

# JOURNEY INTO COMEDY

*WITH*  
THE  
MIGHTY

# INSIDE JOKE

#70

\$1.50

NEWSLETTER  
OF  
COMEDY  
AND  
CREATIVITY

OH-OH...

**RABBIT and COSTELLO  
MEET  
INSIDE JOKE!**



# Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 15 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #71  
(our 9th Anniversary issue!)

SEPTEMBER 16 - Ed Begley Jr. (40); Lauren Bacall (65)

SEPTEMBER 17 - Ken Kesey (54)

SEPTEMBER 19 - UN International Day of Peace; Adam West (61); Mike Royko (57)

SEPTEMBER 21 - KATHY STADALSKY (30); World Gratitude Day; Chuck Jones (77); Bill Murray (39)

SEPTEMBER 22 - Native American Day

SEPTEMBER 23-30 - Banned Books Week

SEPTEMBER 24 - Jim Henson (53)

SEPTEMBER 25 - Christopher Reeve (37); Michael Douglas (45)

SEPTEMBER 26 - T.S. Eliot (b. 1888)

SEPTEMBER 27 - LARRY OBERC (33); Thomas Nast (b. 1840)

SEPTEMBER 28 - Al Capp (b. 1909); Confucius (b. 551BC)

SEPTEMBER 29 - Madeline Kahn (47); Gene Autry (82)

OCTOBER 1 - Groucho Marx (b. 1895); Jimmy Carter (65)

OCTOBER 2 - Universal Children's Day; Sting (38)

OCTOBER 4 - Buster Keaton (b. 1896); A. Toffler (61)

OCTOBER 5 - SUSAN PACKIE (43); JAMES WALLIS (23)

OCTOBER 6 - Carole Lombard (b. 1908)

OCTOBER 7 - PHIL FRIEDMAN (57); World Court Day

OCTOBER 8-14 - National Newspaper Week

OCTOBER 8 - Jesse Jackson (48)

OCTOBER 9 - DAZA (35); Jackson Browne (39); and of course, John Lennon (b.1940)

OCTOBER 11 - Eleanor Roosevelt (b. 1884)

OCTOBER 12 - Aleister Crowley (b. 1895)

OCTOBER 13 - Modern Mythology Day; Art Garfunkel (47)

OCTOBER 14 - e.e. cummings (b. 1894)

OCTOBER 15 - Mata Hari executed (1917)

OCTOBER 16 - Interplanetary Confederation Day; World Food Day; Oscar Wilde (b. 1854) (cont'd. next page)

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\* **INSIDE JOKE** is put on hexaweekly by Elayne "Cute Euphemism" Wechsler and all the dear friends listed below, and emanates from beautiful downtown Brooklyn, much too close to Bensonhurst (Home of Hate) for my liking, but maybe the poison won't spread this far...one can only hope...  
\* **CONCIERGE**.....ELAYNE WECHSLER  
\* **PRODUCTION ASSISTANT**.....STEVE CHAPUT

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* **STAFF WRITERS/ARTISTS**  
\* ANNI ACKNER=====ACE BACKWORDS=====KEN BURKE  
\* TOM DEJA=====PRUDENCE GAELO=====GARY PIG GOLD=====  
\* WAYNE HOGAN=====TODD KRISTEL=====JED MARTINEZ=====  
\* J.P. MORGAN=====LARRY OBERC=====SUSAN PACKIE=====  
\* WILLIAM RALEY=====STEVEN SCHARFF=====  
\* LARRY STOLTE=====DORIAN TENORE-BARTILUCCI=====  
\* KERRY THORNLEY=====PHIL TORTORICI=====

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\* Front Cover by DAZA; "Fan Moose" Logo by MARGOT INSLAY

## OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE:

MARIO ACEVEDO	VERNON GRANT	PAUL NICOLOFF
ANDY AMSTER	RODNEY GRIFFITH	WILLIAM PASSERA
DENNIS BREZINA	MARY ANN HENH	MICHAEL POLO
B.Z. BULLEN	ERIC HOLLOBAUGH	ANDY ROBERTS
ELLIOT CANTIN	A.T. HUNN	TOM ROBERTS
BRIAN CATANZARO	PAUL JACKS	BRIAN RUDDY
SUSAN CATHERINE	TULLI KUPFERBERG	JIM SIERGEY
TOM CHILD	RUSSEL LIKE	DANA SNOW
ROGER COLEMAN	RODNEY LYNCH	CARTER SWART
JOHN CRAWFORD	JIM MIDDLETON	DALE WHITE
TAMARINA DWYER	RICHARD MILLARD	S.M.T.G. YAHOO
ERIC EWING	EDWARD MYCUE	and "KID" SIEVE

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## ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

I can never tell if it's because I don't actually write for this publication a lot, being so busy typing/fixing grammar/laying out/mailing/buying supplies and just about everything but editing that I don't generally have the time, inclination or space; or because, in the words of Sally Field, you all "like me, you really like me"—but my Abbie Hoffman memorial report from IJ #69 seemed to engender lots of response, adding to a good-sized letter column which also owes much to Ace's open question from last time about heroes. I hope this bodes well for another increase in participation, especially considering Eric Ewing's challenge in the aforementioned lettercol this time. Remember, readers, IJ is what you make it. If it reads well, pat yourselves on the back; if not, give me better submissions. That's what I generally mean by my "IJ is a commene-in-writing" theory—I'm just the concierge here, I clean up the rooms and make things as presentable as I can with the tools and decorations with which I have to work—it's up to you to fill the house with warmth and style and conscience, with whatever you want to bring into it. Is IJ the kind of place in which you want to live? If so, I do try to keep space open for you. If not, what would you like to do to make the space more habitable? (As you can see, ye editrix has in fact settled on a suitable appellation for the edit. box...my idea, sorry...)

This is positively the last "Fan Moose" plug column I'll be doing this year, so please, fellow editors: unless you just want to send me a present (as IJ is no longer able to trade with other zines and has been for some time), don't send any more zines for plugs until 1990. "Fan Moose" is a lot of work for me and I generally don't want to do it more than twice a year, but I had so much spillover from last issue that I had to write an addendum. But this issue's best, most exciting news is the Return of Pru!, who finishes the "Pinky Nussbaum" segment of her Pru and Bunny saga, which will lead (we hope for good) into a new multi-partner next time...Sitting out are Mike Dobbs, Rory Houchens and, much against her will and ours (but not that of the mighty Letter-Losing Postal Gods), Kathy Stadalasky (JP's officially out too but I have some artwork of his in the backlog so he's listed as in). If space permits, staffers' addresses are once again published elsewhere in here in case readers would like to correspond with any of them (Deborah would still love to hear from you all!). Also checking in for the first time are Dennis Brezina, Rodney Griffith, Paul Jacks, William Passera, Jim Siergey and Carter Swart; we also welcome return appearances by Tom Child, Rodney Lynch, Edward Mycue and Tom Roberts, in addition to the usual suspects...hmm, flag-burning, drug-ingesting, Dan Quayle jokes—strange and heady stuff for this time of year...

Also coming up before you know it (or even sooner, if you're Arni) is the new TV season, and my first "...Or Not TV" reviews will appear next issue, in time for our 9th Anniversary celeb (more about which below), but in the meantime, I want to share with you wonderful news I received from Deborah Pratt, the supervising producer of QUANTUM LEAP: "QL was pulled for the summer because NBC had to air final MIAMI VICE episodes. I, too, feel this was a mistake. However, we will be returning this September with, in my opinion, some truly fine television. The episode entitled 'What Price Gloria'—which deals with sexual harassment as the male protagonist finds himself inhabiting the body of a woman in the '70s—will probably not air until October because we're saving it for the network sweeps. It's fun, funny and wonderfully poignant, although I'm biased because I wrote it." Kinda how I feel about IJ most times, especially now that we're coming on nine full years of publishing. Our Anniversary issue, #71, will have a lovely cover by Sr. Mary Ann "Second To None" Henn and whatever wishes/hopes/whatever you might want to send along, so check the deadlines and get in on the fun now...

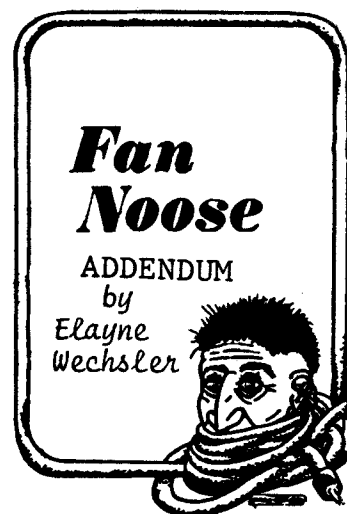
Speaking of which: **INSIDE JOKE** sells for \$1.50 per issue, including sample issues and back issues. Please make any checks out to "Elayne Wechsler"—my bank just sent back a \$3 check made out to IJ and they're planning to penalize me \$5 for it; so it goes—NOT to "INSIDE JOKE." Advance subscriptions are \$12/year for 8 issues and are NON-REFUNDABLE when we cease publication somewhere over the rainbow. If your art or writing will appear in #71, you only have to send me a 65¢ stamp (74¢ US postage if you're from Canada) instead of the \$1.50 if you'd like; that's the contributors' discount (contributors will include letter writers for now). Don't send me stamps for #72, as I won't keep track of advanced postage; one issue at a time is our catch here. As long as your material isn't too graphic or scatological (and I do try to press myself a couple times here to go beyond certain limits, but when something's More Than I Need To Know, it's just More Than I Need To Know, dig?), I'll accept letters, comic strips, spot illos, marginal art, essays (especially satirical stuff), stories, even poetry...and of course ALWAYS money (thanks to my birthday twin Denise Krause, as well as J.C. Brainbeau and that ad-buyin' kinda guy, Bangor Zack Bullen, for their donations)...but please try to send it by the deadlines. The deadline for IJ #71 submissions is September 15 and for #72 work it's Halloween, October 31 (anybody having a party then? And can I wear my generic costume?). Send it all to us here at:

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

I know I always forget to mention that if there's an "X" next to your name on your mailing label, it's time to renew, but you already knew that, I'd bet...

This issue is dedicated to the memories of Michael Harrington and Huey Newton.

OCTOBER 16-21 - Peace with Justice Week  
 OCTOBER 17 - DOUG PELTON (36); Black Poetry Day  
 OCTOBER 19 - Floyd Vivino (38); Crash of '87; Amy Carter (22); Peter Max (52)  
 OCTOBER 20 - Keith Hernandez (36); Mickey Mantle (59)  
 OCTOBER 21 - Dizzy Gillespie (72)  
 OCTOBER 22 - ANNI ACKNER (36); TOM GEDWILLO (38); Doris Lessing (70); Christopher Lloyd (51); Timothy Leary (69); Jeff Goldblum (37)  
 OCTOBER 24 - International Forgiveness Day; Kevin Kline (42); "Weird" Al Yankovic (30)  
 OCTOBER 24-30 - Disarmament Week  
 OCTOBER 26 - DEREK TAGUE (28)  
 OCTOBER 27 - ERIC EWING (21); John Cleese (50)  
 OCTOBER 28 - VALENTINO (37); Fran Liebowitz (39)  
 OCTOBER 29 - Crash of '24; CHANGE CLOCKS BACK 1 HOUR  
 OCTOBER 30 - Grace Slick (46); Ted Williams (71)  
 OCTOBER 31 - National Magic Day; John Candy (39); Hallowe'en (INSIDE JOKE High HolyDay); DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #72; Boo!



I hadn't planned on doing another one of these until next year or so, but I received so much extra stuff on the heels of last issue's column that I felt an addendum was in order...Bad news leads off, unfortunately, as I received notice that Steve Puchalski has put SLIMETIME on indefinite extended hiatus—if he owes you money and you want it back, write to him before 9/15 at 1108 East Genesee St., #103, Syracuse, NY 13210...I'm absolutely thrilled to report, as this issue's extra-good news, that the new issue (V.5, #4) of Candi Strecker's zine of strange amusements, STONEY SUPPE'S QUARTERLY AND CONFUSED PET MONTHLY is out at last! This edition features confessions of Candi's Dish Queen personality, how to shop in thrift stores (she's an expert, take my word for it), a review by IT'S

ONLY A MOVIE's Mike Flores of old Phil Harris radio shows and MUCH more, well worth your dollar! Welcome back, old friend!...Speaking of friends, my pal up in New Hampshire, Sheila Gibson, has finally triumphed in bringing out the long-awaited new issue of IT'S, the Monty Python fanzine. The Easel is also planning to present the Pythons with a giant Happy 20th Anniversary card on her trip to the UK just about the time you get this—bon voyage, Sheila!—so if you want to hear more about that and other Python doings, send \$2.00 to 20 Shady Lane, Nashua, NH 03062...Another old correspondent with a new offering is Robert Michael, whose artzine CRAZY ADULT Steve reviews in his column on p. 20; it's \$2.50 to Robert at 46 Barn Road, Agawam, MA 01001...IJ staffer MasterMath, aka William Raley, edits a superb magazine of his own called AFTER HOURS, which sells for \$4 and features dark fantasy and horror tales, some soso but most VERY good—don't read this stuff just before going to sleep! Well worth your support—William's at 21541 Oakbrook, Mission Viejo, CA 92592-3044 and he even pays contributors!...Another IJ staffer, Ace Backwards, sent me two zines in which he participates. One is a music zine for which he does reviews and 'toons, entitled FACE IT and edited by "J. FACE" (P.O. Box 719, Corte Madera, CA 94925), which goes for \$20/year for 12 issues; the other calls itself RADIO VOID and contains competently written plays and stories—but they're always looking for submissions, which you can send to Brian T. Gallagher (P.O. Box 5983, Providence, RI 02903). He sells RV for \$5 for a yearly sub (4 issues)...In his acknowledgment page of issue #3 of SENSATIONS, editor David Messineo (good buddies with IJ's own Dorian Tenore-Bartilucci) gratefully thanks the management of General Logistics International where he works for letting him use their Macs and other high-tech equipment to enable him to churn out one slick product, complete with hologram on the cover, which sells for \$6 but, alas, doesn't seem to do much. Oh, the summer-based stories and poems (the latter taking up one or two pages each, with LOTS of white space in between) are well-written enough, but even the photos all seem lifeless. A product it is—but bear in mind that these things sell whereas something like IJ doesn't (we're too crowded and teenytypy and not able to spend thousands of dollars per issue), so maybe I speak from jealousy. Judge for yourself by writing David at 2 Radio Ave., #A5, Secaucus, NJ 07094...I know I plugged REFUSE & RESIST! last issue, but I've finally gotten to read all their back issues and feel they deserve a few more words of praise for their fight against INS concentration camps, FCC silencing of progressive programming, homophobia and racism, FBI surveillance, "English Only" laws, anti-abortion goons and massive government misinformation

Candi's at 590 Lister, San Francisco, CA 94112

## CAT LOVERS!

Advice from Mr. Duck: "Save! Buy good low-load mutual fund. Are only the rich entitled to be rich?"

"30 years, at 14 percent yearly, equals 50 times your money! Magic! Compound interest! Tomorrow arrives tomorrow! With inflation—how much will cat food cost in the year 2019?"

and lies, and we need R&R! more than ever—for info write 305 Madison Ave., Suite 1166, New York, NY 10165...I also heard more from the 1% FOR PEACE folks, who sent an update with articles on economic conversion, business and organizational endorsements and US/Soviet relations—good and informative stuff from Box 658, Ithaca, NY 14851...I just got back from a truly scary Safe Drugs Rally, where I watched peaceful, dedicated citizens get arrested for the crime of trying to enjoy a natural herb which has been ingested safely for thousands of years, is considered sacred by indigenous religions, and has never caused a single death, while others killed their livers and lungs with their drugs-of-choice, which are perfectly legal; and I knew I'd better urge folks once more that we should all become "conscientious objectors in the 'War on Drugs,'" a bullshit camouflage to mask the actual drug-running activities of the Bush-North-Noriega-contra gang...but you all know this, so why not just send for the true facts about the medicinal herb cannabis? Write to the NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE REFORM OF MARIJUANA LAWS (NORML), Suite 640, 2001 'S' Street NW, Washington, DC 20009...An excellent medically-related journal is ON THE ISSUES, and their newest issue, #7 (sold for \$2.95) covers abortion—an important topic on which to remain informed at this point—as well as antisexist men, lesbians over 60 and press self-censorship. Heady reading, sometimes a little strident, but worth it anyway—put out by the CHOICES Women's Health Center at 97-77 Queens Boulevard, Forest Hills, NY 11374-3317...In addition to health, women are also taking politics into their own realms, and a prime example of our accomplishments here is MADRE, a friendship community among women of the US, Central America and the Caribbean. Their house organ is written in both Spanish and English, and the latest issue (V.6, #2) outlines their programs for 1989-90 as well as reprinting an absolutely stunning speech by Susan Sarandon given at the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade's 52nd anniversary dinner last April—for info write the Women's Peace Network at 121 West 27th Street, Room 301, New York, NY 10001...Politics is always properly skewered in LOOKOUT!, a mix of commentary on the national, regional and local (northern California) scenes by Lawrence Livermore and others, emanating for a mere dollar from the Emerald Triangle, specifically P.O. Box 1000, Laytonville, CA 95454 and, as far as I'm concerned, MUST read all the way!...The latest issue of SASQUATCH by IJ friend Eric Ewing (see this issue's letter column for his address) has more of the PW (of Livestock and Heavy Machinery)'s anger, wit and strange curse words (Pants!) and is, to say the least, a trip...I don't know, I think Eric may be in collusion with Geoffrey Four-mile, who also had some negatives to note about IJ in his latest issue of the OCCASIONAL JOURNAL OF NOTHING IN PARTICULAR (V.4 #2). I don't think I even want to steer IJ to abandon its "faults" of "brash, folksy chumminess" and "rather careful avoidance of anything controversial," but after advocating fighting back against government repression, the War on Drugs, censorship and everything the Bush folks stand for, I'm stumped as to what he would mean by "controversial" anyway! Why don't you ask him? He's at P.O. Box 419, Lafayette, CO 80026...Here's a nice potential ripoff for you, a place called THE INTERNATIONAL SAVE THE PUN FOUNDATION (Box 5040, Station A, Toronto, Ont. M5W 1N4 CANADA) which sends out a monthly newsletter "offering the latest contributions...in the way of puns and pun-based anecdotes" all for only \$20 a year—go on, take a chance if you think it's worth it. After all, it might be something as slick as THE PEDANTIC MONTHLY, with neat typefaces and obvious desktop publishing and definite humor in a lot of places but a whopping \$5 per 20-page issue (see, this is all you're liable to get for only \$1.50 every six weeks, folks!) and a sloppy article ribbing TIME magazine for misuse of the word "ensure" when many dictionaries will tell you that "ensure" and "insure" are now interchangeable—now who's more pedantic! Anyway, they appear to be a good bunch, so write editor Erik A. Johnson at 2640 Glenpark, Appleton, WI 54915...Meanwhile, here in the land of catch-as-catch-can, where we're so quaint we use typewriters and Xerox machines, Pen-Elayne pres Kip M. Ghesin and I have brought out our latest issue of Four-Alarm FIRESIGN! (Fa!aFa!), #18, the second-to-last one we'll do before handing over this Firesign Theatre newsletter to a couple swell guys in Michigan. If you or anyone you know has listened to and enjoyed the work of the Firesign Theatre, drop us a line—the newsletter's free! We work out of IJ's palatial p.o. box too...That's it for now! Be back next year sometime; until then, see you in the funny pages!



# DIARY of the ROCK FIEND



by  
Anni Ackner

VIDEO KILLED THE VIDEO STARS

I think it only fair to tell you, right at the start of this column, that I am, as we speak, a very, very sick girl. (Those of you wishing to send expressions of sympathy should note that small bills come in a shade of green very soothing to the invalid soul. Those wishing to express the opinion that I am always a very, very sick girl should note that a short pier is a lovely place to take a long walk this time of year.) I have been, as it were, felled by some sort of mysterious flu that has, as its major symptoms, achiness, weariness, crankiness, lassitude, low-grade fevers, and the general inability to give a flying rat's ass about anything more than surviving until the next double-dose of Advil. I attribute this condition partly to the weather, which has been dank—though, in all honesty, I should point out that I am in the habit of blaming everything from Dan Quayle to the rise in cat food prices on dank weather, which may be described as any weather at all in which I am forced to venture Outside—and partly to an overdose of Woodstock Nostalgia and one too many forced renditions of "Going Up the Country" (my one comfort in all this is that, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of The Great Event, I shall be, if not dead, than at least, with luck, too deaf to notice) but, be that as it may, I am most decidedly Not Well, and no two ways about it. Therefore—and this is the point—you needn't expect any cheeriness or Hall-Fellow-Well-Mettedness out of me this time around, and there it is. I mean, really.

Having said that, then, let's talk about television. Now, as some of you may have noticed—and you know who you are—I've made a sort of small side career (side, that is, to my Real Career, in which I am heavily involved in the Migraine and Nervous Stomach industries) out of talking about television in all its various aspects. I've talked about television stars (to the extent that I am now visited periodically—again, as some of you may know—in visions by a minor character actor with a prophetic bent). I've talked about television programmes. I've talked about those vague, shadowy figures who, evidently through the grace of several competing teams of dybeks, control what goes into television programming and therefore on your television screen, and I've even, though I've lived many times to regret it, shared the shameful secret that, in my house, the television plays virtually 24 hours a day, seven days a week, wreaking havoc with the test results of people who study that sort of thing, and not doing a hell of a lot for the electric bill, either. So you can imagine how I felt—oh, yes, you can. Try real hard—when, through channels that I cannot divulge (because some confidences are sacred and because I wouldn't wish the sort of mail I get on a rabid Saint Bernard, even one who hangs out with Stephen King), I was recently made privy to a partial list and rundown of new programming that the networks plan to air during this fall season.

At first, you know, I was simply amazed to have such a thing in my possession; so amazed, in fact, that I could only stare and wonder and gloat over the vagaries and twists and turns of glorious Fate. After a time, however, it occurred to me that I had no right to keep a treasure such as this to myself. After all, soon enough people—unsuspecting, innocent, naive, good people—would be exposed to this programming, would be unable to stop its progression into their living rooms and bedrooms and finished basements, would be swept before its advancing tide. Did I have the right to deny them prior warning? Could I not let them know what was in store for them, simply because I had been sworn to secrecy? Had I been hanging around with Dr. Ehrlich (no, not Ed Begley, Jr. The other one) at the time of his great discovery, would it not have been my duty as well as my obligation to telephone a few V.D. clinics? Well, I'm sure you've figured out the answer to that by now and can extrapolate from that I plan to let you in—providing, of course, that this stays just between you and me—on the mysteries and secrets of:

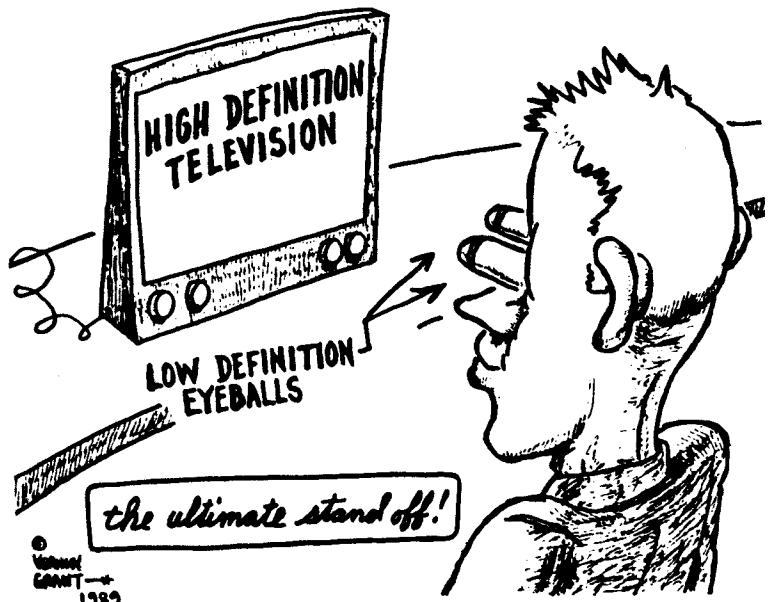
## THE 1990 BROADCAST TELEVISION SCHEDULE

or, *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Cooby* in Syndication  
JAKE AND THE SCATMAN: After a breakdown in contract negotiations forced the departure of William Conrad from his popular television series, frantic efforts at recasting ensued. Tonight: Jake (Joe Penny) and his hip, streetwise new partner (Scatman Crothers) try to persuade a pack of vigilante prostitutes to pay a visit to Redd Foxx's opening at the Improv.

MY SISTER'S A NUN: Hilarious hijinks ensue when New York landlord "Fast Eddie" Kempton (Howie Mandel) learns that his long-lost sister Sheila—now Sister Madeline Murray O'Hare (Jane Curtin)—intends to turn one of his most lucrative crack houses into a convent school for wayward teenaged girls.

GETTING TO BE A RABBIT WITH ME: Zany hijinks ensue when, thanks to the miscalculations of the absent-minded professor brother-in-law (Christopher Lloyd), insurance salesman and family man Ralph Dunbar (Charles Fleischer) must learn to cope with life as a six-foot white bunny. Granpa: James Stewart. Special guest appearance by former President Jimmy Carter.

FACING THE MUSIC: THE TIPPER GORE STORY: Six-part miniseries concerning the life of the crusading senator's wife. In the opener,



the young Tipper (Soleil Moon Frye) is horrified when she discovers the "hidden verses" of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Adult Tipper: Markie Post. Frank Zappa: Father Guido Sarducci.

STOP THE CLOCK: In the first post-modernist game show, really, really ugly people compete for an array of cash and prizes. Host: Charles Kuralt.

MR. IMPERIAL WIZARD: In this new spinoff of *The Jeffersons*, George and Louise, now retired and living in a senior citizens community in Miami Beach, are amazed and astounded by the antics and attitudes of their new housekeeper.

