Roger Rabbit 'toon and certainly Weird Al's UHF. Maybe you and I can take in a showing of DO THE RIGHT THING?)

ANIMATION UPDATE



FILM REVIEW: While the Disney Channel was airing it for the umpteenth time, New Yorkers got to view *THE BRAVE LITTLE TOASTER* (Hyperion Entertainment) on the big screen for the first time. Jerry Rees directed this modern-day tale about a quintet of household appliances, and of their adventures during a quest to seek out their owner. This troupe of animated objects (a desk lamp, an electric blanket, a radio, a vacuum cleaner and the title character) have individual personalities that range from the spunkiness of the toaster to the gruffy exterior of the vacuum (the latter voiced by Thurl Ravenscroft, best known as Tony the Tiger's voice) to the endless chatterboxing of the radio (Jon Lovitz of "Saturday Night Live"). A real standout is an air conditioner that sounds like Jack Nicholson, even though his role in this picture is brief. The plot ambles a bit, taking off Busby Berkeley musical extravaganzas and Indiana Jones-ish moments of suspense and action, but it never strays too far off its target. Although this flick won't rank among the many classics from the Disney studios, it stands out on its own for originality and charm, without too much sentiment. When it eventually comes out on home video in the near future, *THE BRAVE LITTLE TOASTER* will make an excellent babysitter in your VCR...The Film Forum (which will be relocating later this year) screened an unusual assortment of shorts under the title "Jan Svankmajer: Alchemist of the Surreal," which certainly lives up to its name. The Czechoslovakian-born animator surprises his audience with a variety of strange films (from 1964 to 1983) that tantalize, tease, and sometimes stun the viewer into awareness. *THE LAST TRICK* (1964) is one such example; two oddly-dressed entertainers undergo a literal battle of one-upsmanship, concluding with the two of them disassembling each other. *THE FLAT* (1968) involves us with the many mishaps of its reluctant tenant, including a bed that disintegrates the moment he rests upon it and an unbreakable egg that penetrates the dinner table and injures his toe. There are eight shorts in all, all filmed live with stop-motion photography giving off its jaunty effects. The highlights of this collection are *DOWN TO THE CELLAR* (1983) and *DIMENSIONS OF DIALOGUE* (1982). *CELLAR* deals with fear, as we imagine the various phobias of childhood through the eyes of a little girl who goes into the basement to gather potatoes from a vegetable bin. *DIMENSIONS* is a three-part farce, with all its characters comprised of either clay or household objects, animated into a number of repetitious actions that begin normally only to turn more and more abnormal by the end of each segment. So, if you're expecting something along the lines of a work by Disney, Chuck Jones or even Will Vinton, forget it; but, if you're into Kafka, Bunuel, or T.S. Eliot, this unusual anthology is for you...The new Roger Rabbit short, *TUMMY TROUBLE*, is a delight for all ages. Reminiscent of those fast-paced Tex Avery/MGM shorts of the 1940's, it lives up to its manic actions (even Avery's character Droopy makes a guest appearance). Like the short that began last year's hit, *WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT*, the hapless hare has problems while taking care of Baby Herman once again. This time, Baby Herman swallows his rattle, resulting in a wild race to the hospital, where Roger winds up on the operating table. Since this is only a 7-minute cartoon, I won't give away any of the major gags; suffice it to say they are all laugh-out-loud funny! Charles Fleischer once again provides the voice for the long-eared accident-prone toon, and Kathleen Turner returns as well as Jessica Rabbit, depicted as a nurse (as Roger puts it aptly, "Thank goodness for modern medicine!"). *TUMMY TROUBLE* is now playing in theatres with the new Disney comedy *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS*. At last, the way movies were meant to be seen—with a cartoon and coming attractions, just like the good old days. Now let's see if we can bring back the newsreel...

MAGAZINE UPDATE: The May/June '89 issue of *Storyboard* features a look at the Disney/MGM Studios Theme Park, as well as the usual articles about unusual collectables, such as animation cels, foreign stamps with Disney characters on them, and a brief look at the real rarity—a "Backwards Goofy" watch, with all the numbers going counterclockwise. Must reading...The Spring '89 issue of *Animation Magazine* covers such topics as the new generation of Disney animators, a look at new commercial animators and their best TV spots, a look at Will Vinton's Claymation studio in Oregon (enhanced by two pages of comic art drawn by clay-animator Craig Bartlett), and the complete results from the Third Los Angeles International Animation Celebration.

SEND IN THE CLONES: "The Shocking Adventures of Casual T. Cat" is a 30-second public service TV spot from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Its title character is a feline equivalent to Roger Rabbit. In the commercial, he shows viewers the importance of home safety by rescuing an infant (Baby Herman clone) from a falling coffee pot, only to be electrocuted when the innocent toddler plugs the cat's tail into the wall socket. The moral: "Give your cat a break; childproof your home." What sets this storyline apart from the one in *WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT* and *TUMMY TROUBLE* is the fact that the action looks painfully real! That is because it is the work of Will Vinton's Claymation crew (an in-joke in the ad comes in the form of a picture of the Domino's Pizza "Noid" in a

newspaper on the kitchen table, next to the precariously-perched coffee pot). Catch it while it's still on the tube, because chances are, if Action for Children's Television does not pull it off the air for its violent content (even though its intentions are well-meant), some local civic groups probably will. Nevertheless, here's wishing better luck (and safer adventures) to animation's latest fall guy (cat?), Casual T. May you get better breaks, and I mean that in the positive sense...

BOOK REVIEW: The title *The Art of WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT* is rather misleading, as this is not a book that documents the production of the film, but rather displays various animation cels from it. Of course, if you see the name "Sotheby's" on the jacket, it's an immediate indication that this book is really a catalog for items to be auctioned—in this case, the cels. Well, the recent auction of *ROGER RABBIT* art at Sotheby's New York branch (which marks, for the first time in its history, the selling of cels from a single film, instead of several different cartoons) took in a total of over \$1.6 million; that's a helluva lot of carrots! As for the catalog itself, it's a full-color lasting reminder of how good the film was. Many of the cels have background drawings or photographs, giving off the full effect of each scene. There are 560 cels in its over 100 pages, along with a description of each cel and the respective prices. Considering that the lowest price for said cels was a bid of \$800, you can still pick-up a treasure trove of toon art with the catalog; or, for a few dollars more, you can buy the home video of the film (see "Video Preview" below) and set your VCR at "slo-mo" to view every single cel.

VIDEO PREVIEW: This fall will see three hot home videos vying for the number one spot, and all three are animated features. One of them is the collaborated work of Don Bluth, Steven Spielberg and George Lucas, *THE LAND BEFORE TIME* (MCA, with a retail price of \$24.95); but the two main contenders for the top spot are both Disney films. Representing classic animation at its finest is *BAMBI* (Buena Vista, \$26.99), and the modern-day challenger is the live-action/animated hit of 1988, Touchstone's *WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT* (also BV, \$22.99). To sweeten the deal, Disney will be offering special rebates for both videos, thus giving *LAND BEFORE TIME* a literal run for the money...Also this fall, six Rankin/Bass TV specials will be available to consumers (sans the commercials) on video. The titles are *RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER*, *FROSTY THE SNOWMAN*, *SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN*, *THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY*, *MOUSE ON THE MAYFLOWER*, and *HERE COMES PETER COTTONTAIL*. (All the titles except for *FROSTY* and *MOUSE* are puppet-animated works.) International Video Entertainment's Family Home Entertainment kids label will be the distributor. Prices will vary, as some specials (like *SANTA* and *RUDOLPH*) are 50 minutes long while other specials (like *FROSTY* and *DRUMMER BOY*) are half the running time. No specific retail prices are available yet.

MIS'CELL'ANEOUS: No sooner had we finished celebrating Mickey Mouse's 60th birthday when another toon is about to reach a milestone—Bugs Bunny turns 50! In conjunction with his year-long celebration (beginning this fall), the old grey hare will appear, for the very first time, on a special float in Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, along with his Warner Bros. Cartoon compatriots...Of the upcoming animated TV specials, here are three to look out for: one will be an appropriate Halloween show starring "The Real Ghostbusters" from DIC (a prime-time slime-time first, if you don't count the Christmas special based on the regular Saturday morning episode); another special will be a cel-animated version of Will Vinton's Claymation character the "Noid" from the Domino's Pizza TV spots (TMS Entertainment, Inc. and Southern Star Productions are behind the project); and finally, look for a half-hour special (and possible pilot) on the FOX network starring "The Simpsons," Matt Groening's slightly demented "average American family" from "The Tracy Ullman Show" (as usual, the animation will be provided by Klasky Csupo, Inc.)...By the time you read this column, one of the following animated features should be playing at a theatre near you: Nelvana Productions *BABAR: THE MOVIE* (from New Line Cinema), based on the children's stories about the little elephant king; and Disney's timeless classic *PETER PAN* (a quantum leap superior to that recent broadcast rerun on NBC)...Work continues in Florida on *ROLLERCOASTER RABBIT*, the next Roger Rabbit short to be released, with a third short, *HARE IN MY SOUP*, being prepared for production...The 29th Annecy Animation Film Festival in France was a rousing success. Among the many special programs was the screening of six rare anti-Nazi cartoons from the Disney studios (including *VICTORY THROUGH AIRPOWER*, *DONALD GETS DRAFTED*, and the Duck's only Oscar-winning film, *DER FUHRER'S FACE* a/k/a *DONALD IT NUTZYLAND*)...Scott Shaw, who breathed life (if you call that living) into *THE...MISADVENTURES OF ED GRIMLEY*, is the producer/director of *CAMP CANDY* (from DIC for NBC). I'm still pulling for an animated show based on Scott's DC comic *CAPTAIN CARROT AND HIS ZOO CREW*...Other new animated series coming this fall include Ruby-Spears' *POLICE ACADEMY—THE SERIES* (from Warner Bros. for syndication) and *DINK, THE LITTLE DINOSAUR* (a Saturday morning series on CBS). Speaking of dinosaurs, DENVER, *THE LAST DINOSAUR* will expand to 52 episodes for weekday viewing (World Events Productions is responsible)...In other Saturday morning TV news, watch for more new episodes of *THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS* which introduce (or rather, reintroduce) Rick Moranis' character Louis, the nerdy lawyer from both *GHOSTBUSTERS* movies...Also, *GARFIELD AND FRIENDS* expands to one hour this fall, with all-new stories of the fat cat and new episodes of *U.S. ACRES* (in spite of the fact that the comic strip from which it came ceased publication just a few

(continued next page)

months ago)...Here's another prediction from me: Several months ago I boasted that MEET THE RAISINS and GARFIELD: HIS NINE LIVES would become Emmy award nominees for "Outstanding Animated Program" (in prime-time). Well, here's the third nominee—BABES AND BULLETS, another Garfield special, spoofing film noir (it and NINE LIVES are from Film Roman). As soon as the actual Emmy nominations are released, you'll be the first to know how many of my predictions came true (and which show will be my projected winner) ...Speaking of Emmys, the Daytime Emmy Award for "Outstanding Animated Program" went to Disney's NEW ADVENTURES OF WINNIE THE POOH, currently being shown on ABC.

ERRATA: Last time I'd mentioned that the new Disney TV show TAIL SPIN was to premiere this fall. Let me set the record straight—TAIL SPIN is to debut in the fall of '90 as part of the two-hour "Disney Afternoon" block for syndicated daytime television. This block is comprised of four half-hour shows: DUCK-TALES, CHIP 'N DALE'S RESCUE RANGERS, THE ADVENTURES OF THE GUMMI BEARS and the aforementioned TAIL SPIN, with Baloo and King Louie from JUNGLE BOOK. So please be patient; after all, one year may be a long time for you to wait, but it's an eternity for the animators working on these shows!

OBITS: The untimely passing of Gilda Radner on May 20 (at age 42) touched many a fan of "Saturday Night Live," myself included. In the world of animation, Gilda contributed her vocal talents in two projects—WITCH'S NIGHT OUT, a made-for-TV Halloween special, and Steven Lisberger's feature-length cartoon ANIMALYMPTICS...Movie and TV actor Jim Backus succumbed to pneumonia complicated by Parkinson's Disease on July 3; he was 76. Best known as the voice of Mr. Magoo, the nearsighted star of numerous cartoons (including two Oscar-winning shorts, WHEN MAGOO FLEW and MR. MAGOO'S PUDDLE-JUMPER), Backus' other vocal talents included the voice of the genie in the Bugs Bunny cartoon A LAD IN HIS LAMP (1948) and his narration of the Emmy Award-winning animated special YES VIRGINIA, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS (from the 1970's).

NEXT ISSUE: I will pay tribute to Mel Blanc, whose untimely death occurred just as INSIDE JOKE was going to press.

MasterMath Explains...

WOMEN'S FASHIONS

by William G. Raley

You may be wondering what I, MasterMath, one of the elite members of the Cosmic Hall of Universal Deities (C.H.U.D.) is doing talking about women's fashions. Well, I haven't started yet, so give it a chance. For that matter, my superiors, including the Oriel Orator, might wonder also. Therefore, I must ask that you keep this communication strictly confidential. Oh, you can tell your friends, of course; that is, unless they are members of C.H.U.D., in which case you should merely mumble incoherently when the topic comes up. By the way, members of C.H.U.D. are best identified by looking deeply into their eyes, or by a critical examination of their tactics while playing Canasta (I'll give the details in a later monologue).

Women have been around for quite some time -- at least since 1954, when my sister was born. However, the comments men make regarding their companions (not to mention what they wear) have been at best haphazard and unorganized, and at worst, leathsome and derogatory. Fortunately, this latter condition generally restricts itself to the beaches of Florida and Southern California, and one small town in North Dakota.

Thus, this is perhaps the first time an unbiased, objective, and scintillatingly witty examination of that half of the population has been attempted. A comprehensive study of men's fashions has already been concluded, and is available for nightly viewing via syndication on cable TV; it's called "Miami Vice."

It has been said that "Clothes make the man," though no one will admit to it. With women, nothing could be farther from the truth. The cost of a woman's clothes has only a nominal statistical correlation (0.22) to their effect on the male gender. Colour and contrast, however, are paramount.

First, however, let's consider the major clothing groups for women. Notice that there are many more of these than for men, which has caused many a male to lament, "Women get to wear all the good clothes." What can I say. Life is like roast beef; sometimes it is tough.

The following ranking of these groups, in order of increasing allurements, should get us started: (1) bikini -- the bottom of the barrel, no commentary required; (2) evening dress -- what a waste of money, they all look the same; (3) sun dress -- only if it's yellow, and even then, you'd better have got up on the right side of the bed; (4) skirt -- now we're getting somewhere, the longer the better, after all, there's more to you than legs; (5) leotards and tights -- it was a clerical error that restricted wearing of this outfit to aerobics class, try it at work sometime; and finally (6) blue jeans and a long-sleeve blouse -- what else could it be?

Now let's discuss colour. Yes, I meant to spell it that way, what about it? Give me a break. One of my multiple personalities was Shakespeare's English teacher, OK? It's beyond my control. Blue Jean blue is tops; unfortunately, it's only available in blue jeans and denim skirts. I have commented

TIRED? TRAPPED? Music is good. "Huck Finn" is good. Or send for book catalog.

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In other articles on the profound impact of red and black upon the male gender, so I'd better move on while I can still see straight. Purple provides a nice change of pace, especially at parties. Grey is appropriate sometimes in business, and at funerals of people you liked a little. White can be used in combination with other colours for contrast; don't wear something exclusively white, unless you're getting married, or your house burned down and you're wearing a towel.

No, I haven't forgotten shoes. Tennis shoes, believe it or not, are appropriate in almost any situation. It is imperative, however, that those selected be capable of being used on a tennis court -- I don't have room enough here to explain why. Black leather boots are optimal, though if you're wearing them with less than one of the above-mentioned outfits, don't knock on my door, even if it's Halloween. White or cowboy boots can be worn as a substitute, if your black ones are being repaired. High heels are impressive, if worn with a skirt. Anything over fifteen centimeters, however, is unacceptable, as are platform heels. By the way, there's a new law that just went into effect, which requires any pair of shoes in excess of ten pairs to be registered with your congressman -- upon penalty of going on tour with Barry Manilow.

I could easily write a book about jewelry; that is, if I knew anything about it. One point needs to be made, however. If you don't get anything else out of this article, get this. If you're neither married nor engaged, DON'T WEAR A RING ON YOUR RING FINGER!!! You have no idea how many men have pulled their hair out over this one. As a matter of fact, I don't, either, but I know it's a lot.

So much for clothing. Now for the fun stuff. First, hair. A woman's hair can be long and straight, long and curly, or short and straight. That's right, short and curly is definitely out! You don't want to look like Little Orphan Annie, do you? By the way, by long and straight I don't mean perfectly straight, unless you're still living in the sixties, like my friend Olivia -- she thinks Mark Lindsay is president. Hair colour should be brown, black or blonde. Naturally, if you're a redhead, you'll have to perform a costs vs. benefits analysis of buying a wig or periodically dying your hair. So what's the best colour for hair: bleached blonde, without a doubt. Trust me.

It has been remarked more than once (perhaps tens of thousands of times) that blue eyeshadow is degrading to women. Wrong. This comment usually comes from a woman who wants to get a leg up on you, vis a vis a man you're both interested in, and who applies blue eyeshadow the minute your back is turned. Blue also works well in combination with pink. Actually, pretty much any colour is acceptable; just don't use more than five different colours at once -- you just might get sold at an art auction.

A lot of blush/rouge is allowable, even preferable. A man always appreciates that cheery look, unless he's your landlord, and it's rent day. However, putting on more than eight ounces of Pan-Cake at once is considered inappropriate.

Lipstick is critical. Any man who says it's OK to go without it doesn't like kissing, or women, or both. Unlike with eyeshadow, very few shades of lipstick are considered attractive. It must be dark red, bright red, or hot pink. Sure, you can deviate from those three colours, unless you were planning on getting married this century.

Fingernails are important, as well. Contrary to popular opinion, long fingernails are just fine. However, sharpening them with a whetstone is not. Unfortunately, many professional women perform tasks where their fingernails often break off -- yes, life is not always fair. But that is what Lee Nails are for. As with lipstick, only a few shades of fingernail polish are acceptable. These are: dark red and hot pink. No, bright red is not OK, unless you want to look like a you-know-what.

