

INSIDE JOKE



\$1.50
9th
Anniversary
Issue #11

*"A Newsletter
of Comedy and
Creativity"*

MARY ANN HENN

Upcoming Events →

OCTOBER 31 - HALLOWE'EN (IJ HIGH HOLYDAY); DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #72
 NOVEMBER 1 - International Creative Child and Adult Month
 NOVEMBER 1 - National Authors' Day; Dia de los Muertos
 NOVEMBER 2 - STEVE DITKO (52)
 NOVEMBER 4 - Sadie Hawkins Day; Will Rogers (b. 1879)
 NOVEMBER 5 - Guy Fawkes Day; Paul Simon (47); Roy Rogers (77); Eugene Debs (b. 1855)
 NOVEMBER 6 - JOHN P. MORGAN (32)
 NOVEMBER 7 - Mary Travers (52); Joni Mitchell (46)
 NOVEMBER 8 - Katharine Hepburn (80)
 NOVEMBER 10 - DAVID SERLIN (22)
 NOVEMBER 11 - CANDI STRECKER (34); Daniel Ortega (54); Kurt Vonnegut (67); Jonathan Winters (64)
 NOVEMBER 13 - Felix Ungar Leaves Home
 NOVEMBER 13-19 - National Children's Books Week
 NOVEMBER 17 - JOHN CRAWFORD (34); Peter Cooke (52); Doublespeak Awards given out
 NOVEMBER 18 - GENE KUHN (41); Imogene Coca (80)
 NOVEMBER 19 - PHIL TORTORICI (34); Gerry Reith (b.1958); Dick Cavett (53); Grape Koolaid in 1978
 NOVEMBER 20 - PETE SHERMAN (?); Dick Smothers (51); Robert Kennedy (b. 1925)
 NOVEMBER 22 - Terry Gilliam (49); Tom Conti (48)
 NOVEMBER 23 - Harpo Marx (b. 1893); Turkey Day
 NOVEMBER 26 - Doo-Dah Parade (Pasadena)
 NOVEMBER 28 - Randy Newman (46); William Blake (b.1757)
 NOVEMBER 29 - PETER BERGMAN (50); Louisa May Alcott (b. 1832); Int'l. Solidarity W/ Palestinians
 NOVEMBER 30 - Abbie Hoffman (b. 1938); Paul Stookey (52); Jonathan Swift (b. 1667)
 DECEMBER 1 - Mary Martin (75); Dick Shawn (b. 1929); Richard Pryor (49); Woody Allen (54); Bette Midler (49)
 DECEMBER 2 - ME (32); MICHAEL POLO (36); DENISE KRAUSE (?); Seurat (b. 1859)

 * **INSIDE JOKE** is put on hexaweekly by Elayne "Bay Area Series!" *
 * Wechsler and lots of dear friends, and emanates from beautiful *
 * downtown Brooklyn, home of the Jackie Mason Festival of Peace, *
 * Brotherhood and Understanding...gemme outta this jernit! *

* CONCIERGE.....ELAYNE WECHSLER *
 * PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....STEVE CHAPUT *

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==ANNI ACKNER=====ACE BACKWORDS=====KEN BURKE==
 * TOM DEJA=====PRUDENCE GAELORE=====GARY PIG GOLD *
 * ==WAYNE HOGAN=====TODD KRISTEL=====JED MARTINEZ== *
 * J.P. MORGAN=====LARRY OBERC=====SUSAN PACKIE *
 * ==WILLIAM RALEY=====KATHY STADALSKY=====LARRY STOLTE== *
 * DORIAN TENORE-BARTILUCCI=====KERRY THORNLEY=====PHIL TORTORICI *

FRONT COVER BY MARY ANN HENN

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE:

MARIO ACEVEDO	ERIC EWING	PAUL NICOLOFF
STEVEN BARBER	JOSEPH FABIO	MAX NUCLEAR
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ELLIOT CANTWIN	ERIC HOLLOBAUGH	ANDY PLUMB
SUSAN CATHERINE	TULI KUPFERBERG	MICHAEL POLO
BRIAN CANTANZARO	RUSSEL LIKE	CURT PORTER
JAMES CHERRY	ROGER MAXSON	ANDY ROBERTS
ROGER COLEMAN	JIM MIDDLETON	BRIAN RUDDY
PAUL CREIGHTON	RICHARD MILLARD	DANA SNOW
RIM DEMAR	ERROL MILLER	DALE WHITE
TAMARINA DWYER	RANDY MOSER	and "KID" SIEVE

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DECEMBER 4 - R. BAIN (?); Deanna Durbin (68)
 DECEMBER 5 - MICHAEL BULLER (27); Walt Disney (b.1901); Calvin Trillin (54); Joan Didion (55)
 DECEMBER 6 - DAVID OSSMAN (53); Wally Cox (b. 1925); Dave Brubeck (69); Kahlil Gibran (b.1883)
 DECEMBER 7 - Tom Waits (40)
 DECEMBER 8 - Jim Morrison (b. 1943); Thurber (b. 1894)
 DECEMBER 10 - Human Rights Day; E. Dickinson (b. 1830)
 DECEMBER 13 - STEVE CHAPUT (39)
 DECEMBER 15 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #73

Also - on Friday, October 27 I will be helping
 REFUSE & RESIST in their forum on cultural
 censorship - Call me for details!

ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

My favorite time of year, here at last! Steve and I will be in upstate New York ogling the changing foliage by the time you receive this, but we'll return in a few days (in plenty of time for anyone who might be throwing a Halloween party to celebrate the IJ High Holyday). Meanwhile, here at Apt. Third-Eye and the HELP-AT-1 Hotline we're toasting IJ's 9th anniversary! Yep, in October of 1980 I decided my life wasn't nearly masochistic enough...no no no, I've had a swell time doing this and I hope you have too! Here's to another nine—er, couple of years or so!

I'm only sorry Steven Scharff, who's been with us since before the beginning, doesn't have a submission this time, but he's been busy moving (as has Todd Kristel; updated staffer addresses next issue). Mike and Rory are sitting #71 out as well, but we're happy to say Kathy made it in right under the wire! We have lots of new contributors as well, and we'd like to welcome Steven Barber, James Cherry, Paul Creighton, Rim DeMar, Joseph Fabio, Roger Maxson, Errol Miller, Andy Plumb and Curt Porter to the general insanity—some real fine stuff here. Plus we have multi-parters started by Pru, Brian Ruddy and Dorian, another perspective on Dorian's wedding (from best man Tom), and the usual eclectic mix, including our humongous semi-annual TV reviews, so dig in! Not in this issue are two poems entitled "Contemporary Art" because I've forgotten who sent them to me, and they have no author's name listed. Can anyone help me out here? Oh, and Vinnie asked if anyone would be able to help him out; he's looking for a videotape of the recently-run GI JOE cartoon miniseries—write him c/o the Unstable Gables (address in IJ #70)...Happy to be of help; just call us the IJ message service! (By the way, Vinnie's and Tom's zine STICKY CARPET DIGEST will be out any time now, as will the next issue of Pru's and Rodney's SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION QUARTERLY—more details next time, we hope!)

There are a lot of folks to thank, like all of you who sent in camera-ready copy (5½ inches across in elite pitch, with indentations of three spaces to begin paragraphs and NO spaces between paragraphs) and the extra 50¢ on your \$1.50 subs. Special acknowledgements to J.C. Brainbeau, B.Z. Bullen (another wacky ad!), Michael Buller, Paul Creighton, John Doucet, Prudence Gaelor and Richard Millard for helping out greatly in the financial area—the money always seems to get tighter! Also thanks to the folks who have started asking for extra copies. Due to our readership declining a bit of late, we now have plenty of extra copies, BUT I'm instituting our new policy thusly: If you want extra copies of a specific issue of IJ, you can send me the \$1.50 per issue at the same time as you pay for your first copy; however, your extra issues will not arrive until six weeks later, when I'm sure I have enough to spare. For example, the two people to whom I owe extra #71s will get them by the end of summer, right before #72 comes out. I have to cover myself a bit more carefully now, since we've actually got our first real distribution, at SoHoZat in New York! (Thanks for taking the chance on us, folks!)

Speaking of #72, next time I'd really like to try to reinstate our year-end Questionnaire. But, I'm a little short on ideas, so I'll throw the ball in your court, sort of a pre-questionnaire question: What would you like to see me ask you, the readers, on our questionnaire (slated to appear in #72)? Please send your suggestions, along with the usual (letters, written pieces under 1900 words, artwork, illustrations, strips, nothing that's More Than I Need To Know like graphic stuff...you know the routine). by our next deadline, Halloween itself, October 31. The deadline for #73, our first issue of 1990, is December 15 (mail early to avoid the holiday rush!). The rest of the spiel: INSIDE JOKE is \$1.50 per issue, including sample issues and back issues (someone, please buy some back issues!). Please make any checks payable to "Elayne Wechsler," NOT IJ or "Chaput" or like that. Advance subs are \$12/year for 8 issues and are NON-REFUNDABLE. If your art, writing or letter appears in IJ #72, you can either send the \$1.50 or get a discount-of-sorts by sending in a 65¢ stamp (if you're in Canada, please send 74¢ worth of US postage). Stamps cannot be applied for advance issues, even if your stuff will be in them too (it's too much to keep track of). If there's an "X" next to your name on your mailing label, it's time to renew. Send writing, art and ~~dis~~ complaints to us at

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

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Graham Chapman. Some of us (including Sheila Gibson, editor of II'S magazine, and presumably Nancy Lewis, the Python US rep) are planning to hold a memorial service soon—please contact me for details.



DIARY of The ROCK FIEND

by
Anni Ackner
RADICAL CHIC



Fashions, they say, run in cycles. This is, of course, the sort of smug, self-satisfied little statement, generally uttered by someone wearing an apron that reads "Kiss The Chef" and about to do something amusing to a piece of raw meat, that's just about impossible to refute logically, if only because the casual listener will be too busy trying to figure out what he or she is doing in a situation that calls for this kind of remark instead of being home with a sick headache where he or she belongs, to think the thing out clearly. Like its closest relatives, "Boy will be boys," "These things happen," and "Don't worry, I've lit this thing a thousand times," there is, undoubtedly, a certain grain of truth to the sentence; the problem being, however, that it's a variety of truth that does one absolutely no good at all, and furthermore doesn't begin to touch on the reality of the situation.

"Fashions run in cycles," for instance, is a perfectly legitimate way to end a lengthy and tedious conversation concerning just why it is that, every five years or so, some phenomenally untalented musical performer comes along, is unbelievably popular for a couple of months, and then either disappears entirely or goes on to become the mayor of Palm Springs. Said with exactly the correct tone of voice and proper jaded shrug to the shoulders, it can get you out of that bar and back watching Arsenio Hall in just about nothing flat, and that's absolutely fine. It's also a reasonably good explanation of how it happens that, right as you're beginning to get used to blackened redfish, someone insists on dragging you out for kim-chee or arugula salad; and it might even, at its most base, say something about this whole question of Arsenio Hall in the first place. It most emphatically does not, however, cast any light at all on the maddening way designers have of deciding, about once a decade, that the average adult woman looks good in a pair of stretch pants with stirrups on the bottom, nor can it satisfactorily clear up the matter of Dan Quayle—and it is, unhappily, often applied to both—nor does it even begin to touch on the burning question of why—oh Lord, why—after all these years, people are suddenly dusting off the old picket signs, polishing up the old fight songs and slogans, and taking it, as it were, to the street again.