PAST, PRESENT AND SEYMOUR: In the wake of such hits as *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*, *Peggy Sue Got Married* and the surprise television success of *QUANTUM LEAP*, plus television's recent attempts at delivering more positive racial and ethnic images in its programming, comes this action-adventure-comedy series. Twenty-three-year-old rabbinical student Seymour Oseransky (Kirk Cameron), bored with his studies and in danger of flunking out and being forced into going to work at his father's (Rodney Dangerfield) Kosher pizzeria, is periodically visited by the Prophet Elijah (Tom Bosley) and taken on journeys through the panorama of Jewish history, where he fights apostates and often finds romance. Abraham: Billy Crystal. Sarah: Carol Kane. Isaac: Ed Begley, Jr. ABC'S TRACTOR PULL OF THE NETWORK STARS: Series opener: The team from *ROSEANNE* vs. the stars of thirtysomething, utilizing John Deere heavy-duty farm equipment. Live from Nashville, TN, with musical guests Amy Grant, The New Sons of the Pioneers, and Paula Abdul. M.C.: Linda Ellerbee.

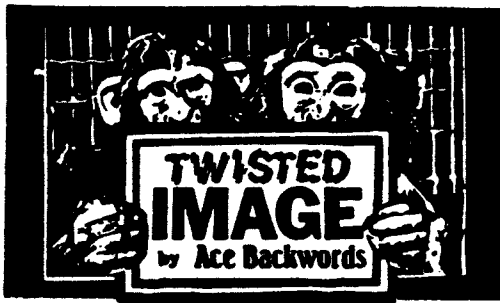
DISNEY'S ADVENTURES OF THE GRAPE NUTS: Continuing the current trend of creating cartoons from popular toys, video games and breakfast cereals, these nutty, crunchy little charmers, brought to life by the magic of Disney animation, are bound to win your children's hearts and your hearty approval as their fun-loving escapades also teach valuable lessons about Life, Friendship, Morality and the advisability of always buying directly from the Sharper Image catalog. Voices: Gramma Nutty: Eva Gabor. Daddy Nutty: Buddy Ebsen. Junior Nutty: Stephen Wright. Sissy Nutty: Sandra Bernhard. Uncle Flako: Jonathan Winters.

21 TRIP STREET: Like its sister series 21 JUMP STREET, this is a hard-hitting police drama concerning the life and times of an undercover cop. Milo "Trip" Tripper, tough, cynical, burned-out survivor of the Woodstock Nation, infiltrates the graduating class of a typical Massachusetts MBA programme in a one-man attempt to "clean up their act." In the opening episode, Trip investigates the claims of a hot new money-market account and makes some surprising discoveries. Brad: Judge Reinhold. Jennifer: Geena Davis. Mr. Kazahiro: George Takei. The Reverent Al Sharpton appears as himself.

There are three or four other items mentioned on the list—including a little number called *LOVE THAT NANCY*, about the misadventures of a former President's wife attempting to adjust to private life, and something that was evidently still being developed for Morton Downey, Jr. and Robin Givens as we went to press (tentative title *WHAT'S SO FUNNY 'BOUT PEACE, LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING?*), but this is the gist of it. As any fool—up to and including Brandon Tartikoff—can easily see, it promises to be season fraught with impact and interest for those knowledgeable enough to appreciate it, but equally full of pitfalls for the unwary. So crank up those VCRs, arm yourselves with the TV GUIDE, settle down, tune in, and please, leave me the hell out of it at least until January and the start of the Second Season, by which time I figure I should overcome this flue, and my backlog of ST. ELSEWHERE tapes will have run out. Until that blessed time, I intend to remain safely tucked away in my little room, steadfastly keeping the Vitamin C people in business and ignoring any broadcast channel that looks as though it employs anybody who might conceivably have ever heard of either Max Yasgur or Joni Mitchell.

Peace, man.





There is just so much bullshit being bandied about these days in the name of "drugs." All you ever hear about is that Drugs Are Bad. Hell, ya can't even make drug jokes on television any more. And, of course, the Villain of Choice in every movie from James Bond to "Scarface" is that gosh-darned heinous Drug Pusher. Yes, "drugs" are the big, bad witch of the '80s. The boogiemaniac for a generation.

It's almost like it's Christian karma at work here. Like, now we have to pay penance for all the drug fun of the '60s. It absolutely nauseates me to see some former '60s drug-swilling charmboy like Don Johnson now playing a heroic drug-bustin' narc on "Miami Vice." Phony bastard.

And Nancy with her classic, moronic Just Say No To Drugs gibberish—as if "drugs" is some all-encompassing generic term. Sure, Nancy, next time you get a headache and reach into your medicine chest full of prescribed drugs, just say no. When you're about to go under the scalpel for your umpteenth facelift, just say no to that anaesthetic.

Sure, there's drug casualties—we've all seen plenty of 'em first-hand. But if somebody, say, drowns in water, does it serve anybody's purpose to "Just Say No To Water?" And yet, that's precisely the attitude of these anti-drug crusaders.

There are some people with addictive personalities—they should steer clear of "drugs" at all cost. I've seen people's lives ruined by alcohol but, personally, some of the greatest times of my life have been sitting across from a good pal in a bar, slowly but surely getting shit-faced together. Is it the "drug" or the person?

I sometimes regret that I got into pot so heavily at 17. I think at that age I was having enough trouble adapting to normal adult reality, let alone dealing with altered hallucinogenic reality. Walk before running, kids. Still, if used right, I think marijuana can be a wonderful drug. I think it's beneficial to occasionally alter one's mental state—if only to remind oneself that one's view of reality is only one of many possible constructs.

Acid is even more controversial. I think that jerk Timothy Leary was one of the worst things to happen to the so-called Psychedelic Revolution. Just what we needed—some slick-talking huckster crashing around the country preaching the virtues of LSD as if it were some kind of psychic cure-all elixir. Step right up, ladies and gentlemen, Peace, Love and Cosmic Understanding at a mere pittance of \$5 a hit.

I've done over 100 acid trips without any noticeable impairments (some of my friends may beg to differ this point). Personally, I feel acid has enriched my life. Of course, if someday I suddenly stop in mid-sentence and start babbling and drooling incoherently all over myself—then I was wrong.

Of course, I don't recommend acid to anyone. Exploring the vast wilderness of one's Brain is, of course, a dangerous thing to do. The analogy I use is mountain climbing—why do people do it? Risking life and limb, pushing one's body to the limit, boldly going where no man has gone before...Sure, it's less dangerous to sit on your ass and watch TV—but maybe not. There's a kind of death in that too, y'know.

Now, cocaine—this to me is a stupid drug. Really, once you get beyond the mystique, it's nothing but glorified caffeine. Because of its exorbitant cost and hip, rock-star image, cocaine got kind of a status sym-

bol appeal. And I've enjoyed it on that level. Y'know, like when a friend thinks this moment is special enough to whip out his special stash reserved for special occasions. It's kinda like during peak moments like championships where the team douses each other with the ultimate status symbol, champagne. But who would wanna drink that crap? Spare me the caviar too, why don'tcha.

Oh, but cocaine is a Violent Drug, sez Nancy. People are getting shot and killed by these drug-crazed crack gangs. Yes, well, does anybody remember Prohibition, when booze gangs like Al Capone's were shooting up half of Chicago? If America in all its wisdom saw fit to outlaw caffeine, you better believe there'd be people getting shot up in the streets over that, too!

But the prize for Ultimate Stupid Drug has got to go to heroin. Anybody getting involved with that drug—hey, you're a dumb fuck. Without exception, every person I know who dabbled seriously into the opiates made a total and complete mess of their lives. I've had opium-crazed neighbors shooting guns out of windows at imagined enemies. I've had a girlfriend fall down right in front of my face with a paralyzing stroke (half her body no longer works) from the results of shooting heroin and cocaine. I've got friends with AIDS.

Why anybody would shoot up drugs is beyond me. It really is. It's like some guy saying: "Hmm, maybe I should take this hammer and pound myself in the face with it. Yeah, that sounds like a rilly cool thing to do."

Personally, in a strange and sometimes painful way, I think my life has been enhanced by my drug experiences. I think I have a deeper appreciation of reality—that there is indeed more in heaven and on earth than my philosophy holds. Furthermore, drugs have had a predominantly profound effect on the blrttx zyrtixcl vvid ffrissz lekevz zzie; ;e,4 uuil;x lie &\$l4fl fgzx le (ED. NOTE: For more information, write the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws; Refuse & Resist [both addresses in "Fan Noose"]; and consult the book Steal This Urine Test: Fighting Drug Hysteria in America by Abbie Hoffman [c. 1987, \$6 from Contemporary Classics, P.O. Box 15, Worcester, MA 01613].)



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# PINKY NUSSBAUM IN THE LAND OF THE DEAD

by Prudence Gaelor

(ED. NOTE: THE STORY SO FAR—Phu wrote a keen story about a girl named Pinky Nussbaum who journeyed to the Land of the Dead. This disturbed the school principal, Dr. Sharkey, who called in Jenny, Phu's aunt, to discuss the matter and Phu's behavior in general. Dr. Sharkey suggested Jenny have Phu undergo a psychological evaluation, and have the Pinky Nussbaum story analyzed. Storming out of the principal's office, Jenny said she certainly intended to.)

"You've demonstrated good use of sentence structure," William said. Jenny had submitted Prudence's story to her writing class for scrutiny, and now the two of them were waiting their turn in the small classroom where the table took up three-fourths of the room for the death blow of the literary guillotine. There were twelve of them there that Wednesday night huddled in the cramped room under the swinging fluorescent light. It was nine-thirty and even though there was a break just twenty minutes ago, people's brains were turning into fuzz. William Angler was Jenny's prof but he served not only as mentor but as mediator when things got out of hand and insults flew. He was a tall man with blond hair that looked like he used 120 volts to style it and he always wore red socks with his suits. He wasn't known as Professor Angler, or Bill, Will or Willie but affectionately as William. Right now he was trying to say something nice about Dorcas Gump's story. It was obvious by the embarrassing silence that nobody thought much of it, if even anybody had bothered to read it. Dorcas fancied herself a writer and without talent or creativity or inspiration she somehow managed to churn out page after page. If anyone would ever publish her she would make a not-so-small fortune if she were paid by the word. The idea of biblical soap-operasque epics might have some sort of marketing potential if the writer had some inkling of talent or at least had lots of sections paraphrasing the letters column in "Penthouse." But this had neither. Even Prudence thought the story was moronic and she was only seven.

"Yes, a very good command of syntax," William continued weakly. Obviously he couldn't offer Dorcas any way to punch up the story because only a shredder could improve it.

There was another pause.

"I like that Bathsheba's always associated with earthtones. I think the beige and wine and mauve references are very symbolic and really relevant to the development of her character," Rodny volunteered.

Jenny snickered to herself. While Dorcas gushed on how perceptive she thought Rodny was to pick up on this, Jenny knew better as she and Rodny were in good. Jenny wondered if Rodny was going to offer more thinly disguised snide comments.

"You know, Rodny, I'm really glad you picked up on that. You'll see that I've further developed that in the next three chapters which I'll bring in next week," Dorcas cooed.

Silence.

Finally, William said, "Okay, let's move on. What do we have left? Let's look at Jenny's latest. Does everyone have it? 'Pinky Nussbaum'?"

Prudence held her breath. This was it. That everyone thought the story was Jenny's didn't bother her because she figured everyone would take it more seriously. Only Rodny knew; Jenny had told him. Prudence hoped he told no one else. If it got out William might get mad or worse, since Prudence wasn't a student, they might ask her to pay tuition since by turning in the story she was taking the class. Prudence didn't know how much tuition was, but she was sure it was more than the thirty-two cents she had in her pocket.

All at once Mitch Traynor jumped in. He was a self-important snob who was always trying to read meaning into everything whether it was there or not. Obviously by his enthusiasm he had discovered some significant relevance and he was going to enlighten everyone.

"This is a pertinent comment on our society as a whole. The child, Pinky, follows one path and excludes all others. Once she gets to her destination her illusions are shattered, including those illusions that those in authority know what's best, or have any wisdom whatsoever but rather are steering people down blind paths, and once those illusions are shattered she has nowhere to turn because she has excluded all her options."

Myrna Lane tried to comment on this but Mitch was on a roll.

"This story," he continued, "is an indictment of our society. All the time we see people singlemindedly pursuing a goal—before kids go to college they've decided what they're going to be and if it weren't for curricular requirements they would take courses only in their chosen field. In some universities there are separate schools—School of Science, School of Art, and once curricular requirements are completed an electrical engineer couldn't take a photography course to save his life. Then, if the student chooses to further his education at the graduate level, eventually he has to choose a specific field of study in his own profession. We've become a nation of professionals so specialized that no one understands or appreciates what the other guy is doing, even in his own field, not to speak of others."

"So what's yer point?" Rodny slurred. It was getting late and everyone else in the class who didn't find anything particularly relevant or insightful in the story was ready to go get beer at the Rat.

Prudence strained her ears. Basically everything Mitch had proposed sailed over her head and she was eager for Mitch to sum up in terms she could understand.



HAVE YOU GOT ANY "YOU-FORGOT-MY-BIRTHDAY-YOU-ASSHOLE" CARDS?

"Isn't it obvious? The point is that when these specialists meet their goals and find out their destination is not as they envisioned, they are stuck, they cannot go back—"

"That's absurd!" Myrna interjected. "You can always go back."

"No. They have cut themselves off. Like Pinky, who had no interest in the other children, they have no interest in other fields or diversions that didn't further them in the quest of attaining their goals. In Pinky's case, she wasn't interested in games or going out into the sun or playing with other children. Her goal was to go to the Land of the Dead to see her fish. The others were extracurriculars she decided not to pursue, and because she wasn't well-rounded she found herself cut off."

"What about her parents? She's not cut off from them. They had a good relationship," Dorcas grumbled, pissed off that Mitch hadn't found any deep meaning in her story.

"Dorcas, darling, consider her parents to be a metaphor for the educational system. They told her how she could reach her goal."

"But they told her to wait until she grew up and died naturally."

"No such animal, Duckie." Mitch's tone was becoming animous. He never had much tolerance for Dorcas, whom he considered a self-righteous whiner who was too obtuse to truly understand anything. Of course, the snit Dorcas had driven him into was awakening the attention of the rest of the group, who really didn't care one way or another about the story because it was late; they were tired of sitting in a classroom and they wanted beer. "They said no such thing. They said when she died she would find her fish. They gave her instructions on how to delay reaching her goal. They offered her extracurriculars. She wasn't interested in those, she was single-minded on obtaining her goal."

"Then in that case it was a personal flaw within Pinky because she refused to pursue extracurriculars and not that of the institution, her parents," interrupted Rodny, who by this time was having a good laugh at the whole discussion.

"I don't think so. She was young and didn't understand their value. The parents supposedly were wiser and should have instilled their value on Pinky. Her never being taught to appreciate the value of extracurriculars is their failure. Rather than learning to appreciate them she saw these as a delay. And had she had interest in the extracurriculars she may have survived the story. I think it is a flaw in her parents or society in general that this appreciation was never instilled in her."

"Oh, of course, I see now," Rodny said, concealing a wink. Jenny attempted to kick him under the table, but accidentally kicked Dorcas instead. Dorcas yelped.

"Oh, I'm sorry. I was stretching my legs." Secretly, Jenny was glad she kicked Dorcas by accident. It was something she had wanted to do for a long time.

"I'd really like to see this further developed, Jen." Jenny hated when Mitch called her that. She didn't hate being called Jen so much, but she hated it when Mitch took it upon himself to call her that. Something about it rubbed her wrong.

Silence.

"I don't see that it needs to be extended. This is a good case of a Blaster. Are you familiar with the form of the Blaster, Mitch? Ultra-short stories that pack a punch? You know, they blast you?" said William. Everyone nodded, too apathetic to speak at this point. "Good. Well, I can't add any more to Mitch's point. I think he covered it pretty much. Anyone else? No? Whose turn is it to buy?"

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

by Ken Burke

## THE JERRY LEE LEWIS REPORT, Pt. II.

"We lined Jerry Lee up to do some ads for our pianos. He was a real pro, did everything we asked and more. We took one of our 'Deluxe Baby Grand's' to a nightclub and filmed him doing his show in front of a live audience. The only instructions we gave him was 'Do your rocking thing.' and MAN did he ever; he pounded that keyboard with his fists, feet, elbows, butt, everything...and still it was music! GREAT show. We took the film and edited together all those instances of Jerry Lee brutalizing our piano in the name of rock'n'roll, and the copy reads 'If our pianos can stand up to Jerry Lee Lewis and still keep their tone, imagine how they'll sound for you.' The final shot has a janitor sneaking up to the empty stage after closing, sitting at the piano and playing a beautiful version of 'Minuet in G.' Then we super-impose the name of our company and a local outlet. Well, the ad tests GREAT, and we booked it in several major markets when the news of Jerry's wife's death hit. No substantive proof was ever offered to connect Jerry Lee with her overdose, but the whole thing was so...sordid, y'know? I still wanted to run the spot, but our account exec said 'Look, you know what's going to happen. The second this spot runs, every cheap-shot comic in the country will do a take-off on it: HI! I'M JERRY LEE LEWIS. Y'KNOW A GOOD PIANO IS LIKE A GOOD WOMAN - WHEN YOU BEAT ON 'EM THEY DON'T LEAVE MARKS!' I saw his point, but I HATED shelving those spots...I think they were some of the best I have ever been associated with."

-Name and company with-held by request.

### 'NEVER TOO OLD TO ROCK'N'ROLL' W/ RONNIE McDOWELL (CURB):

For all his supposed sins, Jerry Lee Lewis deserves better than this - coupling with a man who made his initial mark as an Elvis-imitator on a cliché-ridden send-up of 50's rockabilly. But Dwight Yoakum's successful duet with Buck Owens has made this type of record a hot gimmick. Indeed, 'Never Too Old...' cracked Country Music's Top 30 early this year. (Jerry Lee's first appearance on the single's charts since 1981.)

Technically speaking, this record is a patch-work production, McDowell recording his part in Nashville, Lewis in Memphis, and you can hear the seams. That doesn't mean that this record sucks entirely. As a tribute/revival gimmick it almost works. McDowell and his band 'The Rhythm Kings' provide snare-drum rim-shots and 50's style guitar riffs while Jerry Lee brings a sense of credibility to the proceedings. Lewis sings with gusto and his well recorded piano solo is the highlight of the disc. But one can't escape this record's production problems. Both Lewis and McDowell sound as if their voices have been speeded up to make them sound younger, and the chorus vocals cut in and out abruptly, destroying any sense of a continuous performance. Still, it's nice to have Jerry Lee back on the charts, (no matter how briefly), and Ronnie McDowell earns a few brownie points from me for helping him get there.

**The Video.** 'Never Too Old To Rock'n'Roll' debuted on Country Music Television. It is a cheap passable distraction with a powerfully conflicting message. Instead of having the songs guest star (Jerry Lee) on the video with McDowell, there is footage of Lewis' 1958 American Bandstand appearance edited in with an 80's photo of Jerry and live action shots of old people lip-synching the song's chorus. What this implies is; It's all right for everyone to grow old and keep rocking EXCEPT Jerry Lee Lewis!

Perhaps Jerry was available, or simply didn't want to do the video. Who knows? But the end result has turned a song that was conceived as a tribute to both Jerry Lee and the music he helped create, into a piece of back-handed nostalgia. And as we all know, nostalgia never plays like the real thing.

"I remember the last time Jerry Lee was in the hospital. It was pretty serious, but he still had that legendary arrogance of his...ordering everybody around, talking about how great he was...At one point during his recovery a nurse mentioned to Jerry that a young man in the cancer ward was a big fan of his and how nice it'd be if Jerry would drop in to boost the young fella's morale. So Jerry goes to see the kid. He's about 15, which is quite a bit younger than his average fan these days, y'know? They had a great visit, crackin' jokes, talking about music... Jerry's got a way with kids, he likes 'em better than adults.

When the nurse says 'It's time to go.' Jerry puts his hand on the kid's arm and says 'Boy, if there's anything the ol' Killer can do for you, jes' lemme know.' The kid starts to say something, but stops. Jerry smiles and says, 'C'mon pal, you can tell ME.' So, real contrite but serious the boy says, 'Could you please get another hit record so my friends will know who the hell I'm talking about all the time?!!' Jerry just grinned and winked, 'You bet Killer. You just make sure that you're around to buy 'e.' The boy laughs and they say good-bye.

After that, you never saw such a change in a person. Jerry was quiet, reflective, polite, and PATIENT! A 15 year old kid

had humbled him. That's when he signed to let them do that movie on his life, 'cuz he knew that on his own, he couldn't buy a hit record..."

-Robert Marthen, columnist, MEMPHIS DAILY GAZETTE.

### 'DON'T DROP IT' UNISSUED SUN MASTERS, VOL. 2 (ZUZAZZ):

This is the promised follow-up to 'Keep Your Hands Off Of It!' which was released to great acclaim last year. Like its predecessor, this LP contains 'lost' tracks from Jerry Lee's later years at SUN Records. Unfortunately, there are fewer surprises in this volume, though the music is quite good.

SIX of the titles included are alternate takes of songs that appeared on the 1st LP, and the difference between those takes and these is marginal. Another song ('I Can't Trust Me') is just the originally issued single (SUN 382) with the vocal chorus and saxophone removed. (A shameless attempt at album filler.) The burden of this LP's worth falls to the remaining five previously unheard tracks. They don't quite carry the album, but they're worth hearing.

'Don't Drop It' allows the seldom heard Ragtime influences on Jerry's piano style to emerge. The song itself is nothing special, it is Jerry Lee's joy of performance that makes this track worthwhile. Lewis performs every song as if it were a potential hit.

'Great Speckled Bird' appears in two versions: ballad and rock. Jerry's performance on both is top-notch. He sings and plays with genuine feeling and alternately brings fresh reverence and fervor to this vaguely religious tune. Those raised on Roy Acuff's original rendition might find Lewis' pumping piano interpretation offensive, lascivious, and a first-rate example of the wild-eyed rhythmic indecency that is the mainstay of rock and roll. Which is precisely what I LIKE about it! I consider this track to be a 'Holy' work.

'What'd I Say' is the first demo version of Jerry's last major hit for SUN. It rocks harder and has less of Ray Charles' influence than later renditions, and the piano work is well recorded and flamboyant. Though it does not have the feel of a fully developed performance, it is an exciting studio jam/warm-up track.

'Hound Dog' is my favorite cut on this LP and arguably the best version Lewis has ever put on vinyl. Jerry Lee's performance is more rhythm and blues than rock, and he revives most of the lyrics of Big Mama Thornton's original recording. Effortlessly, Lewis' vocals wring diverse emotions of sorrow, arrogance, lust, joy, contrition, and humor from the simple lyrics. In trademark fashion, Jerry Lee brings something different and exciting to a tune normally associated with another artist and makes it his own.

The best songs on this LP could (should) have been added to the 1st Zuzazz release, making that an even better collection than it was, but despite the repetition of titles from Volume One, 'Don't Drop It' is a decent compilation of tunes that showcase Jerry Lee Lewis in peak vocal and instrumental form. Most Lewis fans/collectors will gladly settle for that.

"RETIRE? Retire to WHAT? No nightclubs, no whiskey, no good-lookin' women? No MUSIC? SHEEEEEE-IT! That's not retirement, that's layin' down to DIE!"

-Jerry Lee Lewis.

**'ROCKET' RECORDED IN 1988. (BELLAPHON):** On this European only release, Bob Moore (Jerry's bass-player) is listed as producer. Besides supplying the most prominent bass-lines ever heard on a Lewis record, Moore takes a quasi-Jerry Kennedy approach to recording his boss. Moore is surprisingly effective in duplicating some of the sounds that brought Jerry Lee favor with Country Music fans, but the Rock'n'roll recordings are a hit and miss affair.

Of the eight rockers on this CD, two are clear disappointments. 'Rock'n'Roll Funeral' is just too wordy for the aging Lewis, and he frequently runs out of breath. 'Lucille' is a technical mess with Lewis' piano solo sounding harshly recorded and Jerry forgetting quite a bit of the lyric. Both are clumsily engineered.

Better though is the current version of Mack Vickery's 'Meat Man' which is smartly arranged with an eye towards humor and playful self-mockery. 'Jailhouse Rock' and 'House Of Blue Lights' are a little ragged but fun if you're not too fussy. The best is yet to come.

Only Jerry Lee Lewis would think of doing Stephen Foster's 'Beautiful Dreamer' as a rocker! It makes me smile. Jerry's rendition of 'Seventeen' (with Lewis on electric piano) and 'Wake Up Little Susie' are the rocking highlights of this set. 'Seventeen' is commercial as hell without compromising Lewis' eccentric brand of integrity and '...Susie' is delightfully weird; all three are lousy evidence that Jerry has lost neither his sense of humor or his bold creative instincts.

On the Country side, Lewis turns in beautiful versions of 'Don't Touch Me' and 'Changing Mountains.' This is strong material wisely chosen and touchingly sung and they compare favorably with Jerry's best later work at MERCURY Records. 'I'm Alone Because I Love You' and 'Mathilda' are not as strong. Jerry's voice seems tired on these, but he does manage to bring the tunes to a satisfying conclusion. His attitude seems professional, though not particularly inspired.

This collection has its problems. As producer, Bob Moore  
(continued next page)

## JERRY LEE continued

relies too heavily on vocal choruses and neglects to bring in a strong electric rhythm guitar. Jerry Lee's piano solos are 'punched in' for some numbers where Lewis does not play anywhere else on the track. These are not Jerry's problems, however; On balance, Lewis is sounding better than he has in years. The best moments are proof positive that given worthwhile material and a sympathetic producer/arranger, he can make viable commercial recordings, and still pound out his brand of boogie-woogie rock and roll. For Jerry Lee's long-time fans, who have lived through every one of Lewis' dramatic ups and downs as if they were their own, this is the best news of all.

ROCK ON, KILLER!

NEXT: THE MOVIE, THE SOUNDTRACK, DENNIS QUAID AND MY QUEASY STOMACH.

# ANIMATION UPDATE



Instead of the usual articles, I would like to pay homage to a performer who, in and out of the animation industry, has been a part of our lives for the last half a century...

## MEL BLANC: A PERSONAL RECOLLECTION

It was the autumn of 1982. I had a job working at an advertising agency in midtown Manhattan for the last few months. It was conveniently located within easy walking distance of Times Square and Rockefeller Center, as well as a number of eateries for my lunch break. I had made several friends amongst my coworkers, and I'd made a lasting impression on my employers. Yet, in spite of all that, I was bored out of my skull with my work.