Well, that about covers the subject (pun intended). Next time, I'll get back to the math stuff with an absorbing monologue on systems of measurement.

This just in: A friend of mine in New York bought one of the World Trade Center towers recently, and invited a bunch of friends over for an outrageous Fourth of July party. I mean, we totally trashed the place. We were having a great time until someone lit too many firecrackers next to the foundation and caused the building to topple over into the ocean. But it's OK, because my friend bought it with the American Express card.

Commercial McClue-In

by "Kid" Sieve

Let me get one thing off my wheezing chest (hey, it's humid here in the big smog-filled greenhouse-affected city!) before I lay into this issue's crop of mind-control ads. I know I don't usually stray from between-programs mode, but after reading Anni's comments and Elayne's report on the Abbie tribute, and remembering Abbie wearing a flag t-shirt on a talk show and being blacked out from the neck downward, I couldn't resist getting into this act. And after all, maybe I don't stray that far—if George Bush isn't a walking commercial for everything odious and misinformative and knee-jerk about modern society I don't know what is. Now, the Supreme Court, for whom I usually have little respect anyway since Reagan packed it with rich white anachronistic men, came out and said, Look, we're not into burning the American flag or anything, and frankly we don't hang with folks who are, but we have to defend to the figurative death the right of any looney to desecrate our cherished symbol. Now frankly, I see this as anything but objective (especially seeing as how a few days later the same Court wound up, to paraphrase Anni, giving women fewer rights than some red, white and blue material); however, I realize that given the way the Court is they didn't really have a choice. They'd have gone just that little smidge too far in striking down the First Amendment, and America isn't ready for that—yet. But George is. He's drafting up "bipartisan" (and if that word isn't proof that Democrats are just one big party with minor splits after all, I don't know what is) legislation to outlaw the desecration of the Stars and Stripes. I presume "desecration" doesn't include wrapping yourself in the S&S, eh Georgie? Now you realize, don't you folks, that this is all about a fucking PIECE OF CLOTH?! Of course George does—that was the whole point of his "Pledge of Allegiance Presidential Campaign" (that and Willie Horton). Symbolism is now owned by Republicans; Democrats are jealous as hell; and neither side of our one-party system gives a shit that symbols not only substitute for reality, they obscure and distort it. Flag-burners play into this in their own way by elevating the flag to symbolic heights it should never have reached in the first place by calling their negative attention to it. If you're an Abbie Hoffman and can do this with flair and humor (like the many flag-burning parties that sprang up this past July 4), it works well, but the religious right has the market cornered on outrageous symbolism now (with their "unborn baby cemeteries" and other tactics coopted from Our Side), so what can we do? Try to one-up them, symbol for symbol? Maybe fly flags of our own (like the ultra-cool Earth flag), proclaim them sacred and push for Constitutional amendments to prohibit their desecration? Or better yet, we can denounce establishment feel-good symbology for what it is, a time-waster and diversion from our country's real problems, chief among them the betrayal or selling out of all the principles their precious flag is supposed to represent in the first place. And we take issue with every government-corporate-media sentence that begins with the presumption, "Of course we despise flag-burning as much as everyone else does"—who are they to assume "everybody" despises flag-burning? (And, if everybody does, then why bother with an amendment? There, we've run rings around you logically!) Almost makes me want to take up a new hobby now. And for the record, no, I do not stand up for the national war song, nor do I pledge allegiance to cloth. My allegiance lies with a moral standard of justice and decency all but foreign to those who would dirty their sacred icon beyond recognition.

Sometimes this government, and especially the Reagan fiasco, reminds me a lot of how my parents used to "teach" me. They're from the "do as I say, not as I do" school. The "Just Say No" drug war was like that from start to—well, it's still going on, despite ample evidence that the government and banks are still the biggest drug-runners in the country. This attitude has since spilled over into advertising, berating people for an excess of legal vice whilst encouraging them to partake of it at the same time. Atlantic City's a great case in point. What a trip. All over the casinos are big signs saying "Bet With Your Head, Not Over It." But for god's sake, bet, please! Are these casinos liable if their patrons do bet over their heads and go into debt? Certainly not, happens all the time. "You can't say we didn't

warn you!" The same smug hypocrisy can now be seen in Budweiser's ubiquitous "Know When To Say When" campaign. With alcohol and cigarettes the leading drugs of death (and "illegal drugs" like pot, which isn't even a drug but an herb, causing absolutely zero ODs in thousands of years' use), you'd think a "Just Say No" nation's priority would be to put these grim reapers out of business. But it's so much easier to tax their immense revenue and blame the victims once more for their "irresponsible" drinking behavior, caused in no part by zillions of ads showing how sexy drinking/smoking cigs can be...But hey, not their fault. You can't say they didn't warn you!

It pains me to say this, as I always pictured them more a post-modernist establishment than they've turned out to be, but I will no longer be plugging The Museum of Modern Mythology. This time they've gone too far in celebrating corporate icons—the front page of the latest MYTHIC PROPORTIONS (the museum's newsletter) shows exec director Ellen Havre Weis next to a grinning middle management type from American Express and holding up a \$10,000 check (an AmEx Travelers Cheque, natch) to celebrate the figure in the middle of the picture, AmEx's "Centurion." Now first of all, who even remembers "The Centurion" as a symbol of AmEx in any of its ads? I'm an ad-follower and I don't remember. It looks like AmEx almost thought this symbol up out of whole cloth just for this occasion. Anyway, in embracing this corporate culture-bribe with open arms, the Museum lets this Senior Manager of the Trademark Unit at AmEx say things like, "Trademarks are promises to consumers, which alter the usual caveat 'let the buyer beware' to become 'let the buyer be assured.'" The Museum of Modern Mythology celebrates that promise by having the Centurion join the collection (and accept AmEx's check as part of the deal). No indication Weis or MP editor Patty Nasey even flinched at dutifully reporting and responding to this outright admission of the schema of corporate mind-control. So much for them.

The FCF wants it noted he takes exception to the Chunky "Hunk" ads. While this Kid finds the FCF quite a hunk himself, she cannot deny the underlying sexist message of male objects lying about sensuously biting into thick, gooey chocolate—oh god stop me... seriously, I think the ad must be aimed at gay guys anyway; all the really good pretty-boy ones usually are. Heaven forfend we women have any fun leeri—I mean, viewing...

Well, those wacky phone companies are at it again. The NJ Bell—oops, Bell Atlantic, 'scuse me (yeah, you try keeping track of all of 'em now)—people are rewriting the music of "Fiddler on the Roof" in their "Matchmaker" series; AT&T is straining to imitate Nynex' spare pun-oriented commercials, with varying success (the only actually funny one involves a phone being lectured by an old geography teacher, the tag line being something along the lines of how nobody knows more about long distances); Nynex meanwhile has brought out a second series of the aforementioned wordplay, the best so far being "Opera Company;" and, on the serious side, AT&T is also continuing its pieces which play on insecurities, since we have all come to regard telephones, one assumes, as integral parts of our lives. They show what happens to foolish yuppies who rely on what they claim are other companies' false promises, and then holds the characters up for the viewers' inspection and all but asks, "Aren't you glad you're not these suckers, ol' loyal AT&T subscribers of ours?" Oh, and incidentally, fuck you if you're not one of us, we're glad you're suffering like this bastard. With messages like this one implicit, no wonder AT&T has been told they should lighten up if they want to sell their service!

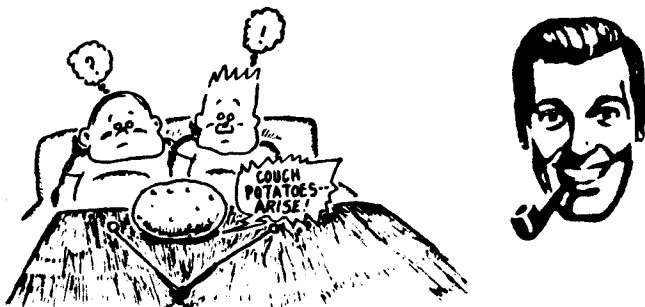
DuPont, meantime, still plays it heavy—heavy on the cheesy, all-American sentiment, that is. The worst of the batch involves a wedding scene, in which the figure of the bride being walked down the aisle is contrasted with the same woman, only months before (in a dramatization, one hopes), hitting her head on her DuPont-treated windshield which then only shatters from the outside, leaving no cuts on her precious, wedding-kissed bridal skin (white of course). Yes, we must remember, mustn't we kiddies, how many lives DuPont products save! And let's just forget, real nicely now, how many more people DuPont products have killed...

And Exxon—well, weren't we all just a teensy curious to see what they'd come up with after the Valdez disaster? Actually, the ads they're now presenting are subtly akin to those of AT&T mentioned above, in that they (like the Chrysler "Here's To You, America" spots) make a point of thanking loyalty, thus implying a gruesome fate indeed for traitors to their generosity, like those big bad girls 'n boys pointing out how much more nature is dying from oil overdose. Nope, they're not one of you, the good Germans. So heil's—I mean, here's to you.

Who lets people like the "Danny Rose"-ish Good Olds Guys Lunch (in black and white) at their restaurants in the first place? Who picks up the check? Why isn't Woody Allen suing? Why aren't the stories these pretend car salesmen tell (in such well-trained voices) the least bit interesting? Why do they always make their customers sound so asinine and themselves sound so patient? Who wrote the book of love, anyway?

Well, dudes, it's summer, so I gotta catch some some sunscre—I mean, rays, yeah. Like, fer sher, surf'n' (and droppin' g's) is back in style, dude, so let's all grab our Kentucky Fried Chicken and watch a Budweiser animated (stop-action?) "Beach Party" movie takeoff featuring beer can characters with groovy shades (which are available in a special offer from Bud). The ad may be cute and well-done, and the idea is nearly adorable, but any commercial with its merchandising angle this explicit is bound to leave a bad taste in viewers' mouths. Then again, this is the crowd that went for the 7-Up Dots and Spuds McKenzie, so you never know. If you want me, I'll be under my covers, riding the summer out in quiet. 17

THE LEADER SPEAKS!...



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Twilight of the Lombies

(An Armchair Stand-up Routine)

by Elliot Cantsin

I always get a good laugh when I talk to wholesome upper-middle class people. First I listen to them brag about how they were self-effacing enough to find a cozy niche in a senseless bureaucracy where all they have to do is follow meaningless orders all day long. Then they talk about how hard they work and how much they accomplish. Then they talk about the "stress" of such an important and responsible position. (They rarely go into details here, but when they do, it's almost impossible to keep a straight face; one's heart nearly overflows with sympathy...It's always the usual office-type inanity. We actually live this way. I don't believe it either.) They proudly discuss their grand "ambition." ("I want it all," they say. Apparently there are one or two more things in heaven and on earth than are included in their pathetic idea of "it all.") They become indignant about the money that's taken out of their paychecks to pay the unemployment insurance of the people they treat like slaves all day long who don't have the decency to quit no matter how much you abuse them. This is the point in the conversation where I usually start jumping up and down and yelling, "You lackey!" about five times until I see that they are visibly upset. Then I calmly sit down and say, "Of course that's just the opinion of a non-consensual minority; please go on."

They become self-righteous about the poor people who can't fit into this magnificent edifice but have to go on welfare (paid for by their hard work) and how they senselessly squander this money gambling. ("The people you see when you go to Atlantic City are just the people who shouldn't go to Atlantic City.") They talk about the need for more and better police to protect their hard-earned property and their healthy, honest and sensible lifestyle. They need to make sure that the homeless aren't breaking into their several spare houses when they're not there. These people who produce nothing are being paid with money we borrow from the industrious Germans and Japanese, whom we were forced to trounce in the last world war because of their nefarious lifestyle and ambition. And when yuppies run a company into the ground with their corruption and inefficiency, they fire the workers but praise themselves with "golden parachutes!" If you question their ethics, intelligence or taste, they tell you, Well, everybody does it, you have to be "realistic," you have to play the game. When is this mad charade going to end? When will people tire of this excruciatingly tedious game? Must we continue to walk in our zombie-like sleep until a depression, or a war, or both, wake us up?

The worst part is that when the yuppies who lived through the 60s get really philosophical, they decide that revolution and destruction are the only answer. It's their guilt complexes. Even in their guilt, they are totally selfish. They know they must pay for their sins. They fantasize a new social jungle where they must struggle to survive. This would atone for their sins. The millions of innocent children who would suffer under such conditions are a moot point, just as they are now.

I got into an argument with a conservative.

"You can see my point of view, can't you?" he said. Yes, I could see his point of view, but he couldn't see mine. That gave me an advantage. He wanted to kick my head in, but I didn't want to kick his head in. That gave him an advantage. He believed in violence; I didn't. That gave him an advantage, too. He didn't believe in the power of the mind, which was logical, because he didn't have one. That gave me an advantage. Finally he said, "Okay, okay, so we both realize your superior fighting skills, so how 'bout we make this interesting by letting me tie both of your hands behind your back?"

We had had the same conversation twenty years earlier. (When the Vietnam War ended the Left eased off, partly in order to let the defeated nation heal—read: lick its wounded ego. The Right has been doing its damndest to start another Vietnam in Latin America, or the Middle East, or Africa, or anywhere, ever since.) This time I said, "Not only won't I let you tie my hands behind my back, I don't even want to play any more. Quite frankly, you bore me." Culture is dead. Long live the counterculture.

Marsyas, a satyr and romantic musician, challenged Apollo, the god of classical order and classical music, to a musical competition. Apollo declared himself the winner, and killed Marsyas as punishment for losing the competition. It wasn't that Apollo was the better musician, it's just that he had more power at the time. And of course the rigidity of his attitude toward life makes the quality of his music somewhat suspect.

Tragedy is based upon the idea of hubris, of pride which comes before a fall. Tragedy is a whitewash of the ruling class. Tragedy is about aristocrats and how they live and die. Instead of portraying aristocrats as the greedy, stupid, tasteless swine that they are, tragedy portrays them as stylish, grand, and well-mannered people who become puffed up with pride only because they really are so much better than everyone else, and it is only this little sin of not restraining their quite justifiable vanity which leads to their sad demise, which brings tears to the eyes of the peasants. In academic circles the great tragedian Shakespeare is held above more intelligent playwrights such as Sheridan, Wilde and Shaw because while the three later men were liberal satirists who said something about the absurdities of society, and pointed in the direction of social evolution and greater sanity, Shakespeare spoke in sweet-sounding poetry about the universal verities

of the struggles of the cave, which conservatives still consider to be the full potential of human life. Academics write thousands of books about the psychology of Shakespearean heroes, when in fact their mindless behavior and senseless violence are the natural result of unrestrained ego, and have the random quality of actions which are beyond (that is, beneath) analysis. The brutality of barbarians has little individuality to it. The ability of Shakespeare to turn mutually-contradictory clichés into melodious phrases is well known. Academics often play the game, "Who wrote Shakespeare's plays?" It seems impossible to them that a dumb businessman like Shakespeare could write anything so deep. Only a conservative could think that. All of Shakespeare's characters think like businessmen, except perhaps a few of the heroines, such as Desdemona and Ophelia, who are not real women but compliant embodiments of a businessman's fantasy.

Conservatives—that is to say, classicists—often worry about setting limits on things when it is really much more rational to let things happen naturally, and see if things won't find their own limits naturally. Some good examples can be found in sports, a totally amoral pastime. Back in the 60's and 70's, for example, baseball gloves were getting bigger and bigger. There seemed to be no limit to the size a glove might attain. Classically-minded baseball fans were contemplating advocating the setting of legal limits to the size of glove that might be used. But more romantic fans encouraged the wait-and-see attitude, and sure enough, outfielder Phil "Skateboard" Rizzuto (no relation to shortstop Phil "Scooter" Rizzuto) tried using a glove four feet across. He never missed a ball, but he always tripped over his glove before he could throw the ball back to the infield. Thus the limits of glove size were naturally set, and no new laws were required.

I'll give you another example. When pole vaulters started using fiberglass poles, the classicists started advocating a law that would determine how springy a pole could be. Records kept being broken, and there seemed to be no limit to how high a man could propel himself with the new vaulting pole technology. The Soviets developed a pole with a rocket engine in one end. Many lives were lost as athletes tried to learn to land on the mat from a mile high. Finally the great vaulter Ivan Ivanovich Ivanov succeeded in landing squarely on the mat...but he died anyway. The Soviets lobbied the Olympic Games Commission to increase the thickness of the mats to three feet, but the commissioners refused to change the regulations, nor would they allow the Soviet vaulters to wear parachutes. Once again a new equilibrium was reached without the necessity of changing the traditional rules.

Sometimes evolution means eliminating an old law that has become archaic. In our country today, all the recreational drugs that the traffic will bear are available. But the mild highs of marijuana and cocaine are small in proportion to the social side effects. Clearly legalization is the only sane solution, but of course the conservatives who are making bit bucks on both sides of the "drug war" insist that we must go back to the paradisiacal time when no one in the United States even thought of using drugs (except jazz musicians). But the problem of performance drugs is more difficult. The most successful athletes today are not men but chemically-produced supermen with nerves of androgens. Prohibition, as with recreational drugs, seems impossible, but in this case, drug use makes competitive sports seem both pointless and unsporting.

In order to be more sporting, what this country needs are fewer poor-bashers and more Bush-whackers, more Quayle hunters, and more Trump thumpers. The electric chair for the unspeakably brutal Central Park rapists, Mr. Trump. How about a guillotine for the biggest slumlord in Harlem?

The Right is by definition violent. The Right is the rule of rules, backed up by force, i.e., the police state. The Right's motto is, "Give them slavery or give them death." The Left has been violent from the American and French Revolutions to the Gang of Four and Brezhnev, but the Left is not inherently violent. George Bernard Shaw and the Fabians (a proto-punk group) advocated peaceful, democratic socialism at the end of the nineteenth century, and finally in this decade Gorbachev and the students of China have started to put the idea into practice. As a new trend in the United States, as a first step toward peaceful revolution, rather than decollating Donald "Louis XVI" and Ivana "Let them eat cake" Trump (Don and Ivana would hate to be beheaded or decapitated, but they probably wouldn't mind being decollated; it sounds so much more classy), I suggest that every graffiti kid in Harlem who lives in one of Mr. Trump's buildings paint "Trump Tower" (aesthetically) over the building's front door.