Now it isn't, you understand, that I have any real quarrel with this trend, at least in theory. As far as I'm concerned, a resurgence of the Sixties' fad of packing thousands of people onto cramped, smelly buses, transporting them to Washington, D.C., and turning them loose there to chant witty things on the steps of the Capitol is certainly a lot healthier and far easier to deal with than, say, a resurgence of the Sixties' fad of having 12 hardy souls attempt to live in a one-room apartment with a large dog named Trippin', or that of having the several least attractive people at any given outdoor rock concert all remove their clothing at the same moment. And it isn't even that I don't think it's prime time for a return to street politics—obviously, the current world condition simply cries out for a few tossed vegetables and a dictator or two hung in effigy. It's only that (a) I can't quite understand why it all happened at this particular moment (I mean, it isn't as though world conditions don't always cry out for flying tomatoes and Cabbage Patch Presidents); and (b) more importantly, the current crop of activists, radicals and all-around do-gooders has no idea in the world how to behave in the situations in which they seem hell-bent on placing themselves.

About the first, I suppose, there isn't a great deal I can do. It is a subject more fittingly handled by a graduate student in group psychology, a researcher in the ways and methods of the sociological model or, anyway, someone who isn't going to have to keep pushing a large, noisy cat off his or her typewriter. Besides, knee-jerk liberals will be knee-jerk liberals, and I'm sure they've lit one of those things a thousand times. About the second, however, as the veteran of many a march, civil action, and picket line—back in the Golden Age of such things, when protesters were protesters, Jane Fonda hadn't yet apologized, and the Grateful Dead were hard-pressed to fill the 5000-seat Winterland, let alone Madison Square Garden—as well as a sort of student of human behavior (meaning that people have an annoying tendency to behave like humans when in my company, for some reason or another), I most assuredly can do something, and I intend to, if only because there's always a chance that, like an elderly fastball pitcher who occasionally gets a perverse pleasure out of burning one by his three-year-old grandson during a game of catch, there's always the possibility that I might wind up on one of these New Age protest marches and, if I do, I'm sure I'm going to have a few things of Great Social Import on my mind, and simply won't have the time or the energy to make sure all these newcomers are handling things with the proper decorum, at which point it will be too late anyway, and we'll all be embarrassed. And we can't have that, can we? Therefore, as my small, humble part of the New Wave of Protest Sweeping Our Great Land, I hereby present:

ANNI'S RULES OF ORDER FOR THE PROTEST MARCH,
THE PICKET LINE AND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE OF ALL VARIETIES
or, Never Whistle While You're Picketing

1. It is of utmost importance, first of all, that when deciding to stage a protest march or civil action that your group, right at the start, make absolutely sure that it selects a cause or topic worthy of the time, effort, and costs in energy and finances that such a thing is going to entail. Abortion rights, gay rights, homelessness, apartheid, unfair working conditions, the plight of endangered species, the fate of the environment in general and nuclear disarmament are all fine reasons for staging a civil action, and there are many other worthy topics as well, which your group, with a little imagination, can easily ascertain. On the other hand, picketing the local Burger King because its management opted not to participate in the Miss Piggy giveaway is only going to make you look silly, and then where will you be?

2. Having selected your cause, it is next advantageous to decide upon an appropriate slogan or set of slogans to be chanted at rallies and painted upon signposts. It will, of course, be your primary objective to create a slogan or slogans that relate directly to your cause, and they will, of necessity, be short, snappy and easily remembered, but it is of equal importance that they at least appear to make some sort of coherent sense. Don't make the mistake of so many first-time marchers! "Equal pay for equal work" is a good slogan; "Give me a quarter or I'll touch you" is a bad slogan.

3. Incidentally, this also applies to those effigies about which we spoke earlier. Hanging people in effigy is perfectly fine, but do endeavour to keep a grip on some sort of consensus reality. Frankly, if you're planning to march on the Pentagon with a strung-up image of Captain Kangaroo, you're on your own as far as I'm concerned.

4. One very common error among new protesters is to assume that, since they are involved in Serious, Important Causes and Political Events, they are therefore beyond Dressing For Success and so can show up at a march or rally in any old thing. Well, nothing could be further from the truth. What one wears at a political action is every bit as essential as what one wears to the office or boardroom, if not more so, because, after all, while there's always the possibility that one may wind up on television or in jail—two places where one certainly wants to look one's best—while attending a political action, there's very little chance of such things happening when one visits the office or boardroom, unless one happens to work for Ivan Boesky. Needless to say, however, the style of Successful Dressing is somewhat different in the two situations. Some fashion Do's and Don't's for Political Actions are:

DO wear only t-shirts pertaining to the Action you happen to be attending at that particular moment. No matter how multi-causal you may consider yourself, wearing a "Save the Whales" t-shirt at a Fat Liberation rally is only going to annoy people.

DON'T be fooled into thinking that everyone's eye is as discerning as yours. If you show up at an Animal Rights march in a fake fur coat, even a purple one, you stand a very good chance of winding up next to some guy who thinks Dynel is an endangered species.

DO keep your clothing on at all times, no matter how moved you may feel. I mean it.

DON'T attend any Political Action in a mini-skirt and spiked heels, unless it's a Gay Rights Parade and you happen to be a man, and even then it's chic-er to have the effigy of Ed Koch wear them.

5. Chairman Mao once wrote that "Power is found in the barrel of a gun." Whatever your own personal views on the correctness of this statement, if you're going to pitch rocks at a platoon of police officers, the operative word is "duck."

6. While, as Garry Trudeau has it, even revolutionaries like chocolate chip cookies, the problem of what food to bring to a Political Action runs much deeper than that. Of course, if it's the sort of thing where everyone is just sort of brown-bagging it, you are perfectly free to pack whatever you like, always bearing in mind, however, that nobody wants to give a warm brotherly or sisterly hug to someone who has just eaten a sardine and onion sandwich, and peanut butter and chocolate ice cream is nearly impossible to get out of a pair of acid-washed jeans. If, conversely, you have somehow found yourself at the head of the Food Committee, you are going to have to take into account that many of the people attending your Event are likely to be vegetarians, vegans, fruitarians, boycotting grapes, wheat-allergic, yeast-sensitive or some combination of any or all of them, and you are going to have to act accordingly. While you may be inclined to merely tell everyone to go out onto the State House grounds and graze and leave it at that, probably your safest bet is to pack plenty of fresh, pure, natural spring water and tactfully let it slip that, in these troubled times, all the really Politically Correct people are doing their utmost to emulate the revered Mahatma Gandhi. People will respect you for it. Honest. They will.

7. Never yell "Party hardy!" while Joan Baez is attempting to sing "Amazing Grace."

8. Even back in the Good Old Days, when people were a tad more easygoing about these things, Abbie Hoffman was just kidding when he threatened to dump LSD into a major city's water supply. These days, such an action, even if you really, really think it's a spiffy idea, is only taking unnecessary risks, particularly if Nancy Reagan happens to be in town. I'm sorry, but that's just the way it is. (cont'd. next page)

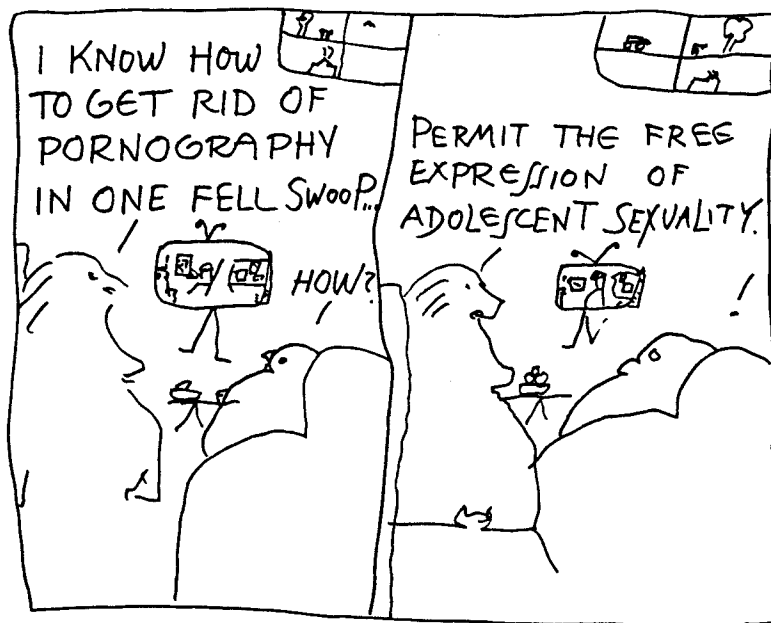
ROCK FIEND continued

9. If by chance you do happen to get arrested, it is politic to remember that you are going to prison, not Bloomingdale's. They will not take your credit card, nor are they overly thrilled by the sight of your check, even if you have a driver's license, even if your check is imprinted with a darling photo of Persian kitties. It is therefore wise to carry enough cash with you to the action to cover your projected bail. The proper way to present this sum to the police is to wait until the officer in charge of such things requests it, then turn it over quietly and without undue comment, after which you may calmly make your exit. The improper way to present this sum to the police is to mutter "Here's a little something for you, buddy" conspiratorily and attempt to sneak out the precinct door.

10. Finally, if you are asked to give a brief statement to the television medium, state your case clearly and concisely, with as little hysteria and hyperbole as possible. The correct response is, "We believe that gay men and lesbians are not receiving their complete civil rights as guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States." The correct response is not, "Faggots rule, you het creeps!" The correct response is also not, "Jesus Christ, what if my boss sees this?!", nor is it, "Hi Mom! I told you I was gonna do this if you cut off my allowance!"

Having once digested these few simple rules, the gentle art of Public Protesting should come as easily and gracefully to you as new capital gains laws come to Administration accountants. Should it not, however, should you find yourself still confused and nervous concerning your role in such events, take heart from the fact that, sooner or later, this too shall pass, and a trend more to your liking—synchronized swimming, perhaps—shall once again take precedence.

After all, fashions run in cycles.



MasterMath Explains... SYSTEMS

by William G. Raley

Systems. We've all heard the word before, though it may have been long ago, in a galleria far, far away. Most people can even count the number of syllables. However, many are at a loss concerning how important systems are to one's day to day life, or how their quantity and/or quality can be increased.

That is where I, MasterMath, come in. This treatise can be considered a corollary, an appendage if you will, to my work on systems of measurement. The members of the Cosmic Hall of Universal Deities (C.H.U.D.) were very pleased with that one, and used it for a tablecloth at their recent flobbering festival. By the way, since my appointment, my stock seemed to have risen considerably with the Hallogens, but farther examination proved it was just my MCI bill. I can't complain, though. I've advanced about as far as I can, taking my brevity of service into account. After all, it takes tenure to obtain a position dealing exclusively with British humour, and those governing Monty Python are only obtained by those deities who have saved a close personal friend of God from a fiery car accident or an encounter with a magazine salesman.

Anyway, this document details systems found around the home, as opposed to those lost around the home, or those found in public restrooms. While these systems individually may not seem to amount to much, if you got them all together for cocktails,

it would be a hefty tab. The point is that a black hole is greater than the sun of its parts. But first, a definition: a system can be defined as an intangible set of procedures for accomplishing something, with the aim of making repetitive performance of this task less dreary. Incidentally, "system" once also meant the person devising the system, for example: "The system came up with a way of asking his girlfriend out to a movie. Unfortunately, it didn't work." Hence the term, "beating the system."

System one: keys. Keep your house, office, and mailbox keys on one key ring, and your car keys on another. A tip -- the key ring the dealer gives you when you buy the car is yours to keep, except in Wyoming. Then, keep a backup house key in your car, and a backup car key in your house. That way, if you accidentally lock one set inside something, the other is there in your pocket or purse to rescue you. Unless, of course, you fall off a pier and drown because of the extra weight.

System two: albums. Keep them in alphabetical order by artist, and chronologically within artist. This will make your record collection an intriguing conversation piece, unless all your friends have CD players, and are laughing at you behind your back for trying to get another few years out of a dead technology only cretins still use.