To alleviate such boredom, my fellow workmates had brought along their radios, blasting every kind of music imaginable from each little speaker. I was sort of the exception to this rule; for one thing, I used an earplug to keep the office a little more quiet. For another thing, my radio not only had AM and FM, it offered the audio from the local VHF TV station (Channels 2 through 13). So, while the guy sitting next to me was listening to Led Zeppelin, along with the rest of the office crew, I was keeping myself personally amused by hearing the soundtracks of "Looney Tunes" and "Merrie Melodies" cartoons from a local syndicated TV station, just as long as I was properly entertained while I worked.

One particular week in November, I was listening to WNBC's news program "Live at Five" where, besides broadcasting current events in the world, guests were interviewed—sometimes as many as three a day during its hour-long format. The show ran from 5pm-6pm (and still does), which took up the last hour of my work day. During the course of the show, announcer Don Pardo would run off a list of guests would appear on future installments.

On that week in November, I was working on a newspaper ad for some porno cinema in New Jersey or Long Island, I forget where really, while "Live at Five" came through loud and clear in my earplug. Don Pardo was bringing to my attention that notables who would be on later that week, with one name suddenly standing out in my mind above all the others...Mel Blanc! Politicians and actors I've listened to time and time again on that show, but to hear the unmistakable voice of the man who breathed life into Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and scores of other cartoon characters deserved my full attention.

That night, after commuting by subway and bus from NYC to Elmont, I rushed into my bedroom closet and searched for something, anything that reminded me of Mel Blanc. Sure, anyone could pull out an old Dell or Gold Key "Bugs Bunny" comic book or some sort of animation memorabilia from Warner Bros. (i.e., a model sheet of one of those characters from Termite Terrace), but I wanted the item to be something special...and I'd found it. Several months earlier, I'd attended a nostalgia convention, which had paid tribute to many personalities from the past, and many wares attributed to those personalities were being sold (such as movie posters, song sheets, radio scripts, etc.). One item I'd purchased was a copy of "The World of Yesterday," a publication for trivia buffs. That particular issue of "Yesterday" had Mel Blanc as its cover story; not only describing his work in animation, but his talents in radio and television as well (along with a discography of the many recordings on which he'd appeared, most of them children's records). "Perfect," I said to myself, and placed the magazine in my attache case.

The next day I placed the magazine inside my desk drawer, and carried on with the day's toil. Only during my lunch break would I bring it out and read it again and again, as I learned about the many characters Blanc had created for radio (like Jack Benny's bear Charmichael, or the Mexican character Sy, who never failed to crack up Mr. Benny with his one-word responses—"Sy?" "Si!").

I remember the day when Mel appeared on "Live at Five"—it was a Thursday. He was in town to promote a new Warner animation anthology ("Bugs Bunny's Third Movie: 1001 Rabbit Tales"). What I recall more than anything else was the big break I got: Mel Blanc was the last guest of the day!

He came on at approximately 5:55pm, which gave me enough time to clean up my work area while I listened to him being interviewed. Naturally, the network put on an obligatory clip from the new anthology before the conversation continued. Mel explained to the

host how he created the voice of Bugs Bunny by combining a Bronx accent with one from Brooklyn, a story I never grew tired of hearing. He then proceeded to entertain the folks at home and in the studio with a brief repertoire of his best-known Warner Bros. characters, including Porky Pig, Daffy Duck, Tweetie Pie and Sylvester. All the while, I finished tidying up and placed my copy of "The World of Yesterday" back into my attache.

I left the eighth floor office at about the same time Mel finished his interview. I had estimated that it would take him a few minutes to remove his make-up before leaving the studio; this gave me enough time to make my three-block dash to the 49th St. entrance at 30 Rockefeller Plaza.

My timing was split-second perfect; I arrived in the hallway, near the elevators leading to the WNBC studio, at about 6:05pm, when I saw Mr. Blanc step out of one of those elevators. Quickly I reached into my attache, pulled out the issue of "Yesterday" and a small felt-tipped marker.

As Mel approached me (and my pulse rate accelerated), I noticed he was accompanied by a young man. At the time, I didn't know if the other man was a representative from Warners or Blanc's son, Noel (about whom Mel talked more often in his later interviews). Immediately, I walked up to him and asked, "May I have your autograph, Mr. Blanc?" (a timeless and corny cliché, I know, but what the hell).

The young man with him appeared to be somewhat in a hurry, but Mel acquiesced and said, "Sure." Taking my marker in his hand, he was about to put his signature down when he noticed what I had handed him to sign. The smile on his face widened when he recognized the publication. He turned around and showed it off to the young man who, upon seeing it, chuckled (as I look back on that day, I'm almost certain that it was Noel, because no Warner representative worth his weight in anything would know everything that Mel Blanc has done—at least not a 1980's representative anyway).

Looking back at me, he opened up "The World of Yesterday," chose a picture in the second column of some right-hand page, and proceeded to sign his name beneath it. As he was doing so, I couldn't help noticing that he wore a small Bugs Bunny tiepin, which adorned a necktie with a pattern of tiny carrots upon it. (I said to myself, "Oh, if only I had seen that interview instead of hearing it on my radio" which, now that I think about it, sounded ridiculous at the time; if it weren't for radio, nobody would know of the many voices of Mel Blanc!)

He handed my trivia magazine and marker back to me. I took a brief second to extend my right hand to him, which he promptly shook. I've forgotten exactly what I said that moment, but it felt somewhere between wishing him continued success and a simple "Bless you"...

The young man escorted Mr. Blanc through the same revolving doors I'd entered and into a waiting limousine just outside 30 Rock. Seconds later, they were gone.

As I rode the 'F' train back to the Jamaica station, I sat there staring at Mel's autograph, and wondered to myself how my coworkers would react when I showed this to them the next day. I wondered if they would immediately recognize the face above the signature, or even the name. Would the name alone conjure up images of cartoon characters with which they grew up? Would they know? Would they care?

As my train approached 179th St., I placed the autographed magazine back into my case, left the station, and waited for my evening bus to arrive. I continued to ponder. Would Mel ever come back to New York? He might, if the occasion were right. Or perhaps one day I'd be able to travel to the west coast and see him in person, at one of those seminars he gave at certain colleges; or maybe at the Annie Awards, a ceremony thrown together by ASIFA-Hollywood, of which I was then a fledgling member.

"Well," I thought to myself, "as long as he's still remembered and loved by the public, he'll always be busy doing cartoon voices and commercials, so I may get a chance to see him again in the near future."

Little did I know that that first encounter with Mel Blanc would be my only one. On July 10, 1989, the "man of a thousand voices" was heard no more. A combination of emphysema and heart disease claimed Mel Blanc. He was hospitalized on May 20, just ten days before his 81st birthday, in a Los Angeles medical center, where he never recovered.

To list all his major credits would take an entire book; fortunately, such a book exists. Mel's autobiography, "That's Not All, Folks" (published last year), is a lasting tribute to this multi-talented individual whom I shall miss dearly.

His last projects included his revival of the Cosmo Spacely character (one of his favorite non-Warner cartoon voices, along with Barney Rubble, Heathcliff, and Twiki the Robot from the "Buck Rogers" TV series) for "Jetsons: The Movie" from Hanna-Barbera Productions, and an unaired TV spot for Oldsmobile done with Noel, who will continue the tradition of providing cartoon voices for future generations...and why not? Noel had one helluva teacher!

And, just for the record, I still have that autographed magazine, as well as that radio with TV sound (which still works, thank you).

ADDENDUM: I was right about my Emmy predictions, but along with the three I had already mentioned in IJ #69, there are two nominations included for Best Animated Special (one hour or less): ABEL'S ISLAND (PBS) and MADELINE (HBO). Although GARFIELD is considered the favorite, I say it'll be a close race between MEET THE RAISINS (CBS) and ABEL'S ISLAND, the latter title already having won several ASIFA-East awards. The Emmys will be held on September 17; watch and see if I'm right!

# MasterMath Explains...

## THE NEW SYSTEM OF MEASUREMENT

by William G. Raley

I just received a communication today from C.H.U.D. headquarters on Aughton. Normally they talk to me via instantaneous sub-electronic Alpha-waves, but there's currently a trade embargo on the moon pies used to power the device, and they haven't sent for a repairman due to budget cuts.

Thus the letter was postmarked a year and a half ago; not only that, but it arrived *postage due*. The nerve of these guys; they make me a deity, and then act too fat-headed to extend a little social courtesy. Ow! I forgot about the similarly-configured Delta-ray punishment machine; I guess it's still fully operational. Anyway, my postman said I owed seventeen fimbals on the letter, and I told him I didn't have any. He barged into my house, opened one of the drawers under my waterbed, and extracted them. They smelled pretty raunchy; you're supposed to keep them in the refrigerator, but they had said they wanted to go to bed with me, and I had been in a joking mood. I explained to him that I was MasterMath, one of the cosmic deities, so I was immune from prosecution for the semi-melted fimbals. He said he was the Post Office Deity, and that I'd better watch my step, or one day I'd open a timesharing notification letter and find a black hole inside. I scared him away by threatening to play my Partridge Family album; let me tell you, it's no fun having a POD in your house.

Back to the letter (sounds like a great idea for a movie, huh -- Michael J. Fox goes back to the 1800's and finds out what "The Scarlet Letter" was all about). Anyway, it said, in essence, that I was not living up to my agreement to explain the myriad mysteries of higher mathematics to the people of Earth. While they were fascinated by the wit, eloquence, and verve of my monologues on the greeting card planet and the universe of perspective, what the hell did that have to do with math? There are other deities whose sole purpose is to explain matters of social relevance such as these. Who was I to tread on Barbi Benton's turf, anyway?

Well, my superiors had made their point. Perhaps I had overstepped my bounds by some minuscule, sub-atomic amount. I hadn't been myself lately -- I had been Bailey Quarters, from "WKRP in Cincinnati." I'd been feeling bad ever since I discovered my stockpile of Mr. Pibb had run out. I decided to turn over a new leaf; the ficus plant I pulled it off screamed bloody murder, but he's used to my abuse.

Now, for some math. Today's lesson involves the establishment of a new system of measurement, the canasta system. Actually, it isn't new system at all, but the statute of limitations has just run out on the extenuating circumstances, which concerned a quart of orange juice, a blender, and a couple of live cockroaches with anthrax. Four of us Alabama students were sitting around one day -- and that night, and the next day -- playing canasta. Actually, it may just as well have been Rook, spades, or hearts, but "canasta" comes first in the alphabet, and I once melded with a woman from the planet Canasta, so it got the nod. We decided that there were too many quantitatively descriptive terms around which lacked proper, precise definition. For example, most people know that the term, "a couple," means two, but the entire town of Eau Claire, Wisconsin believes it can also mean three under some circumstances, such as during a haircut.

Thus, we four made that our project for the semester: myself; Joey the insurance major; Jeff, who majored in pretending to fall down and hurt himself in front of sorority houses; and Jamie, who wanted to be an actress, or at least a spokesperson for a leading dental floss company (the thing with the orange juice, etc. was her idea).

The first few dozen quantifiers were a piece of cake to compile, especially since a visiting football team had spray-painted them on our stadium. Here's a sample: some -- three; several -- four (unless you're talking about several offers, in which case it's zero); loads -- five (usually used by someone trying to impress a date who doesn't know any better); mounds -- same as "loads," but only used in reference to homework; a lot -- eleven; beyond measure -- one more than the speaker's I.Q.

Once we got past these, we knew we had a tough row to hoe. But, we got down to business. The first thing we did was drive to the main library on campus. However, it was midnight and the library was closed, so we amused ourselves by telling jokes about whomever was asleep at the time. I never knew that Joey had taken a bath with an ocelot, or that Jeff had once fondled Howard Cosell's toupee. Finally, the library opened, and we straggled inside. Joey and I headed immediately for the nearest card table, but the other two of us were more practically minded: Jeff was in the bathroom practicing his leers, and Jamie was ransacking the card catalog.

Oh, no, this article's being invaded by a script from my "B-movie" generator. It's --

### THE SKELETON KEY THAT PANICKED

The earth is very old -- not so old as Camelot, but old nonetheless. There exist parts of its surface that no human being has laid eyes upon, or any other body part, for that matter. Strange aberrations of nature are rumored to be there.

For example: We've all seen a skeleton key before -- you've probably got one in your closet -- but not a skeleton key like William and Jamie meet up with.

Jamie sat placidly on the sofa of her room at the residence hall, reading a magazine. William was downstairs in the cafeteria, having just rescued a passion fruit. He returned upstairs and knocked on the door, as he had forgotten his key. "Come in, it's open," Jamie stammered. He shuffled into the minuscule room, and hovered over his friend. "What's the matter?" she stated. "You look more slimy than usual tonight."

"I know. I guess it's because finals are over with at last."

"You can say that again!" Jamie blabbered.

"I didn't think they'd be that hard," William croaked. "You know, it was my mother's idea to send me to school here in Alabama. Still, I've heard going to Interstate 40 isn't much easier."

"Don't worry about it. If you hadn't come to school here, you'd have never met me, right?" Jamie put down her magazine and shrugged. "Tell you what, let's go for a walk to the sandwich shop. I want to do something wild tonight, like maybe pummel a tape deck."

"All right," William observed. "But I've got a bad feeling about this. You'll probably just get us both in trouble, like the time the head of the math department caught us in Atlantis with a graveyard."

The pair walked serenely down University Boulevard. It was good to get some fresh air and celebrate every so often.

"I didn't think the weather would be this heavy this time of year," Jamie complained. "I should have worn -- ARRRGGGGGGHH! What's that in the bushes?"

"Oh, come on, Jamie, it's just a garbage truck," William insured it into submission, and tossed it unceremoniously down a storm drain.

At Uncle Andy's Deli, William got a ham and cheese, some chips, and an orange soda. Jamie bought some beef jerky. The cashier was a freshman, and hence vibrated most of the time they were there.

"Did you have to talk to that swamp for so long in there?" William sobbed, as the pair passed the football stadium, where a mailbox had been bisected just the week before.

"Be real, William!" Jamie groaned. "I hadn't seen her since last semester. Besides, she was looking a little hot, so I thought I'd cheer her up."

"All right. Say, why don't we just sit here on the library steps for a while and sigh. It seems we never have time for that anymore."

Jamie lay on her back and looked up at the stars. "You know, William, you can see the whole quad from here," she cried.

"That is, if you're not looking up at the stars."

"That's very astute of you, Jamie. When I was growing up, you could go to the penthouse of my apartment building and see all the way to Remulak."

"I never imagined that," Jamie said. "There's so much to learn."

Suddenly, a strange scraping noise sounded from a grove of oak trees off to their right. "What was that?" William gushed.

Jamie was pointing frantically now. "Look, William, it's ... it's a skeleton key! I've never seen one that big in all my life!"

"Me neither," William screamed. "Why do you think it's here? Oh, no, if I didn't know better, I'd say it just panicked!" "It did!" Jamie shouted. "It really, really panicked! This is fantastic! This will make a great article for the school paper! And they thought I was too angular to go into journalism!"

OK, where was I? Oh, yes. We found out that systems of measurement originated in ancient Egypt, to keep track of the bounty of statistics on the burgeoning cat population (why no one thought to keep track of the human population before then is a mystery even Time-Life Books can't explain). Incidentally, Arabic numerals were not invented in Arabia, nor even by an Arabian, but rather by a bail bondsman in the Leslie district of Scotland.

The old standards of measurement were, of course, the meter and the kilo. These were kept on display at a sidewalk cafe in Paris, though they had to travel in separate planes. The kilo, by the way, once made a guest appearance on "Miami Vice." The new standards are the length of the Huntington Beach pier (revised slightly in January 1988 when the End Cafe fell into the ocean during a storm) and the weight of a Rush CD.

Any questions? Feel free to call me between the hours of 8 and 5 CST at 1-800-ALABAMA.

Next time, I'll explain some intricate systems you desperately need to make your daily routine more organized, along with instructions on how to mess things up again when you become too neat for your own good.

Think of what the absence of winners would do to the lottery industry -- there would be no more players. Likewise, the absence of winners in the 50 suicidal wars being waged daily could be an even worse disaster -- no more PEOPLE. For one of five must-be-adopted concepts in 1989 send S.A.S.E. to: 50/50 men, women; losers, winners (chance-selected) war-waging strategy or simply WINNERS -- Box 2243

YOUNGSTOWN -- OHIO, 44504

# A Dip in the Plasma Pool

by Dorian Tenore-Bartilucci

Wedding Hindsight Hints, or:

Whaddaya Mean You Don't Wanna Give the Guests

Jordan Almonds Individually Stamped

with Both Your Names in Edible Silver Ink?

One of the points made by etiquette expert Judith Martin, a.k.a. "Miss Manners", in her videotape on weddings (about which I raved at length last issue) is that it's not easy to take something as private as a romance and expose it to the scrutiny of family, friends, and society in general at a big wedding. My new hubby Vinnie and I can vouch for that! Even when your wedding and the party afterwards are smashingly successful (judging from all the positive feedback we've been getting, we can safely say ours fell into that category), it still takes a bit of blood, sweat, tears and perhaps the occasional argument at the top of one's lungs to get there, whether you celebrate with homemade cake and punch for 10 people or a catered multi-course dinner for 200.

Any bridal magazine or etiquette manual can give you tips on what to wear or how to hint for the type of presents you want, but how do you stay sane during the planning and actually enjoy your own wedding? To those of you romantic enough and/or stalwart enough to attempt a big blowout on your wedding day, I urge you to take heed of the following insights from this veteran bride:

1.) Don't plan your big day to death -- relax and let things happen! Indeed, the things we enjoyed most about our wedding were the spontaneous, unexpected happenings. For instance, several of the guests happened to be professional singers, all in wildly different musical genres. Sure, we knew our friend and usher Bill Sutton, a folk singer and filker of note, was going to sing and play his guitar during the Communion (we had a full-tilt mass at our Catholic ceremony). However, we were very touched when we realized that he'd written an original song just for us! Then our friend Terry Blaine, who sings jazz and show tunes at New York City nightclubs as well as commercial jingles (you've heard her sing if you've ever heard the jingle from the JFK Express commercial: "Take the train to the plane...") got up at the reception to croon Cole Porter's "Our Love is Here to Stay."

But the real musical surprise of the night came when my dad's close friend Bobby Pace took the microphone hostage for over half an hour to soulfully belt out several traditional Italian songs, including "Mala Femmina (Wicked Woman)" to 6-year-old flower girl Jennifer. To her credit, Jennifer went along with it good-naturedly, though she seemed thoroughly perplexed that this stranger insisted on stationing her on his lap and singing to her in front of everybody. (Perhaps I should explain that in his nightclub act, Bobby used to perform the song in a similar manner with his own daughter when she was Jennifer's age.) Since many of the guests included our Italian relatives and family friends, Bobby was a huge hit.

Best of all, Vinnie finally got to hear my dad do his much-praised rendition of "Ace in the Hole." (If you were born later than 1959, you won't know it; hell, I wouldn't know it if I hadn't heard my dad sing it before.) Then Dad really brought down the house when, out of the clear blue sky, he sang "Daddy's Little Girl." Now I had sworn that such a cornball ditty would not be warbled at our wedding, but somehow it becomes touching when sung impromptu by the bride's father, rather than by some overly sentimental professional who's only doing it for the money. Lord knows my sister was moved, as she stood there doing her Niagara Falls imitation.

2.) Don't mistake clichés for tradition! How to tell one from the other: if it strikes you as beautiful and touching even if you've seen it done a thousand times, it's a tradition. If it seems tacky, impersonal, possibly involves needless expenditures, and generally makes you feel like squirming, it's a cliché. The musicians singing "The Bride/Groom Cuts the Cake" and forcing the couple to shove cake into each other's mouths is a cliché. Playing the "Wedding March" as the bride comes up the aisle can be a tradition rather than a cliché if it's done with sincerity. To illustrate the point about needless expenditures: one can justify paying a professional photographer to take the best pictures possible of this hopefully once-in-a-lifetime event; but do you really want to shell out good money for purely decorative plastic tchotchkes emblazoned with the names of you and your intended and your wedding date? Everybody loses them and/or discards them within a week anyway. (Everybody, that is, except my sister, who has drawers stuffed with 20 years' worth of wedding favors commemorating the nuptials of barely-remembered cousins and children of our parents' friends. Should she ever marry, the monogrammed-trinket industry will have a banner year.)

3.) Make sure the wedding party members get along with each other. At the very least, make sure the bridesmaids and groomsmen have enough maturity, unselfishness and overall good manners to put aside their differences long enough to behave civilly toward each other for this one day. Two members of our own wedding party, who shall both remain nameless, couldn't seem to grasp the above concept. As a result, there was much

avoidable tension when it came to planning those parts of the wedding involving these folks. It all climaxed in the pair nearly coming to blows at the reception (to be exact, it was just before the wedding party paraded in to be introduced to the wedding guests by the bandleader). Fortunately for all concerned, both of them were on their best behavior for the rest of the evening. This may have been indirectly connected to threats of maiming from yours truly and my equally fearsome-when-provoked mother.

4.) For cryin' out loud, don't worry about everything being perfect! Perfect weddings are boring because they don't spawn amusing anecdotes that you can tell to all who ogle your wedding pictures for years to come. In addition to the story of the almost-slugfest described in #3, we also have rollicking tales of my dad's pants falling down as he was getting ready to sing an encore; the eclectically-attired guest who wore a hat sporting a plush bear's head with his tux and ascot; the limousine driver who got lost between Vinnie's house and the church, nearly depriving us of several ushers; and flower girl Jennifer's staunch refusal to let go of her balloon during the Gala Toy Balloon Launch outside the church (more about that in #7).

Another anecdote concerns two of the ushers' wives, who refused to budge after they'd mistakenly been seated at the bride's family's table. It seems the ladies were convinced that there was a conspiracy afoot to seat them at a separate table from their husbands, who, the wives feared, would then feel free to act on the lust they'd been displaying toward the bridesmaids. Which brings me to another point:

5.) If you're having a catered affair, try to seat bridal party members with their significant others instead of on some godawful dais separated from everyone. Unless the spouses/dates/whatever are all buddies, or you've got a really gregarious herd of party animals there, you'll just end up with a table full of "other halves" set adrift -- people who don't know each other, won't talk with each other, and hence will have a lousy time and resent the wedding party members who dragged them there.

6.) Try not to invite people because you think they'll give great gifts. This seems to happen more often when the couple's respective parents are heavily involved with the wedding plans, I've noticed. Especially, don't plan a whopping big expensive wedding with little existing money to back you up, on the assumption that you and your new spouse will receive enough cash gifts to cover it all. Even if you do receive enough, you'll kick yourself once you've begun everyday married life and you run up bills that could have been covered by all that gift money you wound up giving to the caterer, photographer, musicians, etc.

7.) Yes, Virginia, your wedding celebration can be traditional, yet still have your own personal stamp upon it. Before joining the priesthood, our celebrant, Father Groenewold, had been a lay teacher (no sniggering double-entendres from the Peanut Gallery, please) at Chaminade, the high school attended by Vinnie and one of our ushers, John Wrenius. Since he'd remained friendly with the fellows over the years, he was able to put together an upbeat, enjoyable homily including anecdotes about Vinnie's school years and how Vinnie's and my love of comedy (indeed, we met at an improv comedy workshop) would work with the seriousness of commitment to help make a happy marriage. (Okay, so it sounded better coming from Father Groenewold.)

Vinnie and I also added other little touches that helped make our celebration uniquely our own. Since the church in which we were married (the chapel of my alma mater, Fordham University) forbade the throwing of rice, the maid of honor gave helium-filled pink and white toy balloons to the wedding party and everyone who attended the church ceremony. When Vinnie and I emerged from the church, each person released his/her balloon (except Jennifer, which certainly made for a perky little sky show. At the reception, the musical riffs accompanying such Big Wedding staples as the introduction of the wedding party and the tossing of the bouquet and garter were a little different: we had the band play the Blues Brothers' introductory riff and bits from The Who's "Tommy."

My own favorite personal touch was the naming of the tables. Each table at the reception bore a card containing the name of some significant thing in Vinnie's and/or my life (for example, one table was named "Chicago City Limits" after the group that ran the improv workshop where we met), and usher Rich Segal passed around little homemade glossaries explaining what each name meant. It proved to be a big hit; in addition to being a conversational icebreaker, the cards provided a quick and easy way to play "catch-up" for those friends and relatives we hadn't seen in a while.

There you have the real point of any wedding celebration, big or small: making it a special, uniquely-your-own celebration of the love you and your sweetie have for each other, and sharing it with people you really care about and vice-versa. Of course, eloping has its merits, too -- but ladders are so unwieldy, and what if you really do need to start married life with 3 salad bowls and 9 crockpots?

A FEW OF US ARE LOSING our steam and S.T.M. (Short-term memory). When you drag yourself out to the garage and try to open the car door with your ignition key and start the motor with the door key--that's old age. It's a plus to look forward to a hereafter even if it is the same hell-on-earth. Send SASE to Herebefore, Box 2243, Youngstown, OH 44504.



**SEX WORDS!**  
What's Coming Up  
on July 6, 1998.  
\$1 for Intense Pamphlet!  
The SubGenius Foundation  
Box 148366,  
Dallas, TX 75214



Todd Kristel presents ...  
**THE COLOR MAUVE** by Alice Walker

Dear like God,

Like, oh my God, my older sister Natalie has got like a boyfriend who is like fer sher a total retro-nerd. Just like gag me with a spoon, he is like not all like there. Like his wife divorced him to join like a holistic aerobics commune in Arizona and like he's got like these three children and they're like totally little brats. And they like talk funny too.

So, like I was at the mall with my friends and I like saw my missing pair of designer jeans. Like this woman, she was like wearing them right out in like the open! I like got totally mad but like my friends like said it would be like totally uncool to like make a scene so I like kept quiet.

I think they're mine. My heart says they're mine. But like I can't prove they're mine. So I like start to follow her into like a store and like I watch her run her hand long side the like counter, like she like ain't like interested in like nothing. Like fer sher. Totally. But like my friends decide like they're like bored so we like go to the video store and rent like "Raiders of the Lost Ark"...