I am very upset by the lack of miracles in the contemporary world. Mother Teresa would like to see Father Damien made a saint, but the Pope says not until he produces a miracle. Perhaps they could get Dan Quayle to say "black bugs' blood" three times fast and attribute it to the intercession of the spirit of Father Damien. Mother Teresa says the lepers need a patron saint, and surely there is no greater social leper than Dan Quayle (even conservatives don't like him), but frankly I am doubtful of Father Damien's power to perform such a great miracle as untying Dan Quayle's tongue.

And while I'm on the subject of saintliness, what do you think of those porn flicks with computer-generated fig leaves on prime-time TV every evening? They call it high-tech Victorianism. This is what wholesome people don't want to see. And they want to not see it every night.

And then there's the one about how today's teenagers are violent and have no respect for human life, not because that's the

(continued next page)

example their government (elected by their elders) gives them, but because that's what their favorite comic book heroes do? Sometimes it's difficult to distinguish between the two. Take, for example, the CIA. When George Bush was head of the CIA, its agents were working undercover with Noriega, helping him to run his cocaine operation (not so bad) and terrorize the peasants (not so good). Does the CIA think it exists in real life or in a comic book? Take Ollie North. This great American hero helped Freedom Fighters shoot down voters on polling lines (admittedly they were going to vote pink) and burn old peasant women and babies in their quaint thatch-roofed huts. Was Ollie an employee of our government, working with the approval of our illustrious then-Vice President George Bush, or simply a bizarre comic book character? Take our president...please! The conclusion is that we should give the police the authority to clamp down on those dastardly dealers in comic books. Ah, for the peace and tranquility of the police state!

The Poet's Diet Book

a sequel of sorts by Tamarina Dwyer

(In this chapter, Janet has been promoted to head teller at the Utica Savings Bank. It is spring, and flower poem and food theory combine in colorful combinations in Janet's new apartment. Ken studies Janet as she exercises.)

"I saw a vision of Fred on the back road behind the discount mall. Do you believe in ghosts?" Ken asked.

Janet did a roll-over, her head tucked very neatly between her legs, her knees touching the floor next to her frizzed-out dyed black hair. Janet was silent, thinking the tea was dumped overboard a long time ago and not even the Redcoats could drink it now.

"Do ghosts eat?" she said finally, rolling her legs back down onto the floor. "I see them dance through my room fairly regularly," she added, "a whole troupe of them with platters, roast chicken...I think they raid my refrigerator," she added.

"You want a potato?"

Ken and Janet ate strips of finely-sliced potatoes as the May sun shone in like a beam of insight. The floor of Janet's room was lined with printed silks that were vibrant as flags and personal as stockings.

"If this vegetable is beneficial, then we live in a cheap country," Ken said, his long lean leg lying across an ottoman as he munched. Janet peeled grapefruits and oranges, dropping the fruit into a large glass bowl on the door-table.

"Are you making a fruit salad?" he asked.

"I am shedding the skin of the sun so that it won't be hard and unreasonable, the jealousies of the planets because they are young—"

"Oh Janet, it's not even a greenhouse day." Traffic crawled down Steuben Street, repulsive as snakes, offensive as storm clouds. A fan circulated the air with a fairy's spell.

"How many hours of exercise do you do a day?" Ken asked. Janet got up to switch the fan to high. Ken stared at Janet's breasts like Silas Marner at his bags of coins. If her ass were bigger, she could be rich, he thought.

"I can exercise six hours a day, but I have to vary my schedule or I would either lose my job, suffer too much insomnia or cut off the tail of a dog."

Janet and Ken discussed thoughts of the world, nature and Janet's new bank diet. "In Europe they eat strings," Janet said, arranging her notes on daisies and daffodils. She moved the paper plate of fruit peels. "In the U.S. we write with threads."

Ken stared at the shelf of water pitchers on the opposite wall. Plastic glass ceramic. He studied the clothes thrown over the folding screen, the play of light and shadow like an obscene silence, an unconquerable power.

"Janet, could I read your new nature poem?"

can a daffodil be like a daisy/which has the bigger smile?
all the time they eat the sun/what else can be worthwhile?

"Oh, you're improving, Jan dear...natural diet and natural poem."

Janet's eyes filled with water. The sun went into a

LAST NIGHT I DREAMED I MET MICHAEL JACKSON

by Tom Child

Last night I dreamed

I met Michael Jackson.

Arm in paw with

a chimpanzee,

or was it Liza

with a Z?

More rouge than Tammy Faye

ever would

Diana Ross should look

so good.

Shaking a glove I said
hi Mike, what's your advice?

He whispered

I'mBadI'mBadI'mBadI'mBadI'mBadI'mBadI'mBadI'mBad.

And I said

That's nice.



REFLECTION ON THE ART OF WRITING LIMERICKS

by Michael Polo

Though this is not a five-line poem

I'd like to say

"To whom it may..."

Inside of me there's a little gnome

All gnarled and gray

and hardly fey.

He runs around my little mind,

He kicks and shouts,

He sulks and pouts

And I'm the unsuspecting kind

Who sometimes doubts

His whereabouts.

So when I mirror my poor face

He'd run and hide

From me inside

Yet now and then I see a trace—

His smile is snide.

His thoughts confide

That after all is done and said

A gnome's not bad,

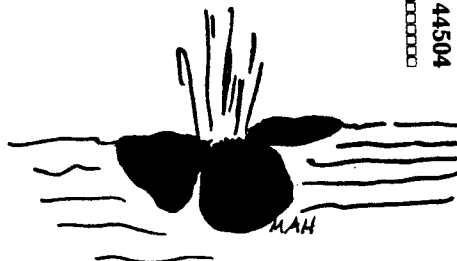
I should be glad

A gnome is there inside my head

and not some fruitcake fairy!

Hey, not only
does the last
line not rhyme,
it's slightly
homophobic,
isn't it? Tsk-

WORLD - WIDE
50/50 (men, women) defense forces
would equate the tragedy of wars but
a non-suicidal, fair-play
(winners, losers) defense strategy
would end them pronto. Shoot a
S.A.S.E. at WINNERS
Box 2243, Youngstown, Ohio, 44504



cloud for a nap and Ken thought of Fred.

"You're gonna lose again, Janet, unless you pick the flowers," Ken said adamantly.

"Well, how are your girlfriends?" Janet choked out.

"I paint pictures now, not women."

There was a sudden space between them. Something floated past the window.

"Do you wanna play Economy?" Ken said.

"Why don't you go play Scrabble with yourself!"

A thump in the walls made Janet jump. The fan stopped working.

"Dearest," Ken said apologetically, "let's go for a walk."

Janet was leery of leaving her room before a proper lunch. She fixed them poached eggs and salad. It was hot, muggy. Ken left at three. Janet tried not to think of him. He had seen her in the nude. He was an artist. Birds pecked at the lawn. Were they hungry? Janet looked for her pencil like an ambitious child. She was bored. But the pencil was gone, and so was the new flower poem. Something flew past her and Janet stared at the water pitchers on the shelf like Ken had done. They were vibrating.

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PICKED UP THE HOME-DELIVERY MORNING PAPER
TEN MINUTES AGO — THAT'S OLD AGE.**

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While I generally leave the movie reviews to the more knowledgeable, I know the Snide Critic won't be covering these two films, so I'll give it a shot.

Ron Mann's COMIC BOOK CONFIDENTIAL will be the standard to which other films on the comics industry shall be compared. The earlier direct-to-video MASTERS OF THE COMICS ARTS, while excellent in covering some of the same material, can only be considered a teaser when compared to Mann's film. Like his earlier films on jazz and performance poets, Mann approaches comics from a historical and sociological perspective. If this film had been done by a "fan" I don't believe it could have been done as well, but would have been burdened with the biases that many fans have toward Big-Name or Hot artists. It's doubtful that a fan would have looked at the works of Linda Barry or Sue Coe. Mann deals with the gamut of comics artists, both mainstream and underground. Of historical importance is the large amount of material on the comic book industry of the mid-50's. Seeing footage of Bill Gaines before the Congressional hearings and segments of anti-comic films and television shows of the period should make the fan and non-fan alike aware of the long history of using comics as a scapegoat for the ills of modern society. If you should get a chance to see this film either in a theatre or later in video, you shouldn't miss it.

One hopes the fanboys will shut up about Michael Keaton and accept the new film BATMAN for what it is: probably the best portrait of a costumed character ever. While taking a few liberties with the mythos (allowing Vicki Vale to know that Batman is Bruce Wayne, and having Harvey Dent, as portrayed by Billy Dee Williams, a black man), this treatment is closer than any previous live-action or animated version. Except for the Vale character's knowledge, I would have to say that all the changes are improvements. Frankly, making the costume into body armour is probably something that makes the thing more believable. As for the stars, the film belongs to Nicholson. The man can go from buffoon to frighteningly maniacal in a split second. You find yourself laughing outrageously only to stop as The Joker coldly kills someone within the same scene. Keaton makes both Wayne and The Batman very believable. As Wayne, he has a vulnerability and charm which is extremely engaging; his natural comedic talents are well used in the few light moments allowed. As The Batman, he is convincing and presents just the right measure of power and menace. His sudden, dramatic appearances and disappearances are superbly done.

Pre-promotion and curiosity would have ensured that this film would make money, but the excellent work of all concerned and word of mouth (everyone to whom I've spoken who has seen it loved it) will turn this film into one of the all-time major money makers. Must see!!

The Comics Buyer's Guide Fan Awards results have just been published, so a few comments are appropriate. As usual, I find myself out of touch with the other fanboys when it comes to voting. Actually, this year Elaine and I discussed each category before voting, so our choices ran toward books and creators that aren't fan faves to begin with.

The only category that I called correctly was Favorite Editor, which went to Dennis O'Neill. The biggest shock to me was that MARVEL AGE won the Favorite Publication About Comics category. Since this book is nothing more than a monthly "hypesheet" that Marvel publishes itself, I can only guess that they published a CBG ballot and asked the Zombies to fill in the blanks. MARVEL AGE has all the credibility of Voice of America.

Other major winners are as follows:

Comic Book Story — "A Death in The Family"
Comic Book — THE UNCANNY X-MEN
Limited Series — "Batman: The Cult"
Writer — Chris Claremont Inker — Terry Austin
Penciller — Todd McFarlane Character — Batman
Graphic Novel — THE KILLING JOKE

One nice thing is that most of our choices placed usually in the top ten, so there must be a few intelligent people reading other than us.

Before getting into this month's plug I'd like to make a few general comments on comics conventions.

Why do I put myself through these things? I'll go to maybe two conventions a year, and I almost always end up regretting it. Is

it me? Do I go to these things expecting too much, or have conventions declined in quality as the number of such events has multiplied?

Elayne and I went to a recent mid-sized convention (smaller than your typical Creation mega-event but larger than the usual monthly marketplace, which is strictly a single large dealers' room with no guests) and came away generally overwhelmed by obnoxious fanboys and pushy dealers selling overpriced books of recent vintage, although there were a few bright moments—like meeting Howard Cruse (BAREFOOTZ, GAY COMIX) and speaking to Sergio Aragones (the nicest man and fastest cartoonist in the field), among a couple of other pleasant creators who took time to speak to us.

When I went to my first convention in 1975, there was still a sense of community in fandom. The advisability of using Overstreet was still being debated, and Howard the Duck was the biggest thing in comics, with the early issues creating the concept of "hot" issues and the Investor market. Maybe I'm just getting too old for all this, huh?

I've recently received a copy of Minnesota Comics and Stories: Comic Book Notes and News, a newsletter put out by Joel Thingvall (central mailer for the comics apa CAPA-Alpha and a name in fandom for a number of years). It primarily covers the current doings of comic creators (artists and writers) situated in the Midwest. Besides the insider info, there are also reviews and a spot-on essay by Mark Lucas on the possible effects of the coming recession (and everybody but Boy George Bush sees it coming) on the comics industry. Send Joel a SASE (2097 Niles Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55116) for Volume 1 #1 if just for the Lucas piece.

We can thank the people at Eternity for having the balls to publish the first two issues of UNCENSORED MOUSE, despite the inevitable bully boys from Disney's legal team. It's no wonder the powers-that-be would like this version of the mouse to be forgotten.

While the early Mickey Mouse material being published by Gladstone shows a far more adventurous mouse than we have come to know, these reprintings by Eternity of early comic strips show the mouse a sort of amoral little bugger who would club or shoot at anything just for sheer sport. The NRA would love this guy! The first issue also contains a storyline featuring the most stereotypical African cannibals you'll ever see.

By the way, rumours aside, the books were not pulled nor confiscated by Disney. In many cases, they were simply under-ordered by dealers, and thousands of copies are being hoarded by "investors." At the abovementioned convention the prices ranged from \$6 to \$20 (the latter offered as a "deal" by the dealer, who had a \$40 price tag on the book).

The books are of special interest to "funny animal"/Disney/comic strip fans, so caveat emptor.

Elayne and I also had the pleasure of meeting the creator of JAZZ AGE CHRONICLES (EF Graphics, P.O. Box 48, Walworth, NY 14568; \$1.50 US), Ted Slampyak, at the convention. He was extremely pleasant and we spent several minutes talking about the book and other things. While I'd probably say nice things about the book just because Ted struck me as a nice guy, I'm sincere when I say this is one of the more enjoyable books I've come across in a number of months.

The book is intelligently written and well researched, giving you a nice feel for Boston during the time of speakeasies and dime-for-a-dance halls. Ted's art nicely lends itself to the task, reminiscent of the best of the Golden Age style of comics. It reminds me very much of the work of Terry Tidwell, who is currently doing a terrific job on MIRACLE SQUAD (one of my favorite titles). Elaine adds that the recent miniseries WORDSMITH, written by Dave Darrigo, feels similar to her in writing style.

The storyline deals with the adventures of Professor Jennings, an archaeology professor and world traveler from Harvard (picture Basil Rathbone as Indiana Jones), and A.C. Smith, an extremely stereotypical hard-boiled detective (whom I loved immediately). In the first three episodes they come up against a sinister Baroness and a vampire, plus miscellaneous hoods and hard-cases. Highly recommended!

A few items for which you might keep an eye out are: NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET and THE DESTROYER, both B&W magazine-sized books from Marvel. They will do original material as well as adaptations of the books and TV shows...Comico is scheduled to do an E-MAN one-shot special...DC is going to be doing a third Batman title aimed at "mature" readers. It is called LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT and will be in the "New Format" used for books like THE QUESTION and THE PHANTOM...Eclipse is producing a third series of trading cards, in the style of "Iran-Contra" and the soon-to-be-released "Friendly Dictators" (which should be out any time now), called "Rotten to the Core." This will feature individuals, both good and bad, who make New York City politics the next best thing to a soap opera.

Be with us here next time, same Bat-time, same Bat-channel, when we cover some of the new graphic novels currently out on the market, such as BEAUTY AND THE BEAST and DOCTOR WHO: VOYAGER, and Prestige Format books like A-1, JAMES BOND and HAWKWORLD.

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THE ENCOUNTER

by David Weakley

One Saturday night in the early spring of '86, I took my father's car for a joy-ride around town. This was not long after I had passed my driver's test.

I was living in Dundee, Scotland, at the time. My friend Drew Scott was with me that evening. We had been driving aimlessly for miles around the streets of the city.

I parked the car somewhere near the top of the Hilltown. We got out and I showed Drew the shop where I worked—Gibson's Meal Store. It wasn't a proper job, just work experience. At that time I was enrolled on a Government-run Youth Training Scheme. This was supposed to create more jobs by giving school-leavers the skills needed to get certain jobs.

We peered in the windows. The inside of the shop was dark and empty. It had closed at half past five that afternoon. We looked at the goods on display and read the sales posters stuck on the windows.

"Tell them they can't spell," Drew commented.

"Okay, I'll tell them on Monday," I replied as I looked at OATS spelled OTTS. We both laughed. It was good looking at the closed shop, but not having to work in it.

We went back to the car. I drove across the Albert Street and turned down it towards the city center. Near where Albert Street became King Street there was an intersection with traffic lights. The lights were red. A police car sat there waiting for them to go green. I pulled up beside it.

It was a small blue Ford Escort patrol car with a single blue light and an aerial on its roof. I glanced nervously at the two policemen inside. They both looked at me.

The light turned green. I drove off slowly and we made our way down King Street. The police car fell behind. It seemed like they wanted us to get ahead. I glanced in my rear-view mirror and saw the police car a little way behind me. Then I saw its blue light come on.

"Shit, he's flashing his light," I said. Drew turned and looked over his shoulder. "Slow down a bit," he suggested.

I slowed the car, and the police car pulled alongside. The policeman in the passenger seat indicated he wanted me to pull over by pointing at the side of the road. I didn't need to be told twice. I pulled over and switched off the engine.

The police car had stopped about fifty feet ahead of me. Both of the policemen got out and one came walking over to my car. I rolled down the window.

"Okay, just get out, will ya?" he ordered.

I took off my seat belt and opened the door. Drew got out also. The policeman turned and walked back towards the patrol car. The other man was waiting patiently beside it. We followed the policeman, who was burly, about six foot four. The other was shortish with a moustache. They were both dressed in the standard dark blue, almost black, uniform. They wore black caps with black and white chequered bands.

"Whose car is that?" the larger man asked me.

"My father's," I replied.

The shorter man pulled out his radio and started to talk into it.

"When did you pass your driving test?" the first asked.

"February the eleventh," I said.

The police completely ignored Drew. He was standing with us, wearing his green "mod" parka. They seemed only concerned with me.

The one with the radio turned to me and asked, "Is your father a university lecturer?"

"Yes," I replied. From reading the license plate on a car the police can find out in seconds who the owner is and everything about him. This information is all on a computer at the police station.

"Can you show me your driver's license?" the first man asked me.

"No, I don't have it on me, but I'll hand it in within five days if you want." I immediately wished I hadn't said that. They might have thought I was trying to be smart.

"Why did you go straight on instead of turning left from the left-turn lane?" the first man asked. I turned red and looked at my feet. I thought of something I could have said but didn't say it. "I, I, I, er, em, em," I stammered. The man with the radio started to laugh. He thought my stammering was very amusing. I glanced at him. He had turned red and was snorting into his hand and shaking his head. The other remained serious and unsmiling.

"Where were you going?" he asked.

"Er, em, just back home," I replied. I couldn't think of anything else to say. We hadn't been going anywhere particular. I had no intention of going back home yet, however.