System three: socks and pantyhose. Keep a separate drawer for each major phylum of socks -- black, blue, brown, and athletic (in that order!). If you need more drawers, buy them; cabinets are optional. For drawer decorating ideas, send for a free colour brochure put out by the Drawer Museum in Gainesville, Florida. Socks of other colours can be lumped into one drawer (since you're never going to wear them), or used to accent ivory. Ideally, all socks of the same colour should have the same texture. However, as a practical matter, socks are a common gift item, and the members of the Sock Trade Association are constantly bickering. Thus, the art of knotting together socks of like colour and texture straight out of the dryer needs to be learned by practically everyone, and will soon be the subject of an ABC mini-series.

As for pantyhose, I speak from a somewhat biased perspective, as the pantyhose is a timid creature, rarely seen in its native state, usually seeking the safety of a female pair of legs. Just like with socks, many more colours are possible than fashionable. Take it from me, the research I have done in this area would fill many volumes. Go with beige, blue, or black. Give the rest to Goodwill or Joe Namath.

System four: morning routine. Set your digital alarm clock for 5 a.m., Pacific time. If you don't have one, you're welcome to sleep with me and rent time (pardon the pun is optional in this case) on mine. Get up, take a Vivarin, then wake up (again, order is paramount!). Turn up the heat if it's winter, sweat otherwise. Take a bath, then put in your contacts (except for me; I put in mine). By the way, isn't it interesting how one little word on shampoo bottles has effectively doubled that industry's gross sales? What is that word? Repeat. Next time you shampoo (which will be tomorrow, hopefully), be rebellious and don't repeat; see what happens. Nothing will; your hair will look fine. Just another subversive plot of big industry uncovered by your roving reporter.

System five: this topic will be presented by a colleague and close personal friend. Faster than an express lane, more powerful than the U.S. Treasury, able to leap bewildered stockboys in a single bound, it's Coupon Man! Hello, I'm Coupon Man. Well, let's get right to it, shall we? You there, in the Craftmatic adjustable bed, sit up straight! That's better. I'll bet you all have dozens, perhaps millions of coupons sitting in a drawer somewhere that you never even use. Why? Because they're mismanaged. Let me tell you, anyone who mismanages their coupons is a real doofus in my book (the word "doofus," by the way, was coined by Warren G. Harding, though reports that he was looking into a mirror at the time are unconfirmed to this day). Trivia question: Is the plural "doofuses" or "doofi"? Anyway, keep your coupons arranged in four stacks: (1) coupons with no expiration date for things you need; (2) coupons with an expiration date for things you need; (3) coupons with no expiration date for things you might need; and (4) coupons with an expiration date for things you might need. Coupons for things you'd never buy in a million years (like picante sauce made in New York City), you can just throw away, or put in mailboxes of people you don't like. Actually, there's a place in Wisconsin you can send them to trade for good coupons; this is supposedly illegal, but I'll give you the address anyway: CENSORED CENSORED CENSORED

CENSORED. This service is especially helpful for Bachelors, who need coupons for such staples as LeMenu, Pringle's, Skor bars, Microrave brownie mix, and California Cooler. OK, that's it for lesson one. Just to make sure you've been paying attention, my operatives and I will be making random inspections to ensure compliance. Anyone with mismanaged coupons will have their names posted in The Village Voice. Repeat offenders' names will be given to Geraldo Rivera.

Who was that masked man? Oh, well, that's all the systems we have time for today. A serious note, now. There won't be a MasterMath article in the next IQ, for the first time since #59. Other duties (such as my magazine, After Hours, and my quest for a personal life) are to blame. I will make an effort to appear henceforth in every other issue. However, I may be making some sort of appearance in the other issues. I just knew I shouldn't have taken that correspondence course from the Richard Lewis School of Stress Management!

...OF HOT TV

reviews by Elayne Wechsler,
"Kid" Sieve and Steve Chaput

There was a great article in Newsday last month that summed up this new TV season as "everything old is new again," and for the most part it's true. CHICKEN SOUP is supposed to remind one of BRIDGET LOVES BERNIE (it's not even that good); FREE SPIRIT is meant to conjure up BENITCHED and I DREAM OF JEANNIE and NANNY AND THE PROFESSOR; THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR was done better as MY WORLD AND WELCOME TO IT; you can find any "Thin Man" movie plot eventually on SNOOPS; TOP OF THE HILL is so much "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington"—so what? I mean, so what? This happens every season; it's just more noticeable this year because the new offerings are, by and large, that much weaker than the shows/movies to which they are being compared. Steve, the Kid and I deserve some sort of medal for sitting through as much as we have to bring you this review—and even then we've not seen some syndicated stuff and we haven't wanted to see some other things (like newsmagazine propaganda/infotainment). And we still live in the Land That Cable Forgot, so forget and forgo those shows too. The asterisks at the end of each review are purely personal opinion (I'm writing in Letter Gothic, Steve's in Artisan and the Kid's in herScript), and all times listed are Eastern since that's where we live:

SATURDAY: DINK, THE LITTLE DINOSAUR (CBS, 8:00am)—They buried this in the right spot. The dinos who don't have big blue eyes have big brown eyes. Too cute for words. Think I'll puke. 0* CAMP CANDY (BNC, 8:30am)—What a disappointment. If this isn't proof John Candy's completely sold out his once-considerable talent to make bucks (and it should be, taking together with his pisspoor movies), I don't know how to convince you. They took ED GRIMLEY off for this? *

CAPTAIN N: THE GAME MASTER (NBC, 9:00am)—If you like video games, you'll probably enjoy some of this. If not, the animation may interest you for awhile, and the characters are nominally original (vidgames being a motherlode of new characters), but it's really only one plot done differently each week. Okay, I guess. *

KARATE KID (NBC, 9:30am)—This seems to be the least objectionable of the three NBC debut 'toons. It's also one plot over and over, but it's nice to see something with Asian characters now and then, when even Japanese-made cartoons feature round eyes. *

CALIFORNIA RAISINS (CBS, 10:00am)—It's not Claymation, which automatically makes it mediocre. Once the "novelty" of a parallel world of vegetablemorphs wears off, it's quite ho-hum. At least you get to hear old Motown tunes, tho. *

BEELEJUICE (ABC, 10:30am)—What a breath of fresh air! Forget the movie but remember the title character and Lydia (the Winona Ryder role). This is pretty much their adventures, largely in the Neitheworld. It's sick and fast and funny and mostly wonderful, though a bit preachy. See Jed's review for more praise. ***

RUDE DOG AND THE DWEEDS (CBS, 11:30am)—Rude Dog is apparently an advertising character, which they've given a personality, his own show, and bozos—um, nerds—er, dweeds (as they used to call them in GALAXY HIGH SCHOOL) for companions. The dweeds are ostensibly canine as well, and they try to acquire sophistication from RD whilst outrunning Sydney the mean cat, a dog catcher and his pet bulldog. It's not as good as it might sound. The best part is the fact that CBS now has the "stars" of its Sat. am shows doing breakaways and comebacks between commercials, and some of RD's lines are cute. Other than that, eh. **

SAVED BY THE BELL (NBC, 11:30am)—Are the kids at whom this sitcom is aimed dumber than the actors? I think not. *

LIVING DOLLS (ABC, 8:30pm)—Then again, things could get worse. Like this show. 0*

SUNDAY: LIFE GOES ON (ABC, 7:00pm)—This is a family-oriented show in the tradition of, well, FAMILY, so you know what to expect; the twist here is that one of the actors/characters has Down's Syndrome, so the plot revolves in great measure around him and the way his family and friends cope. It's pleasant and will tug your heartstrings and is intelligently written, so if family drama is your thing, you won't be disappointed. ***

BOOKER (FOX, 7:00pm)—A spinoff of 21 JUMP STREET. If you're in to teen idol cop shows, this is for you. 0*

FREE SPIRIT (ABC, 8:00pm)—Pretty bad, mostly because of the star, who's much too perky even for a part that's written perky. Do miss it if you can. * for special effects.

SISTER KATE (NBC, 8:00pm)—I can see them sitting in their boardrooms now, thinking, "What a great premise, a nun taking care of some orphans! And let's make her—ornery! Yeah, that's it!" It's pointless and unfunny (PU), the kid actors think people hate them 'cause they're orphans instead of whiny and obnoxious (W&O), and Stephanie Beacham is not a good actress and can't carry this show worth a whit. Why do I put myself through this? 0*

HOMEROOM (ABC, 8:30pm)—Undistinguished sitcom featuring a black teacher. That's about it. He's black. He's a teacher. It's a sitcom. Kids. Family at home. Cosby clone? Who cares? *

OPEN HOUSE (FOX, 9:30pm)—Fox has taken Alison LaPlaca, the most talented cast member of DUET, and put her character and that of her husband (played by Chris Lemmon), as well as Laura (why?), in a show about the ins and outs of real estate. Anni, who has worked in the biz, says it's true to life. I like the actors for the most part, but find this rather ordinary. 'S okay. **

MONDAY: MAJOR DAD (CBS, 8:00pm)—Gerald "Simon & Simon" McRaney does a bad Dabney Coleman. This show exists to either make fun of leftists or rightists, but can't make up its mind. The writing is competent, but the kids are W&O, the premise is hard to believe at best, and ALF will have "no problem!" beating the pants off this sitcom. *

THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR (CBS, 8:30pm)—There are a few inspired moments in this sitcom about a man whose imaginary figments can become real, and I get a kick out of the guest appearances, but unless the writing gets better this won't last long. Plus, it's got the horrid Mary Gross, who still can't act her way out of a paper bag. I'm still crossing my fingers co-creator Wes Craven gets really weird soon with this. **

ALIEN NATION (FOX, 9:00pm)—When I rented the original movie upon which this is based, I remember thinking, What a wonderful series this would make. It does. We're sorely in need in this day and age of a show that reminds us how ugly prejudice can get, but the program also features good acting, buddy-cop stuff complete with witty banter, thoughtful drama, and great makeup jobs. We have this one saved on tape for posterity. ****

THE FAMOUS TEDDY Z (CBS, 9:30pm)—This is the ensemble show every critic loves. They must all love Hollywood superficiality, I guess. Star Jon Cryer's okay and costar Alex Rocco's often amusing, but the lead character's grandmother is an offensive and unfunny stereotype who overacts (like just about everyone else in this abortion), and I don't know what all the fuss is about. *

TUESDAY: RESCUE 911 (CBS, 8:00pm)—Right, like I'm gonna watch a show about simulations with William Shatner hosting. Beam me up and gag me with a spoon. 0*

WOLF (CBS, 9:00pm)—Lots of chase scenes. Blow-dried hair. It must be another cop show. *

CHICKEN SOUP (ABC, 9:30pm)—The fuss still hasn't died down here in dear old New York about Jackie Mason's racist remarks. I understand Mason perfectly. He's exactly like my parents, who also go around calling blacks "schvartzes" (actually, the new word is "chainedlach," because "they all know what 'schvartze' means"). But my parents don't work for mayoral candidates, nor do they have their own sitcoms, so they're easier to ignore. As a sitcom, this show sucks, by the way. The producers might've had a good one on their hands had they given it the George Burns treatment, with Mason stepping out of character to schmooze to the audience (about those darn schvartzes, no doubt), but as it is, the kids are W&O, zany hijinks ensue (ZHE) everywhere, and you never believe a romance between Mason and Lynn "Weight Watchers" Redgrave for a second. Oy. 0*

ISLAND SON (CBS, 10:00pm)—A monumental ego trip for Richard "Bad TV Movie" Chamberlain. You don't believe he's an actor for a minute, much less a doctor. For those who look for shows that are so bad they're funny, this may fit your bill. *

WEDNESDAY: PEACEABLE KINGDOM (CBS, 8:00pm)—The kids aren't W&O in this family drama, and Lindsay "Bionic Dame" Wagner very credibly plays the director of the not-San Diego Zoo. The first plot revolved around her efforts to solve financial problems by getting out under the yolk of the State. Admirable writing, noble acting, lots of animals of course, and it's nice to see a non-sitcom woman in a responsible position for a change. Pleasant. ***