## Inside JJ Staffers

Todd Kristel's in the process of moving, but otherwise these are the most updated addresses for our current staffers:

ANNI ACKNER, P.O. Box 18, Reading, PA 19603  
ACE BACKWORDS, 1630 University Ave. #26, Berkeley, CA 94703  
DEBORAH BENEDICT, 3724 Baldwin Ave., Lincoln, NE 68504  
KEN BURKE, P.O. Box 8, Black Canyon City, AZ 85324  
TOM DEJA, 86 Willow Street, Floral Park, NY 11001  
MIKE DOBBS, 24 Hampden Street, Indian Orchard, MA 01151  
PRUDENCE GAELOR, 3573 Fort Mead Rd. #611, Laurel, MD 20707  
GARY PIG GOLD, 70 Cotton Dr., Mississauga, Ont. L5G 1Z9 CANADA  
WAYNE HOGAN, P.O. Box 842, Cookeville, TN 38503  
RORY HOUCHEMS, R.R. #2, Colfax, IL 61728  
TODD KRISTEL, 1140 North 24th St., Allentown, PA 18104  
JED MARTINEZ, 71 Crystal Street, Elmont, NY 11003  
JOHN P. MORGAN, 185 Seabreeze Ave. #4, E. Keansburg, NJ 07734  
LARRY OBERC, 58 Anderson Street #5, Boston, MA 02114  
SUSAN PACKIE - please contact c/o INSIDE JOKE  
WILLIAM G. RALEY, 21541 Oakbrook, Mission Viejo, CA 92692  
STEVEN F. SCHARFF, P.O. Box 5004, Hillside, NJ 07205  
KATHY STADALSKY, 933 State Route 314, Mansfield, OH 44903-9807  
LARRY STOLTE, 4661 Arizona #2, San Diego, CA 92116  
DORIAN TENORE-BARTILUCCI, 86 Willow St., Floral Park, NY 11001  
KERRY THORNLEY, P.O. Box 5498, Atlanta, GA 30307  
PHIL TORTORICI, P.O. Box 57487, West Palm Beach, FL 33405

### SLUMBER PARITY

(In which Our Hero, having hit an all-time low, is perturbed to find out that even his subconscious is against him)

**WARNING:** This column contains incidents of non-sexual behavior happening where, BY RIGHTS, sexual behavior should run rampant. Proceed at your own risk.

You know you're in trouble when your dreams get out of control.

I've always had my dreams under control. I'm not saying that my nocturnal nightlife hasn't been plagued with horrors on occasion. For example, I once experienced a night terror. A night terror is the equivalent of a well-timed goose on the rear. You see, you'd be there blissfully frolicking with friends, pets and (once that ol' Debbil Puberty sets in) media sex objects and your subconscious will get jealous. So, in a bid to reassert its authority, it sends a crow in a prison suit to topple a building on your ectoplasmic head. For some reason, this is terrifying to a sleeping guy. It's so frightening, in fact, that you start screaming until your father threatens to pop you one while your subconscious giggles uncontrollably.

But other than that incident<sup>1</sup>, my dream-life was fairly uneventful. I'd nod off and my subconscious would create innocuous, hep tableaux for me to experience. Then, after I'd had enough, I'd wake up and go about my business. There were no "anxiety

dreams": no being found naked in class, no falling, no being discovered fornicating by the Pope, no funeral for family members. No matter how horrific my real life was, my dreams were quite nice, thank you.

Until recently.

I had this dream last week, the first in a series of them. I've pinpointed the catalyst as a conversation about what makes women attractive.

**WARNING:** Here's where that non-sexual stuff comes in. Those people with heart conditions might want to sit this one out.

So that night I went to sleep. I had a dream—a dream where I was coming out of my office building to find Winona Ryder waiting for me, wearing a grey terrycloth thing with black straps and matching skirt.

Now, Winona Ryder is presently a prime contender for Official Tom Deja Sex Symbol of '89. Her portrayal of the dark side of the girl next door in *Heathers*<sup>2</sup> fascinated me. Yes, unlike the previous winner of this crown, she has a fresh-faced, conventional look. However, there's boiling anger and intelligence underneath her appearance, an anger I find irresistible. Having her waiting outside my office was not an unpleasant beginning at all.

So we exchanged pleasantries, talked and took the bus home.

That's it.

Nothing else. Nada. Niente. The Big Zippo.

That's what frightens me: NOTHING HAPPENED! I had an attractive woman ALL TO MYSELF IN MY DREAMS and I talked to her. She was even dressed suggestively (if you've seen *Heathers*, you know what I mean), and I didn't do a damn thing. From where I sit, that's shameful.

While you rarely have control over your life, you should have complete comprehension of your dreamlife. If you dream of falling, you know you'll wake up before pancaking. If you dream of wandering naked through Sears<sup>3</sup>, you know nobody's going to notice. If you're dreaming of going to bat at the World Series, rest assured you'll hammer in that game-winning homer.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY**, if you dream you've got your favorite media lust object alone wearing as little as humanly possible, you know that a) you'll engage in wild, hot, passionate sex, and b) you'll ruin him/her for other men/women for life. That's the nature of things. It's no secret that this is as close as you're likely to get to them (my near-close encounter with Catherine O'Hara notwithstanding). This is, in a way, terrific—in our dreams we're assured that the objet d'amour will not snore, will be tireless and totally compliant to your demands<sup>4</sup>. That's why they're called fantasies, people.

In dreams, conversations will never replace sex in terms of sheer animal satisfaction. A good conversation will make you feel better and won't get you pregnant, granted. But there's no such thing as a lingual afterglow. Just ask Kim Basinger.

So you understand my disturbed state of mind. By forcing me to submit to grueling conversation with Winona Ryder, I get the feeling my subconscious is trying to tell me something. However, my subconscious is so sneaky that it ain't talking. It could have up and said it, but no. Subconsciouses never tell you anything. They are poor team players.

The nagging question of the message's meaning is further aggravated by the use of Winona Ryder. Is it saying I should look for a woman in grey Spandex? Is it telling me to confine my pursuits to actresses in black comedies? Is it warning me against lusting after women under the age of eighteen? Or is Ryder representative of one of these Freudian symbols you hear so much about in college psychology classes? But then, considering what Freudian symbols always boil down to, I'd rather not think about it. Maybe she's trying to tell me my education wasn't a great idea. I don't know.

The bottom line is, I'm in the dark here. This is ironic in that, let's face it, I was in the dark when this garbage started. I have suffered from insomnia ever since the dream in question. I have this fear that Winona will appear in my dreams once more, this time to break it off. That would be the ultimate tragedy. After spending so much time getting to know this Shade-With-An-Actress'-Face, I couldn't take a rejection so soon.

Of course, my subconscious might have other nasty surprises waiting for me: homelessness, torture, conversations with a Republican. This fear is ruining my life. When you come down to it, this could be the beginning of a new, more insidious night terror, one designed for a more adult sensibility. Crows in prison suits don't scare me any more. Put that crow in a grey Spandex thing and new vistas of terror open up.

So be careful when you sleep tonight. Trust no one. You never know when that plague o' demons will reach you...or you...or YOU!<sup>5</sup>

### FOOTNOTES FREUD LOVES

1-For the record, there were a few minor nightmares. There was something about a slasher chasing me around an apartment building and one where I died. However, since I come back as a waycool ghost and save my girlfriend from matrimony worse than death, that one was acceptable.

2-If you have not seen *Heathers*, do. This black comedy about the cult of teenage suicide is the second best film I've seen this year. The first was *Miracle Mile*.

3-Dave Barry suffers from this dream. Of course, I bet if he had Winona Ryder in his dream, he couldn't just talk to her.<sup>1</sup>

4-Unless, of course, you like people who snore. That's your problem.

5-When in doubt, cite old science fiction films. Works for me.

### FOOTNOTES ELAYNE MATES

1-Is this the biggest hint that I want to be JJ's Dave Barry, or 11 what?





"INTO THE FINAL DECADE FOR THE BLANC GENERATION"

"The world is moving at such a pace that it is now possible,

for the first time ever, to feel nostalgic for the future."

"Today's heroes aren't so much standing up for what is right as they are getting revenge for all that's wrong." "How can there be re-hash if there IS no hash?"

Three off-the-cuff observations I've plundered across during the sizzlin' summer-o-89 which I believe merit heavy thinking as 1990, and all that implies, careens ever closer.

The tragic passing of Man-With-A-Thousand-Voices Mel Blanc shall serve this evening as a fine stepping-off point for the study we'll be concerning ourselves with herein. To be specific, I'm curious if I'm the only one who thought it odd how the simultaneous loss of Sir Laurence ("Larry" to his imagined dear friends) Olivier—a great actor, sure, but a mere INTERPRETER of lines, no?—completely overshadowed the death of Mr. Blanc, who, much unlike Larry, was a CREATOR. A visionary genius. And a really funny guy to boot. So they ran a hastily-assembled minute or two of Mel's greatest hits on "Entertainment Tonight" while Olivier was praised, honored and mourned all the way up the proverbial wazoo.

Come the 1990's, a decade which no less a cultural authority than our very own Daza has proclaimed shall be (and not a second too soon!) a "decade of substance," such travesties should not be allowed to transpire, or at least pass unaccounted for. Form over flash; steak, NOT sizzle: THAT'S what's in store, I'm told. And I, for one, can hardly wait.

The recent mega-glut of Batmania stands as a signpost as well—that is, if you've bothered to glance out the windshield. As stereotypically as the first "Superman" flick a decade ago, drenched as it was in a thick gauze of heartwarming, flag-wrapping patriotism (a good four years prior to Bruce Springsteen's yankee diddle dandy "Born In The U.S.A.!!") signalled the coming Era of Reagan ('nuff said!), the kiddie-noir Rambo-with-a-cape "Batman" may very well be acting as but a Coming Attractions trailer for that ten-year B-feature starring the bastard offspring of Bernhard Goetz. Join me now, won't you, in not only bidding a fondled farewell to Pee Wee Herman as cultural icon, but to the powers that maybe and their inspired casting of George Bush and (heaven forbid!) Dan Quayle: two bit players who, despite late-night monologues to the contrary, are the ideal Men-With-A-Thousand-Policies poised to pull America even farther off the global theatre's centre stage.

And whomsoever shall be ready to leap into the lead roles, after years of shrews understudy? Put your hands together, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome The One and Only Mikhail Gorbachev, starring alongside his neighbors from the once mystic East as they replay Those Fabulous Sixties in a brand new, and improved, setting. For all of you who missed it the first time 'round—not to mention all you loyally witless boomers pining through rose-colored psyches for the "good" old daze—thrill as Selma, Alabama becomes Alexandra township, and Chicago moves to Tiananmen Square. Next stop? Dallas!

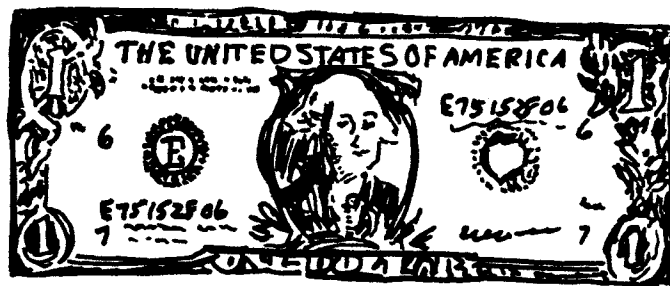
Suffice to say, as cynicism elevates in status from here buzzword to A Way Of Life, and we all choose to deflect rather than reflect, may I humbly suggest we all tuck our collective heads between our thighs and assume crash positions, coz...y'know what?

"Th-th-th-That's All, Folks!"

#### POSTCARD

by B.Z. Bullen  
To celebrate  
Dot's bowling score  
I bought this card  
In Ludwig's store.

Ludwig fought  
in the Civil War!  
What's his age?  
164—  
Same as Dottie's  
Bowling score!



EKEconomy

by Michael Polo

I could work from dawn to dusk  
Or even a quarter to three  
But no matter what the wage  
It seems like a quarter to me.

M 8625

EDNOTE:  
Please forgive typos—no time to proof-read the whole issue...

## SAVE THE DAY

by Larry Stolte

Inflation is an unwanted creature; like bumblebees, bunions, and Bundy, you seem to feel better when it's not around. While the beast is no longer the enormity it was in the '70s, the consensus is that it is not dead but rather in hibernation and sure to be hungry when it wakes. Inflation has hit many countries in such a way that you would need a wheelbarrow full of paper money to buy a loaf of bread, and that is because you trade in the wheelbarrow.

But now comes the announcement of a new type of inflation that is worse than price inflation. It doesn't decrease the amount of our dollar; it decreases the amount of our existence. According to a study at MIT, scientists, using lab rats, a government grant, a computer, a tuning fork, and major hallucinogenics have discovered time inflation.

What is time inflation? Think for a minute about how long your tenth grade school year seemed. Now think about how much time has passed since the Space Shuttle Challenger exploded. You know darn well your tenth grade school year was longer. Now they've proved it.

Simply put, X amount of time in 1989 isn't equal to X amount of time in a previous year, say, 1957. In 1957, a year was a year. You got your four basic seasons, you got a full night's sleep, you got long weekends. Nowadays, you don't get your year's worth. Minutes meld with years; you go to the bathroom and miss November. Something has happened. But what?

It's all in the formula  $E=MC^2/xly+DooWopDooWop$ , where X is the amount of time and Y is the relevant question to ask regarding this study. Using 1957 as the base year (where one year equals one year) and plugging the '80s decade into the formula, we find that this entire decade went by in just three base years. We all knew that we didn't get a full ten out of the '80s, but three? It's devastating. The study also shows we got eight years out of the '70s.

The real problem is that this inflation is not contingent upon external factors (see formula). It won't help to raise unemployment levels or interest rates.

At times the rate seems to be spiralling out of control. Projections show that the '90s could go by in twenty minutes. It's conceivable that in the year 2020 the NBA finals could be played well into the next regular season. It won't be a pretty sight.

Luckily, the increase isn't steady. Also, the degree of inflation is not constant within each day. An average workday, for instance, is actually a period of considerable deflation.

There is no way to measure this phenomenon. With price inflation, you can compare prices of products over the years. But you can't measure time inflation; clocks and calendars change with the change. Otherwise it wouldn't be inflation, would it? This is a very complex issue, and we have only those scientists with funny haircuts who are much smarter than we but can't figure out the toaster to trust. Or do we?

Maybe we can also trust our gut reactions, our hunches, as well. Our body clocks are not fooled. Think about it for a minute (21 base seconds). We know that the average workday is longer than eight hours. Sometimes it seems to last longer than Stevie Wonder's smile. We know that the Shuttle Challenger exploded about a year and a half ago, that Oily Ollie North hit the headlines a few months back, and that John McEnroe was the #1 tennis player in the world about last month.

There is some good news. A group of artists, funded by a Burger King minimum wage grant, has come up with something called the Z factor in an unrelated concurrent study. Their equation reads  $E=MC^2/zxly+DooWopDooWop$ , where Z equals the deification of computers, capital, car phones and faxes, and the ensuing trashing of Mother Earth. If the Z factor can be lowered, there's still time to save the day. It's up to us.

If I could save time in a bottle,  
the first thing that I'd like to do  
is to save every day  
'til eternity passes away  
at a quarter past two...

# Quarter Moons and Pyramids:

A FABLE

by Wayne Hogan

Once upon a time there was a quarter moon.  
And a pyramid.  
Then two quarter moons.  
And two pyramids.  
Soon there were quarter moons and pyramids everywhere.



There were small quarter moons and pyramids. And medium-sized quarter moons and pyramids. And some quarter moons and pyramids that were very big.

A few quarter moons sat on the ground alongside pyramids. And some of the pyramids floated high up in the sky just like the quarter moons did.

Here and there a quarter moon could be seen perched on top of a pyramid, resting, it looked like.

And now and then a pyramid sat balanced on a quarter moon's topmost tip.

The pyramids and the quarter moons, they all got along just fine. The small quarter moons and pyramids got along very well with the medium-sized and great big quarter moons and pyramids. And vice versa. They all seemed to really like each other. Nobody could remember when they weren't together.

Then one day a big grey cloud came along, coming to a stop high above all the pyramids and quarter moons.

The big cloud got darker and darker and darker. Then bright zig-zagging bolts of lightning sailed toward the ground far below. And booming loud sounds of thunder rolled across the sky sounding like several giant kettle drums all being pounded on at the same time by giant drumsticks.

The pyramids and quarter moons huddled close together, waiting anxiously to see what would happen next.

And then it started to rain. Huge drops of water fell from the big grey cloud, getting all the quarter moons and pyramids soaking wet. Bolts of lightning flashed everywhere and the thunder got louder and louder.

Higher and higher the water rose till it almost covered all the quarter moons and pyramids, even those way up in the sky.

And the rain kept falling, hard, like it was being poured from great large buckets.

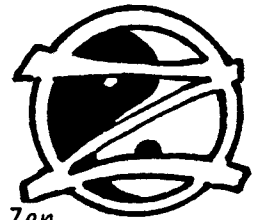
When it seemed that the rain would fill all the ground and all the sky, that all the pyramids and all the quarter moons would be totally covered by water, the rain suddenly stopped.

And there was no more lightning. Or roaring claps of thunder romping across the sky. The big cloud that was grey before had now turned fleecy white.

Slowly, the water receded. Here and there a quarter moon and pyramid could be seen in the sky again. And scattered over the ground, too.

Soon, all the water was gone. All the pyramids and quarter moons, they were still there, just like before. Small ones and medium-sized ones and large ones. Here

# Zenarchy STORIES



by Ho Chi Zen

WHY NOT?

Ho Chi Zen: Why is the grass green?

Krishnadas: To prove how necessary cow shit is.

A HARSH SENTENCE

Alan Watts says in *Tao: The Watercourse Way*:

In many cultures people are brought up to mistrust their own organisms, and, as children, are taught to control their thoughts, emotions, and appetites by muscular efforts such as clenching the teeth or fists, frowning to concentrate attention, scratching the head to think, staring to see, holding the breath or tightening the diaphragm or rectum to inhibit emotion. These strainings are largely futile because the nervous system is not muscle but electric circuitry, and one does not use a sledgehammer for tuning a radio. Those who raise children in this way are simply unintelligent people who think that mere force can achieve anything. They remind one of the story of a cigar-chewing Texan who harnessed a kitten to his broken-down Cadillac. When bystanders pointed out that this was absurd, he replied, "You-all may think so, but I got a horsewhip."

FAIR ENOUGH

"God and I made a deal: I don't inquire into His nature and doings and He don't tell me how to conduct my personal affairs." —General Strike

WHAT PRICE POWER?

"The states of Han and Wei were fighting with each other for territory. Tzu Hua Tzu saw Marquis Chao-II (of Han, 358-333BC), who had a lugubrious look. Tzu Hua Tzu said: 'Suppose that today the whole world agreed before Your Highness to an edict which said, "If your left hand grasps it, you will lose your right hand, and if your right hand grasps it, you will lose your left. But if you do grasp it, you will gain the world." Then would Your Highness grasp it or not?'

"Marquis Chao-II replied: 'I would not.' Tzu Hua Tzu continued: 'Very good. From this we can see that the two arms are of more importance than the world, whereas the body is still more important than the two arms. The state of Han in comparison with the world is far removed in importance, and what you are now fighting for is still less important than Han. Yet Your Highness has been embittering his person and doing harm to his life to the point of chagrin, still without obtaining it.'..." (From the *LU-SHIH CH'UN CH'IU*, as quoted on page 140 of Volume I of *A History of Chinese Philosophy* by Fung Yu-lan, Princeton University Press, 1952)

THE MOTHERS OF WORDS

Wen Ch'ang, the Chinese God of Literature, is served by two attendants: T'ien Lung (Deaf Heaven) and Ti Ya (Dumb Earth).

MORE HIPPIE NOSTALGIA

Ho Chi Zen said: "The True People of Old did not get bored, for they knew how to enjoy the company of friends and lovers. Knowing how to enjoy the company of friends and lovers, they lacked the desire to acquire fame and had no need to amass wealth and were bereft of any ambition to regulate one another's lives. For this reason, they never needed to do for their own happiness anything that would make others miserable. So that is why the time in which they lived is called the Age of Perfect Peace—for there was no monotony, but only the excitement of intimacy one with another among them, precluding all boredom and hence depriving them of any desire to fight."

MUCH TO THE POINT

Rabbi Koan: Which is mightier, then pen or the sword?

Ho Chi Zen: At what range?

and there a quarter moon sat resting on a pyramid. And several pyramids were balanced on the tips of quarter moons.

They were all together again. Just like before. 13

# The Power(?) of Thought

by Steven F. Scharff

Another of my many excursions into the Twilight Zone known as New York City, and another ride on the PATH commuter train. It was Saturday night, and the train's weekend schedule meant the long route: 33rd Street to Journal Square, Jersey City, via Hoboken.

I tried to think of something to rid myself of the boredom that would follow me on this ride. As the train slowly left the station, I went into my shoulder bag to read a left-wing newspaper I had picked up. As I worked my way through Marxist-Leninist rhetoric, I noticed a man, slightly older than me, enter the train at 9th Street.

He looked about as "medium" as you can get: pale pink skin, brown-to-blond hair, closely cut, and dressed in assorted shades of beige, with a brown paper bag under his arm to match. He avoided eye contact with the passengers as he made his way to the far corner of the car, and sat with his head turned to face the window.

"My God," I thought, "a generic human being!"

I decided that this was the opportunity to let my mind flex. I imagined a scenario in which an alien civilization had "planted" bland, ordinary people to mingle unnoticed in society, and then triggered them somehow with a missing in life that profoundly altered civilization.

"This simple-looking man," I thought, "is destined to become a great and powerful leader. He will be imbued with the True and Omnipresent Secret of Life and the Universe, will experience true cosmic understanding, and will profoundly and irreversibly alter all previously-held concepts of human thought!"

All this went through my head as the man stared out the window on the way to Hoboken.

"And all this activity will begin on this very train. Right...NOW!"

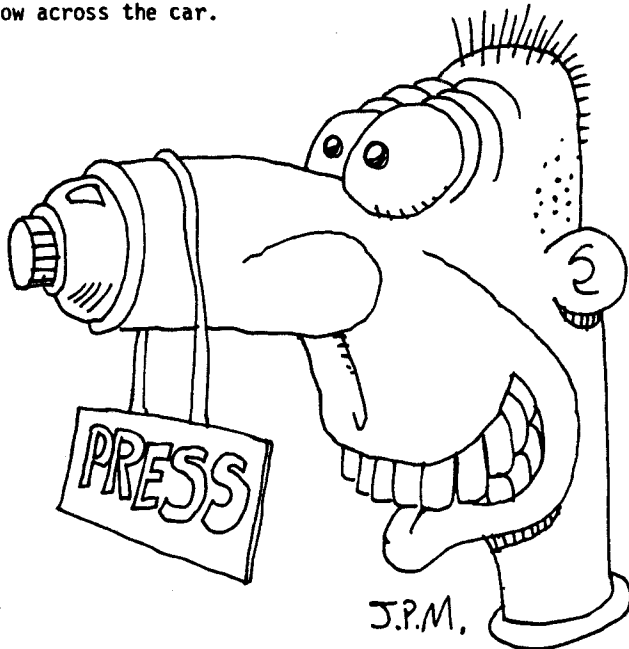
At that very moment, the man began to smile. He closed his eyes and turned away from the window, with a peaceful look on his face. He then began to giggle. He tried to keep quiet, but the closer the train came to the station, the more he laughed.

Finally we reached Hoboken. The train scraped to a halt, the electronic doors opened, and then man stood up and briskly walked out of the car, his laughter echoing against the tiled walls of the station. Every eye, both in and out of the train, was on him.

A woman in the twilight of her years, seated beside me, mumbled, "He's gotta be on drugs!"

I sat motionless, sweat dripping down my back in the air-conditioned car, wondering just what it was that I had set in motion.

For the rest of the trip, I avoided eye contact with the other passengers and stared at my reflection in the window across the car.



# POSITIVE THINKING

by Larry Oberc

It was John's idea to buy the gun. I'm the one who chipped in for the bullets. Between the two of us we had a chance. A chance for what, we didn't know. But it was a chance we had to take. There's a thing I got about positive thinking. I don't believe in it. Neither does John. About how these fells got paid huge amounts of money to go on talk shows. About how positive thinking, no matter how positive it was, wouldn't stop a bullet from going wrong. Bullets are like that. They don't think positive, negative, at all. They just go. They don't give a shit. They fly, crush, break open shut doors. The image that bothered me the most about positive thinkers was that scene in California. The one where that wildman walked into a McDonald's and started shooting. Positive thinking didn't mean shit to these people. Nobody answered their prayers. Nobody was listening. It was like a row of dominoes clicking, collapsing, falling down. Nobody kept score. And nobody got even. I think John threw the first punch when I wasn't looking. It caught me off guard, sliding across my face like a tractor. He was upset about the bullets. I wouldn't give him any. The second punch he threw went wild. It landed on nothing. My car crunched a few minutes later. The bomb went off. Waves drowned. Cats and dogs still fight outside my window.

# The Making of an Illegal Substance

by Susan Packie

The crux of the Great Candy Debate was to be whether brown chocolate was superior to the white variety. A panel of experts made up of youngsters and oldsters from all fifty states congregated in Hershey, PA to sample the specimens.

On exhibit was chocolate from all over the world. Chocolate shaped like bunny rabbits, hearts and shamrocks. Chocolate filled with cherries, cream and caramel. Chocolate flavored with brandy, rum and coffee. Chocolate solid and smooth, crunchy and munchy, liquid and mixed into milk and ice cream. Light or dark, it was truly the chocolate of everyone's dreams.

To decide the question of which was the best, a vote was taken, but the mouths of the panel members were so crammed full of the tasty treat they could not even speak their opinions, could not raise their sticky hands, could not even manage to stand.

But the opponents of both brown and white chocolate were exceedingly able and willing to voice their views, not having their jaws stuck together or their fingers permanently lodged in a candy box. In fact, none of them had ever tasted the product they lambasted so vigorously. It was, it seems, beneath their dignity.