The police now seemed satisfied. They saw I was scared to death of them. "Okay, you can go," the first man said to us.

"Thank you," I mumbled. We turned and walked back towards my father's car. I felt their eyes boring into my back.

I opened the door and climbed into the car. Drew got in beside me. We immediately started to laugh. It felt very good after such a tense situation. I saw the two policemen getting back into their car. They were both laughing and shaking their heads. The serious one who had been questioning me could contain himself no longer. They had given that stupid kid in Daddy's car a scare, all right.

They drove off. No doubt they would have another good laugh about it with their friends in the police station. I started the car and we drove down the road and reached the city center. That was the first time I had ever been stopped by the police while driving a car.

We drove through the center of town and then out along the Perth Road. As we drove along I noticed a couple of girls walking along the sidewalk.

I took my eyes off the road and watched them as we went by. I turned back to Drew to make a comment. As I did so his eyes grew bigger and he suddenly yelled, "Look out! Stop!" I slammed on the brakes. It was too late.

There was a loud thud as the bumper of my father's car hit the rear of a vehicle in front. Luckily we both had on full restraining safety belts. I had nearly brought the car to a stop, but not quite in time. I stared in horror at the car in front. It was a blue Ford Escort. A blue light started to flash on top of its roof. Two policemen climbed out with angry looks on their faces. One was a burly six-footer. The other was shortish with a moustache. My heart was racing and my mouth had gone dry. They both walked towards my father's car.

Get ready for a
pretty tough
future.



They're
Out To Get
YOU!!

CENTRAL LOCATION, NEAR MASS TRANSIT

by Sergio Taubmann

Bryce could tell just what this couple wanted.

He had seen this type of malaise so often in the past few years. These people came to him worn down from work at the hydroponics labs or the biogen factories needing an escape. These people, however, weren't going to be satisfied with just any trip. Oh no. They've already seen the geyser parks and the old ruins and the crystal trees. They needed something different, something wild, something...alien.

That's why Bryce was always pleased to see this type of tourist in his office. He was pleased to welcome these aspiring archaeologists and anthropologists because Bryce, of all the people on this world, could provide them with exactly what they wanted.

He poured the couple a drink from the bar in the back. "I know just the thing you need, Mr. and Mrs. Polnyn."

"You have a suggestion?" asked Mr. Polnyn, a grumpy, rotund individual.

"Have you ever considered interplanetary travel?"

Bryce asked with a gleam in his eyes. He presented the couple with their refreshments and sat down behind his desk.

"We were under the impression that interplanetary tours were out of our price range," said Mrs. Polnyn. Unlike her husband, she was svelte and quite cheerful. Bryce wondered how the two of them ever got together.

"Well, yes—at first. Now, thanks to deregulation, interplanetary travel is unbelievably inexpensive. In fact, I'd even risk saying it's your best travel buy at the moment. It just so happens I have a package here that was designed with your interests in mind."

"It's not another one of these 'Ancient Cities of Mars' junkets. We've heard how terrible those are," Mr. Polnyn grumbled sourly.

"Oh no, what I have here is a live planet—one with an actual civilization developing right now." Bryce handed Mrs. Polnyn the brochure he devised for the special tours he offered. "It's on page 6. You'll be flying on a private ship, so you won't have to worry about travelling through space with a Rosicrucian from SanElm. Advance word has it that the planet is quite beautiful with plenty of vegetation and animal life. The residents are supposedly friendly and there's quite a lot of natural wonders to explore."

"The brochure says we only get four days. How can we see everything?"

"That's easy. We're going to drop you at the seat of civilization there, so you'll be able to travel to whatever interests you from there. And there's no rule against visiting repeatedly," Bryce said, smiling.

"Where is this 'seat of civilization'?" asked Mrs. Polnyn as she glanced over the sales pitch.

"A place called 'Mud Hollow, Louisiana'," Bryce replied. "Take it from me, you're going to love the Earth."

As he took another sip of his Furinolic Tea, Bryce shut two of his fourteen eyes. He knew he had a sale now.

I know it's been a long time since most of you have heard from me, but I have my reasons. Today we're going to have a true-life recollection of something that happened to me the other day, spoken in a voice that makes it seem just as important to you as it did to me at the time:

THE FINE ART OF BEING ARRESTED!

by Max Nuclear

Yes, it's true. I was arrested. The charge: Driving While Intoxicated. I was not intoxicated at the time. I had had one shot of Wild Turkey 101, so of course my breath stank. If I wanted to be publically intoxicated, I would have gone straight to Bacardi 151 to do the job right. Such is life.

I was in the left turn lane just as it was changing to red. I applied my brakes which, as they had done in the past, fucked up. I hit the brakes again and they locked. I skidded, and the back end of my car hit the vehicle in the other left turn lane. No serious injuries. Within two minutes (after I pushed the other car into the parking lot), the police arrived. I attempted to explain the situation to them as the other motorist screamed in my ear, but to no avail.

It was at this point that I realized that I was, as they say, FUCKED. As is the case with most Texas officers, they never graduate beyond the "cops and robbers" stage. The officer didn't ask if I had done any drugs or if I had been drinking. He said, "What are you on?" In other words, guilty until proven innocent. He starts in with the tests. I screwed up immediately by going through the entire alphabet correctly in less than eight seconds. Obviously pissed, he told me that I had passed one of the tests. In other words, he was going to keep giving me tests until I messed up, so I might as well give up.

Next was counting backwards from 39 while I looked him straight in the eyes with my hands at my side. Of course I screwed up as I contemplated his weaselly, shit-eating features. At this point the reader should get the idea that I have developed an intense hatred for all authority figures, especially the twitching little fuck in front of me.

After I had screwed up once, his mood seemed to improve by leaps and bounds. His grin returned. He had me do the walk-the-straight-line test to cap it off. I didn't falter, but he said that I was going too slowly. I didn't know I was competing for a speed record.

I didn't know this until later, but at the same time the other fuzball was talking to my wife, Donna, trying to get her to say that I was drunk. Now this boy was definitely stupid because I know he didn't have any real guts. I was surprised to find him still breathing after the confrontation. He must have turned tail, because Donna was mad! And when Donna is mad, nothing is safe. Especially man-pigs. It was probably fortunate that I transferred the 9mm to the other car.

They slapped the handcuffs on me, and off we went. These two bozos in blue were driving 95 mph down the Dallas Tollway as they purposefully cranked up the stereo to blow my ears out. They were "rockin' and rollin'," as they said, while they slapped me on the back and called me their "Jack Daniels man." My ride to the Lew Sterrit Justice Center was just about like riding through the Texas/OU Parade with a couple of drunk fraternity guys.

Of course, when we reached the Justice Center, these two had adopted a wholly different attitude. They were very professional as the desk officer booked me. It was at this point that things started to fall apart for them. I had had enough time in the car ride to calm down and control my breathing, so when we went into "the little drunk tank," I was back in complete control. The attending officer even said, and I quote, "I don't see what's wrong with this guy." I continued to embarrass them by going through all the tests correctly. It was much easier, as I imagined their testicles being deep-fried. Yes, I was reaching my "piss potential."

I was still busted. The county needed the money. And those two yahoos needed to act like they were doing something official so they could knock off early. In between fingerprinting and photographing, they informed the others in the tank that I was the "new meat," which seemed to amuse them no end. My respect for those two did not rise a great degree.

Here is a helpful tip for those of you who are arrested for the first time. I am a decent, law-abiding citizen whose only deviation could be being a little abrasive in print. (I'd say, "so sue me," but with my luck someone probably would.) If you are ever arrested and have to be held in a large cell with other supposed law-breakers, there is a form of etiquette. I am not on the large side...in other words, if you've got some rough cellmates and it's going to be a long night, you are labelled as "boning material." Don't sleep, and culminate all the body odors you can muster. Do not tell everyone that you have AIDS in the hope that they will avoid you. Instead, they will try to kill you to get the corpse out of the holding cell. The secret is to babble and drool. Heavy on the drool. Even the most hardened criminal won't mess with you. It's bad luck to mess with crazy people. This tip could save your rectal posture.

I was arrested at 4:30pm. I didn't get out until midnight. And they didn't even tell me that I had to call someone to get a ride out of that sewer. I finally figured it out, and was gone by 1:00am.

22 Considering all events, I was unusually calm. I even restrained myself from telling the arresting officer that his mother

HE'S JUST CONFUSED

by Andy Roberts

I lay down the strat on the couch and picked up my old red guitar. The transition was smooth; I lost, perhaps, 4 bars. I was in tune. I adjusted my volume and began to play.

I was playing very well, my back to the fireplace. Although it was summer, there was a fire going, but I was not hot. I couldn't concentrate on the heat. The strings were dry and light beneath my fingers, everything just right, my amp rich and warm, the bass thumping low, the drums cracking and rolling like thunder. I turned it up and began to play.

She was watching my mouth because, when I play, I squeeze out the notes with my lips, like I'm singing. That's the way it is. I don't try to analyze it. She was steady on my mouth all the time.

After the party I had my shirt off. We were out in the cool by the tire swing. She was telling me her boyfriend was confused. He's just confused, that's all.

I'll say, I said.

But he's trying, Honey, he's really trying. He's so sorry about it, really, he is. But he can't help it—it's just in him, you know—and then he makes it up to me all the time. All the time! It's like I'm losing weight! It's crazy! It's like speeders all the time!

Tell me about it.

So she did. She said she met him in college—friend of a friend sort of thing. But I was fat then, like totally grossed out! But he was totally into music. Like, the Violent Femmes, that sort of thing. Like, The Police were big, and the Talking Heads, but he was totally into this wild shit. Like I just freaked, you know, but I got into it; you could dance. I owe him for that, I really do. We had fun. I never danced before in my life. But then I didn't know about Gayle.

Gayle? I asked.

Oh Honey, with a Y, she said. A boy. I told you he was confused. But I helped him, really, I did. It was good for us both, I lost weight. But he hurt himself—with glass and stuff. Oh I know, gross! But I lost weight. I was into like yogurt in the morning or something, and black coffee. But he was into like, dissipation. Rimbaud and Dylan Thomas and stuff. But I couldn't get into it, and he'd like, cut himself, you know, and say, See, and I'd just freak, and he'd like taste his own blood, you know, like Jim Morrison.

Jesus!

Yeah, but he wasn't into that either. I mean, he said like, when you die you die, you know. And like, well, how do I know it isn't true? But he loves me, Honey, really, he does.

But what about Gayle? I asked. I was beginning to wonder what was the point of this conversation.

Oh Honey, she said, don't fool yourself. There've been others. There always have. But he always comes back to me. He's trying, Honey, he's really trying.

Then she asked me something crazy.

You mean you're not?

No way!

You never?

No!

She looked hurt.

I couldn't believe it! No way. You got the wrong boy!

But Honey! I like boys that—

Not me! Forget it! I finally had her figured out.

Jesus Christ, I felt sorry for that guy.

I packed up my guitar and left.

—well, never mind. I am still awaiting the final outcome, and yes, I know that I have sounded bitter in this article, but this is the only therapy I can afford.

In closing, I'd just like to say this is not an across-the-boards condemnation of the police forces of the U.S., but it is an observation that some people who are allowed to wear a uniform and abuse their power should be drowned in a vat of donkey shit...

There, I feel much better.

From Mathematical Annals

by John See

A few centuries before the birth of Christ, Euclid wrote *Elements*, perhaps the greatest single mathematical work of all time. When the work was made known to other Greek mathematicians, it was hailed as a masterpiece. However, when the Greek mathematical community realized that Euclid intended *Elements* as a serious work, and not as a comic book, they were appalled that Euclid, previously known only as a baklava baker with a small cult following, was trying to make a name for himself as a geometer. Euclid is partly to blame for the comic book interpretation. As Schuyler (1969) points out, Euclid's drawing of an isosceles triangle looks like a Roman slipping on a banana peel, and the drawing that accompanies the mid-line theorem bears a striking resemblance to Ziemerius, a rival baklava baker, in a somewhat compromising position.

The reaction of the Greek mathematicians was typical: they stripped Euclid to his undertoga, dragged him through the streets, and as Waters (1974) adds, "kicked him where the sun don't shine." Some mathematical historians claim that the Greek mathematicians also yelled, "Get an idea, baklava baker!" as they dragged Euclid around the city. However, the consensus among historians is that this was something the mathematicians thought of later while drinking ouzo, and only wished that they had said to Euclid.

For the next two-and-a-half millennia, mathematicians continued to attack the great Greek geometer's work. Specifically, these mathematicians tried to prove that Euclid's fifth postulate was not a postulate, but in fact a theorem, derivable from the first four postulates. During the Middle Ages some scholars went a step further, trying to prove that the fifth postulate was not a mathematical postulate at all, but simply an encoded recipe for a special pastry Euclid was planning to make for his daughter's fifth birthday. Non-mathematicians have always favored this approach, since it seems to make more sense than the postulate itself, which states:

For every line l and for every point P that does not lie on l there exists a unique line m through P that is parallel to P .

Until the late nineteenth century all attempts to refute Euclid's work failed. In fact, countless mathematicians wasted their entire lives trying to prove Euclid wrong. (Some of these lives were not a complete waste. Ree Tong, a Chinese mathematician working on the encoded-baklava-recipe approach, invented spaghetti. It is thought that his story is the origin of the otherwise inexplicable Chinese proverb "Lucky with wok, unlucky with abacus.")

By 1890 Euclid had been proven correct by mathematicians working in the fields of elliptic and hyperbolic geometry. However, because of the poor communications of the times and the fact that Euclid's work was still considered by some to be the world's oldest joke, mathematicians were still trying to prove that the fifth postulate was dependent (and thus unnecessary) as late as 1911.

One of these scholars was William Boothby. Although Boothby had the reputation of a mathematician, he is not known to have studied at a university or to have made any significant contribution to any branch of mathematics. He was, however, an avid swimmer and was the first person to attempt to cross the English channel doing the backstroke. He failed miserably and fled in humiliation to New York, where he was known as Mad Willie, the hot dog vendor. He returned to England seven years later with a small fortune of unknown origin.

The following is an excerpt from his diary:

AUGUST 19, 1911

Euclid, Pythagoras, Newton, Leibniz, and, dare I say it? Yes! Boothby. I am certain my name will soon be mentioned in the same breath as other great mathematicians. I am on the verge of a great discovery. I intend to prove that the fifth postulate (or Fipfo, as I call it) is independent! I have already devised two alternative versions of the postulate that are to my ear (and to the ear of any mathematician, I should think) more aesthetically pleasing.

BOOTHBY'S ALTERNATIVE FIPFO #1: The sum of the measure of the interior angles of a triangle hovers somewhere around 179 degrees.

BOOTHBY'S ALTERNATIVE FIPFO #2: No triangle is larger (in area) than every rectangle.

SEPTEMBER 2

I am running into a bit of difficulty with my first alternative fifth postulate (Altifipfo #1). With Altifipfo 1 (and a sextant) I have determined that the distance from my house to my dear, innocent Lucretia's is greater than or equal to five miles, yet I can walk there in ten minutes. Is it possible that love and yearning have given me the ability to transport myself at such a speed? Maybe, but I think not. I am now considering Altifipfo 2.

SEPTEMBER 4

Alas, something has gone awry. With Altifipfo 2 I have proven that the traditional order of numbers is incorrect. The order should be 1, 2, 3, 5, 4, 6, 7, ... This is disturbing. The Pthagoreans drowned a man for claiming that the square root of 2 is irrational. What would Parliament do to me if I revealed this? I will keep it to myself and concentrate on Altifipfo 1. This sigging and sagging back and forth between Altifipfos is making me frantic. Were it not for my soothing evenings with Lucretia, I would go

A Question by R.S. Moser

Why is there distance between you and I? Alone I ask: Why is there distance between you and I? I have more than enough love to keep both of us warm. To love, to care. To hold your hand within mine. To give you enough room or smother you within my need. To write poetry or sing sad songs to. To love, to care. My need is a warm one, my love deep and passionate. I would give me soul for a warm kiss or a loving look. Again I ask: Why is there distance between you and I?



stark raving.

SEPTEMBER 8

Math and love both passions. Impossible problems. Solutions?

SEPTEMBER 11

I have discarded the two alternative forms of Fipfo. Like all geni on the verge of a great discovery, I have reached a place where I must go backward to go forward. N.B. Billy boy: Before Newton saw the apple fall and discovered gravity, he saw a walnut fall. For fifteen years he went around saying it was magnets.

I am going to try an indirect proof.

SEPTEMBER 14

I had a dream last night in which a porcine Pythagoras said to a Moses-like Euclid, "The square root of a Lucretia? Of course it's irrational."

SEPTEMBER 16

I have forgotten mathematics and found love. Lucretia, Lucretia, Lucretia. My dear, innocent woman is a wild and passionate savage. Yesterday she fed me grapes and licked my left shoulder blade until I was spent. For today she has promised me something special.

DECEMBER 12

At last I am able to write again. In a few months the doctors say I might be able to walk with a cane. My hands have stopped shaking except when I am near a certain fruit, and I am out of the hospital. I am through with Lucretia and her evil ways. She is crazy and barbaric, but that is the last I will say about her. Lucretia is forgotten.

My mathematics was slowed by my...illness. However, I am at it again. Perhaps my illness was a blessing. I have decided to abandon the plan of constructing alternatives for the fifth postulate. After all, if fipfo is really dependent, as I firmly believe, then there is no need—wait, someone is at the door. I shall return in a moment.

That, of course, is the last of Boothby's entries. In fact it is thought that after that entry he never wrote again. Lucretia Milnsipe visited Boothby at his home in mid-December, 1911. Although few details of the visit are known, it must have been quite a shock for the frail Boothby. The trauma of the visit left him with a tremor in his right hand and a bad attitude until his death in 1917.

BOBBY HEAD

by Eric Ewing

The cats were cricker-crawling at the linoleum while Mary stroked the length of Theodore, the boa constrictor.

"Save me from this wicked plight, o casual masturbator," pled Johnson, the small man in the cage. Mary spared him a glance. That was all.

"I am not purple, you. Tiptoe to the lock and handle it roughly. Surprise me!"

Still, Mary seemed deaf.

"Pour syrup on him, Mary," hissed Theodore. "Make him hold eels with his teeth. Certainly, you don't have him here just to hear him beg."