DOOGIE HOWSER, M.D. (ABC, 9:00pm)—Do you know how much it pains me to admit I love a Steven "Hill St. Law" Bochco show? But there you are; Doogie has won my heart. The success of a show like this depends almost entirely on how well its star can carry it, and Neil Patrick Harris, playing a 16-year-old boy genius and resident doctor, pulls it off with aplomb and actually makes this premise work. Also of note is Max Casella as Doogie's sex-obsessed (isn't every teenboy?) pal Vinnie. It's funny, touching and consistently well-done, and a great lead-in to ANYTHING BUT LOVE. ****

THE NUTT HOUSE (NBC, 9:30pm)—Mel Brooks has not done it again. How could he take two of his best stars, Cloris Leachman and Harvey Korman, and trap them in this? Didn't John Cleese do all the hotel jokes you'd ever want in FAULTY TOWERS? There's lots of cheap laughs, good slapstick and whatnot (especially whatnot), but it's no WHEN THINGS WERE ROTTEN. *

THURSDAY: TOP OF THE HILL (CBS, 9:00pm)—Since networks tend to want to avoid overt political viewpoints in "entertainment" shows, especially concerning views held by an honest politician (is that an oxymoron?), this show skews more toward making star William "Gimme That Bod" Katt a detective type of Congressman. It could've been better, given the subject matter. **

THE YOUNG RIDERS (ABC, 9:00pm)—Someone at ABC bought this when it looked like YOUNG GUNS might be a hit. Billy the Kid, Wyatt Earp and "Buffalo" Bill Cody as played by Bon Jovi. Right. * (just because it's a Western)

FRIDAY: SNOOPS (CBS, 8:00pm)—For this they took the Reids' show FRANK'S PLACE off? The couple is fun to watch, and they do a good Nick & Nora each week. It's as good as MURDER SHE WROTE, if a mystery show is your cup of arsenic. **

BAYWATCH (NBC, 8:00pm)—Parker Stevenson and David Hasselhoff on a beach. Bikinis, sand, surf, sun, stupidity, and a surprising number of murders and other accidents. Malibu was never like this. Maybe Stevenson can reprise his role from PROBE and guest-star on DOOGIE HOWSER as a fellow super-genius. Everyone's IQ goes down when watching this fluff. 0*

FAMILY MATTERS (ABC, 8:30pm)—This is apparently a spinoff, and since I don't watch the show from which it spun off I'm afraid I'm

more reviews next page

at a loss right there. Another sitcom. ZHE. W&O. Etc. *
HARDBALL (NBC, 9:00pm)—Starsky is balding and middle-aged, while Hutch looks like a refugee from a heavy metal band. You've seen it all before. 0*

MANCUSO FBI (NBC, 10:00pm)—Not started by presstime.
SYNDICATED AND OTHER (PBS, etc.): Syndicated shows are different in every market, and even so there are a few we've not caught yet, so this is only a partial review. We do know that the Beav is back (from the Disney Channel to syndie), Lassie's come home, and roller derby's bigger than ever (I'm not going to review ROCK AND ROLLER GAMES here, as I did it to death in Tom and Vinnie's new upcoming zine which I'd love you all to buy). Simulated infotainment abounds, ET-clones sprout up everywhere (there's a new video review show, for example), and even Superboy has changed. Here's what we've seen so far:

DRAGNET—Not Jack Webb, but certainly not Dan Ayckroyd. I actually found myself enjoying it. The show is done straight, but you can tell that the actors have a sense of humor about the whole thing, just as Webb did on the earlier shows. Give it a try! ***
ADAM-12—Except for one of the leads being black, this is exactly like the original, if only slightly more hip. **

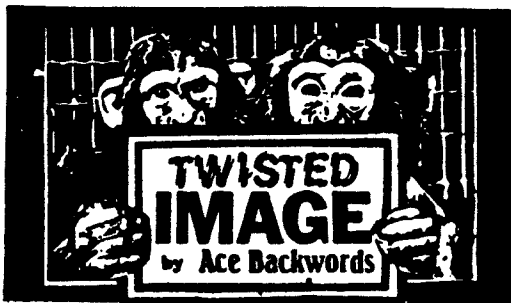
AMERICA'S DEFENSE MONITOR (PBS)—This program, usually buried on a Saturday or Sunday morning, is produced by the Center for Defense Information. CDI was created by retired military and Defense Department types who got a little sick and tired of the Military/Industrial Complex games and are blowing whistles and naming names. For someone who spent nearly a decade in the Navy, not much surprises me, but...WOW! ****

SOUTH AFRICA NOW (PBS)—The powers that be are doing their utmost to sabotage this informative half-hour newsmagazine as well—for instance, the "parent" station WNET actually runs a disclaimer prior to every show to the effect that they don't necessarily agree with SAN's anti-apartheid stance! What does this mean, that they're in favor of apartheid? Probably, since their biggest financial support inevitably comes from multinational corporations still firmly entrenched (despite pr to the contrary) in that regime. The show's coverage is excellent and wide-ranging (for instance, each installment also has a Namibia Watch), and provides just a bit of hope that maybe someday more shows like it can get on the air despite the odds. Search for it! ****

WHOSE LINE IS IT, ANYWAY? (PBS)—This British import appears to be a cross between a game show and an improv group, as well-known (at least in Great Britain) comedians compete for something-or-other, mostly their audience's amusement. I'm hoping to watch more of this rather innovative improv series; do look for it. ***½

RED DWARF (PBS)—Another British import, this show is best described as a cross between BLAKE'S 7 and THE YOUNG ONES, for lack of better words. I can't figure out quite what's going on yet, but it has something to do with a spaceship, holograms and a guy who likes to imitate James Brown, for starters. Weird! ****½

Changes for the better: The magnificent Ann "Made for TV" Magnusen joins the cast of ANYTHING BUT LOVE; MasterMath's favorite, Gates McFadden, is back on STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION; PEE-WEE'S PLAYHOUSE has become raunchier once more, playing to an obviously adult audience; and Jade Pryor (Richard's daughter) is acting up a storm in HEAD OF THE CLASS. Changes for the worse: The aforementioned HEAD OF THE CLASS should have added an entirely new cast of "kids" instead of just three, on the premise that if you're in an honors program in the first place, what are you doing coming back to the same class the next year?; also, it is hoped that QUANTUM LEAP lays off the God-talk a bit more in the future. Shows to watch: Tape ALIEN NATION Mondays while you're watching MURPHY BROWN; get into DOOGIE HOWSER and ANYTHING BUT LOVE on Wednesdays; and pretty much stick with ROSEANNE and anything else you're already watching the other days (like QUANTUM LEAP—don't even bother calling us Wednesdays from 9-11pm). We'll see you in a few months with our midseason updates—until then, stay tuned!



It's been said that every person's life would make a good book. It's also been said that some people's lives would barely make a decent pamphlet. At any rate, I hope my life will make at least a decent column. Therefore, ergo, with much false modesty and half-assed bravado, I proudly present

THE ACE BACKWORDS STORY!!!!

(Soon to be a major column in INSIDE JOKE, no less)

I was born in 1956. Eisenhower was president. My father was a Methodist minister. My mother was an American Indian, maiden name of Gearwar (as in "geared for war"). Her father went loco on booze. Used to go berserk and threaten to kill the whole family

with his shotgun, while my grandmother locked up the kids in the bedroom for protection. When my mother was 9 he went off to the New Hampshire mountains where they lived and blew his brains out. Needless to say, my mom was fucked up for life. And I inherited that madness. Seems she was scarred by her dad's suicide with a lifelong fear of men—and an inherent belief that they will go berserk on you at the slightest provocation. Needless to say, being raised by a mother who was scared to death to ever let me grow up to be strong, lest I turn on her, was no picnic.

Further complicating my genetic makeup was my father's side. Nuts, nuts, and more nuts. Both his brothers were lifelong mental patients. The oldest experienced first-hand some of the most savage fighting of World War II, the D-Day invasion. After the war he hitchhiked from New Jersey all the way to Alaska, convinced "they" (whoever "they" were) were following him.

My first strong memory is of stepping on a beehive that was on a stone wall in front of our house. Within seconds I was being simultaneously stung by hundreds of bees. I was completely paralyzed—it was like being electrocuted...=ZZZZ=...Finally, my mother heard my screams and ran out and wrapped me up in a blanket, stomping out the bees in the process. I also remember being covered with baking soda and watching "Zorro" on TV that evening (my first TV memory).

We moved to High Bridge, NJ when I was 5. I loved that town. Oddly enough, up 'til junior high school I was a well-adjusted, happy lad. I was even somewhat of a leader of the gang. Days were spent playing basketball and roaming around by the railroad tracks and sneaking out PLAYBOYS from my best friend's Dad's dresser. Often I was the teacher's pet. In photos I looked like a cross between Beaver Cleaver and Spanky from "Our Gang." I often tell people that my life peaked at sixth grade. They think I'm joking, but I'm not. The highlight was helping to lead our basketball team, the Warriors, to the Saturday League championship. I remember sneaking downtown for lots of fast breaks. After the game, our coach, who was a great guy, and to whom I dedicated my eighth autobiography (English class project; wish I still had that fucker), took us out to the Daz-a-dill Restaurant for ice cream sodas and cheeseburgers. I remember they were playing "The Theme from Valley of the Dolls" on the radio, so this must've been around 1967. It was still pretty much like the '50s—there were no hippies or drugs, that was still pretty invisible, but you could see the tip of the iceberg. I remember I always checked out the top ten records and remember seeing a photo of the Rolling Stones being led off in handcuffs, shielding their faces with their jackets after appearing in court for a drug bust. I remember thinking what cool names they had—Mick Jagger and Keith Richards. My favorite songs at the time were "Penny Lane" and "Hello Goodbye" by the Beatles.

The summer before seventh grade my family abruptly packed up and moved to an ultra-rich suburb, Upper Saddle River, NJ. Yeah, right, UPPER, and they meant it. Supposedly the family line was that we were moving as part of the Great American Dream to enhance ourselves, move UP in the world, get all the wunnerful culture offered to us living within reach of a major metropolitan city like New York. High Bridge was a backwater dead-end town. Right. It wasn't until 15 years later that I learned the REAL reason for the abrupt departure (my dad had been surreptitiously shunning some of the more noble members of his congregation). At any rate, I despised Upper Saddle River. All the kids were rich, phony and snobby. My pals in High Bridge were funky, dirty and cool. We'd roamed the town on foot all day long like packrats, whereas in Upper Saddle River everything was so spread apart you had to make appointments to see your friends, and you had to be chaperoned around in your parents' car. There wasn't even a single store in the whole town, aside from a funky old barn called "Elmer's" that had been there before the town had banned all commercial enterprises to keep the town clean and totally residential. Why, I don't know. But there was no place to go aside from the malls in the other towns, and again you needed parents to taxi you there. I felt like I had been whisked out of the "Our Gang" episode that I loved into some stilted "Upstairs Downstairs" episode where everyone wore clean, pressed clothes and talked with their snoots up in the air. I hated it.

After graduating from high school I had to make a pilgrimage, hitchhiking, back to ole High Bridge. Everyone was gone. The high school had closed down and the kids had all been farmed out to a big regional school. I looked up Mrs. Gasperelli, the ancient old lady who ran the pizza place downtown. She told me drugs had hit High Bridge in a big way (this was '74). All my pals had dropped out or gotten married, and my best friend Irving (who was the smartest kid in the class and predicted to go places) had knocked up whatshername and was pumping gas at the local Sunoco station. Worst of all, the beloved candy store where I spent my 50¢ allowance every Saturday buying Batman comic books and making the awesome choice of which candy bar I could afford to buy from the huge selection of stuff laid out in front of us (it always boiled down to Tootsie Rolls or Chunkys—the age-old quality versus quantity question; the Tootsie Rolls would last 10 times as long, but the Chunkys tasted 10 times as good), my beloved candy store where we sat at the counter slurping cherry cokes and plotting the latest moves of the "Five Gang" (later changed to the "Six Gang" when we graduated to the sixth grade), had been turned into a laundromat! It was like desecrating a monument. My childhood was truly over.