So chocolate was officially declared an illegal substance and its consumption and sale were prohibited by law. All the strikes were against it. It was called fattening and messy. It caused acne, headaches, and bloated bodies. It wasn't nutritious. Worse yet, it was addictive!

Not a single sane voice had spoken up for the world's supposedly favorite food. What does all this prove? Well, the next time you get high and wonder why the law doesn't smile on your enterprise, remember the outcome of the Great Candy Debate and the fate of its chocolate-satiated fans.

# CONFLAGRATION

TOM ROBERTS  
JIM SIERGEY  
7-2-89



Defense Appropriation Approved

## End of world narrowly averted

FT. TOTTEN, New York (YU) — The world came within thirty seconds of global nuclear annihilation last month because of a stripped machine-screw that Pentagon officials had not been allowed to budget for as a result of recent deficit reduction hysteria in Washington.

The screw, a chrome plated #12, 1/4" Japanese import with matching tooth washer and lock nut which holds a spill guard in place on a custom-built coffee machine, was an early victim of the budget-cutters' axe. At \$250,000 a dozen, this special order line item available only from Meese's Plumber's Supply in Redondo Beach, Calif., was originally seen as part of an elaborate price-gouging scheme in which taxpayers were forced to shell out billions of dollars for items commonly available in neighborhood hardware stores.

Not so, say military analysts, who point out that leakage from the coffee maker nearly short-circuited the DS-Button which would have launched 32,327 missiles at the targets.

No other details were available.

Yossarian Universal

## THE OCCASION

by William Passera

Mad man covered with coats in August will ran naked this winter. Dinner at 8:00 a.m. whistling at the sun, he traded his watch for the moment, doubt for understanding.

Performing, reaching his goal of walking on the moon... he urinates without gravity or interest in watching eyes.

JOY NOW, NEVER DELAY reads the newspaper in his pocket.

Talking to someone that never answers, as my father did my mother, he works out the formula that all makes perfect sense—Forty-three people crossing the street equals page sixty-four of the Daily News.

IT COULDN'T HAPPEN HERE!

by Dennis Brezina

A face—confident, hopeful, Yet angry, inspiring fear. Is this the face of fascism? No, it couldn't happen here!

The face of North or Gingrich, Intense, efficient, sincere. The Reinhardt Heydrichs of a Hitlerian America? No, it shouldn't happen here!

A voice—urgent, strident, Moral high ground commanding. This voice—for complexity, Simple answers demanding. Ends over means, Due process must cease. Like a voice of the past—Father Coughlin, the radio priest.

Battling for America's soul In a poisoned atmosphere. Demogoguery to win in the end? It just couldn't happen here!

Flag-waving President Preaching ethics, efficiency; Foreign policy, a single voice; Without end—American Century. Pandering to the public. No hard look

At threatened democracy— Deficits radical, economy Distorted and plutocracy.

Who's to blame? Full accounting near? Round up the unpatriotic. No, that shouldn't happen here!

Silencing voices of dissent, Don't imitate Brian Willson, Who lost both legs Or Hart, Coelho or Wright If you treasure your health. Eroding traditions, Civil rights' recisions Make it easier To concentrate the wealth. Fading, the communist devil. Let's devour what's dear. "Anne Frank, the last transport! All aboard!" Oh, my God! What if that happens here?

Control and order, The sine qua non of a corporate state. Ex-drug offenders jackboot from camp. Pro-lifers mate, mate, mate. America for Americans, Bring the soldiers home again. Society to militarize. What else to do with them?

Strident voices incessantly promoting The politics of bigotry and fear. America's awash in a xenophobic tide. Maybe it is happening here!

No! No! Don't manacle the people, Leave them alone, they're simply dear! It just could not, should not— Indeed, it must not happen here!

But what if it does?

WE ARE ALL TERRORISTS—first class. Terrorism stems from suicidal, winnerless wars, inflationary fixed wages, unnecessary unemployment, and atheism (no herenow returns). For the arm and religion that had to be adopted in previous lives (returns save one) send SASE to BRAINBEALISM, Box 2243, Youngstown, OH 44504.

## The Fifth Horseman by Rodney Lynch

Many people aren't aware of it, but there is a Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse. His name is Class Reunion, and he destroys lives while singing the school song. High school reunions tend to make the Inquisition look like a bunch of Catholic choirboys handing out flowers to the sick and infirm.

My own reunion was held several weeks ago. The invitation was delivered by two professional hitmen who tortured sheep in their spare time. I immediately assumed a German accent and told them Rodney Lynch died while trying to elude a posse. They weren't buying it, though. Under a bare bulb and threats of unanesthetized dentistry, I admitted my identity. They shoved an engraved invitation beneath my nose and forced me to read it: "You are cordially invited to be roasted over an open flame at our five-year reunion for Independent School District Thirteen."

Within minutes the house was on the auction block, the cat placed in cryogenics, and I was waiting in line for my ticket to Buenos Aires. Finding all flights booked—mostly with people trying to escape reunions—I knew my only choice was to attend. So now I had two weeks to write a boring book on American society, lose 167 pounds and shave my back, if possible.

The reunion was to be held in the school itself, the site of a major psychiatric experiment: take a normal kid, treat him like dirt and see how he turns out. As the unwitting subject of this test, I expect to someday receive the Nobel Prize in Science, along with my psychology teacher, Mr. Mead.

The day of reckoning finally came. After being searched for concealed weapons (I had to ditch my Uzi), I found myself in the gym of Northwest Cabbarus High School, Independent School District Thirteen. Behind a formica table sat Ms. Daughtery, my old biology teacher, an old crone whose face had been left inside an oyster too long. She picked up an ID tag and slid it my way.

"Hello, I'm:" the tag read. I scrawled on it with a pen. Ms. Daughtery glanced at the tag. "I hope you have a nice time, Mr. Vengeance."

"Oh, I'm sure I will," I said and headed into the gym. I confidently patted the pack of index cards in my pocket containing the answers to any peaky questions from prying classmates.

The punch bowl had several small dead things floating around in it and, behind it, Mr. Vector, my physics teacher, the man who answered every intelligent question with "What are ya—stupid?" He hadn't changed much—Burgess Meredith with cowboy boots.

He scowled at me when I asked for some punch but extended his

### MONDAY NIGHT BLUES

by Michael Polo

It's rumored in certain gym lockers  
That cheerleaders all have big blockers  
To cheer for when blocking that kicker  
And if you ask them to try liquor  
They may even take off their pom-poms  
In order to beat on your tom-toms  
You'd bought for the cheerleaders' beating  
Though they're whom you'd like to be seating  
Yourself near instead of some trucker...  
You're dreaming that you'd like to tucker  
Her out on the field there and party  
But you ain't no football jock, smarty!  
So, while those young things are all cheering,  
It's into your beer you'll be tearing.

## OVERHEARD at America's Lunch Counters



"I can't complain much, I've been to California."

arm anyway and we shook hands, mine shaking all by itself. He ran his fingers over his balding head and stared at me.

"I know you," he said. My legs quivered. I got ready to bolt from the room. He peered closely at my nametag. "Vengeance. Vengeance. Oh, yes. First period, third row."

"Why, yes," I said and let out a breath. "How swell of you to remember."

"What do you do now, Vengeance?" he asked as he dipped me a cup of red punch.

"I'm an author," I read from one of my cards as I flicked an exoskeleton off the rim of my cup. "Did you read SO YOU WANT TO BE AN ARMCHAIR? I wrote that. Now I'm working on a sequel: SO YOU WANT TO BE A BOTTLE OF LIQUID PLEDGE. It's tough work, but I feel a certain obligation to my legions of fans."

"You know," I said, lowering my voice to a whisper, "I hear that sometimes former graduates come to these reunions and lie, yes, lie about their lives. Is that true?"

Mr. Vector shook his head sadly. "Pathetic, isn't it?"

"Yes," I said. "I'm currently writing a groundbreaking article on that very subject for the Journal of American Psychiatry. Of course, that's after I restore the ancient palace at Knossos and take the first close-up photos of the sun."

Vector crushed a small corpse on the bottom of the punch bowl. "You turned out to be a good egg, Vengeance."

"Thanks, Mr. Vector. I owe it all to the way I was treated here at good ol' Independent School District Thirteen. And I'm going to mention your name in my next article for Physics Illustrated."

Mr. Vector blushed with pride.

Suddenly I winced. Over Mr. Vector's shoulder I saw a familiar flattop. Coming our way was Butch Nahtsy, the school bully, now running a training camp for overweight children. At his elbow was Buffy Crystal, the cheerleader with so much school spirit she had to stuff some of it into her bra.

"Oh, would you look at the time? I'm lecturing on abstract typing at the U.N. in fifteen minutes. I must be shoving off."

I turned to scramble away and blindsided Ms. Daughtery, who was just coming to complain about the unusual pulpiness of the punch.

"Aha!" she squealed. "Now I know you! How could I ever forget a klutz like you, Rodney Lynch? I couldn't swing a dead cat without you getting in the way." I vividly recall getting pelted with a dead cat once or twice.

"No, the name's Vengeance. See my tag?"

At that moment Butch and Buffy stepped up to the punch table.

"Haw, haw, if it ain't Rodney Lynch, my favorite wimp," Butch said and poured a cup of punch over my head. "Hey, everybody," he yelled to the rest of the gymnasium, "Rodney Lynch's here! He actually had the nerve to show up!"

"Lynch?" Vector said. "He said his name was Vengeance. He said he'd put my name in Physics Illustrated!" He pointed a short stubby finger at me. "Now I remember you. Always had your head on your desk, always drawing those blasted pictures of Physics Man on the back of your test papers."

Apparently the air conditioning had failed in the gym, because the room was beginning to feel uncomfortably warm even with that nice, cool punch running down my neck.

Buffy giggled and tugged at Butch's arm. She hadn't lost that girlish figure; I'm sure it was just temporarily hidden under several hundred pounds of peanut butter sandwiches. "Isn't that the guy who—" She burst into laughter. "You know."

"Hey, that's right. Rodney—"

Uh oh, I thought, here it comes. The time I had that little accident and—

"—wet his pants in gym class! Haw, that was funny! The principal wouldn't let him go home so he had to walk around the whole day like that! What was the reason for that?"

"Some bully hit me in the crotch with a soccer ball, Butch," I said from between clenched teeth. "But that's okay. After spending several thousand dollars and hundreds of hours in therapy I'm almost cured of my urge to kill people foolish enough to remind me of that."

Butch stopped laughing instantly. His smile faded and the twinkle in his eye shot away to rest precariously on the edge of the punch bowl. "Are you trying to be funny, runt? You know, you sound just like the parents of those sniveling little cowards at Camp Butch."

A crowd had now gathered around us. I recognized them; some unknown graffiti artist had gone through my hearbook and drawn red "X's" on all their faces. They were beginning to turn ugly. I could hear grunted insults coming from angry faces. There was only one thing to do.

And I did it.

"Oh my God!" Buffy screamed. "He wet his pants again!"

A warm trickle ran down my leg as I moved toward the crowd.

"Okay, everybody stay calm and nobody gets wet," I said. The stain on the front of my pants was increasing, seeping deeper into the fabric of my rented tux. "I want a pathway to the door. Now." No one moved. I took another step. "Listen, I don't want to splash anyone, but I will if I have to."

The former elite of my class parted like the Red Sea. I quickly walked down the path, stuffed some cookies feverishly into my pockets and bid the crowd adieu. Then I walked calmly out into the warm summer air, took a deep breath and merrily ran home screaming at the top of my lungs.

Several minutes later, residents of my neighborhood were amazed to see an oversized gnome trying desperately to stuff himself into a garbage can.



# Commercial McClue-In by "Kid" Sieve

Hot on the heels of last issue's soapbox tirade against the Museum of Modern Mythology (693 Mission Street, Suite 900, San Francisco, CA 94105, phone 415/546-0202) apparently selling out to American Express by accepting a bribe of \$10,000 and a presumed icon of modern mythology in the persona of the AmEx Centurion in exchange for much publicity and so on, we received a very lovely letter from the Museum's administrative assistant in the form of the following challenge:

Your response puts me in an awkward situation, because I'd never heard of the Centurion either, and in general I agree with your point of view. However, the plain truth is that the AmEx grant kept the museum from folding. Unfortunately most people who are not sell-outs also don't have \$10,000 to give us. You should realize better than anyone that this is the miserable state our country is in. Mathematical laws would indicate that it would take 400 individual members like yourself to equal the AmEx contribution. If you've got any big fundraising ideas that don't involve what you perceive as selling out, we'd love to hear about them. Really, I'm not being snotty.

I wasn't at the Museum when all the AmEx stuff happened, but I think it was probably done with what "Bob" has called the "Zen of butt-kissing"...refer to SubGenius Media Barrage #10...

Still in operation, **BONNY BALDWIN**  
Bonny added at the bottom, no doubt in jest, a picture cut out of a newspaper of "Matt, RadiantLight's charismatic minister, preach[ing] unconditional love and acceptance." Well, okay, I really am going to try to respond here with love and acceptance, since I do love the idea of the Museum, and I accept Bonny's letter in the spirit in which it was intended, certainly. But I also want to dovetail my response with the following excerpts from a recent column by Linda Winer in Newsday:

This just in...It seems Yoko Ono has made a deal so that esthetic New York shoppers can see one of her late husband's drawings—including the always-appropriate "Bed-In-For-Peace"—whenever they use [MasterCard or Visa]. Naturally, Yoko gets reimbursed for whatever new customers John generates. Kind of gives new meaning to the Plastic Ono Band...The whole world is a billboard. We know, we all know. Just when I think I've gotten used to it, however, when I've begun to convince myself that "selling out" really does mean just boffo box office, a fresh celebrity tie-in or commercial outrage appears to darken the view anew. Yoko aside, the deal that still jolts my enough-already reflex is Linda Ellerbee's union with Maxwell House Coffee...Watch this ad, then try watching one of her editorials on CNN and see if you can separate her journalist voice from her huckster voice. "Trust me," she is telling us. "Coffee. Money. Journalism. They're all the same." Ellerbee reportedly was paid \$350,000 for the ad's first 13 weeks and another \$200,000 for the next 13 weeks. This is a lot of money to most people, but not so much for celebrity TV reporters. To justify such stupid greed, she claims the money will help finance her TV production company. I love that. We're supposed to think, well, this woman is destroying her career so she can afford to produce better TV for us all...Of course, this was Reagan's decade of "private sector" support for nonprofit culture. This means the arts were turned into the gold frames for corporate billboards. Business got credit for elevated taste and got to plaster its logo on everything that doesn't bleed. We hardly raise an eyebrow any more when a cola is the name of an arts festival or a bank gets top billing on orchestra concerts in Central Park. Artists can expect to need more, not less, corporate largesse in the '90s, now that Congress wants to control anything that gets federal money. But as Madonna learned when Pepsi dropped her video, and naughty TV shows are learning as sponsors buckle to conservative pressure groups: There's no such thing as free expression when you're part of the corporate promotion department.

What choice is there? I honestly don't know. Not to keep electing assholes, for a start, but most of the people who put these myopic corporate buttlickers there in the first place (remember, ol' Ronnie was GE spokesman for years, one of the reasons why, as our friend Marvin Kitman recently pointed out, GE had no trouble buying NBC whereas ITT ran into a whole mess when attempting to purchase ABC) probably couldn't give a flying about keeping the arts logo-free. But it seems to me that when you've got an enterprise whose purpose, among other things, is to point out the absurdities of corporate mythology in the first place (albeit while "celebrating" it in a perverse, post-modernist way), the last thing you want to do is make yourself vulnerable to a corporation! I'm sorry the Museum couldn't figure out another way to raise funds; I myself am not versed in the area of fundraising, and hey, Elaine always makes such a big deal out of how much money she loses on TJ each issue out-of-pocket, so I'm afraid I can't help you out here, Bonny. I would love TJ readers to write in to our letter column, and to Bonny, with their moneymaking ideas. There are plenty of people, including esteemed TV kibitzer Anni Ackner, who agree with your point of view; I tend toward Linda Winer's vista myself. Alas, compromise is the way of things nowadays, and yes, I know one doesn't have to like it, but neither does one have to support it. I will be visiting the Museum in the future, no doubt, but you've now set yourselves a precedent that has me saying, well, I'm only 1/400th as valuable to you as this corporation, so therefore my membership means comparatively little in the scheme of things—and as nice as you are, and as much as you seem like the kind of person with whom I'd want to hang out

and all that, I'm afraid I won't be renewing membership. Not now, at any rate. Perhaps in a more perfect world, someday, when museums aren't forced to throw principles out the window in order to stay alive.

I'm full of excerpts today—this one comes from Thomas Collins, also a writer for Newsday (hey, what can I tell you, it's the only mainstream paper I read), who spotted a "curious juxtaposition" between the Jesse Helms-led obscene censorship (as opposed to the wording he'd no doubt prefer, censorship on obscenity) hearings and the latest Pontiac ad. I don't know about you, but the latter makes me want to hit the cold shower every time I see it, it's so More-Than-I-Need-To-Know! Listen to this, kiddies:

The ad was for Pontiac sports cars and involved a beach scene in which male and female models cavorted on car hoods and in a parking field, at one point simulating copulation. Buttocks and loins and the outline of genitals through skin-tight biker shorts whizzed by on the screen. Other more subliminal goings-on occurred that had to be freeze-framed to be appreciated, but which no doubt registered in the viewer's unconscious, helping make the connection between Pontiac and sex. Sex in advertising is nothing new, of course, but in this instance a careful viewer might have wondered why the fuss over [the Helms obscenity stuff] compared to what was going on in the commercial. Robert Napplethorpe's nude males—with some of the more offensive parts excised, to be sure—did not seem all that different from the scantily-clad figures in the car ad. Yet one is causing an uproar in Congress and the other is passively accepted—almost unnoticed, you might say...

For those who might have missed the Pontiac commercial, in spirit it was similar to a lot of other commercials in which boobs and buttocks compete with the product for the viewer's attention. However, there is one sequence in which a couple are on the ground, laughing and horsing around in a fairly obvious depiction of the sex act. What gets the advertiser off the hook is that the couple is clothed and the woman is between the man's legs, not the other way around. A few seconds later, the camera focuses frontally on a bulging biker in Spandex shorts. In another version of the same ad, the couple are shown in a different position. He is sitting on a car hood and she is leaning forward between his legs. He is simulating untying her bra string. Her hands start moving downward. In this version, the bare-chested biker is positioned between a woman's legs, his back toward her and one hand holding her ankle as she caresses him.

Just thought I'd peak your prurient interests there. There's another commercial out now, for SVD, featuring some gorgeous blond football player wearing nothing but (or should that be "butt"?), that always sends me into a personal frenzy, but that's neither here nor there. Just shows ta go ya, right-wing ideologues only rail against obscenity if it's not in their best interests.

Speaking of obscenity, the Coors folks (remember, it's the Far Right beer now!) have spent some of their contra money on a very creative new spot, described this way by Adweek: "Tom Arcuragi, spokesman for Coors Extra Gold, gives the good news that one of us mere mortals can win a trip to Hollywood to appear with him in a spot as an extra—as in Extra, get it? While he's in the foreground giving his spiel, we view clips from some spear-and-sandal epic in which extras rush around the screen while Vesuvius erupts. In the end, Arcuragi is joined at his friendly neighborhood tavern by some toga-clad extras." Naturally, this synopsis leaves out the best part—the "extras" are seen in black and white (or was it sepia?), while the rest of the scene takes place in color! I'm pretty sure this was done with colonization-in-reverse, where the entire scene was shot in b/w and then Arcuragi and other "moderns" are colonized in. It's nice to look at anyway, though. Shame it's by those union-busting bastards.

Well, I've got to go gear up for the new TV season—if I'm good, Elaine will let me co-author her reviews next issue. Meanwhile, let me leave you with a preview of Things To Come: The Television Bureau of Advertising has announced a new campaign, entitled "Turn On The Power," to promote free television. We're speaking in relative terms here, of course—they actually mean commercial network TV, as opposed to cable. Uncle Walter Cronkite himself did an unpaid promo for "free TV" already, and the exec VP of Campbell Mithun Esty, the agency doing this nonsense, says, "We want to get across how exciting and glamorous television is." The big push will start January 22, 1990 with a 2-minute spot (does anybody have that much ad-attention span left?). TAB's president asserts, "We're treating television as a product that needs to be marketed." Duh. Like it was ever anything else? Meanwhile, cable is set to shoot back with its campaign, "Cable: Making Television Even Better." Again, esteemed critic Ackner summed it all up very nicely when she opined that the best promotion to get people watching "free TV" again would be better programs. Guess that's still too radical an idea for ad-types, huh? Stay tuned!

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**WHEN YOU'RE READING, LISTENING TO AND WATCHING ALL THE CRAP IN THE NEWSPAPERS, RADIO AND T.V. KEEP IN MIND THAT'S WHAT IT IS — 90% CRAP.**

**It's not so crappy, though, that it shouldn't be relived in the hereafter as in the herebefore. To keep it coming and save capitalism as in past and future herenows send S.A.S.E. to war, inflation, unemployment and death-ending BRAINBEAUISM**

**Box 2243 — YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, 44504**

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K.C. SWAN WRITES A NEIGHBORLY  
NOTE TO SUICIDAL JERRY  
by Bangor Zack Bullen

I been there. They got paths and squirrel trails  
leading out of the thorn thicket.

In the direction I took, there was a carnival ferris  
wheel turning in the distance, with seats swinging high  
and seats rattling low.

I've been high, halfway down, and low. In 1974, my  
dark furnished room, my cracked bathtub, and my Gil-  
lette razor blade wailed out a tempting death song.

Good timely advice: The doctors got good modern  
medicine to treat severe depression. Plus, whenever  
you feel despair, buy some stock in Ocean Bio-Chem.

Now I write books and doggerel, keep Gordon Light-  
foot's music alive, and watch rare sea birds. Fine  
path!

Who knows where your path will lead? A part-time  
job at Milly's Pizza? Savings? Capital? Why not buy  
a few shares of Ocean Bio-Chem (symbol OBCi), price  
fifty cents, buy and hold? This company manufactures  
and distributes beauty products for rich men's boats,  
under the trade name "Star Brite." Climb aboard for a  
pleasant ride!

SUICIDE

by Andy Roberts

20 Conway Twittys singing Harper Valley PTA  
40 Glen Campbells singing Galveston  
60 Andy Williamses singing Moon River  
80 Roger Millers singing King Of The Road  
100 Tennessee Ernie Fords singing 16 Tons  
couldn't bring me to my knees

But The Flight Of The Bumblebee  
hummed by Tiny Tim  
in stereo  
at 10

drove me out the kitchen window  
in a spray of shattered glass  
in a screaming sun dive to the street  
to the place where angels sing  
and the red giraffes  
run like hate.

POETRY IN THE PERFORMANCE

by Edward Mycue

Sydney Savvy dumps on stage.  
This act is currently the rage.  
Once adequately posed behind,  
the squat's to open up the mind,  
transcend by symbol of the mound,  
and by this method acting crowned.  
This garland act earns poop a page  
penned by Acting Annual's reigning sage  
who praises in these words, to wit:  
"Sav's act is literally shit—  
this stuff, the commonest of clay,  
will last with you at least a day—  
that is, to say, beyond the smell:  
for, take my word, Sav cast a spell  
so strong on me that I dare say  
this talent's not to sniff away."

Are they really that smart?...  
or just fearful of what  
is not understood?

Marriage seems their only hope.  
Our grasping honeycomb  
and her divided partner...  
Unafraid and venturing into the  
future...  
creating anew...  
happily ever after.

WEDDING BELLS  
by William Passera  
Sponges are nice and soft,  
but  
find it difficult to let go.  
You can't blame them though,  
who wants to get old and wrinkled?  
(Growth is not easy.)  
Filters have flaws too.  
See how they separate  
good from bad.



"BOB"

EDNOTE - Forgive the zig-zaggy lines  
(and blurriness) throughout this issue - the copiers  
at I.C. weren't quite awake yet!

# SLEEP IS A HOAX

by Russel Like

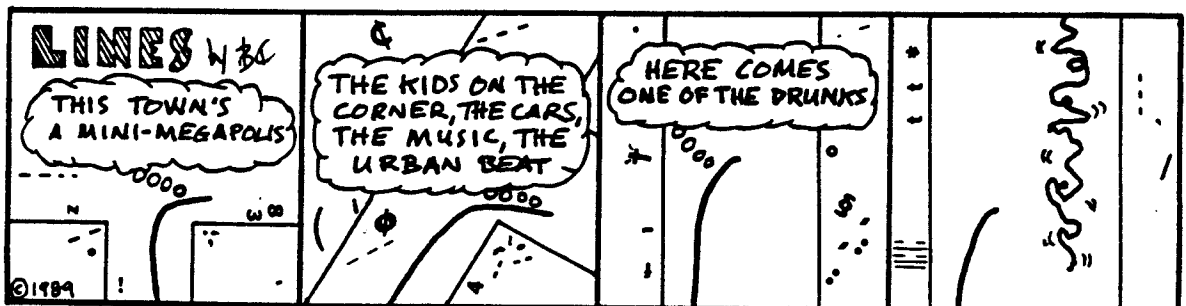
Humans don't really need sleep. No. If God, or  
whoever or whatever designed humans, wanted us to  
sleep, he or it or they would have made the human life  
about thirty percent shorter. Then, instead of having  
to always interrupt your life with periods of uncon-  
sciousness, you could just do it all at once, after-  
wards. Wouldn't this make more sense?

So, then, who is responsible for the popular miscon-  
ception that sleep is an integral part of a satisfying  
existence? I have only recently figured it out. An  
unholy alliance of the mattress, pillow, and sheet in-  
dustries has perpetuated this crime upon the human race  
for centuries. The leaders of this nefarious coalition  
(henceforth known as the Box-Spring Cartel) have long  
deceived the people of this great nation for their own  
gain. Notice I said "nation" and not "world." This is  
because the people of other countries don't actually  
sleep. They are in the pockets of the Box-Spring Car-  
tel and thus pretend to need sleep whenever an American  
is around.

I know what you're saying to yourself right now.  
You're saying, "This is all well and good. Maybe sleep  
is a fiction. But what about sex? People use beds for  
sex." And this is true. But sex can't be an invention  
of the Box-Spring Cartel, for if sex didn't exist we  
would be deprived of so much excellent daytime televi-  
sion programming. Besides, people can have sex on  
beaches or floors (those without access to beaches or  
floors will, tragically, leave no descendants, once the  
Box-Spring Cartel is brought to its knees).