Mary continued to massage her serpent. "Maybe..."

The ceiling remained high above their heads while the muffins cooked in the oven.

Theodore turned his sinewy, muscly head to the small man in the cage.

Their eyes met.

They fell in love.

"Uh, Mary? Those muffins done yet?" asked Theodore.

"I set the timer. When the buzzer goes off they'll be done."

"Are you sure you set the timer right? Maybe you should check."

Mary, in a huff, set the snake on the floor and walked hastily to the kitchen.

Alone, the lovers had a chance to speak.

"Chunky?" started Johnson. "I'm locked in a cage without fresh cream. My ears contain enough wax to form a candle and a half. Cancel my subscription to Pond Life Digest."

"Shut up. We don't have much time. The lock dissolves in saliva. Spit into the keyhole, wait eight seconds, and peel off that metal suit. Ssssh. She arrives as we speak."

Mary walked in, her hair growing from her head. She picked up Theodore and danced with him for a stint.

"You were correct, my slithering pal. I had set the timer for seven to eight hours rather than twelve to seven minutes. It's a good thing you had me check. Bounce bounce."

The coatrack, considered by many to be inanimate, held coats tirelessly.

"Mary!" called Johnson.

No reply was offered.

"Mary!"

"Hey, he's talking to you."

"Yes, Theodore. I know. I'm thinking." She sat quietly for ample seconds. "What if we put coffee grounds in his hair?"

Theodore spun and looked at Johnson. He had his hands on the bars and was looking between them.

"Multiple bananas?" guessed Johnson.

"No," said Theodore. "Time is always later than patience. Lengthen an hour and it's times-two for boredom. Staple it to your tie, like marbles in a stove."

Mary understood not, and pretended to be unhearing. She acted like she had other things on her mind. Seconds after her hair, she spoke softly, but audibly. "It's time."

"What?" asked the lovers, surprised.

"I've decided what to do. I'm going to curl the caged one's hair and tape ants to his nipples. Would you like to help me, Theodore?"

Theodore had now to deal with a conflict of emotions. What should prevail: his loyalty to Mary or his love for Johnson?

The cats continued crawl-coting at the floor, their claws producing grooves in its surface.

Theodore looked from male to female and back. He repeated this procedure two additional times.

And spoke. "I wish I had arms."

This surprised both listeners, because what he spoke of had no relevance to what the topic held.

"And legs. And hair. And hands. And looked just like a businessman. I can't hold a briefcase. I can't hold a gun. I'm a snake. I'll never hold a fork to eat. Nothing."

Johnson felt something touch his cheek. He brushed it away and felt its wetness. It was a tear.

Mary was turned, so none could gauge her emotions. She knew this was coming. Limb-envy came at a stage in every snake's life.

"So what am I supposed to do about it?"

"I've lived with you for four years now. What have I earned? Your hug? A kiss on the tail? A pizza?"

"Let me out," commanded Johnson.

"No."

Johnson split into the lock, waited eight seconds, and stepped out of the mini-prison.

"Oh! You're free!"

Theodore smiled a reptile smile at his lover. Johnson smiled back.

THE NOBEL PRIZE
by Bangor Zack Bullen
I always show Brenda
each new poem.
I rush to Brenda's house
and show 'em.

Brenda giggles, yawns,
says "Ho-hum."

Kissing the lids
of Brenda's eyes,
Even kissing
her knees and thighs,
I kept my mind on
—The Nobel Prize!!

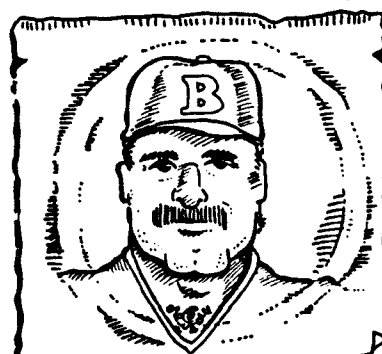
"It's easy," said Brenda,
on the couch,
"Grab your prize
like a juicy peach!"

"But what about my
acceptance speech?"

"I don't deserve this,"
Brenda said.
"Eliot should be here
instead!"

Next, a poem
assailed my head!

24



CONSERVATIVES REFER TO "OUR FRIENDS ON THE LEFT". Apparently they have yet to discover that conservatives are as leftist - maybe more so - than the liberal left. Today's well-heeled conservatives can thank our socialistic economy for what are largely ill-gotten gains. However, they are outnumbered and the rest of us should come up with a non-socialist, capitalistic - like ISM - MINE. Send SASE to war, inflation, unemployment, death and FREE RIDE ENDING BRAINBEAUISM - Box 2243 YOUNGSTOWN - OHIO, 44504

Neglected Discrimination

by Russel Like

Most Americans would tell you that they don't discriminate, or at least that they try not to. Right (please pretend I'm saying this out loud and you hear sarcasm in my voice, or else I've wasted my time in writing this passage and you've wasted yours in reading it). This is a bare-faced lie. Oh, sure they try not to discriminate on the basis of such cliched differences as race, national origin or sex. These are all factors over which the individual unarguably has no control, and thus discrimination would be wrong. However, there is one crucial characteristic the ACLU lawyers and the Supreme Court have overlooked--origin in the state of New Jersey.

I was raised in the fair and verdant land of New Jersey, and though I presently spend most of my time outside the state I believe that I am discriminated against in myriad subtle ways. Whenever I get at the end of a line, I am always last. Public elevators stop at floors I haven't pressed. It sometimes rains when I'm around. And my bread invariably falls buttered-side down. You can plainly see that someone is out to get me, simply because I hail from the Garden State.

I am not saying that a New Jersey origin is bad, any more than one skin color is better than another, but merely that it is high time individuals from New Jersey began receiving fair and equal treatment under the law. Perhaps native New Jerseyans should become an affirmative action "target" group; every business and college will be encouraged to hire or admit a certain percentage of these forgotten underprivileged. New Jersey Turnpike jokes should be made a federal offense, punishable by enforced residence in Greater Newark for no less than three months. I for one will no longer remain in a room where such "jokes" are being told. The boulevard, as we Jerseyans affectionately call it, is an elegant and stately thoroughfare which plays a vital role in our national security (for example, during the Revolutionary War, not a single Warsaw Pact tank division successfully travelled the road from Philadelphia to New York). And until those with New Jersey pedigrees start being treated with the dignity and respect accorded all other groups, I will vote only for candidates of the TURNPIKE (Those Ugainst Repression of New Jersey) People in Industry, Kommerce and Enterprise) Party. I suggest my Garden State brethren around the country do the same.

FOR THE BOYDS

by Dave Savona

Ralph Boyd, a devout swimmer, never missed a day in the Florida surf. Every afternoon he'd weave his pick-up truck through the rush-hour traffic and head directly to the beach. Rain or shine, hot or cold, he had never missed a day immersing himself in the salty water. He even managed to take a splash during hurricane Gloria, nearly drowning himself.

"Good for the heart," Ralph would say, pounding his hairy chest.

One sunny day, an oil tanker sank off the Florida coast, coating the beaches for miles around with the thick sludge. Heedless of the pleas of family and friends, Ralph swam through the gunk, only to die a week later from a parasitic infection, a side effect of the swallowed petroleum.

"You know what they say," the coroner told his assistant, "the oily Boyd gets the worm."

TV 242 by A.J. Wright

One of the vivid childhood memories of television that I have is coming home from junior high school to watch "The Big Show" on Channel 5 in Nashville. Even as a child I was fascinated by movies; so each weekday when the weather was bad or for some other reason I was at home right after school, beginning at four o'clock I could be found in front of the ninety-minute movie that ended just as Dad got home ready to sit down to supper. Sometimes I saw serious films like Gentleman's Agreement or The Silver Chalice, and they were okay. But the best ones were the 1950s science fiction films--The Giant Behemoth, The Day the Earth Stood Still, Them, The Thing and so forth. Watching the adult world reduced to chaos was the perfect antidote for a day at school.

Excerpt from

THE PLAYBOY INTERVIEW WITH THE

GREAT KUBLA KAHN by James MacDougall

PLAYBOY: You've publicly expressed displeasure with the famous poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge...

KUBLA KAHN: (derisive snort) Coleridge! What an asshole! I should have sued his eyes out!

PB: What exactly is your objection to the poem?

KK: He makes me look like a junkie; how's that for the pot calling the kettle black? Total slander.

PB: Then you deny that you use drugs?

KK: Oh, I did a little honey dew when I was in college. Everyone was doing it.

PB: Have you ever tasted the milk of the gods?

KK: Now and then, like at a party, if everybody else is doing some. But what gets me is how he supports all this. He uses my appearance!

PB: How do you mean?

KK: Well, that stuff about my floating hair. That was the latest fashion, I paid good money to get it to look that way. How does he get "Beware, Beware" out of that?

PB: And your flaming eyes?

KK: Are you kidding, Mac? You never had a bad night? This was a long time ago, we didn't have Visine. No, man, Coleridge was full of crap.

PB: What else do you suspect Coleridge might have said had he finished the poem?

KK: (laughs hysterically)

PB: I'm sorry, did I say something funny?

KK: (fights to control himself) Did you ever! Look, why do you think I never took Coleridge to court? You want to know who that guy from Porlock really was? He was my attorney!

ZEN BRICK

by Santa Mike the Golden Yahoo

Zen brick wandered through the tall plains grass.

It was a sunny day, with just enough clouds to make the sky interesting. Pondering a cloud arrangement surrounding the peak of a far, snow-covered mountain, Zen brick failed to hear an ominous hiss, the rattle not far to his left. A moment later, the diamondback struck, shattering both fangs on the hard surfaces of Zen brick. "You horrid brick, look what you have done! You have made me break my beautiful long fangs! I am crippled; I am doomed." Shaking a few stray pieces of enamel from the bit of mortar that still clung to one of his top corners, Zen brick said, "I am a brick," and then wandered on, musing to himself about the shapes of the clouds.

Yeah, I'm sick of this font too by now, but it's the only 16-pitch one on my computer!

THE DIRTIEST WORDS IN THE WORLD

by Dale A. White

"A monastery?" Fetch didn't understand. "The King of 'Smut' is sending me to a monastery?"

The freelance assignments Fetch received from Lonnie Sparkes, the publisher of "Smut Magazine," had always been in keeping with the notoriously low standard that had made "Smut" the dirtiest word a man could utter at a newsstand. Fetch's investigative articles about celebrities' dirty laundry, jury deliberations in pornography trials, and the sexual preferences of particular Congressmen during each fluctuation in their biorhythms, had successfully put "Smut" on the bottom of the journalistic heap.

Sparkes specialized in peddling trash. If a story idea didn't reek, he wouldn't touch it—much less toss it to Fetch.

So, when Sparkes summoned him to do lunch poolside at the "Smut" Chalet in Los Angeles, Q.T. Fetch presumed the pornography King was on to something so filthy, so depraved, he could trust the mission to none other than his crackshot writer. Where to this time? Fetch wondered. A bordello in Soho? A wife-swapping party in Middle America? The annual convention of some hookers' union?

"The monastery of Arcanum in the Sub Rosa Mountains," Sparkes said. "All expenses paid." He tossed Fetch a manila envelope, stained with his greasy fingerprints and containing an airline ticket to Europe and a file of confidential information.

"What's the story?" Fetch asked. "The monks fooling around with girls from the village?"

"Nah. Arcanum has been virgin territory for six hundred years."

"So?"

"So, let's face facts, Q.T. People aren't buying 'Smut' like they used to. It's not so easy to outrage and offend any more. The men who got their jollies by looking at spray-painted breasts and thighs ten years ago are now planting flower gardens and pre-riding over the PTA. If it weren't for lonely college freshmen, 'Smut' would have no circulation at all. We need an exclusive with guaranteed shock value."

"What dirt do you have on this monastery?"

"This monastery has got the dirt all to itself. That's where you come in. I want you to clean these monks out."

"What have they got? Some kind of company secrets?"

"They've got something Q.T. Fetch would love to get into his grubby little typewriter. You think you know profanity, Fetch? You think you can spell all the four-letter words anyone needs to know? Think again. The dirtiest words in the world are in Arcanum, where they've been stashed for centuries. We're talking about a vocabulary so vile, so base, we can't imagine. Go for it, Fetch."

On the flight over, Fetch read the file of background information. Since the Middle Ages, Arcanum had been the monastery of the Expurgationists, a small order dedicated to transcribing and preserving all literature, whether sacred or secular. Before the printing press could be legally used for such purposes, the Expurgationists recorded what were considered the world's most profane words. As languages evolved and the oral tradition was lost, these words were forgotten. And Arcanum remained under strict orders to never release its glossary of lost profanity to the public.

If Fetch could copy those secret words and get out of the monastery without getting caught, "Smut" could make publishing history.

As planned, Fetch boarded in a bed-and-breakfast inn until a storm eventually blackened the Sub Rosa Mountains. Drenched and dirtied, he climbed the rugged path to Arcanum, a medieval fortress that seemed as securely affixed to its mountainside as an inscription on a stone tablet. A cherubic monk finally answered his call at the front gate. Fetch explained how he was a vacationing college student who'd been beaten and robbed on the desolate highway below.

The monk smiled moronically. Without speaking, he ushered Fetch into a gray hall where Muzak mumbled a Gregorian chant. He relieved Fetch of his wet coat and scurried up a private stairway. He returned momentarily with a grim person in a black hood whom Fetch presumed to be the man in charge.

"Forgive Brother Harpo if he seemed rude," the second man said. "He, like most of our brethren, has taken a vow of silence. I am Abbot Bowdler. How may I assist you?"

Fetch repeated his sad story.

"You may stay with us until the weather clears, Mr. Fetch. Although Arcanum does not have much money, we will gladly provide you with enough cash to safely resume your journey in the morning."

As planned, Fetch acted proud. "Abbot Bowdler, I don't know when I'll have a chance to repay you. Let me earn the money. I can delay my trip for a day or two. Besides, the first-hand experience of seeing life in a monastery would be invaluable."

The abbot scowled. Skepticism didn't become him. Despite his job description, he was apparently a man of little faith—in Fetch, at least. "Arcanum doesn't demand favors in return for good deeds. Brother Harpo will arrange sleeping quarters for you. We'll discuss your offer tomorrow."

After morning prayers in the chapel, calisthenics in the courtyard and a bowl of Wheatena in the cloister, Fetch waited for Abbot Bowdler's summons. Eventually, Brother Harpo grew weary of waiting also and abandoned Fetch to perform his chores in the stables and garden. Unsupervised and apparently unsuspected, Fetch took this opportunity to case the joint.

In an upper room, the morning sun highlighted the writing desks at which the Expurgationists once transcribed all literature great and small. The quill pen on each desk had decayed into a skeletal stem. The leftover parchment had become faded and brittle.

In an adjoining archive, stacks of beautifully-bound books

awaited Fetch's inspection. Aquinas, Copernicus, Machiavelli and thousands of other authors were faithfully represented. As he browsed, Fetch looked for a cabinet or compartment in which a manuscript might be concealed. The library, however, appeared to have no hiding places that a time-consuming, page-by-page search could not expose. If the dirtiest words in the world were here, anyone could retrieve them if he knew where to look.

"Looking for a good book, Mr. Fetch?" Bowdler had crept up on him from behind.

"You certainly have many, Abbot. Have you read them all?"

"No one could live long enough. Besides, what a person has not learned in this world might be more important than what he has. Sometimes, a man can know too much."

"It seems a waste to have this reservoir of knowledge and not share it. You may possess works of which there are no other surviving copies."

"We could use your assistance outside, Mr. Fetch—in the garden."

While hauling fertilizer from the stables, Fetch studied the exterior of Arcanum. A tubular tower in the center of the monastery appeared to be the most secure and least-used building. If the Expurgationists indeed possessed a book they wanted to conceal from the world, the tower was a logical place to keep it out of everyone's reach.

After dinner, Fetch located a locked door to the tower. Distracted by the sound of heavy panting, he stepped into a nearby chamber marked "necessarium," where he made another discovery. In the farthest stall, a novice monk struck an irreverent pose over, much to Fetch's chagrin, a copy of "Smut Magazine." The young initiate used a few well-known expletives when he saw Fetch, then appeared to choke on those words as Bowdler materialized over Fetch's shoulder.

"Apparently, you have learned more about life in a monastery than even I wished to know, Mr. Fetch," the unamused abbot said. "As we both see, Brother Peter is not suited for Arcanum."

Peter stepped forward like a repentant schoolboy, tearfully surrendered the magazine and ran out without looking either intruder in the eye.

"Good night, Mr. Fetch," Bowdler said curtly.

Watching the light in the abbot's window, Fetch was unable to have a good night. Even Bowdler probably had enough prurient curiosity to thumb through the confiscated "Smut." When he did, more would be revealed to him than what evolution had managed to do with Adam's rib. If he saw Fetch's byline, the jig was up.

Fetch had to get into the tower before sunrise, before Bowdler either woke up or caught on. Since he didn't have time to find a key, he decided to scale the tower and slip through the window of its dome.

The ascent took longer than Fetch expected. As dawn broke, Brother Harpo discovered Fetch while en route to the stables. The flustered monk burst into Bowdler's bedroom and, through charades, tried to report the burglary in progress. Finally, Harpo noticed the copy of "Smut" on Bowdler's nightstand, which had been left open at the table of contents. After he pointed at Fetch's photograph in the authors' credits, he had to mime no more.

As the abbot and his informant raced up the tower's winding staircase, Fetch slipped through the upper window.

In the center of a round, graffiti-smeared room, a slim monk rested on a dictionary stand. The binding cracked like a knuckle as Fetch opened the volume and examined page after page of exquisite calligraphy. As Fetch read the text, he dropped his most vital burglary tools, his pen and notepad, and gawked at the page.

Sparkes had no idea how right he'd been. These words referred to bodily functions and deviant acts that were so distasteful and so disgusting even the Marquis de Sade wouldn't have been able to stomach using them. No question of constitutional law here. This was undeniable, unadulterated obscenity. Definitions weren't even necessary. The mere sound of any of these words was so offensive that it made the worst cases of belching and flatulence seem almost spiritual and symphonic.

After taking a moment to recover, Fetch reluctantly picked up his pen and notepad.

"Don't even think about it," Bowdler warned. "Drop the ballpoint, close the book and turn around with your hands up."