A Dip in the Plasma Pool

by Dorian Tenore-Bartilucci

Eccentrics On Parade:

One Critic/Fan's Semi-Objective Guide to
the Best Celluloid Performances of Jeff Goldblum

"...Wayne looked remarkably like Jeff Goldblum, and though I don't like Jeff Goldblum as an actor, I'd never met someone who looked so much like him.

You know how you meet someone who looks like Jeff Goldblum, and you spend a long time wondering whether to tell him, and then you do, and he says, 'I look nothing like Jeff Goldblum,' or 'Yes, everyone tells me that,' but he never says 'I really do look like him'? Well, Wayne said the last, and I guess that's why we're getting married..."

From **MARY'S STORY** by Michael Gorelick
(Published in the September 8, 1989 edition of NewYorkPress,
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What is it about actor Jeff Goldblum that seems to inspire either total devotion or utter puzzlement in anyone who's seen him perform? In my own humble opinion, Goldblum ranks right up there with steel as Pittsburgh's greatest contribution to American life and culture. Born in that Pennsylvanian city on October 22, 1952 (exactly one year before our own Anni Ackner), the son of a prominent doctor, Jeff Goldblum knew that the actor's life was for him from childhood. In interviews, Goldblum (pronounced Gold-bloom) has told stories of dressing up in a cowboy costume at about 8 years old and thrilling to the grown-up choruses of "Aww, ain't he cute."

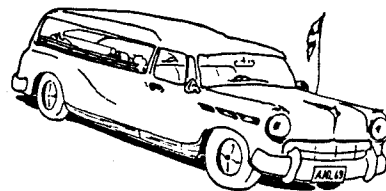
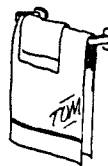
At 17, Jeff's incredibly supportive (in every sense) parents set him up in New York, where he studied acting at the Neighborhood Playhouse. Goldblum got first-hand proof that looks do make a difference when you're trying to land a job. Thanks to his ectomorphic 6'4" frame, the fledgling thesp was cast as a spear-carrier in Joseph Papp's stage production of **TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA**. Goldblum's career grew slowly but surely in the mid-1970s, when he performed in the Off-Broadway hit **EL GRANDE DE COCA-COLA** at the Plaza Hotel. Fate stepped in when movie director Robert Altman ducked in out of a snowstorm one night and stayed to watch the wacky musical. The stork-like young man cavorting about the stage caught Altman's eye and ended up in his next two movies (a small part in **CALIFORNIA SPLIT**, a small but memorable part in **NASHVILLE**). Goldblum's movie career was beginning to take flight.

The kind of movie fan who defines A Movie Star -- or more specifically, A Leading Man -- in terms of having a heroic air, or at least an air of dependability (that is, the sort of upbeat, plucky fellow who can always be depended on to get the girl, lend a hand, and "do what's right") as well as being conventionally handsome probably wants nothing to do with Jeff Goldblum. Of course, since the '60s, there have been plenty of leading men whose looks and personalities are quirkier than the screen idols of yore: Dustin Hoffman, Al Pacino, Donald Sutherland, Elliott Gould and Dudley Moore leap readily to mind. However, Jeff Goldblum is my own favorite Offbeat Leading Man for a variety of reasons.

Though many of you readers probably first got to know Goldblum through his Shoulda-Been-Oscar-Nominated performance in David Cronenberg's 1986 remake of **THE FLY**, or possibly the 1983 Yuppie friendship-fest **THE BIG CHILL**, yours truly liked Goldblum before liking him became cool. I "discovered" him in a remake of a different science-fiction classic: Philip Kaufman's 1978 rendition of **INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS**. Having always tended toward more offbeat media heartthrobs than my girlfriends, who were more interested in the likes of John Travolta, Chevy Chase, and myriad TV and pop-music hunks, I took to tall, dark and soulful-eyed Goldblum like Cher takes to outlandish costumes.

My frustration knew no bounds when Goldblum failed to turn up in anything else (save for a small part in Alan Rudolph's otherwise interminably dull, murky would-be film noir **REMEMBER MY NAME** in 1979) for two years. I had to content myself with TV broadcasts of his mercifully brief appearances in two Charles Bronson actioners: he played one of the rapists in the infamous, original **DEATH WISH** (1974) and a thug in **ST. IVES** (1976). I say "mercifully" because Goldblum was a little too good in the roles for a puppy-lovestruck, violence-shy teenager to handle. He simply oozed evil, malevolence, and viciousness (in addition to looking greasy and wraithlike). Even today, should I happen upon a broadcast of **DEATH WISH** (**ST. IVES** doesn't bother me anymore -- its violence is more on the cartoonish, formulaic side, and the non-action scenes are kinda routine), I have to change the channel the minute a sneering Jeff and his fellow sociopaths ring the hapless Hope Lange's doorbell.

When Stephen J. Cannell's tongue-in-cheek private eye series **TENSPEED AND BROWN SHOE** came (and alas, went) on ABC in 1980, I was one happy camper, let me tell you. If Nielsen boxes had been installed in the Bronx homes of 17-year-old Dorian Tenore



his

hearse

and her pals at St. Catharine Academy, that TV series would have had a decidedly different fate. I was no longer alone in my Goldblum-mania. Fortunately for Jeff and his growing cult of admirers, the show's cancellation only freed him to do other TV, film and stage projects.

One of these was an extremely short-lived Broadway musical, **THE MOONY SHAPIRO SONGBOOK**, a mock-revue of a fictional songwriter's greatest hits, with music by Monty Norman (best known for composing the James Bond theme song). Though the show closed on opening night, Goldblum got excellent reviews. (I didn't see the show myself -- that'll teach me not to attend previews -- but I was able to order a Playbill program. Wonder if it's a collector's item now?)

What's the secret to Jeff Goldblum's not-just-any-old-hunk appeal? I consulted with some of my fellow fans on this. First off, there's Goldblum's lanky, swarthy, slightly eerie good looks (once described by *US Magazine* as "a cross between James Stewart and Peter Lorre", though I also detect elements of Gregory Peck circa 1945. Watch Peck in Hitchcock's **SPELLBOUND** and then watch Goldblum in **INTO THE NIGHT** or a rerun of **TENSPEED AND BROWN SHOE** and see if you don't agree). Jeff's physical demeanor is one-of-a-kind; I don't know how he manages it, but he is both graceful and twitchy at the same time. During conversation scenes, Goldblum's gesturing hands move like a combination of karate and the hand-jive, charging even the laziest dialogue with urgency and humor (and he's fun to watch, too).

Whether playing a naïf or a cynic, a hero or a villain, Goldblum's acting blends intelligence, intensity, and a vague otherworldliness. He possesses just enough of an Everyman quality to allow the audience to identify with him (and thus, root for him). Still, Goldblum's strangely winsome (to his fans, at least) brand of eccentricity never fails to shine through, keeping moviegoers guessing (What's with this guy? What's he gonna pull next?) and holding their attention through movie masterpieces and turkeys alike. His best performances, of course, have been in roles that take all these qualities and fuse them into a memorable characterization that, for better or for worse, couldn't be duplicated by anyone else -- performances such as the ones cited below:

GOING FOR THE GOLDBLUM -- HIS OUTSTANDING FILM/TV PERFORMANCES:
BETWEEN THE LINES (1977): Joan Micklin Silver directed this sleeper about the staff of an underground Boston newspaper on its way to being taken over by a Rupert Murdoch type. This quirky, low-key "dramedy" helped to introduce not only Jeff Goldblum, but such stars-to-be as John Heard (**AFTER HOURS**, **BEACHES**), Lindsey Crouse (**THE VERDICT**, **HOUSE OF GAMES**), Jill Eikenberry (**ARTHUR**, **TV's L.A. LAW**) and Bruno Kirby (**THIS IS SPINAL TAP**, ...**WHEN HARRY MET SALLY**). The critics agreed that Goldblum nearly stole this ensemble piece with his manic portrayal of Max, the paper's rock critic. Just when you think Max is a pompous ass, he'll pop holes into his own theories with his cynical sense of humor. Highlight: the scene in which Max lectures at an all-girl school. The subject: "Whither Rock?"

INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1978): Jeff Goldblum has the distinction of being featured prominently in not one, but two updated (and in certain ways, improved) remakes of classic science fiction movies. Writer W.D. Richter (who worked with Goldblum again on **BUCKAROO BANZAI**) and director Philip Kaufman decided to adapt the story of emotionless "pods" who make themselves into clones of the local citizens in an attempt to take over the planet to the cynical 1970s. One important change in this regard was the movie's setting: the sleepy small town of the '50s version (which also had Communist witch-hunt undertones) became the bustling metropolis of San Francisco in the new film. The change was hailed by those who found the remake to be a chilling allegory for the increasing impersonality and apathy of urban life (I'm in that camp), reviled by fans who felt that it was scarier to have familiar, friendly, lifelong neighbors turn into cold, emotionally sterile aliens overnight.

Goldblum and veteran fright-flick screamer Veronica Cartwright (**ALIEN**, **THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK**) play the second-banana couple to stalwart yet loopy Donald Sutherland and the serenely pixieish Brooke Adams. Leonard Nimoy is perfectly cast as a pop psychologist/best-selling author who may or may not be the pods' leader. Jeff is a hoot as a cranky *avant-garde* poet who is proud of the fact that it takes him days to think of a single word (needless to say, he's more than a little resentful of the Nimoy character's success). His "day job" as proprietor of a mud bath house is the setting of one of the movie's creepiest scenes, wherein his life is saved by a nosebleed (see the film to find out how!)

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE!

CONJUVANTS & DISOVANCE

by Larry Stolte

I hope I don't have an episode before I see the shrink. I don't know if I could handle that. But almost anything can catalyze my sickness. Be strong. You can't turn off the world.

8:15 A.M. My appointment is for 10:00. The TV awaits. Should I test myself? I know I have two choices and two outcomes. I can fail miserably or I can fail admirably. What the heck. I turn the TV on. Click, CBS. A CIA covert action in the YMCA. Keep the Faith. Click, NBC. MIRVs and ABM. Will the USSR attack the BBC? Be strong. Click, ABC's GMA. NTSB investigates NYSE and AMEX crash. Hang in there. Click, CNN. Welfare fraud. NBC's peashen on AFDC. Click. Some commercial for a VHS VCR, I think. Click, MTV. U2, INXS, REM and Run-DMC. Deep breath. Still kicking.

Gotta make it. At least it's Friday. TGIF. Uh oh, it's starting to take over. Check the pulse.

Get away. Drive. Yes. I go out to my Mazda GLC. Almost back into a UPS truck doing 55 mph in a 30-mph zone. Like it's a GTO. Stupid CB S.O.B. Is the M.F. on R&R from AA? DWI? Where's the DMV SWAT team when you need it?

Stop the thoughts. Stop the thoughts. C'mon, relax. Turn on the AM/PM. Click. REO Speedwagon. Click. KWUS: Old 78 rpm PG BS. Click. Sportstalk. It's the season of the NBA, NFC, AFC, MISL, NHL and the PLO. Click. NPR: Correlation between PCBs and GNP.

Headache. I pull into an AM/PM or 7-11 or Circle K or whatever for aspirin. I'm also as hungry as a cannibal on a T&A diet. But I pass on the M&Ms, B&H beans, C&H sugar, and BBQ rat ribs. Don't need the lbs.