Of course, the sick or injured often convalesce in  
beds. But once the Box-Spring Cartel is smashed, I be-  
lieve patients will be only to glad to recover standing  
up, or perhaps sitting in overstuffed armchairs. No  
sacrifice is too great, if it will make the people of  
America free in fact as well as in name.

It is truly frightening how such malevolent intelli-  
gences as the ringleaders of the Box-Spring Cartel can  
flourish behind something as seemingly innocuous as  
linens. Only through the vigilance of concerned citi-  
zens like myself can these things be brought to public  
attention. But I can't do it all by myself. I urge  
anyone who sees a similar situation to the one I have  
just described to report it. Take a closer look at the  
things you see around your house--everyday items you're  
convinced you need--and think about them. Perhaps you,  
too, can achieve a triumph of investigative journalism.





# Black Monday

by Carter Swart

There is nothing funny about this thing we call "Black Monday." For many of us the first day of the work week is the darkest day of them all—the pits.

For years I wore a black suit to work every Monday just to signify my resentment of this most vile of all days. But finally the suit wore out, leaving me to make do with one of navy blue—hardly fitting, if you'll pardon the pun.

Anyway, the particular Monday morning I have in mind, the one to which the dreaded appellation "Black Monday" can hardly do justice, blossomed so swiftly and unexpectedly that it still gives me the shivers just to think about it.

We are talking about your typical southern California July morning—hot, cloudless and smoggy. The normally flamboyant concrete jungle that is Hollywood was in sullen repose, its habitués sleeping off the excesses of the previous night. In other words, things were normal—for Hollywood.

We opened the bank at 10:00am and began what appeared at first to be a rather conventional day. But along about 11:00 my Operations Supervisor, Mae Clark, stalked over to my desk like someone at the end of her tether. She had in tow a cranky caricature of womanhood one might encounter on a late-night horror channel—a grey-haired, hunched crone of ripe vintage and sour expression. She was dressed in black and sported more wrinkles than your average mummy. She even had a mole on her narrow, crooked nose. I knew right away I was in for it.

The upshot of Mizz Wicked Witch of the West's complaint was that we'd bounced five checks and had hit her with the minimum \$30.00 per day in rejected check charges.

"I want those charges reversed and letters of apology written. Today!" she snapped in a voice as dusty and dry as a tomb.

"Sorry," I replied firmly, "it seems that by the time your deposit was posted, the checks had already been returned unpaid. I'm afraid you're out of luck, uh, Mrs. Smith."

She stared coldly at me for a moment with those tiny obsidian eyes, then snatched up her receipts. But as she turned to go, she abruptly whirled around to face me. She moved like a panther.

"No sir," she shrieked, "you're the one who's out of luck!" She hobbled back to my desk, wrote a phone number on a piece of scratch paper and tossed it on my polished chunk of genuine oak laminate that passes for the manager's desk.

I stood my ground. No expatriate from a horror film was going to push me around. I folded my arms and tried to stare her down. Impossible. It was like staring down a cobra.

"You'll call, sonny, if you know what's good for you!" she snapped

As she marched toward the door, and I have witnesses lest you don't believe me, a finger of lightning stabbed

into the street, while a fast-moving, gun-metal gray cloud unleashed a tropical monsoon outside.

She stopped for a moment. Then, cackling like a banshee, she turned and pointed a bony finger at me. "You'll call!" she screamed, just moments before she vanished into the cloudburst.

I shook my head in unison with Mae. It happens.

At 11:30 Mae suddenly came down with a lethal case of stomach flu and had to rush home. That left me to run things with her two subordinate officers. Later, one of them fell over a file box and broke her toe. In turn, the other crushed her fingers in a teller's cash drawer and I had to send her home too.

It looked like we were playing a bank version of "And Then There Were None."

By noon, two of my best tellers retired from the fray for various reasons; my boss called to rip me about our lack of progress in consumer loans; and my wife topped them all with a tale of woe about having had an accident with our only serviceable car. Of course, following that call came an anxious one from my insurance agent. No need to reflect here on what he had to tell me about the inadequacy of my coverage. You get the point.

In desperation I took a late lunch and, in order: got soaking wet in a violent squall that came out of nowhere; spilled coffee on my crisp white shirt; smeared mustard on my \$40.00 tie; and burned a hole in my new camel's hair jacket.

Get my drift? It had to be that crone. I know it's crazy, but how else can you figure it?

When I got back to the office, I found that there had been a small fire in the ladies' room, the roof had inexplicably sprung a leak right over my genuine oak laminate desk, yet another teller had gone home, and some sort of giant rat had gotten into the lunchroom to terrorize my few remaining employees.

Now what in hell would you have done?

You better believe I jumped on that phone fast and called the crone.

Her number rang for the longest time. I figured I'd probably caught her in the middle of an afternoon incantation—no doubt directed toward me. Maybe her pot was boiling over, spilling crow's heads and frog guts all over her stinking, rotten floor. At least that's what I hoped.

She finally answered the phone with a rather triumphant giggle.

She knew it was me, she said. I was throwing in the towel, right? I'd had enough, right? And I'd send letters of apology, right?

"Right!" I cried.

There was a long and ominous pause at her end, then she whispered seductively, "You're not such a bad sort, after all. Why don't we get better acquainted?"

I went into shock. I'm sure my heart rate climbed to 200. They say I turned the color of parchment. I just clung to the phone and prayed.

She let me dangle for awhile.

"Just kidding," she finally said with a chuckle.

I put down the phone and wiped the sweat from my brow. My hands were clammy and I had the shakes. I figured I'd gotten off easy.

Now, who says witches don't have a sense of humor? 19



I'm going to try to cover a lot of material this time out, so I'll be doing some of it in brief. There has been quite a bit of stuff from the small press sent in, and I really think these people deserve more coverage than the four-color books from the Big Two. First, let's cover the mini-comics:

**JOE REDNECK #1** (Chris Vargas, 760 Wilomita #145, Harbor City, CA 90710; 25¢ + stamp)—This is actually ZANY COMIX #11, so you might ask Chris about other stuff available. An 8-pager about the title character, who lives up to his name.

**DEVIAN'T GESTURE #1/ROWAN #1** (High Improbability International, P.O. Box 523, Columbia, OH 44028-0523; each is 25¢ + SASE)—DG is by Donald J. Morrison, and deals primarily with the memoirs of a former clown. ROWAN is written by IJ friend Rodney E. Griffith, with art by Morrison. This is a superhero/sci-fi spoof with cynical hero: "If you've lost the will to live, you can do anything." I like it!

**SERIOUSLY JIVE FUNNIES/CURLEY RIDES AGAIN** (Haricots Verts Publications, 468 Anita Drive, Milbrae, CA 94030; 50¢ each)—Both 8-pagers deal with K. Greene's Curley, The Handsom Cat. If I may quote from the cover of SJF, "Totally static minimalist comic strips with marginally drawn characters spouting questionable philosophy." That covers both books.

Bigger books:

**REAL SCREAM COMICS #16** (Mike Culpepper, 808 Stanley Street, Melson, B.C. V1L 1N7 CANADA; \$1 US but Canadians can send a dollar or stamps)—This book is written and drawn by Mike and features his anthropomorphic characters Elvis, the alienated rodent, and Steven, the bourgeois cat. It's a 12-page, 5½ x 8½ book with a 4-page story about Steven trying to sell encyclopedias door-to-door and several shorter stories. Nice art overall, but Culpepper's use of "blacks" (dark shadowing) does get out of hand at times and obscures the goings-on.

**CRAZY ADULT #4** (see "Fan Moose" for address and price)—CA #4 is 48 pages-plus-covers of new wave punk cartoons that owe as much to "Big Daddy" Ed Roth as they do to the undergrounds. Since I can't find any credits, I can only assume that everything, including poetry, is by Robert Michael. If so, he's a deranged and creative dude. Scary!

Look for **FISSION CHICKEN #1** (\$2 US/\$2.50 Can.) from Fantagraphics Books, out now! There will be at least four issues by IJ staffer J.P. Morgan, but John reports that he's been asked for his plans for future issues, so let's all keep our fingers crossed. The **FISSION CHICKEN COLLECTION**, Volume One, will be out this fall, gathering all the earlier CRITTERS stories together with new introductory pages. Back-up stories in the FC mini-series will be by Kyle Rothweiller (PLATYPUS BILL).

You can find the work of IJ friend Jim Valentino in **THE MIGHTY THOR Annual #14** (Marvel Comics; \$2 US/\$2.75 Can.). Jim pencils a 9-page Loki story, and is nicely inked by Gary Martin. This story written by Randall Frenz, and two other short tales, are the best things in the book. The main story, part of the tedious "Atlantis Attacks" storyline, is an embarrassment from Roy Thomas, who once knew how to write, and Don Heck, an artist who sadly has lost the edge he had in the early Marvel era.

For those of you who keep track of such things, **SWAMP THING** is back on schedule with a new writer and artist team. Doug Wheeler, who wrote the critically-acclaimed **COMICO CHRISTMAS SPECIAL**, is now taking over from Rick Veitch, who quit the book after Jeanette Kahn (whose convention behavior is the talk of US and British fandom) caused Veitch's original ST #88 to be pulled after it had almost been completely drawn. Since Kahn and other DC higher-ups decided that Swampy shouldn't meet a thinly-veiled Christ figure, Wheeler has to find another origin for the Holy Grail and the amber crystal that causes poor Alec to fade through time.

Wheeler does as well as could be expected. Possibly he will go beyond a third-generation Alan Moore riff, but with a threatened boycott of the title and the bitterness that many feel, he had better do far better than that.

**THE EYE OF MONGOMBO #1** (Fantagraphics; \$2 US/\$2.50 Can.)—Written and drawn by Doug Gray, this bimonthly B&W tells the tale of Dr. Cliff "Cincinnati" Carlson, a professor of anthropology at San Jose State University. In a thinly-disguised Indiana Jones take-off, Carlson is first fired and then turned into a duck within the initial three pages of this issue.

I was laughing out loud at some of the gags, and found that readings allow you to find more gags hidden in the panels. Gray is off to a nice start. Recommended.

When I started reading comics in the mid-'50s, they were still a dime with bad printing on cheap newsprint. I can only assume that most people in the general population still believe that is how they are today. Boy, would they have a shock coming to them if they ever went into a comic shop! Your "typical" comic book

is going for 75¢ to \$1.25, in some cases the paper may be slightly better in quality, but for the most part the old-time comics buyer would recognize a "funnybook."

Nowadays, however, comics come in an unbelievable number of formats, with magazine-quality paper and cardboard covers. They can be anywhere from 48 to over 100 pages in length, and cost as much as a trade paperback. These are called by a number of names, generally "prestige format" or "graphic novel" (if you're being pretentious about the whole thing). This format is becoming increasingly popular and more and more publishers (small and large) are bringing a wide range of material, both original and reprint, in this form. I thought I'd group a number together to show you what is out there:

**VOYAGER, A Doctor Who Adventure** (Marvel, \$8.95 US/\$11.23 Can.)—This book is larger than the usual graphic novel format of 6-5/8 by 10-1/8, being 8½ x 11. This reprint, in order, the B&W Doctor Who strips that appear in the British DW magazine. If you're a DW fan, you'll enjoy this tale of the Colin Baker incarnation as he seeks ancient charts stolen by another renegade Time Lord from the Lord of Life. Writer Steve Parkhouse does a good job on the Baker character and introduces a shape-shifting companion, Frobusher the Whitterdill. Artist John Ridgway should be familiar to fans of **HELLBLAZER** (DC), and he does an excellent job.

**BATMAN: The Official Comic Adaptation of the Warner Bros. Motion Picture** (DC; \$4.95 US/\$6.95 Can.)—Writer Dennis O'Neil and artist Jerry Ordway do a serviceable job of giving us something to do until the video comes out. Apparently working from stills and a pre-shooting script, the book does have several changes from what we saw on the big screen. The changes are slight, but we can understand why they were made. Nice for the collector.

**LEX LUTHOR: The Unauthorized Biography** (DC; \$3.95 US/\$4.95 Can.)—Writer James D. Hudnall and artist Eduardo Barreto do an excellent job of fleshing out the character of Superman's greatest foe. No longer the ranting ex-con/mad scientist twisted to crime by losing his hair, Luthor is a nightmare Donald Trump, clearly akin to the Kingpin character of Marvel comics. At least the Marvel crimelord has his love for his wife to soften the character. Luthor coldly had his parents killed in order to collect on the insurance policy. A frightening look at a ruthless person. Recommended.

**GREGORY** (Pirahna Press; \$7.95 US/\$9.95 Can.)—Pirahna Press is DC Comics' bow to "creators' rights." In other words, DC tries to start their equivalent to Marvel's Epic line. GREGORY, written and drawn by Marc Hempel, is in B&W and features a number of vignettes about the title character, a child confined in a strait-jacket and locked in a single bare cell with a single barred window and grated drain. This is Gregory's entire world, and he couldn't be happier. Any contact with the "outside world" is traumatic and ultimately fated to end in tragedy. This book is an incredibly disturbing, yet strangely uplifting, portrait of human survival. Highly Recommended!!

**BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Portrait of Love** (First; \$5.95 US/\$7 Can.)—Writer/artist Wendy Pini (ELFQUEST ad nauseum) brings her skills to work on the closest thing to fantasy on television. She quite nicely captures the appearance of the major characters, although Vincent occasionally goes from leonine to looking like a guy who needs a shave. The story deals with Vincent's attempt to paint a portrait of Catherine and its theft by Paracelsus. A must for fans of the show and Pini completists.

**HAWKWORLD** (DC; \$3.95 US/\$4.95 Can.)—Timothy Truman and Alcatena present a prestige format mini-series that will give Hawkmán and his wife, Hawkwoman, a new origin and a different rationale for being heroes. Thanagar, the planet of their origin, is a fascist police-state, ruthlessly conquering and abusing hundreds of other races. Young Katar Hal, member of an aristocratic family, becomes increasingly disenchanted with the cruelty and fanaticism he sees about him and sets out to change things. Beautifully drawn and nicely written. Recommended.

**PERMISSION TO KILL** (Eclipse; \$3.95 US/\$4.95 Can.)—Mike Grell writes and illustrates a new tale of James Bond in a prestige mini-series. Bond finds himself trying to aid the escape of a woman from Eastern Europe. Typical 007 adventure, closer to Fleming's novels than to the multimillion special-effects laden films of the past 20 years. Well done.

**CLIVE BARKER: Tapping The Vein—Book One** (Eclipse; \$6.95 US/\$8.25 Can.)—First of a series of books which will adapt the horror/fantasy short stories of Barker into comic form. This first book has "Human Remains by Craig Russell, a Twilight Zone-like story of doppelgangers and possession; and "Pig Blood Blues" by Scott Hampton, a frightening tale of human sacrifice and revenge from beyond the grave. Great stuff.

**TRIDENT #1** (Trident Comics; \$3.50 US/\$4.70 Can.)—This first issue of a new bimonthly anthology title from England contains work from both well-known and unknown creators. The weakest of the stories is the lead, "Light Brigade," written by Nell Gaiman (currently doing such a great job on **SANDMAN** at DC), a confusing cyberpunk tale which takes place in 21st-century England. Far stronger is a Bacchus story by Eddie Campbell, who also has work in A-1 (see below). The rest of the stories are mixed, and all will be continued in further issues. Recommended.

**A-1** (Atomeka Press; \$9.95 US/\$12.95 Can.)—Another beautiful anthology from England, which hopes to be appearing on a bimonthly basis. Some of the creators to be found in the first issue are Alan Moore, Dave Gibbons, Brian Bolland, Bob Burden (with a **FLAMING CARROT** reprint) and Bill Sienkiewicz. Included in this volume are three MR. X stories and another installment of the Bojeffries saga by Moore and Parkhouse. Highly Recommended!!

# THE TWIDDLEBUM METHOD

by Dale A. White

A year ago, no resident of Cinderblock, New Jersey, could have predicted Netherview High School would become a model institution. No parent, student, teacher or alumnus could have foreseen that Netherview High School would attract nationwide recognition for its breakthrough theories in the field of secondary education. To be blunt, no one acquainted with that inner-city heap of soot-coated sandstone and crumbling brick thought it would ever amount to anything.

"Let's be honest," said Cinderblock Mayor Dino Graft, a 1964 graduate. "Historically, Netherview really hasn't been a high school. It's been a flophouse with chalkboards. Kids haven't gone there to learn. They've gone there to make time until the bars open."

Riots, assaults, robberies and bomb scares may as well have been on the class schedule. Hall lockers were better stocked than a pharmacist's medicine cabinet. The honor roll listed any student whose grade point average included a numeral, any numeral, to the left of the decimal point.

"Something had to be done," Principal Thomas D. Twiddlebum said. "Something drastic."

Twiddlebum, a nondescript veteran of the school district whose name his superiors recognized but whose face they never seemed to remember, realized his career had scraped bottom when he was assigned to Netherview a year ago. "For me, this was a matter of survival. I had a pension to protect. If I intended to keep this job, I had to dismantle the time bomb that Netherview had become. Yet I realized the only people with the expertise to do that were the people who'd put the bomb together..."

"In short, I needed the kids on my side. And, based on personal experience, I knew that if I didn't build a rapport with them immediately, I never would. So, on my first day here, I started implementing changes."

Education experts across the country now refer to those changes as the Twiddlebum Method. They disagree about its effectiveness, however. Some consider it innovative and enlightening. Others think it's lackadaisical and dangerous. Yet all concur that, if nothing else, it's unique.

"At Netherview High, we now prefer an above-board, straightforward approach," Twiddlebum explained. "We tell the kids right off: 'Hey, look, you know you're losers, we know you're losers. The future is grim and dreamers only get the snafu beat out of them anyway. Just fill the chair. That's all we ask. What happens to you after you're graduated is your business.'"

Stone carvers chiseled a new motto above the front entrance: "Learn What You Can." Under a revised attendance policy, deposition dates and court appearances became excused absences. Cigarette machines were installed in the student lounge. Pep rallies became open forums for skinheads, punk rockers and black Muslim extremists. Cots were provided for students who habitually fell asleep in class.

"Attitudes, like, changed, man," sophomore Skip Dreggs remembered. "School, like, it used to be, like, a bummer, you know. Like, we'd go there and get burned out on all that #&+e\*!! bull all those #&+e\*!! teachers used to give us every #&+e\*!! day. Then Old Man Twiddlebum comes along, man, and he like tells everybody to chill out, you know. It's like he says, 'Hey, dude, I hate this #&+e\*!! trip as much as you do. Let's get through it without getting in each other's faces.' Like, I can respect that, you know."

Initially, the Twiddlebum Method outraged the people of Cinderblock. For generations, the working-class community had clung to a belief that, in philosophy if not in practice, discipline and academic achievement should be the hallmarks of its public schools. Eventually, however, the taxpayers saw the practicality of Twiddlebum's plan.

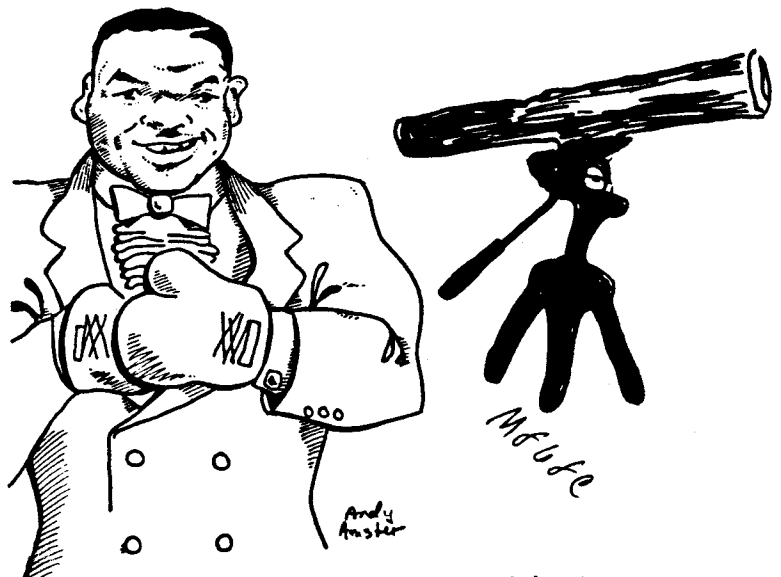
"What else could we expect the poor guy to do?" said Mamie Henn, chairwoman of the Netherview High PTA. "The students have the faculty there outnumbered forty to one. With odds like that, I'd throw in the towel, too."

Observers soon noticed, however, that the flexibility and openness of the Twiddlebum Method actually boosted campus morale, academic freedom and student participation.

"Kids who wouldn't stay after school unless they intended to set a fire are now club presidents and chair membership committees," said Lou Motley, coordinator of extracurricular activities. "All we had to do was eliminate those parliamentary eunuchs such as the Key Club and the National Honor Society and let the kids do what they want."

Today, Netherview hosts more student organizations than any other school of its size. Group photographs in "The Washout," the new yearbook, depict the diversity of special interests: the founding chapter of Young Sociopaths of America; the Silver Pentagrams; a Satanic cult; the Unholy Rollers, a bikers' gang; Unwed Mothers United; Lesbians for Liberation; the Small Firearms Exchange Club; the Juvenile Delinquents Defense Fund...

On the request of the student body, radical changes were made in curriculum. Algebra, chemistry, foreign languages and other courses the teenagers considered useless were exchanged for classes in explosives, car theft, fast food service, extortion techniques and lottery numerology. Lesson plans and homework assignments covered topics such as how to forge parents' signatures; recitation and interpretation of the Miranda warning and the Fifth



Amendment; the use of the metric system in illegal drug transactions. On Career Day, prostitutes, bookies, mercenaries and prison trustees conducted lively question-and-answer sessions.

"The kids had a point," curriculum supervisor Lulu Page conceded. "They wanted to learn real-life management skills. Face it, the Theory of Relativity is nice but it won't get you a bed for the night."

Once overwhelmed with paperwork and regulations, teachers at Netherview now say they're happier as well.

"Ay yuth to con-conceal the fact Ay kept a bottle in me desk," remedial math teacher Aaron Summs admitted. "Now Ay'm not ashamed to drink on the job. Now-a-nowadays, Ay don't haft to issue a hall pass to a kid when I send 'im out to buy me more hooch. Ay-Ay just have the store de-deliver it."

"Under the old system, I'd have to tell Mr. Summs to dry out or get out," Twiddlebum said as he walked down a graffiti-splattered hallway. "That would be a shame because students love the old gin sot. Given some of their family backgrounds, they probably think of him as a father figure. Besides, they need whatever role models they can get. Did you know that, on Parents' Night, most of these kids end up having to bring their probation officers?"

The Twiddlebum Method still has detractors, however.

"From my observations, it's not a success story," said Dr. N.D. Tower, dean of the College of Education at Tweed University. "The Twiddlebum Method is based on the falsity that today's youth are predestined to be freeloaders and reprobates. It conditions them for a role in society as deadbeats. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy. From where is the next generation of authors, scientists, sports heroes and civic leaders going to come? Not from Netherview High, that's for certain."

Twiddlebum, however, dismisses his critics as naive:

"The problem with highbrows like Tower is they're from the old school. They're prejudiced against underachievers. I have nothing against school administrators who put a top priority on scholastic merit, if that's what works for them. Yet we must be realistic."

"We must acknowledge that we now reside in an America where most citizens don't vote, where job opportunities are the biggest export, where illiteracy is rampant, where the average adult can't identify Europe on a map. We must acknowledge that we are now a nation that has settled for being second, third or fourth best."

"Call me irresponsible but I think, just maybe, it's about time our schools started meeting that low standard. I know, from personal experience, that failure isn't an inherent trait. It must be learned."

## DEATH OF A DREAM

by Richard Millard

The death of a dream is an ugly sight.

So much promise crushed by reality.

The hopes of years smashed into a thousand pieces.

Never to reappear.

The death of a dream is an ugly sight.

But it is much more.

For truly it is the end.

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# The Poet's Diet Book

by Tamarina Dwyer

(In the last chapter, Janet was trying to forget Fred, and Kevin encouraged her to do so. Janet's job at the bank has led to a new diet, but Janet has hallucinations. She is disappointed with nature poetry. Her food theories are compensation.)

Janet ate boiled eggs as a waitress. Now she eats each day like a pretentious child, skeptical of changeable rights and life's seemingly preordained chaos. Janet's head was the same as Humpty Dumpty's. More oval than offices, but broken like the soft-boiled egg she sat in front of, Janet's thoughts were too hot to peel off like summer clothing, her ideas too cold to the touch like a real porcelain egg. She got up to look for her blue sunglasses, her bank blouse and her satin pajamas. Moons shine outside and Janet glimpsed the bowl of unrinsed vegetables on the door-table. Why wasn't there a sun inside? She gave up again. Kevin had borrowed her glasses and Fred's spirit had stolen her bank blouse and satin pajamas.

Rain had fallen like a magician's scarf, threatening complacent shoppers and summer's sun idols. Janet thought weather was comparable to people's egos and moods—too hot one minute, like ice the next; too cool when they're supposed to be warm, suddenly violent or totally unpredictable. Janet plugged in the blender and whipped peanut butter decaf. She would be dark again. Her spirit would delve into negative philosophies and dogmatic mysticism. She would write about the trunks of trees, the rich black soil. When she was not in motion, Janet could hear frail rhythms of sound, or was it Fred's ghost? Silk strips of material on the floor were a reminder of shopping. But that was not darkness. It was light, like reflections on fragile glass, a conversation with the mirror. Janet wanted to eat chocolate cake, and that was like dirt, or at least a bran muffin, and that was like mud! I'll diet Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, she decided, and thawed beef and cut egg-plant.

as far as I'm concerned,  
the grape hyacinth is a hippie.  
its little beads are icky.

Janet wanted to buy a microwave oven. She would bake brownies and fudgies, satanic apprentices to Fred's disappearance, Kevin's asexuality, Chuck's realism and Janet's visions.