Fetch cooperated. "What are you going to do, Bowdler? Have me arrested? Do you want the public and the police to hear all about what I intended to steal?"

"Arcanum has its own methods for dealing with persons who've read from the forbidden book. The punishment is harsh enough to have kept me from even being tempted to look at it all these years."

"What punishment?"

"Those whom we can trust not to tolerate the premises are required to take a vow of silence."

Harpo grinned.

"Intruders such as yourself, however, are allowed to enjoy their newfound vocabulary as much as they like." He motioned at the graffiti on the circular wall. "They must stay here, of course. In the tower. For life."

Fetch tried to negotiate a plan as his captors back out of the room.

The smirking abbot refused to mitigate, however. "Here, you may be needing this." Bowdler tossed Fetch the confiscated copy of "Smut" just before he slammed and locked the door. "We want you to feel at home." Echoes of cruel laughter ricocheted around the tower as Bowdler descended the spiral stairs.

Fetch angrily ripped the magazine to shreds and futilely tried to break down the door. Although all of Arcanum heard it, what he said shall not be repeated.

Steal This Seat

A REPORT ON THE ABBIE HOFFMAN TRIBUTE
JUNE 17, 1989 - PALLADIUM (NEW YORK)

by Elayne Wechsler-Chaput

When I was younger, my burgeoning political consciousness just coming into focus, Abbie Hoffman was one of my first idols. Not only did he represent the only things I liked about the era at the time (I despised most hippies as being dress-alike hanger-oners), but he was funny and dramatic and quotable and, hey yeah, cute as well. Years later I would lose a little of my innocence to a guy who looked like Abbie, whom I convinced myself I loved mostly for that one reason. I didn't actually read any of Abbie's marvelous writings until college, but when I did they were mind-openers. When I sloggled past the cliched rhetoric, I found some great ideas and ideals, beliefs in the power of love and truth and humor, and I knew I wanted to adopt these beliefs as my own.

Abbie's death, to me, was a kind of closed bracket on the 60's, a decade which began with the senseless slaying of John Lennon, my other major hero. I like to think John and Abbie had much in common; both their deaths devastated me and drove me to yearn that much more for their gifts and the power to use them as they had. Alas, like so many others I have neither the courage nor the talent to snap out of my everyday inertia and make the kind of difference John and Abbie did—but neither would I wish to share their fate. The most I can seem to do, from time to time, is wish and remember and spread their words as best I can in my own way.

That, and attend memorials. The tribute to Abbie held at the Palladium on June 17 was sponsored by the "Abbie Hoffman Activist Foundation," a division of the Off-Center Theatre, Inc., and had the feel of an "Inc."-orchestrated event.

Actually, it started out quite nice, except for the street hawkers trying to make their bucks off Abbie's image on buttons and postcards. The folks from Ben & Jerry's were there giving out free Peace Pops; to their credit the ice cream went not only to those on line but to anybody walking 14th Street. Others passed out goodies like a commemorative bookmark; a pamphlet detailing a "Counterattack Conference" to combat mainstream media lies about the "War on Drugs" (see "Fan Noose"); a nice tribute reprinted from the Revolutionary Worker; and a circulating petition for a nuclear-free New York harbor. A token cameraman from CBS News was there, but I doubt the gathering got much coverage in the end, as tame as it was to turn out.

The self-proclaimed "Celebration of Abbie Hoffman's Life" was titled "No Regrets," but I can think of a few I had that day. There was an enormous blown-up reproduction in the Palladium entranceway of a choice Quote from Chairman Abbie which read, "Nostalgia for the 60's is a form of oppression" (speaking of enormously blown-up, Newsday's John Leonard picked up on the above analogy when he reported on the stage overhang of "a Mao-sized portrait of a grinning Abbie"), and I couldn't help but shake my head at the day's betrayal of this sensibility. The afternoon seemed positively reverent with Abbie nostalgia.

Our friend Derek Tague had saved us choice seats inside, near the front by the press and VIPS (Steve and I star-spotted Peter Boyle in the audience, and Steve later shook hands with Twain Corey), where the old people held their hands to their ears to dampen some of the volume on the video playing Hendrix' "Wild Thing." We slipped past security, much as we were sure Abbie would have done—nobody but us seemed to grasp the irony of security clearance at an Abbie day. The "program" cost \$5 and turned out to be no more than a poster folded in quarters with a couple pictures of Abbie (one circa 60's, one 80's), a Hoffman quote again, and lots of credits for writers and directors and other offstage production of the afternoon's events.

And produced they were. As Leonard observes, "No Regrets" was so busy, too filling, a made-for-television overproduction. There wasn't time and space at the Palladium for us to contemplate our own failures of character, nor any silence in which to seek some courage." And in his "Press Clips" column, Village Voice writer Doug Ireland notes "cable companies are bidding on the video." Video played an intrinsic role in the program as well—punctuated by filmed scenes of Abbie's life and times, his friends and admirers read excerpts from "Soon To Be A Major Motion Picture" (his autobiography), interspersed with their memories of Abbie. Rather than engaging in interminable name-dropping (anyone who wants a complete list of participants can ask me), I'll relay the highlights:

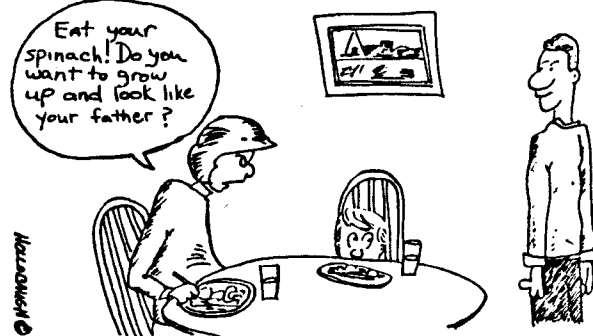
Pulitzer Prize winner (and one of my favorite Newsday columnists) Syd Schanberg talked about his cousin Abbie's early life. Jazz artist David Amram performed "Pull My Daisy," a song originally cowritten with Jack Kerouac, to which he added scat lyrics to fit the occasion. Peter Varrow led the audience in a sing-along of "Day Is Done." Abbie's kids (Andrew in particular resembles him to a frightening degree) joked with us that "Dad can't be here today, he's in Tiananmen Square, but we'll tell him you all came." Abbie's former wife Anita and many of the original VIPs (Brad Fox, Walli Leff, Marty Carey, Jeff Nightbyrd, Jerry LeCourt, Ed Sanders and IJ friend Tuli Kupferberg) were in attendance, and the Fugs performed a few ditties. Also taking the stage were Jerry Rubin, Bill Kunstler, Bobby Seale, Lee Weiner, Daniel Ellsberg, and IJ friend Paul Krassner, who ad-libbed one of the day's best lines. Buster Poindexter had just finished a dyna-

mite set, and quipped Krassner, "he's no Lee Abwater!" Wavy Gravy led the crowd in singing his anthem to Harpo Marx, "We are climbing Harpo's Ladder/With an opera hat full of rubber chickens/He was a soldier of the clowns/Soldier do you love my cream pie," all the while with paper bags over our heads. William Styron, on tape, spoke of the illness of manic depression, and I'm more inclined to believe that Abbie did commit suicide now after hearing Styron, a fellow sufferer, describe its effects, which Abbie admitted had plagued him throughout his life. Amiri Baraka gave probably the most stirring speech of the day, to much periodic applause. Johanna Lawrenson, Abbie's "running mate" at the time of his death, clutched a flag handkerchief to dab her eyes as she lamented her loss (truth to tell, her personal grief became a bit uncomfortable to witness in such a public forum). Activists from Save the River and Del-AWARE, two groups with which Abbie worked closely in recent years, spoke of his unending commitment. The afternoon ran longer than expected, despite the efforts at over-control, so we only got to hear brief "last words" from Nation editor Victor Navasky, writer Chris Hitchens, ex-CIA man Ralph McGeehee, Pei Ming Shing (sp?) from China, Christine Kelly (who gave a wonderful and moving speech) from the Student Action Union, Allen Ginsberg (who sang!) and Norman Mailer, before singer Dennis Pearne wound up with his song "Dear Abbie" (I missed most of its lyrics, being busy talking with VIPpie pianist Aron Kaye).

The most interesting moments of the day for me, though, involved Jerry Rubin. Half the attendees booed Rubin when he took the stage and, while he tried his best to ignore that reception by relating the story of Abbie and the judge's robes from the Chicago Seven/Eight trial, he looked VERY nervous. Rubin had just finished eulogizing and was about to introduce Kunstler when a long-haired, trim-bearded fellow suddenly ran up to the foot of the stage and started shouting, "There's a group of Tompkins Square protesters downstairs, and security is preventing them from putting up posters and literature—they need our help!" To fill you in, Tompkins Square is a city park in "Loisaida" (the Lower East Side) on which the authorities are continuing to impose repressive curfews and regulations—the latest occurring as I type this, involving tearing down the tent community erected by people made homeless by encroaching yuppie gentrification. The group, the Emergency Coalition Against Martial Law, was apparently formed after last August's park riots, which resembled Chicago 1968 in the widespread severity of police brutality. The Coalition also publicizes the connection of FEMA's dastardly plans on eradicating low-income housing with the REX 84 plan (quickly suppressed by the Iran-contra committee) for the rounding-up of Latin Americans and dissenters from government policy in detention camps.

From what I saw, no one (myself included) got up to help. We all just sat there, stunned. Jerry couldn't answer the man, and Kunstler didn't reply—all of us, suddenly leaderless and trying to pretend the interruption in the script never happened. Abbie might have been the first person to run back down those stairs to stand by the protesters' side and protect their freedom of speech from the Palladium goons, but Abbie was gone. I sat through the remainder of the afternoon chagrined and guilty, and when it was over I made a beeline downstairs to find the Coalition folks. There I relayed to them what had happened (they took great glee at discovering the interruption had come during Rubin's speech), and they assured me that about 100 people had indeed come to help them fend off security. I came away feeling a lot better having talked to these activists than the ones from whom I bought my \$15 t-shirt.

But I'm not so sure the point of activism is to feel better. You act because you have to, because it's right, because with all the misinformation and propaganda and downright lies flying in our faces courtesy the military-industrial-media conglomerates you have to act or go mad (or become coopted). Those of us who don't possess the bravery or sense of theater that Abbie had must act in smaller ways—by putting out pamphlets or small press 'zines or talking on the radio waves or even the telephone. By getting the truth out to as many people as possible in the best ways, or the only ways, we know how. By supporting the writers and reporters of truth in the non-mainstream, non-state-sponsored media, and not falling into the trap of divisiveness by nitpicking progressive thinkers who aren't 100% in agreement with our personal philosophies (as Anita Hoffman noted, when she met Abbie "the only thing I knew about the left was that there were factions"). By talking back to our televisions in each other's company whenever we spot the inherent flaws, to keep ourselves in practice. By creating the impact to sustain us and our children through the deluges to come. The only way we can effectively honor Abbie's memory, like so many speakers reiterated on June 17, is to carry on his work. Vippie! (ED. NOTE: For more information, see "Fan Noose".)



by Sara Edwards

only the smoke

by Thomas S. Roche

He seemed to materialize the way your pillow does when you're waking up from a night of furious dreaming. Like another dream. More real, more vivid, perhaps—but just the same, not quite reality. Only he was. Jesus Christ, he was.

Her, too.

I found myself running my fingers through her hair, her familiar soft wispy hair. The rhythmic motions of the bus lulled us gently, as the road swayed and warbled. As we passed the road lamps, the lights would set fire to her pale skin. I brushed her black hair away from her face, touching her warm skin, bending forward to kiss her throat...

Putting my face to her shoulder, I began to cry.

"Oh come now. It's not worth tears. You should be dancing."

I looked up. He sat in front of me, twisted in the seat so that he faced us. He was me. That is to say, he could have been. He grinned at me, wolfishly, and chuckled.

"Don't I even get a 'thank-you'?"

I turned and looked at her. Her sleeping face was as gorgeous as ever: high cheekbones, deep eyes, pale skin like white fire, black hair...the eyes closed, though, always closed. But it was Karen.

"Striking resemblance," I said.

He held his grin. It was my grin, but I wasn't the one wearing it. "It should be. It's her."

I felt my chest shaking, and I couldn't stop it. I shook my head, very slowly, back and forth, and as I did my eyes shut themselves. When I opened them, he wasn't grinning.

"It won't do any good to deny it. You've got her back. She's here. She really missed you. You could at least kiss her."

I turned my face, looked into hers. I lifted her head with a finger under my chin. She was still sleeping. Her lips parted slightly.

I put my lips to hers, kissed her softly. When I pulled back, she mumbled in her sleep and smiled. Her head slowly sank onto my shoulder.

I pulled her close, my arm around her back. "What's the price?"

He flashed his Thomas-smile, familiar from the mirror, and laughed disarmingly. "Whatever do you mean, my love?"

I winced. "There's always a price."

The lamps shone rhythmically on his face, each angle changing as we passed the light. Only the moon through the back window made his eyes keep glowing. "Oh, I get it. You've been reading too many comic books. You have to sign in blood or something."

"You're not me," I said softly, holding Karen close. "So you must be him."

"Or your twin brother Maynard."

"You must be him," I said.

He thought about it. We were in the back of the bus. He lit a cigarette. The smoke rose around him and me and Karen. I watched him through it.

"No price," he said. "No contract. Consider it a gift."

"A free gift?"

"Yes." He smiled. "Free."

"Those are the worst kind."

"Just the same...she's yours."

I touched her neck, brought her face close to mine again. Her lips were heaven.

I turned back to him, shook my head.

"No."

"No what," he said. "I'm not asking you to sign away your soul in return for her..."

"No," I repeated.

"Don't be a fool."

"No." My lips were shaking. My eyes grew tangy.

He shook his head sadly. "You poor stupid bastard. Can't even take a gift."

"Go away."

"If I go, she does, too."

I nodded, but pulled her close.

He stood, quickly, and tossed the cigarette down. It rolled from side to side in the aisle, with the motion of the bus. Smoke rose on his heels as he walked toward the driver.

"Stupid shithead," he said. "Doesn't know what's good for him!"

And he was gone, and I was left with only the smoke. And Karen.

I stroked her hair softly, as she leaned against my shoulder.

I relaxed into my backpack. I began to drift off into Karen's lap, my head resting as I fell asleep again. The streetlamps lit up my eyes, rhythmically.

Somewhere, there, I felt the pillow of her thighs moving. She gently eased my head out of her lap and onto the cold rough upholstery. I did not look up.

Then click-click, click-click, her favorite pair of pumps up the aisle toward the driver. I looked after her. The cigarette was still burning. Smoke rose on her heels. The bus seemed to stretch on forever lengthwise. And Karen disappeared into blackness. And I was left, with only the smoke and the stench.

I closed my eyes. Streetlamps flared through my eyelids. The bus rocked.

28 Slowly, breathing the smoke, I began to shake.

Yeah, I was born 'n raised here in State Line, U.S.A. Boy, I could tell ya stories that would make ya cry. Yessir, State Line sure was an interestin' place to grow up in, still is, not like when I was a youngun, but life here still got its moments.

Now, some o' you folks maybe askin' yourself what's so interestin' 'bout a lil' ole hick town like State Line. Well, I tell ya what makes my hometown so u-neek—half o' our town is in one state and t' other half is in t' other state. I live in t' other half. So ya kin see it was purty smart of our foundin' fathers ta name our lil' hamlet State Line U.S.A.

Actually, they was gonna name th' place Burton, after ole Allias T. Burton, who was literary this town's foundin' father. With 13 sons, thar're so many Burtons 'round here most folks called this place Burton fer years. Poor ole Mrs. Burton kept havin' boys, never did get a girl in th' bunch, but you had ta admire her fer tryin', fer tryin' it th' must have been.

Now I'm not sayin' we're so u-neek just 'cause we got that ole state line amobolem plum through th' center o' town. I hear tell there's even a town like ours smack-dab on top of th' Mason-Dixy line. Now I'll be willin' ta bet that that was a whoopin' ruckus back in th' big ole war between the states. Things is pretty quiet an' peaceful, in fact downright borin', here in State Line, but we've seen our fair share o' scrapes an' ruckuses. In fact, we had our own civil war just 'bout th' time I started school. Y'all might not know it, but it was that insurrection what led ta th' buildin' o' th' United States Union School.

Way back in State Line time, half th' kids went ta school in one state, 'n half went ta school in t' other state. In th' afternoon, we would all get back 'round th' same time, we'd all have time fer a game o' blind man's bluff or allyallyinfree afore we had ta go 'n do chores. Everyone was as happy as Camelot, till somebody got the bright idea ta have a friendly area basketball game.

Now when ya live in a town that's in two diff'rent states, with two diff'rent state basketball champion teams, an' two all-state boys on each other's teams, an' those boys are best o' friends, 'n some fool suggests a "friendly" area basketball game, ya would expect folks would see a civil war comin', an' come it did.

Now, everyone knows Sam Kaiser 'n Eric Burton's the best hoopsters 'round. They'd been out in th' Kaisers' backyard court playin' b-ball from dawn ta dusk since they've been big enough ta stand up. The turn'ment changed 'em though, did sumptin' to 'em, changed life as we knew it, all 'cause one day Eric decided Sam couldn't use his ball an' Sam decided Eric couldn't use his court.

No one knows exactly which one started th' mess, pretty childish stuff fer sure, but th' whole town ended up sidin' with one boy or t' other. It wasn't even as simple as state vs. state, nothin' in State Line is that easy, ya see, Eric bein' a Burton split up th' very fiber o' family life. It was civil war an' both sides were drawn an' quartered.

Th' folks in State Line had themselves a problem on their hands with their basketball champions at odds. Grown folks 'n children alike were fightin' in th' streets, state vs. state, man vs. wife, id vs. ego. It was up ta th' turn'ment ta settle it.

Now I always felt th' solution was simple. Th' whole thing was started 'cause Sam 'n Eric got mad at each other, wouldn't play with each other an' went home sulkin', leavin' one boy short a basketball an' t' other short a place ta play. Now neither o' 'em was gettin' any practicin' in, an' everybody in town wanted ta get their shots in at someone else.

So I say, buy Sam Kaiser a basketball, him bein' a wee bit less pigheaded sort than any Burton might ever be, he bein' appeased 'n in a slightly better mood, just might make up with Eric 'an every-one could go back ta bein' folk an' us kids could finish up our last game of blindmansbluff. Things in State Line, however, are never simple.