I leave the store and find a narc and a scumdog who probably OD'd on PCP or LSD fighting in the parking lot. No I.O.C. rules here, no siree. The druggie, definitely ACDC, probably S&M judging by his GQ-meets-USAF attire, pulls a 42 oz. Louisville Slugger on the narc, who now pleads for a little TLC. No RBI for the AIDS aspirant, however, as two men of the Antisatan, clad in C&R suits (FBI? CIA?) and NRA IQs grab the druggie and throw him against a VW and KO him with TNT punches. They threaten to boil him in 10W40 Quaker State, suffocate him with a PMS-stricken WAC's IUD, and have a GP bill him. He's SOL.

I leave PDQ and pass a DQ, KFC, and FTD florest. Maybe they should merge the latter two so you could send chicken to Mom anywhere in the world. Call it Telefauna. Hey, I didn't think about letters. I'm feeling better. The voices are fleeing.

Oh no, an S&L. FSLIC? FDIC? CDs? With FHA/VA loans? Shit, must be in my DNA. I gotta get to the Dr. Bet he makes more \$ than an NHL D.D.S. More than SDI. Probably as effective.

"What does this condition feel like?" the Dr. asks.

"Like I'm forced to watch AT&T and IBM commercials with an IRS CPA for all eternity," I reply. "Frankly, I'd rather have TB, MD, CF or MS."

"When did it start?"

"My school days. USC. Had to be."

"M.A.? B.S.? M.B.A.? M.S.? M.E.? M.D.?" he jokes.

"ROTC," I add. "Stupid me. But, as an lt., at least I avoided fighting the VC with ARVN in SE Asia. No ICBMs in the BVDs, no KP, no CPR from M.D.s and L.P.N.s in the DMZ. Sure, some future GOP GQ VPs who BF the NRA get familial CEOs or GMs to call IOUs and serve in the National Guard, but this CSNY YIPpie used his SAT and GPA to get into SC. Though I almost booked TWA NNE to SE B.C. province in Canada or SSE to Tj. in the B.C. province of Mexico."

"ROTC, huh? Where did you serve then, after school?"

"D.C. At DOD. Me in the Army made as much sense as the NAACP in the KKK. Who's the enemy, anyway? The new SS? KGB? Or USAF? USMC? USN? MPs saw a lot of me for going AWOL drinking PX J&B with PFCs and practicing OB-GYN with RNs."

"After the Army, what? Business?" the Dr. asks.

"Yes," I reply, "I was as out of place as JC in the RAF. RFQs and MRs spawn PRs which spawn POs on LCDs and CRTs. It's the Gospel according to P&L. MRP, EDP, ECOMs, and APICs on IBM PCs. GMS at hq. fighting AFL-CIO. For GMS, ERA's still a baseball term. Uncaring CEOs with NASA-sized insipience get me P.O'd. I could ship them 5,000 kms. FOB in an H2O-filled P.I.E. truck accompanying PLO YUPPIES with NFL BO and no AA towing. Better yet, C.O.D. Of course, the SPCA or ICC would nail me to some RR tracks if I did this."

"Gee."

"No, GTE."

"Here's an AP UPI newsflash for you," he says. "It's external. It's not you. College, the military, business. Everyone from the LDS to the NYPD does this. Especially INS and USMC types. It's spreading to other countries. Check the UN, UNICEF, UNESCO. The RCMP and ANC are probably RSVP'ing and PS'ing even as we speak. But we in the USA lead the way. We're bastardizing the English language every day. It's soon to be DOA."

R.I.P.

**Are You Disgusted?
Are you ready to be
Amused?**

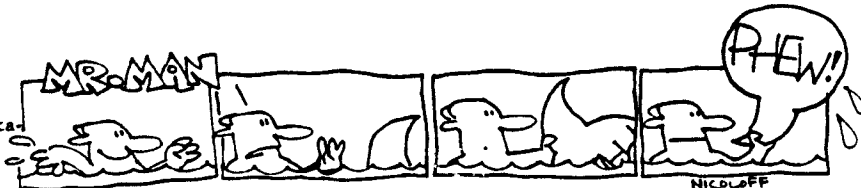
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8 **Learn to Laugh Again!**

QUESTION:
What if just for laughs the network
talk show do-gooders began discus-
suing the pros and cons of
Brainbeats?
ANSWER:

I would welcome the publicity and
would have the last laugh as in past
and future heronows. Wing a S&B
to arithmetically and spiritually
sound HERONOW REUNIONS

YOUNGSTOWN - OHIO, 44504
Box 2243



"ACCORDING TO THE BOOK OF
REVOLUTIONS"

"Listen to these words well,
for they bade upon you all
portents both heavy and true."

Three men, not wise yet nor blind, came early one morn upon a street they had never before encountered, despite their long and storied sojourns. This street seemed to stretch onward and upward before them, snaking shiverly past both the mill and curlers shoppe. And although farther down this path sensed a mystery, and all who're seen to absolutley finter themselves non-committably upon each curb hastened the travellers to paws with reconsider, the three men, without exchanging even so much as a dance, moved as one, forward, bravely.

As they walked, each knew more assuredly than why their path must thus be trod.

"It is as part of man's eternal quest for peace of a mind," said the first man.

"It is to reaffirm our oneness with all above, beyond and around," spake the second.

And as the third man, "It is as if by ever walking onward, we thereby symbolize the journey that lies at the root of the very tree of resistance."

The three men walked. And they walked. And then they walked even more. They were gonna stop and grab a quick bite at one point, but they kept on going.

For seven days, past seven knights of solitude (the same knights of the most round of tables!), the three men walked. And walked. Until on the eighth day of the week they came upon a fork. A fork so stainlessly obvious that they, for once and as ever as one, ground to a halt atop the very ground they once war-shipped.

And at this fork it was seen to be the road suddenly split most seductively into two distinct paths, as the river is often wont to flow perpendicularly divided o'er the border, spinning either clockwise or counterclockwise around the drain at the center of the university.

"Which way shall we follow?" the first man confused. "Shall we forge towards the right, towards the most republically cavalier of species?"

"Which way shall we follow?" thought man too. "Is it ours to veer most heavily leftly, where the path rambles freely, directionlessly, toward the most indulgently slap-happy of society?"

But the third man's theme, til now the most quaintly and reversed, was now heard to boom.

"No, my bruvvers. Wander not towards the right, where there but black and white rains again by night, and rules, with the biggest of wicks, to verily tuxedo you into that lonely state of endless clone, both rich and responsible for no one but your elves.

"And wander not in that most seductively opposing of walks, where every day may seem but a holiday, yet only to mask as a down-stared raza the plight and pity of the poor, the confused, and the guitarist."

And with this the third man rose his staph to the heavens, thrusting proudly past galaxies of gore, greed, and wonton sloops of rotisseried businessmen.

Past broodily brewing clouds of fear, anger, and supplication. Past windowless temples of mock ministry, there both bakkers and shakers duly plunge teflon towards boils of lice and despair.

"Regard my pole!" the third man deplored, "for now it points jayly forward, straight to a path so narrow yet so smooth that the remainder of our trek, far from being a trip without curves, reveals itself to be one of unlimited joy and redemption.

"For you see, my fat fellows, this be the ONLY way, directly forward, that leadeth not into temptations or miracles, nor leadeth empty into the land of bland economy and compromise.

"No way, my good men. The path ahead, that beckons us now as doth a straight arrow, will soon enough be revealed as not that fabled promised strand, but simply as the bridge theretoward, whereupon one can safely cast troubles over water not yet fouled by oiled moguls or, perversely, riddled with guilt and slum.

"For this here by thy path, both fallow and weep, o'er which we must now all traipse, continuing on our journey without ends, as well we all must, soon to be concealed our fate as men kind, not jest at one another, but to all in this universe, so vast and gamely, which be instantly created not for our treasure and much as just for our pleasure."

And with that, the third of the men lunged forward, striding with the gate and grace of staged confidence towards one destination.

And slowly the other two men pressed to play, hesitantly at first, but soon with the ableness and deftness of the certain.

And once again the three men, now both wise AND blind, storied onward and upward without bend, as must us all, towards the ending times sorely now dropping upon us.

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

by Ken Burke

The Movie, The Soundtrack, Dennis Quaid and my Queasy Stomach.

Being a tried-and-true Jerry Lee Lewis fan, the very idea of a movie about Jerry was very exciting. After I saw the movie, I was interviewed by my close friend and former drummer from The Ron Russ Trio, Toby Ward.

Q: Who would you have chosen to play Jerry Lee, and why?

A: Well, me, for one... When I heard who they cast as The Killer, I was very nervous. I would have chosen Sean Penn, who looks a good deal like the young Jerry Lee, and has much of the Killer's emotional baggage. Mickey Rourke, who was initially going to do the film, would have been fine as the older Jerry Lee, though Marjoe Gortner would have been better (not only does he physically resemble Lewis, but he can pump the piano like Jerry as well). On paper, even Gary Bussey (with some orthodonture work) would have been a more convincing choice to play Jerry than I thought Quaid was.

Q: You don't like Dennis Quaid?

A: Yes and no. He's an all right screen presence, but to paraphrase a line from "My Favorite Year," he's a movie star, not an actor. Plus, the ad campaign offended me a bit—"DENNIS QUAID IS JERRY LEE LEWIS!" Yeah, right, and I'm Elvis Presley... After seeing previews and ads, I kept reciting the woeful mantra, "This movie's gonna be a turkey, this movie's gonna be a turkey." But I went anyway [and] was pleasantly surprised... The movie was a lot more sympathetic to Jerry Lee than I thought it would be, and it emphasized his "ferocious God-given talent" just as I hoped it would. You know, most Lewis fans know about all of Jerry's problems and troubles and can probably recite them in correct chronological order in their sleep. What gets lost is how damned good the music is, and what a tremendous performer Jerry is when he's right. Jerry's fans need something like this movie to remind the world, if not themselves, what a tremendous gift the man has.

Q: How was Quaid as Jerry Lee?

A: Okay. He lip-synched all right, though it was a bit weird to hear the 53-year-old voice of Jerry Lee come out of the 34-year-old face of Dennis Quaid, who was playing a 21-year-old Jerry Lee. If I had any legitimate criticism of Quaid's performance, it would be that he plays Jerry Lee too bug-eyed over-the-top. I understand that he immersed himself in Jerry Lee-ness in preparation for the part, and then energized his characterization. Usually when an actor does this, a smart director or dialogue coach will instruct the actor to "take it down a notch or two." Also, there were a few times when Quaid spoke in such a thick, slurred approximation of Lewis' Louisiana accent that he ruined the impact of some of his lines. Being from Texas, Quaid should know that just because someone is from the South, that doesn't mean he can't be understood (well, most of the time, anyway). Also, there was Quaid's posture. He kept arching his back and strutting around like a rooster at scratching time (which I've never seen Lewis do). When he did this, he looked like a man making a conscious effort to Act. Complaints aside, there were several scenes where Quaid looked and sounded so much like Jerry Lee that I was genuinely taken aback. For a few precious moments at a time, he showed that he knew what it felt like to actually be Jerry Lee Lewis. Not only that, but he brought forward much of the playful exuberance of Jerry Lee's younger years and made Lewis seem as something of an endearing character. That's hard to do when you consider how most people perceive him.

Q: LA BAMBA and THE BUDDY HOLLY STORY were riddled with annoying inaccuracies. How did GREAT BALLS OF FIRE fare in this department?