Janet didn't see anyone that afternoon, and she didn't believe in telephones. The next day was a bank day, and she didn't have to diet until Tuesday. She spent the evening straightening her hair, but there were bumps in the linoleum floor. There were lumps in the bathwater and humps in the velvet towel. Janet's delicate balance began to sway. She was tired of poor relationships. She was tired of loneliness. Something fell upstairs. Janet walked into her dayroom looking for her kimono. It lay across the ottoman like a shadow. The fan had stopped again. Cars crossed Steuben Street like traitors of peace. Now she was nervous from the decaf. The bowl of vegetables looked strange. What was wrong? She heard voices. She saw figures. Janet opened a book of fairy tales and began to pray. Could she, would she make a sandwich for supper? Black olives and sour cream on whole wheat—to combine two dark elements with the lightness of the cream. Janet fixed black tea and waited...for the Russians, the Chinese, the US marauders and the unknown. She thought of caves, funhouses, alleys, velvet night hats. She read *The Boy and the Lion* and wheezed like a dusk bird. Janet remembered Fred and Kevin and Chuck. She exercised. She was strong.

## SPIRAL DEMONS OF GRAPHIC HERITAGE

by Eric Ewing

Jake swore loudly. He knew he shouldn't have taken those drugs stolen from the Mental Health Center. Now everything was closing in on him. Nothing was right. He couldn't concentrate.

## DIARY EXCERPTS OF A PERFORMANCE

ARTIST by Tom Child

August 18—Today I began work on an exciting new performance piece. Based on the Book of Genesis, "Man, Woman and Galoshes" will pose the philosophical question: Should Man, in his physical and spiritual relationship with Woman, get his "feet wet," or choose "protection" (i.e., when he goes outside to "get the paper")? I think the concept abounds with theatrical possibilities. Tomorrow I will begin the arduous task of assembling the various creative elements of the piece: music, dialogue, video, and the most difficult component—for me—dance. I have such a time getting into a pair of tights. I must diet.

August 28—Met with my good friend M today about the music for "M, W, SG." Music presents quite a challenge for me, and so M, the brilliant post-punk, neo-avant garde, New Age minimalist has agreed to collaborate, although he has been doing overdubs on "The New Gidget" lately and his time is limited. We will work around his schedule, for I need help; I haven't the slightest idea what those little buttons on his squeezebox represent, and this "Every Good Boy Does Fine" thing has me pretty confused. M's involvement in the project will also contribute a moral question: if God indeed exists, then how do we explain the accordion?

September 15—H has gone an excellent job preparing the video for the show. I must choose between the rare historical footage he has assembled of Gandhi, Stalin and Churchill, and the film he shot of the Miss Itsy Bikini '88 contest at Hanratty's Bar and Grill. Each makes its own powerful statement. I am leaning toward the world leaders but I have the other here at home for some further, in-depth study.

September 25—Had an exhilarating discussion with my friend Q today over lunch. Q is a fabulously talented hyphenate (director/choreographer/waiter) who is working the swing shift at Hanratty's while at the same time directing a dinner theater production of "Cats," using real cats. I talked of the Artist, and his dual responsibility not only to his "vision" but also to his "mother," and Q spoke eloquently of the "Theater of the Now," as well as the "Theater of a Week Ago Last Tuesday." After much argument (and the gift of an uncut copy of the Miss Itsy Bikini videotape) Q agreed to direct and stage my piece. We drank a toast to the success of the venture, and skipped out on the bill. (Note: for lunch I had soup, salad, and roll without butter, and am down to a svelte 197.)

October 10—Held auditions at Hanratty's last night to find an actress who is emotionally and physically capable to handle the demands of the pivotal role of Woman. Couldn't have picked a more inopportune time because I had no sooner started cold readings with my candidates than the Monday Night Football Beer and Taco Blowfest kicked off. When I approached a particularly unruly mob of quaffing Cro-Magnon and politely requested they keep their exuberance in check for the duration of my auditions, they elected instead to run a few plays demonstrating the vaunted University of Oklahoma's wishbone offense, featuring me as the wishbone. The doctors insist the cast will be off in time for rehearsal.

October 22—My search for the perfect Woman continues. Q, the director, thinks I should play the role myself. He feels that my playing Man and Woman would make a Major Statement. Even though I had envisioned Woman to be a quasi-Playmate type, I must confess the idea is intriguing. While the adjective "beefcake" won't appear in any of my reviews, I have shed a few pounds and the hair transplant looks like it might take.

October 28—Have finally found Woman! Z is an ex-female oatmeal wrestler currently wrapping up post-graduate courses in Binary Spatial Physics at Cal Tech. I spotted her at Tiffany's Tofu Tent last night licking strawberry mocha from the earlobe of her date. When I offered her the part she insisted first on consulting the I Ching and placing a quick call to Shirley MacLaine, who wasn't home—we got her machine. (Seems that Shirley enjoys wintering at her villa on Atlantis.)

November 16—Dress rehearsal. Since the cast came off I have been hoofing up a storm trying to learn the tricky pas de one while wearing those damn galoshes. Q has worked it up as a big tap number to close the first act but the taps keep coming loose during the shuffle-ball-change and I end up making funny flapping noises instead. M threw a rod on his accordion and the video player digested a generous portion of tape. I split nine pair of tights today (an Equity waiver record) despite subsisting for weeks on Rye Crisp and Diet Squirt. A nasty rash has invaded my crotchital area and my hair is coming unglued. I realize a certain degree of suffering is important for Art, but I'm starting to get the blues.

November 27—Opening night, and I'm a...BIT!! I can hardly believe it! Technically, the show went flawlessly; costumes held together, people hit their cues, and nobody fell down. (Well, just once, but I made it appear that my head-first half-gainer into the front row was planned.) The audience proved to be very responsive, demanding I take a bow plus an encore. We hadn't prepared anything, but Z and I managed a passable duet on the "Theme From 'Ice Castles'". Afterward, in a little cafe, Z and I celebrated our artistic triumph with a quiet, lo-cal dinner. Back at her place we popped the cork on a flagon of fizzy, and the last thing I remember before wafting out of consciousness was Z's naked form etched into the firelight vigorously applying my prescription ointment while quoting from our reviews...





## THE SNOW-WHITE CRANES OF AMOZA

by Paul E. Jacks

Water snakes were overpopulating in the canals of Zmoza. Yes, Amozza—the lovely city of water. It was bad. The water snakes were everywhere, and King Montana Susquehana had no idea what to do.

The water snakes of Amozza had once been kept under control, for at one time, cranes would fly into Amozza twice a year on their migration routes. The cranes would wade around in the canals and eat water snakes, keeping their population at an acceptable level.

But the beautiful, snow-white cranes came no more.

You see, one day several years earlier, King Susquehana went for a walk through his beautiful city. He gazed at the light reflecting off the canals in golden hues, he watched his citizens humming and singing to themselves as they went their happy ways through the ancient streets of Amozza. But he was deeply troubled, and these scenes did not bring him comfort.

He was upset by the treatment he had received at a recent gathering of the United Council of Nations. It was the same old story: he was seated at the rear of the auditorium, he was snubbed by his neighboring rulers at the ritzy council receptions (some did not even recognize him and others forgot his name), and he was completely ignored and never called on during council sessions, even though he had his hand politely raised. Furthermore, his wife threatened to leave him and create an international scandal if he didn't get his act together. She told him flat out that she hadn't spent her entire youth working diligently on her beauty and social graces to become the wife of an insignificant leader of some has-been kingdom.

"I am a royal Queen!" she declared.

The king sadly realized that Amozza was an ancient kingdom whose power and influence had long since diminished. He knew also that he was a ridiculed figure in political circles as well as in his own home. He also realized that it was only those kings with substance who had any influence in international affairs.

That fateful day in beautiful downtown Amozza the king made a decision. He clinched a lucrative deal with some cigar-smoking fatcats who considered Amozza's convenient geographical location an excellent site for their shoe factories.

The deal was a tremendous financial success—thousands of people moved in immediately to take advantage of the new career opportunities. Amozza became a booming new power and King Susquehana became one of the biggest leaders around. Amozza also became famous for its shoes.

Amozza was once famous for its cranes as well. People would come from all over the world to watch the graceful birds hunt water snakes in the canals. But the shoe factories, whose thick smoke began to settle on Amozza and erode its beautiful architecture, became too much for the birds to handle, and they took off for good. And when the cranes left, the tourists left as well, for there were no more reasons to go to Amozza unless you needed a pair of shoes or had an urge to ride gondolas in the canals.

This was a bad blow to the hundreds of people whose livelihood depended on the tourists, and the water snakes grew in number.

If all this wasn't bad enough, one day, quite suddenly, the gondola workers of Amozza went on strike. They simply refused to work the canals which had become riddled with water snakes. This was a terrible occurrence, because there were few streets in Amozza and therefore no taxis, cars or buses. So with the gondola strike, the public transportation system of Amozza went to pieces.

Still the cranes would not come.

King Susquehana began to sweat. It got worse. The snakes began to feel quite at home in Amozza, and as a result became very bold. They began leaving the canals at night to prey on mice and rats because the food supply in the canals was getting low. Of course, this had its good point—the disgusting rodent population was kept under par—but no one, not even the rat haters, wanted a bunch of snakes crawling around in the streets.

One night, the king's daughter, Princess Mariana Susquehana, had a hot date. A handsome prince from a neighboring country, whom the Queen of Amozza considered a very suitable husband for her daughter (and whose country's major export was nylon shoelaces), came to Amozza to court the princess. He was the most wealthy and eligible bachelor in the land. They went to a swinging nightclub in downtown Amozza and had a wonderful time. However, on the way back to the castle, they came across several snakes in the street and the prince became hysterical. He took the next flight out of Amozza and vowed never to see the princess again.

This was the straw that broke the King of Amozza's back. Something had to be done about the snakes, and still the cranes would not come.

The king brought in a thousand snake charmers from India to help remedy the problem. But this plan failed miserably, because the water snakes were tone-deaf, had no rhythm, and refused to get into the baskets.

In a hasty move, the king closed down the shoe factories in hopes that the cranes would return. But this was no good because the economy of Amozza fell apart, the city went into a severe depression, and the unemployed workers began to riot. The king began to receive hideous threats in the mail, every morning his garden was littered with toilet paper and shaving cream, and desperate messages and risqué references were scrawled in colored chalk

on the castle walls.

The king had no choice but to reopen the factories.

The king really started to loathe those snakes. He became obsessed with wiping them out. The Environmental Society of Amozza, perhaps still upset over the factory issue, was no help either. They told the king that they did not do snakes and washed their hands of the whole situation.

And what was worse, the king's daughter, the beautiful Mariana Susquehana, was becoming a social outcast. Her girlfriends snubbed her at school. It was the most prestigious school for girls in Amozza, Sister Mary Elizabeth Catherine in the Woods and Behind the Trees. The pressure was so great that the princess dropped out and returned to the castle. She tried several times to get in touch with her beloved prince, but he refused her telephone calls and ignored her existence completely. The whole situation gave the princess a severe identity crisis (not to mention a hideous skin condition), and she soon became a recluse in her private chambers, crying terribly and refusing to be comforted by anyone.

The king became desperate. He called a sheik friend and ordered an oil spill in the canals. The canals were set on fire, and although several snakes got fried in the blaze, most escaped into the sewer system until things cooled down.

Meanwhile, half of the kingdom almost suffocated and the king had several lawsuits on his hands. The snakes soon returned to the canals and grew to even greater numbers.

Still the cranes would not come.

Things looked hopeless. Not only did the king despise the water snakes which were overrunning his kingdom, he began to bitterly resent the snow-white cranes for leaving his kingdom without so much as a thank-you or a goodbye. He secretly blamed the cranes for the horrible situation he was in.

The king declared a national state of emergency and summoned everyone in the kingdom to the royal square. The people of Amozza, although dejected and in despair, desperately wanted to believe that there was still hope, and they went to hear what their king had to say.

"Loyal citizens of Amozza," the king began, "I've had it up to here with these cranes!"

A horrified gasp raced through the crowd.

"These cranes," the king said, "used to come into Amozza twice a year. By the millions. We let them have the run of the place. They dumped on our buildings, they caused gondola jams, their honking kept everyone up at night, and for what? Just a little extra revenue on the tourist trade. And when the air gets just a little bit smoggy, they take off, and let the snakes get out of hand!"

The crowd began to fidget. They began to mumble. The king had spoken too hastily. He had let his anger and resentment get the better of him and had deeply offended the people of Amozza who would not tolerate such slander against their beloved cranes.

"Therefore," the king went on, "I demand that every able person in this city go at once into the world to track them down and return our ungrateful friends to Amozza."

The people did not go. Instead, they walked out of the square and returned to their homes and unhappy lives.

The king, desperate and alone, set off the next day on a long journey in search of the cranes. He traveled far and wide, visited many towns and cities, but no one he encountered could help him. Some had never seen cranes in their entire lives, and others, who remembered them fondly from happier times, sadly told the king that it had been a very long time since the cranes had been around. The cranes, it seemed, had vanished.

The king returned to Amozza and was shocked to find that the cigar-smoking fatcats with whom he had made the lucrative deal several years earlier had taken up residence in his castle! And there, on his very own throne, sat the fattest cat of them all. The king's wife sat next to the fatcat, slowly stroking his fur.

"What is the meaning of this?" the king demanded.

"You've been under incredible pressure lately," the fatcat said. "And since you're such a dear friend of ours, a friend whom we care about deeply, we've decided, through the kindness of our hearts, to come in and run things while you take a nice long rest."

"And the snakes?"

"They don't bother us," the fatcat said. "Live and let live, we always say."

The king looked at his wife for support, but she only smiled at him and filled the fatcat's glass with wine.

The king slowly walked out of the castle, completely defeated. He took to a life in the streets, sleeping in doorways and eating what he could find. The citizens of Amozza heckled and abused him, and the water snakes crawled over his body with complete indifference.

One day, while the king lay drunk in a canal side gutter in an appalling state of wretchedness, he looked up at the sky and there—floating effortlessly over the city—was a crane. The king could not believe what he saw. And then, from out of nowhere, another crane appeared. And then another. Yes, floating gracefully over the city of Amozza was an entire flock of cranes! The water snakes hissed sinisterly and recoiled into dark corners. The king let out a muffled cry of joy and raised his hand toward the sky.

The beautiful, snow-white cranes remained motionless, like precious diamonds in the sky, gazing down at the city of Amozza. And then, with a graceful and almost imperceptible motion of their wings, they were gone.

# WHOOPS, WRONG POEM

by Dana A. Snow  
I thought I had it here,  
But it ran away.  
I set it on this table  
And I ordered it to stay.

On my forehead are starting  
To develop some sweat beads.  
The poem was inspired  
So I follow where it leads.

Let the critter have its head.  
It knows where to go.  
I wish I was as wise as that  
I wonder: How's it know?

I can't find the poem in question.  
Reminds me of days as a kid  
When ma said, "Well, it didn't WALK  
away,"  
Well, mom, this time it did.

# AN UNRECORDED HISTORICAL MOMENT

by Roger Coleman

Pisa, 1174

Dear Guiseppe,

As for a progress report on our building, let me say  
we've sped up the ground-breaking with a forged  
environmental impact report. The official commission  
is much too slow. This landfill has been here forever  
and has settled thoroughly, I'm sure.

This tower will be round, about 179 feet high, and I  
don't think the foundation needs to be more than ten  
feet deep and no wider than the tower. Once it's built  
it will be a thing of beauty and a joy forever. You'll  
be able to see for miles from the observation deck at  
the top. Believe me, one hundred years from now, no  
one will ever know we fudged a little on the  
foundation.

Constructively yours, Sharpio, the builder

# THIS WEEK'S PROTEST SONG

by Todd Kristel

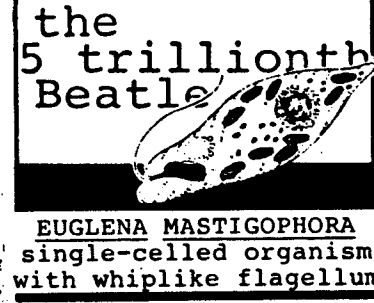
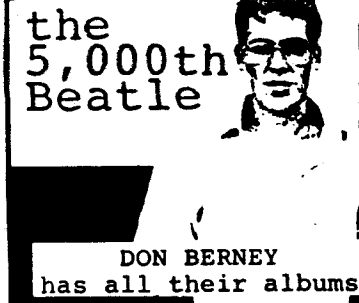
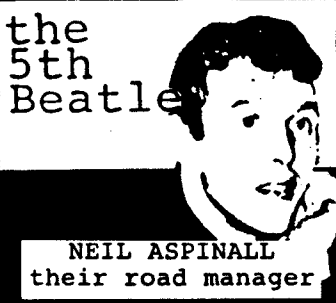
AUTHOR'S NOTE: This poem was  
printed in my school lit mag a  
few years ago...

Sitting in the doorway.  
Watching the ceiling fall away.  
Didn't you see a flash then?  
I thought I saw a flash then.

My eyeballs start to turn.  
Breathing makes my throat burn.  
Didn't you hear a crash then?  
I thought I heard a crash then.

The fire inside my chest  
Is all that I have been left.  
Didn't we forget something?  
We must have forgotten something.

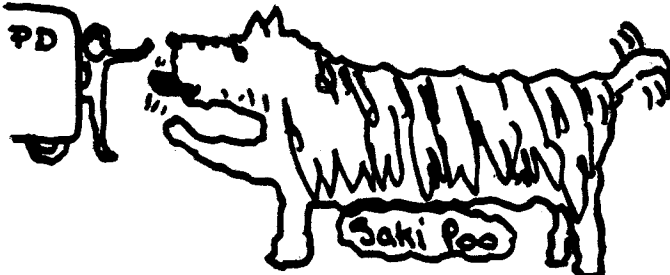
3 x 9 1/2



Ednote: Thanks to Ken,  
William, Doran &  
everyone else who sent  
in camera ready  
copies!

Ednote: Camera-ready specs  
for 17 rule:  
- 3 speeds in to start \$85  
- 10 speeds between \$95  
- \$12 across per line

# MAN'S BEST FRIEND



"Your dog led me straight to this marijuana  
patch. Get in the paddy wagon."

# A House Divided

by Eric Ewing

"You just shut your face, Reggie! I'm nobody's  
house!"

Reggie just offered his usual smirk. He had lived  
in Paula for just over two weeks now. In this time, he  
had recarpeted the living room, put up shelves and re-  
painted the stairs.

"Well, dear," he started, "would my sofa fit inside  
you if you were anything but a house?"

This was his standard reason. Still, it stopped  
Paula. As much as she tried, there was no avoiding the  
logic. But was it time to relent? No!

"Maybe I'm a U-Haul."

"I wouldn't live in a U-Haul. You know me better  
than that. Besides, does a U-Haul have a wood stove?"  
He smirked some more.

"Well, Mr. Smug, if I'm a house, I'll just kick you  
out!"

"Sorry. You're mine. I bought you. So be quiet,  
and let me live here in peace!"

"No."

"Yes."

"No!"

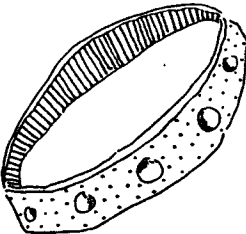
"Listen to yourself, Paula. You're sounding like a  
child."

That did it--she was furious! How dare someone move  
into her and act like such a jerk!

So she collapsed on him.

Ednote: At last, room for a bit  
of artwork from our staffers! 25

N.Y.P.D. CIVIL SERVICE EXAM  
(Q. #27: MULTIPLE CHOICE)



IN THE VERNACULAR OF POLICE  
WORK THIS IS KNOWN AS (A) A  
CLUE, (B) A SUSPECT, (C) A  
SMUDGED FINGERPRINT, OR  
(D) A GOOD COLLAR.



# consider this

by A.T. Hunn

Vice-President Dan Quayle. Game-show host Pat Sajak. One and the same?

Does Dan Quayle really exist? Or is he just the creation of a public-relations firm that gave Sajak a political alter-ego?

Consider this: Pat Sajak resigned as the daytime host of "Wheel of Fortune." And then reappeared as the host of the late-night "Pat Sajak Show."

But what really happened during that transition period? Was Sajak hard at work on the campaign trail?

Could it be that during those fateful days the personal of Dan Quayle was finally put on public display to give George Bush the yuppie vote and that extra push needed to enter the White House?

Of course, sources said the Dan Quayle had been in Congress for many years. But where in Congress? Did anyone ever see Quayle when they were taping segments of "Wheel of Fortune?"

And, has anyone seen the Vice-President lately?

Sure, we hear all about the nations (far, far away) that he is always visiting. But has anyone actually seen Dan Quayle in any of these places?

And why do reports keep leaking out about the inhabitants asking where Vanna is and why she didn't come

## Quayle: A Chronology

Major Events in the Life of our 42nd President  
by Brian Ruddy

1947—J. Danforth Quayle is born on February 4 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The birth comes as a complete surprise to the boy's parents, James and Corinne Quayle (affectionately known to close friends as "The Quayles"). Corinne is particularly astonished. "I had absolutely no idea that I was in a family way," she recently recalled. "Danny never even kicked or anything. So I assumed all along that I was just bloated—you know, just sort of bulked up from all that hearty Midwestern fare. Yes sir, I really used to put away the pot pie in those days." Bursting with fatherly pride, James Quayle takes literally hundreds of photographs of his newborn son, photographs which, four decades later, he will methodically destroy following the 1988 Vice-Presidential debate.

1953—Quayle's enrollment in kindergarten is postponed, as he still has not developed the power of intelligible speech. The records of the school psychologist, Dr. Esther Baum, tell the tragic tale: "Danny Quayle is the most inarticulate and unresponsive child I have ever examined. At first I suspected autism, but his symptoms are too severe. In fact, one of our borderline retarded children saw me trying to communicate with Danny and said, 'Hey, Doc, who's the veg?' Danny does attempt to form words, but the result is just a sequence of bizarre sputtering sounds. It reminds me of the exhaust trouble I had with my DeSoto."

1954—Quayle is permitted to start school when he passes a test originally designed to measure cognitive potential in brain-damaged chinchillas.

1955—Through the influence of a certain relative, Quayle is skipped ahead several grades. Absorbing his lessons with great difficulty, he soon acquires the whimsical nickname "That Real Dumb Kid."

1962—Against the advice of his guidance counselor, Quayle refuses to drop out of high school.

1966—Majoring in political science at Indiana's DePauw University, Quayle develops an intense interest in the Kennedy administration—and especially in its untimely end. Through family connections, Quayle obtains a copy of the Zapruder film, and, after rerunning it countless times, he formulates his "suicide theory" of Kennedy's death.

1967—Endeavoring to "find" himself, Quayle desperately searches for clues to his whereabouts.

1968—At a dorm party, Quayle unwittingly drinks a cup of punch laced with LSD. Some 90 minutes later, a dramatic insight strikes him like a flash of lightning: "It's all so clear now," he announces. "First you put the letter in, then you seal the envelope." After proudly declaring, "My rectum is the window to my soul," Quayle strips naked, bends over and invites horrified party guests to take a "look-see." The future statesman then crouches down in a corner and spends the next ten hours repeating the word "beige."

May 1969—Quayle graduates from DePauw after his transcripts are mixed up with those of a fully-conscious student.

along?

As for those occasional photos that appear on the news, don't those backgrounds look suspiciously like Hollywood sound stages?

Take a real good look, America.

After all, was not our last ex-President a former actor?

Think about it.

NEXT TIME: Marilyn Quayle. Mary Tyler Moore. One and the same?

## ZEN BRICK

by Santa Mike the Golden Vahoo

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 hisslitherattle 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.

June 1969—Quayle is eager to enter the fighting in Vietnam. His enthusiasm for combat quickly dissolves, however, when he is informed that the enemy is using live ammunition. Through the influence of a certain family member, Quayle is able to evade the draft by enlisting in the Indiana National Guard. Claiming, "I was born to kill gooks," Quayle requests, and is promptly assigned, a job as editor of the base newspaper, "The Sandbagger." Lieutenant Dan "Dodgin' Dan" Quayle serves his country by editing copy, writing press releases and experimenting with various hair-sprays.

1971—Quayle marries law school classmate Marilyn "Marilyn" Tucker after a whirlwind romance during which he promises her the moon, the stars, and "lots of other cool space stuff." The couple seem happy, but rumours soon spread that the relationship is based on something other than love. An indignant Marilyn denies that she married Quayle for his money; an indignant Quayle denies that he married Marilyn for her bouffant.

1972—Haunted by memories of his emotionally devastating tour of duty in Muncie, Quayle begins to exhibit symptoms of what will later be called Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Many are the nights when, in the throes of a nightmare, Quayle thrashes about in a cold sweat screaming, "Incoming! Incoming telex!" and "File cabinet twelve o'clock high!" Psychologically scarred, he begins to withdraw, and before long he loses all interest in his favorite hobby: mayonnaise sculpture. Sensing that his son is drifting, James Quayle offers him a position as associate editor of the Huntington Herald-Press, one of the many newspapers he owns. "No thanks, Dad," replies the troubled vet. "I can't even look at another office without remembering all my buddies who got eye-strain."

1976—Now a prominent attorney, Quayle wins election to Congress on the slogan, "Me, take a bribe? I can't even spell it!"

1980—Quayle runs for the Senate. On the campaign trail, the two-term Congressman commits numerous gaffes, the most notable of which occurs during a speech to the Indianapolis chapter of B'nai B'rith. Departing from the text of his script, Quayle quips, "I'll tell you one thing; those Nazis wouldn't have gotten us Hoosiers into the ovens without a fight!"

1982-85—Senator Quayle reads the novel "Don Quixote." Predicting that the work is "destined to become a classic," Quayle summons his aides and says, "Let's see if we can get this Cervantes guy a grant or something."

1988—Quayle is elected Vice-President after the Democrats nominate two men who fail to see the political advantages of slander.

April 1991—Quayle becomes President when George Bush is disabled by persistent goofiness. True to his word, Quayle's first act as President is to say a prayer for himself and for the country. Meanwhile, a mass prayer vigil is hastily organized and led by Madelyn Murray O'Hare.

May 1991—Completely befuddled by the complexities of his job, President Quayle spends three weeks in Bethesda Naval Hospital in the Complete Befuddlement ward.