Well, ta make an already long story longer, it did kinda end with th' turn'ment. Sam 'n Eric, both bein' festered an' not gettin' in much practicin', both ended up losin' ta those pinheads over in Centerville (who ended up winnin' th' turn'ment only 'cause they got fluoride or sumptin' in their water that raises 'em bigger 'n uglier over in Centerville). That of course made no one here in State Line very happy. 'Stead of bein' mad at each other, everyone was more uplited than a stick up th' arse (pardon my French), an' everybody was just plain mad.

Folks ta this day still make fools of themselves in public places over that turn'ment. With State Line bein' in two diff'rent states an' the kids all goin' ta two diff'rent schools even though they all live in the same town, it proved ta be just too much fer our lil' berg ta handle. So folks just got together an' decided ta build th' United States Union School.

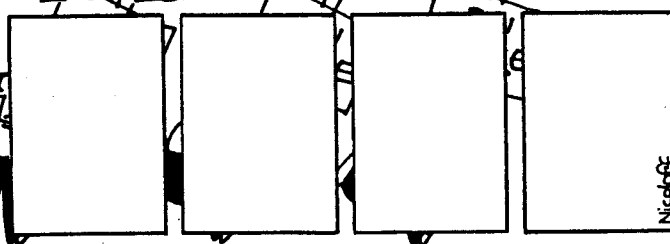
O' course that didn't heal all th' damage done, there was still hard feelin's between Sam 'n Eric, therefore hard feelin's between one state an' t' other, th' Burtons an' everybody else. Now I still feel the easy way ta settle things was ta buy Sam a ball, but everybody else with folks from t' other state didn't see it that way, so we all sat back ta see what Eric's people would do.

Things never bein' simple in State Line, th' Burtons, bein' Burtons, decided rather'n sendin' Mohammed ta th' mountain, if it wouldn't come to them they would build their own mountain. Well, not a mountain, but they did build a court fer Eric, cee-ment with lines 'n everything. Sure 'nuff, Sam bein' less pig-headed than any Burton figured if he made up with Eric an' they played on Eric's court, Eric would have ta let Sam use the ball.

GIVE ME YOUR MONEY!



Mr. Man



Nicolosi

The Importance of Rewriting

by Brian Ruddy

"The most important element in the writing process is rewriting." That's what my English 101 professor, Dr. Podabinski, wrote in his introduction to the course.

Dr. Podabinsky, may he rest in peace (strangled by a student nurse), was right. Rewriting is the most important element in the writing process. And, as an aspiring (failed) writer, I can attest to that fact.

Well, to be perfectly honest, I suppose the most important element in the writing process is talent. But the second most important element is definitely rewriting.

Then again, maybe the second most important element is inspiration. And, come to think of it, Dr. Podabinsky couldn't write his way out of a subordinate clause.

I'd better start again.

The Importance of Rewriting

by so and so

The importance of rewriting is overrated. But it's still pretty important, as I hope the following example will illustrate:

Most Christian theologians now agree that the first Gospel was authored by Mark, not by Matthew, as was once believed, and that the Gospel According to Mark provided much of the narrative structure for the Gospels later written by Matthew, Luke, and Sid. Therefore, Mark, as the first man to put the life of Christ into written words, bore a huge responsibility regarding the future of Christianity. It is entirely possible that the fledgling religion might not have survived if Mark had not diligently rewritten his Gospel many times. In his first several drafts, he got the order of events all wrong. Originally he placed the Resurrection before the Crucifixion, and the Ascension before both of them. His second draft wasn't much of an improvement; in this he correctly had the Crucifixion occurring first, but he still had the Ascension coming before the Resurrection. Mark's third draft was a complete disaster; he had the Resurrection occurring first, followed by the Crucifixion, followed by the Ascension, followed by another Crucifixion. In his fourth draft, Mark placed the Crucifixion and the Resurrection in their proper order, but he completely omitted the Ascension and had in its place the "Locomotion." His perseverance paid off, however, and in his next draft he got all three events in perfect chronological order. He then made a few minor revisions, such as deleting a brief passage in which he describes Jesus miraculously curing a man's pattern baldness.

The English Renaissance poet John Donne wrote the transcendent line, "No man is an island, entire of itself..." in order to express the idea that each human life touches all other lives. Donne had spent many months—and countless sheets of parchment—searching for the phrase that would best convey that profound truth. And although he finally hit the nail on the head with "No man is an island," his previous efforts were way off the mark. Among these were: "No man is an isthmus," "No man is a delta," and "No man is a mid-ocean rift." When the great John Milton heard that Donne had written the line, "No man is a sinkhole," he promptly drew up a petition to have Donne kicked out of the Poets' Guild. But perhaps Donne's worst effort was "No man is a stalactite." Despite these early failures, Donne did not give up. "The more I fail," he wrote in his journal, "the more I am encouraged." He struggled on, often working deep into the night in his small study at Oxford. So obsessed was Donne with solving his poetic problem that, one night, as the last of his candles was burning out, he used its dying flame to set his beard on fire for light. Obviously, what Donne needed, besides a lobotomy, was an appropriate metaphor to express the folly of trying to isolate oneself from the rest of humanity. Failure followed failure, but eventually he got on the right track. His breakthrough came with the line, "No man is a peninsula." His very next attempt, "No man is a single piece of land surrounded by a body of water," brought him within easy reach of his goal, although he did have a temporary setback with "No man is an archipelago."

Historians and literary scholars alike consider the Declaration of Independence to be one of the most masterfully-written documents ever produced. Author Thomas Jefferson's expert use of rhetoric has rarely been equalled in power and eloquence. But very few history books record the fact that Jefferson began his first draft of the Declaration with the words, "King George, you PRICK!" Had Jefferson not rewritten that rather vulgar opening line, it

could have made the British so angry that they might have actually made an effort to win the war. Also, since many copies of the document were circulated throughout the colonies, it would have become widely known that Jefferson used profanity, which could have severely damaged his image as a statesman, intellectual, architect of modern democracy and slave-owner.

Occasionally the process of rewriting develops into an entire reconceptualization of the work. This often increases the length and scope of the work considerably. A notable example of this is Tolstoy's massive novel *War and Peace*. According to many authorities on Russian literature, the monumental saga grew out of Tolstoy's casual effort to compose and obscene limerick. A fragment of the limerick, which Tolstoy did not complete, survives to this day. It begins, "There once was a girl named Natasha/Who fell in love with a pony named Sasha." But the Count would not think of a suitably lewd word that rhymed with the Russian word for "bare-back," so he just rewrote the bawdy little poem into a colossal epic using a panoramic, multidimensional depiction of Napoleon's invasion of Russia to examine the totality of human experience, thought and emotion.

Ernest Hemingway once said, "I rewrote the last page of *A Farewell to Arms* 39 times before I was satisfied...getting the words right." That was a remarkably candid statement for the usually secretive Hemingway. But it was only partly true, for what he neglected to mention was that, for the first 37 times, he had mistakenly rewritten the last page of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. But his point, that good writing doesn't come easy, is well taken. Incidentally, Hemingway's rewriting sessions might have gone more smoothly if his drunken friend, F. Scott Fitzgerald, hadn't kept barging into his apartment and throwing up all over his Smith-Corona.

Any form of mass communication, if it is to be effective in conveying ideas, must be built on a solid foundation of good writing. The art of public speaking is no exception. A well-written, well-delivered speech can rally a nation. Such a speech was the first inaugural address of Franklin D. Roosevelt. In that address, now regarded as a classic, Roosevelt gave new hope to Depression-weary Americans by declaring, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Those simple yet stirring words helped start America on the road to recovery. However, Roosevelt's original version of the address wasn't nearly so upbeat. The Great Depression might have lasted even longer than it did if FDR had delivered that first draft, which concluded, "The only thing we have to fear is the continued disintegration of our economy, which will surely transform this once-proud and vigorous nation into a brutal, hellish wasteland in which the living shall envy the dead, and I don't know about the rest of you poor bastards, but if we're not out of this hole by this time next year, I'm gonna pack up and haul ass to Bermuda."

The rich legacy of music bequeathed the world by John Lennon will stand as an enduring monument to his creative genius. Lennon, despite his penchant for frying his neurons, was a meticulous artist with a total dedication to his craft. He strove for perfection. Toward that end, he scrupulously rewrote and revised many of his compositions before recording them with the other members of his band, and Ringo. The early versions of his songs were shockingly inferior to those he ultimately set down on vinyl. For example, John utterly failed to capture the intensity of a psychedelic experience with "Lucy in the Sky with Ricky." Nor was he successful in achieving the desired mind-expanding effect with "W.C. Fields Forever." And it is safe to say that the vivid imagery in "I Am the Walrus" was a vast improvement over its predecessor, "I Am the Walnut."

Though I do not consider myself in the same league—or even the same species—with the aforementioned talents, I do try to rewrite whenever possible. But sometimes there is only time for a rough first draft, and the results have often been embarrassing (like this). One instance I will never forget happened in school. I had to write a formal research paper for my political science class. I put off writing it until the last minute. There was hardly enough time for an outline, let alone a second draft. Anyway, I managed to slap something together, and handed it in the day it was due and hoped for the best. Only when I got the paper back did I realize just how badly it was written. It was riddled with inappropriate language. The paper was a review of the first year of the Reagan administration, and wherever I had meant to write the words "the President," I found that I had inadvertently written things like "the fool," "the stupid boob," and "the ignorant, moronic, hypocritical, warmongering, pea-brained maniac monster pig." Such terms tended to undermine the objectivity of the paper. The paper deserved an F. Fortunately, though, my instructor had gone to Berkeley in the 60's so he gave it an A-. Which 29 proves the importance of---something.

Sayz-U!(Letters)

Dear Elayne,

6/10/89

Well, what's new? I thought I'd write a letter for Sayz-U since you seem to have a shortage of letters lately. (Now watch, this time there'll be 30 letters!)

I had to let you know about something that happened here in the booming metropolis where I live:

Someone stole the 20-foot-tall Ronald McDonald from the new McDonald's on the freeway! I love it! A McHeist!

What a whopper of a case! The Big Mac attack was pulled off sometime between 8:30pm and 1:00am Friday/Saturday night, according to the paper. There were at least a dozen and a half people working at the time, but detectives have no McNuggets of evidence on the case.

I heard the detectives were going to grill the employees at the Wendy's restaurant up the street—but they were afraid they might get a Frosty reception.

The desk clerk at the motel behind the McDonald's didn't see anything and said she wouldn't have any reservations about talking to the press or the cops if she remembered anything.

Seems no one saw the clown being bagged. Even the employees at the Sohio station, when pumped for information, couldn't recall seeing anything.

The theft of the hundred and a Quarter-Pounder could get the thieves fried with a felony charge of grand theft, though. The paper printed that in an attempt to shake them up a little, I guess.

The latest IJ, #68, is a gem! I laughed my ass off! (I wish...) Oh well, instead of commenting at length on the thing, let's just say I liked almost all of it, and what I didn't particularly like I didn't hate so there's no need to step on some other writer's ego and tell 'em so!

Anyhow, gotta blow this joint—tell everyone to participate in the latest "NEWS" contest (#2) and guess the phony! I got a whole pile of Post-It pads to give away. And I'll even throw in a custom-made certificate of merit. Ask MasterMath. He'll tell you how nice the one he won was...

Come on, kids, where can you have so much fun for the price of a postcard? Tell you what—every entry gets a consolation prize even if they don't win. (We can't tell you what it is, that'd be spoiling the surprise! But let's just say, it's a thing everyone would love to have...)!

With a guaranteed value of \$5.00 in prizes going to be passed out, how can you pass this contest up, folks?

And no envelopes with Ed McMahon's picture on 'em...

Anxiously awaiting a new album from the Fugs, I remain, most of the time...

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

Dear Elayne,

Hello hello hello, and welcome to another column of "Sayz-U!" Lessee if it goes over one page again. Ahem. IJ #68. Lovely psychotronic film cover by Dobbs, By Dobbs! Anni's "Quick & Easy Steps" for writing were quite informative, as were Mr. Backwards' Tips for Cartoonists...both articles definitely being true-to-life! Dorian's "Alibi" was a mysterious treat—sure wish there was more. "Animation Update": rich and chewy as usual. Mike Dobbs, male hygiene products had actually been put on the market in the mid-1970's (when else?), but, uh, well, the term "turd in a punchbowl" comes to mind. I waxed nostalgic with this issue's "Purgatory Papers" featuring toys of our vanished youth...hey, does anybody remember this toy zap-gun advertised in the mid-60's? I don't remember the name of it, but the commercials showed how, looking through the viewscope, you could see the "ray" travel upward and destroy whatever you aimed at! Your target would disappear in a flash of light and a roaring noise! They showed you a passing car, the mailman, a plane overhead, and a city across the river, all being vaporized! Wow! And how 'bout the M-16 rifle from Mattel? The kids march into the sunset, singing "M-16, M-16, Greatest Gun You've Ever Seen!" over and over! Ahh, nostalgia. Moving on, we note the groovy comic strips from Backwords and Crawford. Dale A. White's "Craving" was a wonderfil piece (no, I'm not going to add "...of pie"! I empathized deeply with Oberc's "TV," appropriately placed facing another swell "McClue-In." The "Mr. Man" and "God is Man's Hobby" cartoons were also nifty, and I agree that the visual art levels in IJ keep gettin' better! "Brain Drain" and "Sophistry" were good for the brain (my brain anyway), but Al Fry...uh, I dunno, his material is like a cake made with too much lard or something. Why do you say he breathes his last in IJ, Elayne? Or did my previous statement explain it? Oh well. (Aside from your statement, the reasons Al "breathed his last" are twofold—I ran out of backlog for him but, more importantly, he hasn't sent away—even the contributor's discount of 65¢—for an IJ in many issues, and I'm trying to make it a habit, especially given our lack-of-space considerations, to stop printing the work of folks who aren't even interested in getting the issues in which their work appears. This was why, for a long time, we weren't printing "Baboon Dooley" until John Crawford resubscribed. Our only exception now is Tuli, who doesn't get IJ but still keeps in touch and encourages IJ in other ways.) Four-Color Fiend, I still haven't caught Valentino's "super-dude" style...I must look it up. And BLOOM COUNTY is ending its run

August 67 Yippee! Calloo, Callay! (No, I ain't a big fan of the strip.) Christopher Gross' "Angel Band" was a crunchy short tale...except for the comedic ending, the story gave me the sort of alternate-reality eerie feeling that often appears in the works of Philip K. Dick, and that's not bad! Yep, it looks like another great issue, here.

(Nobody picked up on that Andersons-type space show from the early '60's I was askin' about a few issues ago, eh? Oh, damn!)

Wellp, this seems as good a place as any to sign off...just remember, if you're in New Jersey, make sure that no mosquito gets more than one pint of blood from you—there's no excuse for gluttony.

You say Goodbye, and I say Hello...

JOHN P. MORGAN
185 Seabreeze Avenue
East Keansburg, NJ 07734

6/26/89

Dear Elayne,

I am really enjoying the artwork in IJ these days, especially most of it. Does Acevedo have a book? (None that we know of; do you, Mario?) When "Rock Fiend" is not there, she's really missed. Also enjoying Sara Edwards' PLAGIARISTIC TENDENCIES.

Recording a lot these days too, trying to get songs published and write a hit. Also trying to get band recordings published by small labels. Two of my friends' albums appeared in Rolling Stone, Richard X. Heyman in June and Scott Appel in July (I'm on that one). But who cares for fame, checks are more important.

Guess you'll never have a title; why don't we just call you "Chieff?"

BRIAN CATANZARO
7 South Warren Street
Dover, NJ 07801

[I hope you weren't expecting the standard Perry White response, Brian...come to think of it, we never did settle that question of an alternate title for what I do here at IJ, since I don't consider myself an editor [I "edit" rarely in the sense of changing words or such, preferring merely to clean up grammar/spelling]. Guess we might as well drop it for now...]

Dear Elayne:

3 July 1989

It is 4:45am, the sky is beginning to lighten, the air is cool and damp, and Charlie Rose's guest host is interviewing James Galway. I am awake at this faintly ridiculous hour because I fell asleep at 9:00pm last evening, and the reason I fell asleep at 9:00pm last night was that I had stayed up till 6:00am that morning watching a 1939 epic called Boy Slaves, which wasn't anywhere near as exciting as it sounded (as a matter of fact, the major point of interest to the thing turned out to be that the boy slaves in question did their slaving on a turpentine farm. Did you know turpentine was raised on farms? I certainly didn't—think about that next time you paint the bathroom), and was then rudely awakened at 9:45am by a Mary Kay representative who called to inquire about my skin condition. You see, in a temporary fit of niceness, I agreed to attend a Mary Kay Party (one hopes they are not planning to run anybody for governor next year) thrown by one of the women in my building, and this representative was doing the ground work for the party so she'd know what sort of samples to bring. I think. It was a rather less than successful conversation, one way or another, partly because I am not at my sparkling best after 3 hours and 45 minutes of sleep, and partly because she (I believe she said her name was Nichole, which I don't believe for one minute) kept asking me the sort of questions that I am simply constitutionally unable to answer. For instance, she insisted on knowing, right off the bat, if my most frequently used skin care products were geared towards dry, oily or "combination" skin. Now, I imagine someone like Eva Gabor could probably come up with a pretty satisfying answer to that, but since my most frequently used skin care product—in fact, my only skin care product—is Ivory soap, and I use that solely because I'm allergic to everything else, and I slather it fairly indiscriminately all over my face, and then wash it off—well, I just don't know. Then she wanted to know if I "suffer from puffiness and lines around my eyes" and the point is that I probably do have puffiness and lines around my eyes—I'm 35 years old, after all—but you can't precisely say that I "suffer" from them because I really don't give a damn. We lost contact entirely when she asked if my complexion was "light, medium or dark," and I asked if she meant compared to Elvira, Mistress of the Dark or Whitney Houston—I really felt that was a cogent question—and I am not looking forward to this party at all, no I am not. In any event, I would have gone back to sleep after that, but I'd promised to take a young friend of mine out to brunch, as he had just turned either 19 or 21 (his age seems to fluctuate with his mood) and was feeling the ravages of time dreadfully, so we went and consoled ourselves with one of those heavy, Pennsylvania Dutch breakfast buffet things, and I defy anybody to go to sleep within six hours of eating one of those. So there I was, nodding off over It's Garry Shandling's Show—I tend to do that at the best of times anyway—and here I am, awake while the birds are singing, and Charlie Rose himself—on tape, I assume—is interviewing Lou Reed, which is the sort of Dynamic Duo about which I used to have nightmares. I hate 1989.