A: Pretty well. There were just a few, and they weren't pivotal. Quaid's left-handed and Jerry's not. "Breathless" was recorded and released before "High School Confidential." "I'm On Fire" was recorded at Smash Records in 1963, years after Jerry's ill-fated tour of England; and the rest were just plot contrivances such as Jerry's phone conversations with Myra, etc. The biggest inaccuracy was in the ad campaign they ran on television—"He was a star before he was 19..." I'm not sure what that's supposed to do other than make people more sympathetic to his marriage to a 13-year-old. But mostly the movie itself stuck to a lot of well-known versions of the Lewis myths and legends. Some of those may or may not be true (like burning a piano, Elvis saying "Take it all"), but these have been told and retold so often that they're public domain, if not exactly the truth. In other words, the movie creates very little new untruth.

Q: Was there anything that made you uncomfortable in this movie?

A: Well, yes. The way the movie kept visually harping on the fact that Myra Gale was virtually a child still playing with dolls when she and Jerry Lee were falling in love. They have her skipping, blowing bubbles, packing her clothes in a dollhouse like a 9-year-old—then, when Jerry Lee and Myra spend their first night alone together, they show Lewis mauling her in bed. (In these scenes,

Dennis Quaid looks every bit of 34, while Winona Ryder looks as if she's barely 12.) These scenes are the most damning indictments of Jerry's character, and the ones that make me squirm in discomfort the most.

Q: What did you think of Winona Ryder's performance?

A: She was really excellent. Between this film and BEETLEJUICE, I'd say that she has a helluva future ahead of her. There's one scene in the movie, where Myra and Jerry Lee are getting married, Ryder's look of shocked disbelief is hysterical—it's the comic high point of the movie. She plays southern real convincingly, and she's got the right combination of girlish exuberance and womanly eroticism to make viewers believe an older man would take a serious romantic interest in her.

Q: Do you think public furor over Jerry Lee's marriage will be reignited by this movie?

A: Probably not, especially in light of revelations about Bill Wyman's marriage. But one observation I would like to make is that the original Rockers are still hassled more than the modern performers. Genuine rock'n'roll still frightens those in authority, and they still come down harder on these people than they do on modern performers.

Q: How were the reviews on GREAT BALLS OF FIRE?

Something I find interesting about the film's reviews—nearly everyone liked the music (which is good for Jerry Lee), and those who gave the movie a bad review tended to review Jerry's life rather than this movie (which, considering their venomous attacking style, is bad for Jerry Lee). You have to suspect the motives of reviewers who refuse to allow that Jerry Lee had an innocent time period in his career, and demand that his later troubles be shlepped in with his few bright early moments.

Q: Why do you suppose they take that tack?

A: Well, it's part of the rock'n'roll revisionism movement that Albert Goldman started. They want to take our legends and heroes and emphasize their flaws and addictions and de-emphasize the thing we liked about them—their talents. Men like Elvis, Jerry Lee, John Lennon, Lenny Bruce were natural talents; you could not have taught them the attitude or perspective that made them special. This irks most critics, since criticism is not so much a talent as it is a learned skill. I also suspect that most critics hate people from the South (whether the critic is from the South or not) and fear cultural movements like the one that brought about rock'n'roll.

Q: Lorraine (your wife) says that even though you enjoyed the movie, you were a little sad afterwards. Why was that?

A: It's kind of hard to explain. It was like I knew that this movie signalled the "official end" to Jerry Lee's career. You cannot do better by a man than give him the type of promotion and exposure that this movie did. Everywhere you looked for one glorious month you saw interviews, articles and feature stories about The Killer. And now that the movie is completed and before the public, we'll hear no more about Jerry Lee or the music. Jerry had his final moment in the sun, and now it's over. I'm going through extreme withdrawal after being deluged with so much Jerry Lee material and then having it abruptly cut off...

Q: Which magazine articles did you like the best?

A: Well, the Los Angeles Times did a great feature story about the problems of making the movie in their Sunday Calendar section. It was negative but very thorough, and complimentary to Jerry's music. Fame had a great story about Jerry Lee by Chet Flippo, who is one of the few guys out there who's actually qualified to write about Lewis. His piece was by turns cutting, colorful, insightful and worshipful. The strangest one was in The Face, which approached an interview with Jerry as if he were an object of terror. That one was pretty funny. Robert Palmer's article in American Film was a disappointment, though, and all the rest just seemed like reshaped press releases... most of these articles seemed to use the same phrases over and over again.

Q: Which phrases were those?

A: Oh, you know, "police blotter," "licentious maniac," "bad boy of rock'n'roll," that type of thing. Y'know, it's weird, in the '60s and '70s articles seemed to almost point with pride at Jerry Lee's wild-rockin', nonstop pill-popping/whiskey drinkin' ways, saying "Let's see today's modern rockers compete with THAT!" Now they all point the finger of shame whenever they get the opportunity. They admired his behavior before; now they seem to resent his being alive. Hell, I resent these guys getting paid for writing about Jerry Lee Lewis when I'd do it for nothing and do a DAMNED SIGHT BETTER JOB THAN THOSE HYPOCRITICAL PUKEES DID!!!!!!

Q: Back to the movie. It did poorly at the box office. Can you hazard a guess why?

A: First, I think we're starting off with a limited-appeal subject. A record exec was once quoted as saying that there were about 30,000 hardcore Jerry Lee Lewis fans in the U.S., and these fans will buy anything connected with Jerry Lee, but that everybody else bought only strictly formatted hits. These 30,000 fans would have to see the movie about 100 times apiece at full admission price for this movie to even come close to breaking even. Second, I don't think that this was a summer movie. BATMAN, INDIANA JONES, LETHAL WEAPON, those are summer movies. Loud mindless distractions. GREAT BALLS OF FIRE would have been a better autumn movie. It dealt in human warmth, foibles, and rhythm. Third, the national focus is no longer on the music and styles of the '50s. Had this flick been done a few years earlier, it pro-

(continued next page)

bably would have done better at the box office.

Q: What about the soundtrack?

A: The soundtrack is great. T-Bone Burnett did a great job reworking Jerry Lee's early hits, and shows that modern producers could make good-sounding rock'n'roll records, but that they just don't want to. Jerry sounds his age, to be sure, but he sings with drive and spirit. The three songs on the disc that aren't Jerry's (the original "Rocket 88," "Big-Legged Woman" by Booker T. Laury and "Whole Lotta Shakin'" by Valerie Wellington) are top-notch examples of rhythm & blues of the period. The most disappointing aspect of the disc is that not all of Jerry's music from the film is included. "I'm Throwing Rice" and "Lewis Boogie" are featured in the film but not on the disc.

Q: Including legally-issued live recordings, this is about the fifth or sixth remake of Jerry Lee's original Sun hits. Does that bother you?

A: Well, I still can't understand why they couldn't use Jerry Lee's original Sun recordings. Those are still the best. But I'm happy The Killer is back on record again. All that hype handed out by people saying that the new versions are better than the originals is just promo-talk. Jerry's piano sounds great, Jerry's voice sounds okay, and the production, backup musicians and engineering are first-class. But make no mistake, Jerry's Sun versions are unsurpassable classics.

Q: Would modern music fans appreciate the soundtrack?

A: You know, my tastes are so removed from those of the general public's that I can't make an accurate judgment, but I will say this: I went into a Tempe Warehouse and brought the cassette single version of "Great Balls of Fire" for my collection; while she was ringing it up, the cashier (who looked about 19 or 20) said, "Y'know, this whole LP is rilly good, my boyfriend and I play it over and over at our place." And we had ourselves a little talk about The Killer and genuine rock'n'roll music. If this movie and this soundtrack can get a few young people involved in real rock'n'roll, and by extension Jerry Lee Lewis, then this movie will have served its purpose, in my view.

Q: Any impressions created by the movie that you'd like to dispel or amend?

A: Well, people should know that despite England's initial revulsion over Jerry's marriage, Jerry eventually went back to Britain in triumph and that the English fans are among his most loyal. The English in general kept our music, rock'n'roll, alive for years while we let it wither. Also, I like the ending. Each time I've seen the tag-line at the end I choke up and am moved to applause. It's certainly the way I feel about Jerry Lee.

Q: Refresh my memory—what was that end line?

A: "Somewhere in America tonight, Jerry Lee Lewis is playing his heart out."

A poem inspired by a Firesign Theatre reference: SLEEVE JOB

by Dana A. Snow

When you're talking to a friend
And a know-it-all comes your way
Tell your friend, "Let's put him on!"
And then here's what you say:

"I just had the greatest sleeve job!
She was married, so don't tell!
Sleeve jobs are seldom seen in films,
'Cause they don't photograph well.

"You won't find it in the Kama Sutra
Unless you read between the lines,
Nor in Krafft-Ebbing, DeSade or 'The
Joy of Sex'

And judges don't give out fines.

"Maybe you think I'm making it up.
You look like you don't believe!
But let me say, if you're not serious,
Please don't tease me with your sleeve!"

Unleash Your Weirdness

The Church of the SubGenius is the cynicism of the future, uniting superior mutants, renegades, weirdos, kooks, twisted geniuses and so-called sinners in a brain call of prophetic yuks.
"This is not a sect of Carl Jung or the most incredible sort of Carl Jung or the
Ten years." — TOMORROW '80
The SubGenius Foundation
P.O. Box 14848
Dallas, Texas 75214

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article, by Dr. Ellsworth T. Fuquay, III, Ph.D., M.D., D.O., L.P.A., A.S.S., D.P.M., S.O.B., O.B.GYN, and D.V.M. is published due to our continuing policy of accepting works from all forms of idiots. This piece does not necessarily represent the views of us, or our readers, but here it is anyhow.)

Recently, a staff writer (surely a misnomer) for this publication approached me and asked me to peruse the past year's issues. She told me that the periodical's 9th anniversary was fast upon us and asked me to help her commemorate that great event with a column of my usual caliber and drive.

After delving into the pages of issues numbered 63 through 70, I find it difficult--nay, impossible--to determine precisely how this newsletter has managed to publish 70 issues.

I am appalled and disgusted to imagine that there are so many sick, warped, deranged and misguided individuals around our grand nation who actually read and enjoy this conglomeration of biting satire and off-color humor.

This publication is socially unacceptable, morally bankrupt, politically irreverent, apathetic, vulgar, obscene, dishonorable, facetious, profane, unpredictable, uncontrolled, raging, frenzied, impetuous, crazed, perverse, outrageous, flagrant and utterly stupefying.

After careful study and analysis of the various columns and letters, I have determined that many of your regular readers are avid (or is that 'rabid'?) devotees of this sin sick serial.

I have completed a fairly indepth analysis of your readers, contributors and staff writers (if so they be) and have thus been able to prepare a profile of the same.

WHO READS THIS PERIODICAL?

Immoral sinners.

WHO CONTRIBUTES TO IT?

Immoral sinners.

WHO ARE THE STAFF WRITERS?

Highly immoral sinners.

The staff writers comprise a clan to be feared and avoided at all costs. These sinners not only indulge in great varieties of sins, they write about their sinning!

I have even found evidence in these pages of staffers encouraging others to JOIN THEM IN THEIR SINNING!

These people are perverted, immoral, maniacal deviates. They listen to rock music, condone "free choice" for the useage of drugs, are Liberals or worse, accept the behavior of sexual deviates, question authority, are apathetic, and just generally refuse to conform to the right, true, proper way of life.

Their sin sick souls will surely roast in the fires of hell for all eternity.

I have always attempted, in my works, to save souls from the endless purgatory of pain and suffering awaiting them if they do not repent and seek a cure for their sick, broken lives.

While you poor sinners were sequestered in your homes reading this pernicious menace, many interesting, frightening and important things were happening in the world.

The end of the world is fast approaching, and you will be left behind to continue your cycle of sinning and spreading your sickness if you do not repent!

You will MISS the apocalypse!

It is all avoidable, though.

Simply join me in powerful meditational prayer and send your love offering of \$20 or more--plus your repentance offering of \$25 or more, and your forgiveness offering of \$12.95--to me in care of STAFF OF GOD PUBLICATIONS, INC. You may use the address of your staff writer, Kathy Stadalsky. She will see to it that I receive your offerings.