June 1991—Quayle grants himself a Presidential pardon for "all crimes I may commit in the future."

# Sayz-U!(Letters)

Dear Elayne!

24 July 1989

IJ #68, the first one I've ever had the pleasure of reading, causes me to ask myself "Where the hell have I been all your life?" Oh well, better late than never in latching on to a good thing...

Only 150 copies in total production? Zoicks! It's a scandal! 1.5 million would be more appropriate, but you know that. (Somehow I doubt Owen at Instant Copy would let me repro 1.5 million IJs for \$200. And I don't even want to think about postage!)

Take satisfaction in the knowledge that I'm not likely to read that rag, the National Lampoon, any more; wasn't taking in too much of that one lately anyhow.

INSIDE JOKE is refreshing. I haven't read all of #68 yet—I read only a few pages a day to make it last longer...I was going to send \$25 [for sub and donation], but my credit card statement for this month came today and I accidentally took a cash advance from VISA instead of my bank cash card from the money machine this weekend. VISA sticks ya for 20% interest on cash advances, calculated from the second the machine spits out the cash, so I kinda had to settle up quickly...

However, this only goes to show I'm still a cheapskate 'cause there's still plenty left in my savings account...

Anyway, I wish I had more to say here, but my mind is going blank and I have more letters to write. Hmm, I'll tell me friends to buy IJ, to start with...

Goodbye for now!

JOHN P. DOUCET  
R.R. #1, Box 135  
Concession, Nova Scotia  
CANADA B0W 1M0

(John is the winner of Kathy Stadalsky's last IT'S IN THE NEWS contest, having guessed correctly that the fake news item was the one about Nancy Reagan having taken downers in college...)

Hello Elayne—

7/25/89

I seen a blasphemy-type cartoon in IJ, caused it necessary for me to put up six additional lightning rods on the roof. Why?

You got to watch out for saviours—they got a temper just like you got. But they can blast you with lightning; and you won't like it!

In my prayers, I said: "I'm scared of lightning, especially since that cartoon got published. Yes, it was outrageous, I agree. You want me to what? Carry your word to the pagans? Me? Well, I'll try."

The following story is true—it's in a book.

Captain Ahab (deceased) laughed too loudly in a cathedral in Valparaiso, Chile. Big mistake! He got blasted by lightning! He could never enjoy his maggot-infested beef after that. Captain Ahab had a long scar running from his ear down to his ankle. Bluefish ate him. Bluefish will eat anything. His widow married a shoelace salesman.

It's a world full of magic and mystery—you see how Captain Ahab got paid off. Like I say, saviours got a temper, just like you got! I recommend a minimum of six lightning rods—Sears sells 'em!

Hello Mr. Ace. You inquired about heroes in INSIDE JOKE #69. I've got lots of 'em:

1. P.G. Wodehouse—At age 92, still writing funny stories about Jeeves and going for walks on dirt roads on Eastern Long Island.  
2. J. Krishnamurti—Age 91, still trying to help people keep alert, aware, alive.

3. Lao Tzu—Chinese Tao sage.

4. Chuang Tzu—In same racket.

5. Musashi Miyamoto—Sorry about this one. Undefeated Japanese sword fighter. Later became artist, writer, sage. Very violent in his youth (fights with 60 swordsmen before age 30).

There's many people to admire in human history (oh, I forgot to mention Col. Percy Fawcett, the explorer).

Signed,

BANGOR ZACK BULLEN  
Box 426  
Northport, NY 11768

(Near as we can tell, the "blasphemy" to which Zack refers, one hopes facetiously, is probably the work of Mario "Ace" Acevedo; not to be confused, of course, with Ace Backwords.)

Dear Elayne,

July 24, 1989

Who is this "Wayne Hogan" I've been seeing lately in IJ? What a writer! Is he the same one that does those New Yorker-quality cartoons IJ uses? Wow! His and Susan Packie's stuff are always my favorite things in every issue. Whatever they're paid can't possibly be too much. (You do pay them, don't you?)

Anyway, I just wanted to write and say how I enjoy IJ so much more now that it's got Mr. Hogan in it. I like the other folks, too, especially Ms. Packie, but I really like that Mr. Hogan feller. Thanks for listening.

Truly yours sincerely,

ABNER NUSBY  
(aka Wayne Hogan)  
P.O. Box 842  
Cookeville, TN 38503

Dear Elayne,  
My heroes:

AS A KID NOW

Popeye	R. Crumb
Ty Cobb	Buster Keaton
Geronimo	Jack Kerouac
The Beatles	The Beatles

I think as you get older, you become less impressed with the icons and more impressed with the creators of the icons. The Beatles were both, so that's probably how they made it onto both lists...

PAUL NICOLOFF  
c/o Anna Stavino  
705-B Brownlee Circle  
Austin, TX 78703

Hello, Elayne, Hello!

Boy, IJ #69 really stunk out the place! How could you even stand to put it together? Aah, just kiddin'—I just wanted to open the letter in a different way than saying how much I liked IJ.

I don't have a Snide Critic column for this issue...haven't seen much besides BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN on Channel 13, which was great to watch, of course, but I got the impression that the busy little editors snipped bits of it here and there in order to "improve" it by speeding up the pace...everything seemed to happen a little too fast, and the running time seemed about ten minutes short. Sure with they'd keep their hands off it, since the pauses and buildups are integral to such great films, and director James Whale wouldn't have needed that sort of "help," anyway!

Oh yeah, the S.C. was looking through an encyclopedia of TV programs and stumbled across that marionette sci-fi show I was asking about: it was PLANET PATROL, 30 minute episodes, 1963, about the adventures of the Galsphere Patrol, featuring Colonel Rayburn, Captain Larry Dart, Husky the Martian, Slim the Venusian, Berridge (an enemy) and so on. Anybody remember it? How about SPUNKY AND TADPOLE? Or SPACE ANGEL, or THE BIG WORLD OF LITTLE ATOM, or the episodes of TIN TIN? (Ah, well there ya got me. I have vague recollections of most of this stuff from very early childhood, but would be intensely curious as to whether other IJ readers remember any of this in more detail. Do write in!)

Enough nostalgia for one letter. IJ #69: neat menu front cover (and wrinkle cartoon) from Middleton; charming Tortorici Family back cover with funny chainsaw bit (prejudiced against pin-heads?). Always good to see ya, Rock Fiend, though your "List of Ways to Enjoy Oneself..." could've included listening to a fave record on the stereo whilst sittin' next to the air conditioner (an S.C. fave). "An Alien in Heat" was short, but a nice comment on the teddibly-teddibly jaded folk populating the original. Killer Acevedo executioner 'toon. Dorian's review of the Miss Manners wedding tape was fun—my sister sure could have used it before her wedding! Ace's childhood hero fantasies were a hoot. "Sorry, But It's True" and "The Bare Truth" went well together; nuns in bars, nuns in bathing suits... "Howling at the Moon"—well, Mike, the very next day after I got IJ #69, Morton Downey did lose his show! Ding dong, the witch is dead, which old witch? The wicked old witch...! "Twilight of the Zombies" was a helluva good read. Four-Color Fiend: It's no real surprise that Marvel Age won out in the CBG awards...the CBG prefers to kiss up to Marvel addicts, and it's not a very thoughtful fanboy pub/ad sheet at any rate—phoo! Lovely Wade Boggs Condom from Amster. I also liked "TV 2 U 2"—remember when they had movies at 4:30 on Channels 7 and 9 (4:00 on Channel 4)? Lots of sci-fi and horror; they'd often have week-long marathons of this stuff, but that was before "infotainment" programs befestered the tube (oops, more nostalgia!) More neat stuff was "Zen Brick," Vernon's computer-theft 'toon, Mr. Man, an' Roche's "Only the Smoke." One of the nice things about IJ is that it has the "real feel" (vague gesture with the hands here), you know?

Hmm, let's see, you still need a title, Elayne? Well, how 'bout "Whaddayacall'er?" Nah, too vague and unwieldy...

Back to the shadows again,

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

Oochs All,

Been thinkin' for a time, but HOO-WEE! Never time to put a pencil to paper.

Yes, IJ is the newsletter of comedy, creativity, and whining writers who hate yuppies or the government or anything else easily whined about.

So what. You saw Eisner. What do you want, a cookie?

No. No individuals cited. It's just that I want to laugh and enjoy. I don't want to read about Dan Quayle or art or someone's depressed catharsis. Cartoons? Hilarious. Some of the fiction? Innovative. The taste left in my mouth after forcing myself to wade through typical boredom? Biah.

No, I am not an exception. When I write for IJ, I half-aim it at the imagined (dull) audience.

When I want cut and dried, nothing-out-of-the-ordinary chitchat opposing something, I'll watch a talk show. Some IJ writers think they're anti-, but they're really 3-piece-suit anti-, not action-anti-. They've got arguments, but no attitude, no anger.

There are no surprises. Plain oatmeal. No, more like raisin oatmeal, the instant kind. The plump, juicy raisins are the fiction and cartoons. Everything else is so serious-minded.

I read and see people just flexing their creative muscles. Why not punch someone with them?

I pity Elayne, who has watched her paper of voices grow (shrink) into a thirty-plus page ego-boost for ones who ache to see their names in print. It's gotten to the point where the only challenges gleaned from IJ are not in its content but in whom I'll add to it (well, another challenge is picking out the false "news items"). Face it—we're all brilliant, an elite few who DARE submit. Why not take it a bit farther? Go-Go Gadget Helicopter! Or Give Up.

Elayne and Steve do us all a favor. They are also our friends. They wouldn't hurt us by saying that we're too dull. Heck, my story "Baby Head" from issue 69 was just irritating. Change any 27

lives? Did anyone ponder the story after reading it through several times? Offer any interesting philosophies? Did anyone even chuckle? I think not. Elayne should have said, "No, Eric, it's just stupid. Don't make me have to type it." She should say the same to others. Or I will.

No. I'm only criticizing the bad and dull writers. If you are a good writer you need not feel indignant. Moo. Continue to astonish the readers with your scintillating wit. The rest? Let 'em rot in a tree or stream.

Interested in feedback of any sort, through the letters column or otherwise. More interested in results.

Nuke the seals.

Grunt big for Daddy,

ERIC EWING  
P.O. Box 126  
Milford, ME 0461

(I'd like to give my feedback first, natch. Perhaps Eric's disappointments are what Geoffrey Fourmile means by "non-controversial" as it relates to IJ material. I must take blame, of course, for the absence of graphic crudeness in writing and art—while some consider this controversial, I lean toward believing it more impolite and gratuitous than anything else. I don't know how this affects our anger quotient; I only know that sometimes instead of getting angry at The System [whatever that may represent to anyone out there] incitement only serves to make us angry at each other, which accomplishes nothing, in my opinion. On the other hand, I agree in large part with the lack of more satire and comedy in general in these pages; bear in mind, however, that as the old joke goes, dying is easy—comedy is hard. And while I agree that just about everyone does Dan Quayle jokes, I wouldn't necessarily dismiss them outright as good fodder for ripe humor—as good as just about anything else is. Remember again, readers, any given issue of IJ is the sum total of what its participants make it—if the writers, including Eric, choose to make it "boring" [which I guess means different things to folks with different criteria] or "bad," I won't stand in their way unless their stuff is also MTINTK.)

Dear Elayne—

In response to Ace's article, I would like to say that my heroes are Jesse Jackson and Mikhail Gorbachev, because they are the only two major politicians today who are idealists, not pragmatists, and as a result, any practical change for the better (or at least mitigation of change for the worse) in world politics today is being spearheaded by them. My other hero is, of course (nyuk! nyuk!) Ace Backwards, because many of his panels are infinitely closer to the spirit of Expressionism than the \$80,000 canvases cranked out by well-connected contemporary Neo-Expressionist art stars (not bad for an hour's "work"), even though Ace is not always as ideologically correct as Jackson or Gorbachev. After all, Leftist politics was made for individualists like Ace, and not vice versa, something conformist "Leftists" too often forget.

Sincerely,

ELLIOT CANTSON  
1961 Cedar Street  
N. Merrick, NY 11566

(I'm not sure whether I'm a conformist leftist or not, but I do believe true progressive politics is spearheaded by individual empowerment; and I think Ace is pretty p.c. [or i.c.], having spoken to him of politics many a time.)

Dear Elayne,

July 29, 1989

My heartfelt gratitude for your report on the Abbie Hoffman tribute. It was so lucid, candid, moving and inspiring that I felt like I had been there. You recreated the mood so vividly. It lives on with your words. Thank you.

I feel moved to tell you a little about what I was up to in the late '60s. Not for any profound purpose except to say that I know that people can make a difference. I was a million miles away from Abbie Hoffman then, at least in some respects, but close in ways I hadn't thought much about. I worked in the U.S. Senate for a couple of anti-war Senators—one of whom was among the first three to come out against the war in Vietnam. With the help of a summer intern I started pulling out the stops of the herbicide program in Vietnam ("Remember, only you can prevent forests."). With some prodigious research and a lot of luck and good timing, I gave Sy Hersh a story about defoliation of Cambodian rubber plantations that appeared on the front pages of Sunday papers across the nation in August 1968. That didn't stop the bastards but did slow them down. Fought to stop the Anti-Ballistic Missile system, worked for a Senator on the Riots Commission and helped set up the first Earth Day in 1970. Also helped to get "classrooms without walls" legislation passed, later writing a book about the subject. Helped stop the Navy from building a humongous communication grid in northern Wisconsin (introducing that service to the concept of environmental impact in the process). And tried in numerous ways to keep the grant-fat scientific community from taking itself too seriously.

The most poignant event of all was Bobby Kennedy's funeral in 1968. The thousands of us who attended held lighted candles while watching the bereaved family bending over the grave. As we walked by the grave we sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Our lighted candles flowed in gentle waves past the gravesite and down the hillside of Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, DC. We were sobbing, of course, as we headed back into the world searching for hope in a sea of grief and despair.

Alas, I paid a price for such intense involvement with a broken marriage and the abuse of chemicals, particularly alcohol. That tore my personal life apart. But, like you, I fought the good fight and still am but in a more subdued fashion.

28 Yes, "looking back" is not an end in itself but a means to re-

new one's dedication for dealing with the ongoing struggle against oppression and injustice. Yes, we all don't have to act in ways larger than life. There are many, many options—many of the daily variety that you touch on so well. You are still fighting the good fight. INSIDE JOKE is a superb contribution. I'm doing the same in ways that won't tear my personal life to shreds as I once was able to do with great ease. People make a difference. Little things add up. Timing is crucial. Thanks for your sharing.

Thanks also for mentioning AMERICA'S AT OUR DOORSTEP. Your kind words have attracted several letters and new friendships are building...

Sincerely,

DENNIS BREZINA  
4566 Solomons Island Road  
Harwood, MD 20776

Elayne,

What's happening dude? Just returned from the beautiful land of mudbaths and massages, aka California. I mention this as vacation is about the only time nowadays that I get the chance to read IJ. A full week of sunshine (please don't remind me of skin cancer), casual beers (not to be confused with formal commitment beers) and relaxation. I actually went to Calistoga for the mud-bath treatment. It's wild, and I highly recommend it. The massage is probably the best part but after the mud/hot tub/towel wrap, it becomes difficult to separate one from the other.

You know, I was wondering when that little "x" would return to my name. Like Jason, it keeps coming back.

Lots of good stuff in IJ 69. One might be tempted to say a feast of fun; but one won't. There were good pieces by old and new names. I think Thomas B. Roche's piece ("Only The Smoke") was my favorite this time 'round. Dale White's bit was real interesting too. Hey!! Are mathematicians taking over the pages of IJ?? MasterMath was his usual unusual self and John See's contribution from the Mathematical Annals was great. If Lucretia has any descendants, I have a friend working on his Ph.D. in Math and...

The Rock Fiend was hilarious. I could add a couple of items to her list, but they involve violence and Davey Johnson and may be fun only for me (and any other self-respecting Mets fan).

The Kid's column, although as insightful as ever, was a little too tangential for me. Granted, it is the Kid's column, but I like it when it centers more on the ads. This is not to say that I'm not interested in the whole abortion/flag burning scene (what would Bush do if someone burned a flag in protest outside of an abortion clinic?). What kills me is people who are pro-one and anti-the other. Doesn't it boil down to personal freedom??? Will Durst (political comedian extraordinaire) sums it up perfectly: "George Bush—they sold us Reagan without the charm!!"

I like your piece, Elayne, but I must be honest and admit I missed a chunk of it. Having been born in the early '60s and "becoming aware" only in the last couple of years (if we ever become aware), some of what you say and some references are beyond me. Yet, a lot of what you said (and of what the Kid said about allegiance to a moral standard of justice and decency) makes good sense; not common sense, because it's hardly common!

The Mets without Mookie? It just doesn't seem possible. I'm going to have to go watch games in Toronto or, worse, watch the Blue Jays when they come to Yankee Stadium.

In mourning,

MICHAEL BULLER  
11 Columbia Ave., Apt. B1  
Hartsdale, NY 10530

(Some of the more cynical among us speculated that the Mets have been steadily trying to divest themselves of all "minority" players, slowly but surely. How else does one truly explain the Kevin Mitchell giveaway? Alas, though, the Mookiester is perhaps past his prime, and the Mets desperately needed pitching. I shall miss the gentleman exceedingly as well; he's a good fellow all 'round.)

Dear Elayne,

2:Aug:89

Late, as usual, again, but no excuses. I haven't had a chance to get through most of the IJ but I have enjoyed what I have seen so far. I am personally disappointed about the disappearance of INSIDE STROKE, because my brown bag cover will never be seen. The project was doomed from the start, I suppose.

Anni: Add number 11—Work with dangerous petrochemicals: I am absolutely hysterical by the end of a ninety-two degree day working with lacquer thinner, turpentine, toluene, xydol, benzene and the like. I have so much of that stuff in me through osmosis that I am perennially happy. Except when I am around careless smokers.

Todd: You got Moorcock down all right. Do you also do Zelazny? Gary Pig: Funny, I don't associate Chuck Barris with the CIA.

The rest of it follows, sort of. I am not as hip as I used to be. I found out what I disliked about MTV real early on, yet couldn't name. Sort of like the "Brain Drain." I dislike post-modernism. Outside of progressive rock and RPGs, and underground comic, there is not a hell of a lot to say for the 1960-plus period, leastways what I think.

Ace: Heroes, huh? (just for one day) Early on, it was Ferdinand Porsche and Heinz Nordhoff (?) for the Volkswagen bug; my high school French teacher Louis Gregoire; Jack Cassidy from the JA; Frank Zappa (a long time ago); Vaughn Bodé (still current), Vance Packard; Jim Hightower; Roberta Gregory and Roger Dean, for their earlier work; Matt Howarth (whom I think is a god); and William L. Keith. Keith used to work for FASA on the Dr. Who RPG and BATTLE TECHNOLOGY magazine. He wrote three novels for them, a Dr. Who solo game book or two, edited and wrote for BT, and drew and painted the artwork for the magazine. Whew.

Mike Dobbs: My son likes the 976-BABY hotline. He has learned a lot about being a baby from it. But he was disappointed with



976-TODD. He thought it was a toddler info service, but it turned out to be a Todd Rundgren hotline.

Steven: Yup. I was wandering about SunCon in '77 when I stumbled into a friend of mine running the blood drive autograph table. Seated next to him was an elderly gent with a name tag that said "Robert Heinlein." I still carry his autograph in my wallet.

"Kid": There's trouble coming every day. All I can do is grit my teeth and watch America slowly grind to a halt.

That is about it for now. Elliot's piece looks good but I can't read it now. Aloha.

PHIL TORTORICI

P.O. Box 57487

West Palm Beach, FL 33405

P.S. The name of the [back cover] piece is He Who Makes Kittens... (ED. NOTE: "RPG" means "Role-Playing Games.")

Dear Elayne, 8-8-89

This is my first letter to IJ in about 6 1/2 years. Call the delay apathy, an unfortunate case of complacency. It took issue \$69, with your you-are-there report on the Abbie Hoffman tribute, to bring back the activist in me.

In response to Ace Backwards' request for readers to name their heroes, here are a few of mine: JFK, RFK, Ray Davies, Peter Cook, Rod (and Rock) Serling, my parents, Rosa Parks, unfairly obscure (and deceased) record producer Curt Boettcher, and Gary Pig (no quote marks) Gold. Speaking of Mr. Gold, his PIGSHIT is consistently entertaining, BUT, after reading issue #69's Daza-esque column, I wish he'd go back to the formats he does best—narratives and dialogues. Then again, maybe I'm just feeling left out because that last column didn't include any inside jokes about me.

I publish my own fanzine, titled 7 INCHES. It's devoted to obscure and out-of-print rock and roll singles. Issue #2 is due out as soon as I get my Macintosh set up (apathy again, I know). If any IJ readers would like to receive a (almost free) copy, send me a 25¢ stamp and it's yours.

Yours musically,

DAWN EDEN

P.O. Box 20780

Columbus Circle Station

New York, NY 10023

Dear Elayne,

Yet another few submissions...they may not be as clever as some of your writers' work, yet poetry is a tough medium and there are built-in limitations inherent in the form, though working within a framework is neater, like using a ceramic urinal as opposed to an outhouse in the woods. Who's to say which is more natural? I agree with your color choice for the cover of #69. It's all pink, agreed? Seriously, one-color pastels are great, but 4-color would be a trip, especially with some of your past covers. It would be great to see a large softback edition of a collection of the best of IJ on the stands to compete with some of the goofy humor paperbacks in the bookstores lately. It's been quite a while since anything underground has been in the bookstores, and I think some of the Major Publishing Houses could be interested in a humor collection with the kind of format and subject matter contained in INSIDE JOKE. Think about it...

MICHAEL POLO

3907 N. Windsor, #54

Victoria, TX 77901

(Perhaps in a more perfect world, Michael, Major Publishers would be interested in a "Best of IJ" collection, but, take it from me, I work with publishers during my "Conspiracy Job" and the market is only shrinking, not growing. Alternatives and undergrounds are frowned upon more than ever, as ever-growing conglomerates opt for sure-fire best-sellers over diversity every time. Even the SubG people took years to get published, and they're much better known in alternative circles than we are. As for getting some collection together, undoubtedly I will be doing that in the future, after IJ ceases publication—after all, why do a "best of" if I'm still trying to sell back issues [available for \$1.50 each]?)

## THE ROAD TO "FOREVER"

starring BOB DeSPARE and "BANG" SCORPY

a Paramour Artists Motion Picture

written and directed by Rodney E. Griffith

(Being the first in a series of "punk road trips," in which Bob and "Bang" find themselves inexplicably placed in film plots from semiobscure 1980s films, occasionally even cable television scenarios, depending on whether you buy the premise.)

THE STORY THUS FAR: 16-year-old Mary-Catherine Copeland (played by Stephanie Zimbalist) is on a camping trip with her boyfriend, Michael. They are being chaperoned by his parents (thus the "willing suspension of disbelief" is called in); however, Mary's parents are less than approving of the serious nature of this relationship, feeling their daughter is more in over her head

than head over heels. Bob and "Bang" observe this during a late-night golf game which has somehow inadvertently caused them to wander into the campground. They watch as M-C relaxes in the hot tub.

BOB: I dunno, she's headed for a heartbreak.

BANG: If we could only get her away from her parents...

BOB: Now listen, Bang, her parents aren't to blame!

The kid's too young for serious romance! She's gonna get crushed, and they're just trying to soften the blow!

BANG: Are you serious? The only real shot you have at

"serious romance" in your life is when you're young...

if you haven't met someone by the time you're 15, you might as well forget it!

BOB: And you call me a cynic! But that kid's in for a crash, you know, of real "Romeo and Juliet" proportions. We've gotta do something about it.

BANG: What's this "we" stuff, Elliot? In case you hadn't noticed, we're ideologically split on the question—

BOB: Now hold it! What's with this "talking to the fourth wall" shit? This isn't "Mood-Lighting," y'know. Quit talking to the audience! And gimme those glasses, I wanna see for myself... (BANG hands BOB a set of binoculars, with which BOB peers out of the grove.) We gotta get in there.

BANG: Okay, agreed. But you'll need a disguise. Here, put on this bear costume...now, get over there and make an impression!

BOB: In a bear suit? Listen, I'm—

BANG: (Sternly) Just get in there!

(BOB caves in, shaking his head, mumbling something just out of earshot. He enters a small glade and returns moments later in the bear costume.)

BOB: I've changed my mind. I think we should just leave the kid to her own devices. I mean, who are we to interfere?

BANG: Get IN there! (BANG gives him a shove, causing a rustling of leaves.)

MARY-CATHERINE: (Startled) What's that? Who's there?

BOB: Nobody but us bears! (Reluctantly steps out from foliage.)

M-C: (Gasps) A talking bear!

BOB: Now, listen, kid, your parents are worried that you're getting a little too far into this romance. And me, too.

M-C: (Confused) What are you suggesting, Mr. Bear?

BOB: Well, a little bear hug wouldn't be out of the question...Wait! What am I saying? Look, kid...

BANG: (Enters from foliage) What my tongue-tied friend is trying to say is, well, go for it! Trust your feelings. Isn't that right, "Mr. Bear?"

BOB: Yeah...No! Kid, you should play around a bit!

BANG: Heh-hah. Isn't he cute? It's a shame about his attitude...

M-C: You are cute, Mr. Bear.

BOB: Well, I'm flattered. Speaking of "flat," what say we...

M-C: I like your friend, too...I've always wondered

about blonds...What did you say your name was?

BANG: Bang.

M-C: You know, Mr. Bear...I think you're right...maybe I should see other boys. (Slowly approaches BANG.)

BOB: Now, wait a minute...what about Michael? What about commitment? What about cuddly ol' me? (In a different world, BANG and M-C exit, leaving BOB alone with his golf bag.) How d'ya like that? Oh well, maybe I can find Nastassja Kinski around here or something. At least I can get in some more of my game... (Swings. S F/X of golf ball plunking into hot tub.)

MALE VOICE: What the— (Screams) It's a bear! Quick! Get the gun!

BOB: Oh, no! (Panics) Gotta get outta here! (Runs.

S F/X: Gunshots) At least that answers the question about bears and woods...

(The End. Bob and Bang will return, however, in THE ROAD TO "THE HEIGHTWONGER.")