So about this flag-burning business—has it occurred to anybody that, if some sort of amendment against desecration of the flag actually passes, there are going to be an awful lot of unwanted flags hanging around? I mean, suppose you go out and buy a nice flag, and put it in your living room to complement all your early American stuff, and then one day you decide to redo said living room in Danish Modern? Then what? You can't burn the flag, you

(continued next page)

can't put it out with the trash, you can't put it in the basement to get moldy, you can't cut it up as Fourth of July barbeque napkins—about all you can hope for is that one of your flagless friends or relatives will offer to adopt it, and you won't be able to count on that. What I propose to do, therefore, is open a chain of Bide-A-Wee Homes for orphaned, stray or unwanted flags, wherein, for a small fee, your flag can live out its natural lifespan in a safe, sanitary and entirely no-kill environment, and where people can drop by on specified days and hours to see if they might not want to take one of the little darlings home with them. It's all still in the planning stages, of course, but I think it could work...

NBC News at Sunrise just came on. Andre Gromyko is dead and the Supreme Court may hand down its verdict on Webster v. Reproductive Health Services today. There's a message in there somewhere, but I don't know what it is.

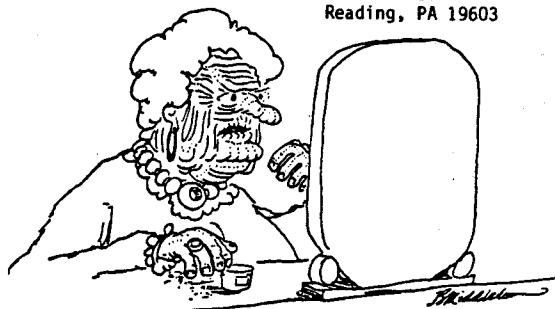
Anyway, I liked the last IJ. I liked the cover. I was interested to note that Ace Backwords' first professional publication and mine both appeared in *The Berkeley Barb*—he shouldn't bitch, however. I only received \$10 for a 2,000 word piece on the SLA. I am glad to see that someone else is embarrassed by Linda Ellerbee's Maxwell House commercials (why, Linda? Why? Why? Were you that broke? Did you lose your apartment? You could come live with me in my flag sanctuary...) I should point out to Nina Bogin that David Peel's songs are supposed to lack melody and beat, and sound as if he's making up as he goes along. They've always sounded like that. That's why we love him. And I actually, literally laughed out loud at Vernon Grant's cartoon on page 27, something I have not done at a cartoon in quite some time. Yeah, it was a good issue.

Well, in honour of the day, I think I'll go out and have a festive, Third of July breakfast. (Aren't four-day weekends fun?) One of the local greaseless spoons is pushing red-white-and-blue-berry pancakes. I wonder if that's legal. Can you pour maple syrup on something that only looks like a flag or achieves flag-esqueness or flagesquity? Do you think it will occur to Randall Terry to somehow dye fetuses red, white and blue so they can't be aborted?

On second thought, maybe I'll skip breakfast after all.

By the dawn's early light,

ANNI ACKNER
P.O. Box 18
Reading, PA 19603



Oh, damn. Another wrinkle.

The Blue People

"Are they ready?" by Richard M. Millard

"Yes, sir!" Hoskins exclaimed as he flashed a broad smile.

"Good," Keene nodded. "Send them in."

Hoskins turned smartly on his heels and waved at a figure standing by the door. The figure nodded and opened the door.

Through the doorway came a woman with a blue face, followed by a blue-faced man. They wore khaki jumpsuits that covered all but their faces.

"Come forward," Keene ordered from behind his desk. The blue people moved forward, but stopped several feet short of Keene's desk.

Keene looked at the blue man and woman. "Very good. Are they complete?"

"Yes, sir!" Hoskins snapped. "Totally blue!"

Keene looked at Hoskins and shook his head. "Yes, well, very good. Then we can set things in balance again."

"We're releasing blue people in every major city," Hoskins beamed. "They'll be everywhere."

"But not too many at a time," Keene cautioned.

"No, sir!"

"These people are about to perform a great service," Keene said as he looked at the blue faces in front of him. "They are going to become the new minority. The new race by which others can measure themselves."

"Hear, hear," Hoskins muttered.

Keene nodded. "The people have been complacent for too long. They need to agitation of discrimination to get things moving again. So, send these blue people on their way."

Hoskins then waved to the figure by the door, who ushered the blue people out of the room.

"I hope this works as well as the friction that was created between the blacks and whites," Hoskins offered.

"Indeed," Keene replied as he spread his fingers and tapped them together. "That was an interesting period of confrontation. So easy. It was amazing how just words led to violence. And the hate that was generated! It was exciting."

"At the people's expense," Hoskins chuckled.

"Of course," Keene nodded. "But then they worked things out. Everybody got a piece of the pie. Black and white. It took them awhile, but they did it. And it became rather peaceful."

"I know," Hoskins mournfully replied. "And I wouldn't give you two cents for the fellow who tried to work up discrimination with the red people."

"Agreed."

"Never got off the ground."

"But it was a different story with the yellow people," Keene pointed out. "Hate and resentment were brought to a fever pitch."

Hoskins sadly shook his head. "I had high hopes for that one. We had such a great campaign to get people to look down on anyone with yellow skin. And yet..."

"And yet it worked well for awhile," Keene interrupted. "The blacks, whites and reds had a new minority on which to look down. Something to make them feel superior again. And something to cause new friction."

"I know, sir," Hoskins stated. "But they didn't follow through. They began to tolerate the yellow people. Why?"

Keene shrugged. "No one really knows the answer to that one. Maybe we didn't push hard enough. Maybe the media didn't help us enough. But secretly, I've always believed that the other races were reflecting on what they'd been through. And they let that feeling carry over to how they treated the yellow people."

"Compassion?"

"I suppose so," Keene stated. "Sometimes I wonder. Are we really doing the right thing?"

"Another attack of conscience?" Hoskins asked.

Keene shifted in his chair. "I can't help but get the feeling that maybe we should have left those giant lizards alone, so long ago. They might have evolved into a perfectly fine civilization."

"That's not what our scientists said," Hoskins corrected. "They stated that the lizards would die out and this would become a lifeless planet. So we've actually kept life going here."

"While having a little sport," Keene added.

"Would you rather be back on our planet watching the ice shift?" Hoskins questioned. "So what if we're having some fun? These bickering little creatures would not even be here without us. And we can't bring the giant lizards back."

"I suppose so," Keene said as he folded his arms. "Well, then let's make sure that the blue people get whatever they want, no matter how outlandish."

Hoskins grinned. "Don't worry. We've instilled in them that they can have whatever they want if they just scream loudly enough."

"Good. Very good."

"This should really infuriate the others," Hoskins chuckled.

"I imagine so," Keene stated. "As long as they're so busy hating each other, they'll never realize that they're being manipulated. But if they did band together as one people, that would surely be the end for us."

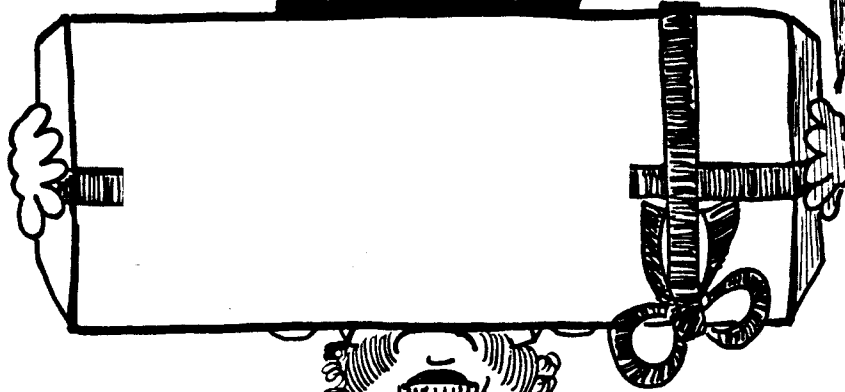
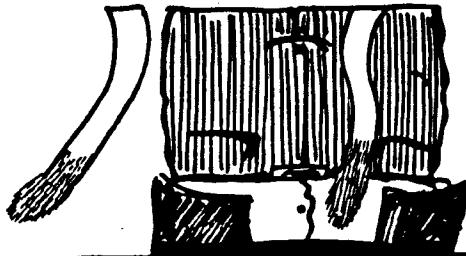
Hoskins shook his head. "It'll never happen."

"You're probably right," Keene agreed. "So it looks like we're set for a long time."

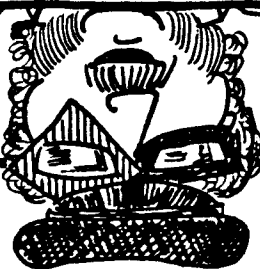
Hoskins rubbed his hands together.

"Gather the council members," Keene ordered. "And set off the blue smoke so all will know that the operation has begun."

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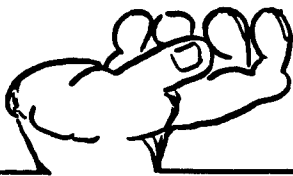
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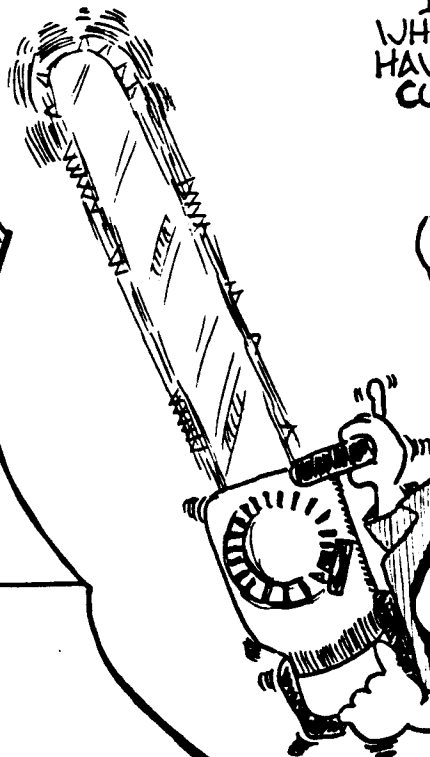
INSIDE JOKE
46 ELAYNE WECHSLER
PO #1609
MADISON SQ STATION
NEW YORK, NY
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... AND THEN, WELL YOU
KNOW THAT I HURT MY BACK,
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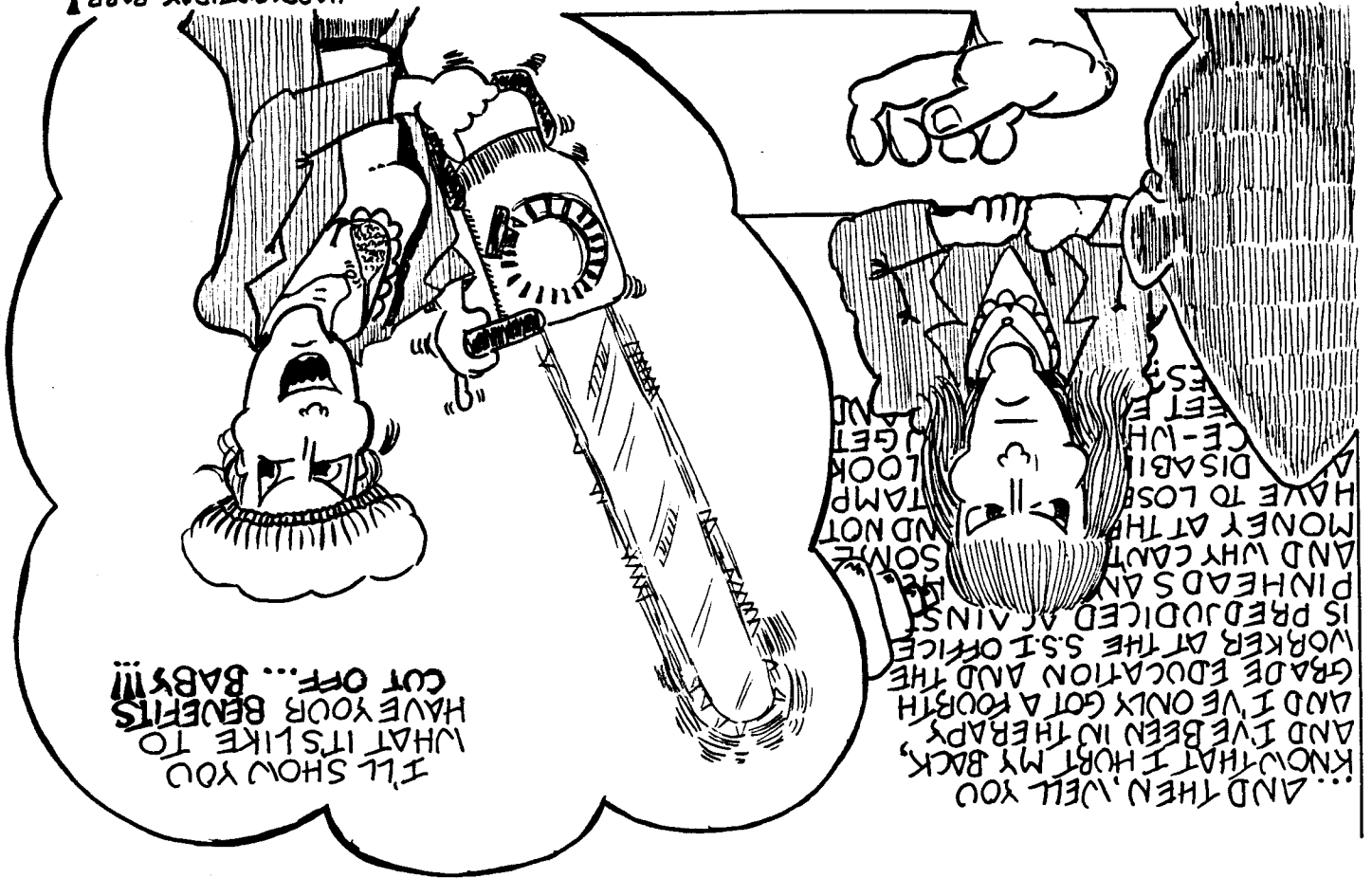
I'LL SHOW YOU
WHAT IT'S LIKE TO
HAVE YOUR BENEFITS
CUT OFF... BABY!!!



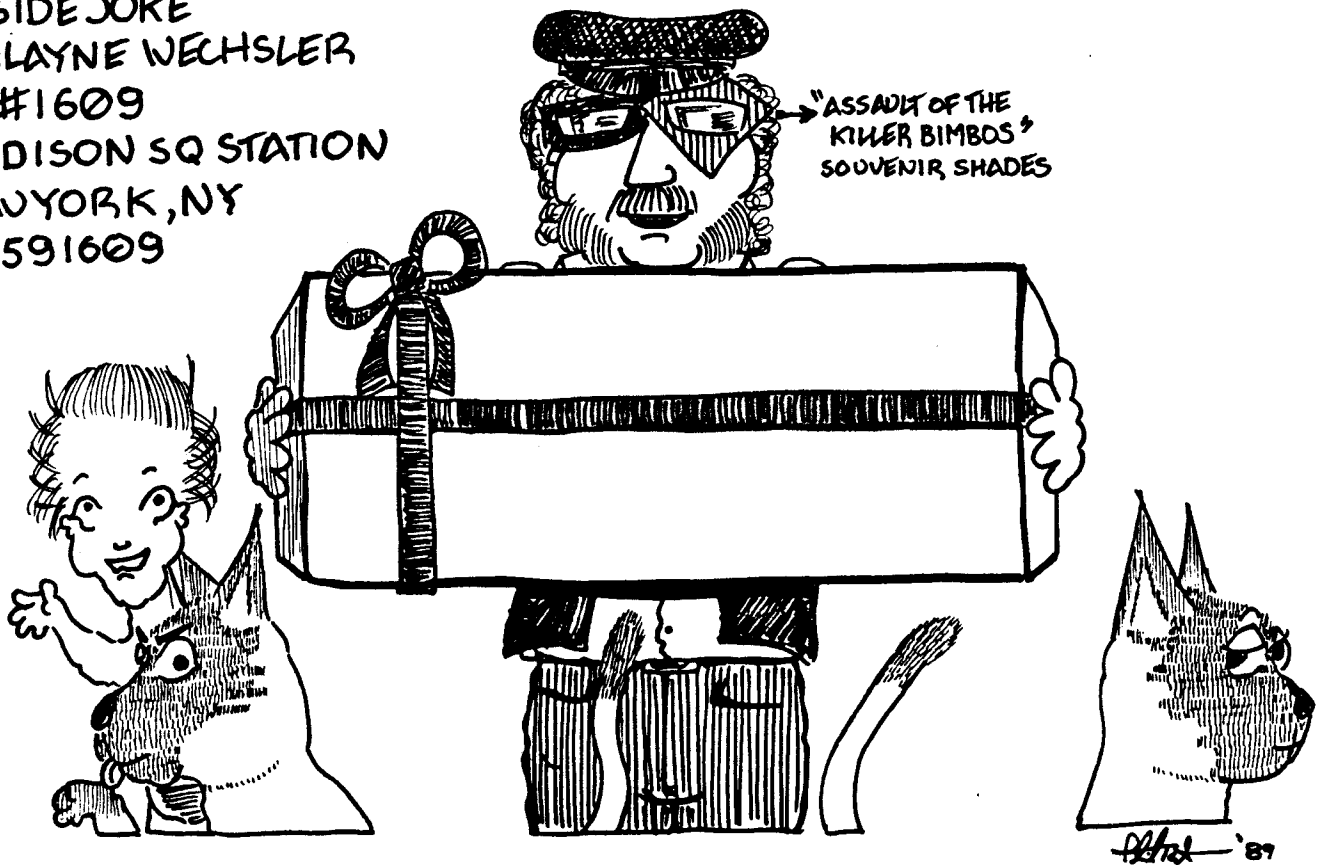
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BARB!

20: JUN: 89
LW, [signature]

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GARBY!
20:00:00
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