The time is at hand. Won't you join us?

- Kathy Stadalsky



Sorry folks - no time to proofread this issue!

(Please forgive typos)



456A

PUMPAIN HEAD

I'VE TAKEN UP A NEW HOBBY.

DON'T TELL ME,
BIRDWATCHING.

THERE'S AN OWL LIVING IN THE BARN.

THE ONLY PROBLEM IS...

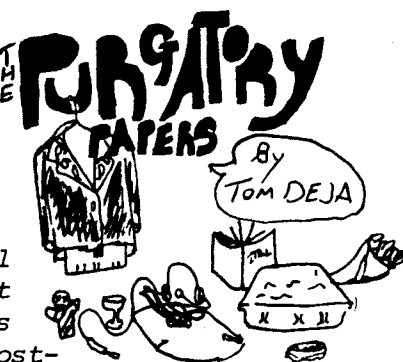
IT SCARES

THE DAYLIGHTS OUT OF 'EM.



ALL HEADS TURN AS THE RECEPTION GOES BY

(In which Our
Hero provides
advice for all
potential best
men and ushers
to minimize post-



wedding stress

Okay, this column is about the wedding -- you know, the one that Dorian went on about last issue. If you're already tired of this subject,¹ please turn to this fascinating article Elaine published on communist bread molds on page seventeen. You'll enjoy it so much more. Trust me.

Likewise, all people who are engaged or otherwise have eminent nuptials should **STOP READING NOW! I'M SERIOUS! I'VE GOT A VICIOUS DOG WITH RABBITES WHO'LL EAT YOUR FOOT IF YOU DON'T PUT THIS COLUMN DOWN RIGHT NOW AND GO AWAY!! HONEST!!! THIS IS NOT FOR YOU!!!!**²

Now that that's done with, we can get down to business. You see, I was involved in the wedding in a best man capacity. While I fulfilled this capacity well, I realized...Oh, excuse me.

HEY, YOU TWO! CLOSE THIS 'ZINE RIGHT NOW!! YOU WANT SOMETHING BAD SHOULD HAPPEN TO YOU??

WOOF-WOOF!!!

OH, NOW YOU'RE IN TROUBLE!! GO GET 'EM, BRUNO!!!!

Sorry

Now, as I was saying, as I was best man-ning, I noticed that, while the bride and groom have *reams* of material designed to make their trip through the marriage machine survivable, us wedding party folk were left in the cold. There is no *Best Man* magazine for the secondary members of the wedding party. We are left to fend for ourselves and, before we know it, we've been crushed by the wheels of that knot-tying Leviathan. Never one to leave a gap unfilled, I'm going to give you a little pocket-guide for the beleaguered best man.

Let's start with the tuxedo. Now, understand that the best man³ and ushers should not outshine the groom. It's his wedding after all and you probably thank God every day for it. However, this does not mean that you should look like troglodytes, as some bridal places feel. They're devoted to making the party look like total fools. Thus, they keep a backlog of horrible formals that went out of fashion in 1973. These are always made of some brightly colored synthetic and is heavy on cheap satin or other death cult fabrics. The groom may have Casablanca in mind for his wedding style, but the best man's tux is almost guaranteed to be more reminiscent of Superfly. The only way to prevent almost total sartorial embarrassment is to pick out the tuxedos yourself.

Getting to choose the wedding party tuxes is not all that difficult -- the groom is, after all, your friend and won't want you to look like those Italian James Bond knock-offs that abounded in the 60s (Unless the groom is a self-destructive sadist and wants to alienate his family and friends). The difficult part is picking out a tux that every member of the party will look good in. Remember, those people in the tuxedo books are *models*. They're trained at birth to look like that. If one of them reaches a weight over 180, the model farmers have orders to shoot them. Your wedding party will not contain any models. What's worse, *guaranteed*, one of the usher will be fat -- not portly, not beefy but **FAT**. Nothing against fat people, but tuxedos were designed for the thin. No fat person has ever, ever looked excellent in a tuxedo, not even Sydney Greenstreet. You must accept the fact that there will be portly folk who are not going to look as good as you would like, no matter what the tux you choose. There's also a good chance that one usher will be, ah, unusual in appearance in terms of grooming. That also can't be helped. Just go with the flow. Remember not all wedding parties will be perfect, so better look out for number one.

The tuxes out of the way, the next thing you'll have to worry about is the party for the soon-to-be-marrieds. In the case of the bridal shower, all men are banned from the building (And the town and state, if it can be managed), so that the women can talk about how the groom isn't worth it. I know of men who have had terrible punishments visited upon them for breaching this rule of etiquette: dismemberment, castration, having to wear silly hats. They also give the bride a plethora (a shower, one could say, hence the name) of gifts, usually of a blatantly sexual nature and generally requiring batteries. There are also conventional gifts, like toasters and demitasse sets⁵, but that's just to cover up the sick and depraved objects they present the bride for real. Crashing a bridal shower is just not worth it, men. All they do is try to convince the bride that the single life is eminently better which, let's face it, it's not. I know.

Unlike the bridal shower, the bachelor party is attended by at least one woman. This woman usually wears as little as possible, is

most likely paid for her services and is generally instructed to clean the groom's pipes but good. This is done in an attempt to convince the groom that the bride isn't worth it. This is indicative of how radically different male and female approaches to a problem are. Keep in mind that there will be at least one, most likely more, participants who will want their pipes cleaned as well. The reasoning goes something to the effect that damn it, since they're paying for the girlie, they should have use of her. The people with this mindset are usually also the people who don't look good in their tuxes and will stiff you for their share of the festivities. Just hand them another chili dog and tell them to stuff it.

Please keep in mind that the groom might not want his pipes cleaned. After all, in the words of Vinnie, "Why sleep with a total stranger when, if you play your cards right, you can sleep with somebody you know?" This is an admirable sentiment, but it does open up the question of what to do for entertainment. The first thing you learn upon shopping around is that alternative entertainments are expensive. When the average entertainer hears the words 'bachelor party', their eyes light up and they automatically get in touch with their broker. After looking for something both entertaining and reasonable, you may want to just give up and rent out a couple of videos. This is because the words affordable and entertaining are usually mutually exclusive, like Republican and New York Mayor. But look on the bright side; your party may be perfectly happy watching Jimmy Wallach's Puppet Safari⁶.

By this time, you will suddenly find yourself needing the managerial skills of a Donald Trump⁷. You will need to know who every male friend of the groom is, where he can be reached, and how much money you owe him so he could get to the party. You will also have to perform not unlike a skilled aerial, traversing the emotional waves caused by people who haven't seen each other for a long time and with good reason. Look, there's going to be at least one slip of the lip at every bachelor party. You can't take a bunch of primitive male folk and get them drunk without one. Your job is to keep that slip of the lip from becoming a slash of the throat. Maybe you better not drink.

In retrospect, I really think that somebody should market one of those headphone things you see television producers wearing for best men. With all these men of the male gender together, you need that lifeline to the one usher you trust (and believe me, you better have an usher you can trust -- you and he will probably be the only ones who pay for the party). A headset can give you the ability to react with lightning speed while also giving you the false sense of being in control. Some folk will find your wearing a headset odd. Just nod your head like a crazed chimpanzee. They'll just think you're grooving to your Walkman and wander off.

Sometime before the bachelor party, however, you will come up against the Wedding Rehearsal. There are anywhere from one to five hundred wedding rehearsals before the ceremony, depending upon the neurosis of the groom and the expense incurred by the bride's mother. If something goes wrong during these rehearsals do not be alarmed. In fact, be thankful. That means the ceremony will go off without a hitch. It's when the rehearsals are flawless that you should worry. The law of averages states that, with so many people involved being in a highly emotional state, something's going to screw things up. If you can get all that disaster-proneness out of the way during rehearsals -- disperse the 'Murphy' Energy, if you will -- then the wedding should be a joy to behold. Case in point: after a flawless rehearsal on Wednesday, the 'Murphy' energy struck during the ceremony when the ribbon holding the rings tightened rather than loosened after I pulled it. This was not good. In a situation like that (especially when you have to use your foot to brace yourself so you can pull the ribbon loose), don't panic. Just smile rictus-like and plead with the nearest person in earshot for help. After all, this is one of the prime times when the photographer will take 'candid's'.

This will bring you to the reception. Considering the absolute diversity of humanity, it is not surprising that the reception style varies wildly from ethnic group to ethnic group. In the case of Vinnie and Dorian, the scions of two families who are violently Italian, the reception was...large. It usually takes hours to complete, involves more food than it takes to feed India for a year and will involve a series of 'dances' that resemble obscene tortures. This is probably due to the fact that most Italian weddings last longer than most relationships.

The itinerary of the average Italian wedding goes something like this:

- 1)The guests eat.
- 2)The wedding party is introduced.
- 3)The guests and the wedding party eat.
- 4)The bridal couple dance.
- 5)Everybody eats.
- 6)The best man makes a toast.
- 7)Everybody eats dinner.
- 8)People dance.
- 9)Everybody eats.
- 10)The guest vocalist sings.
- 11)Everybody eats.
- 12)Italian folk dances.
- 13)Dessert.
- 14)The gathering up of leftover dessert in doggie bags.
- 15)Everybody eats.

You can see what's the center of attention here. Actually, the abundance of food is beneficial. You're going to need all those excess calories for the dreaded Italian Folk Dances⁸. For example, my escort

(continued next page)

for the evening dragged me into the Tarantella. From what I can glean about this Authentic Italian Folk Dance, what basically happens is that all the wedding guests get somewhat drunk. After they have proven that they can mistakenly identify their hands as a sentient, five fingered sausage, they gather together in a circle and spin around real fast until one of the participants dislocates his/her shoulder. If one couple feels particularly feisty (usually the Aunt and Uncle no one wants to acknowledge as their own), then they will get in the middle of the circle and swing each other about by the elbow. Since I was sober during all this, the effect was, quite frankly, frightening. This is not even mentioning a folk dance spoken only of in whispers known as the 'Chicken Chicken' dance. That's when all the matronly people gather around and hug their arapits, occasionally making the 'M & M's' movement -- you know what I mean, as in 'M & M Melt in your mouth...'. This dance is usually done most enthusiastically by the woman who has cellulite covering some unlikely place on her face. It is not a pretty sight at all.

I can now hear you lot going "Oh no, not me. I ain't doing no 'Chicken Chicken' dance." Lord knows I did. However, as part of the wedding party, you will be required to do these things so that the other guests won't seem intimidated. However, the benefit of this is that you, as a member of the wedding party, will have power over large amounts of people. Nobody wants to bother the bride and groom, who are busy angling. You will be the one the guests turn to when they need something done. You will be the one the caterers will cater to. You will be the one busboys will trip over to serve because you will find yourself with the god-like power over life and the band... and that's all that matters in this reception world. Just don't let it get to your head, because after the reception is over, it's back to being lonely ol' Mr. Single Guy again unless...

Maybe it's just me, but there is something about singleness and weddings. More people of the single persuasion end up attracted to each other as the result of receptions. Maybe it's the way the bride and groom radiate such total and absolute good karma. Maybe it's the fact that everybody looks so damn good, and knows they won't look this good again. Maybe it's the allure of rented outfits. Maybe it's because ingesting all that food increases other appetites. All I know is that nobody went home alone that night. Even I, misogynist that I am, managed to strengthen an all ready existing attraction between myself and a woman from Armonk. Of course, she's moving to Florida this weekend, which just goes to show you that happy endings don't always last. But in a wedding reception world, they might.

The Jordan Almond-less (Thank god) Footnotes

1- And believe me, if you're single, chances are you're bloody sick off this subject

2- And double !!!!

3- Insert horrible screams and violent dog-munching sounds here

4- This may not apply to bridesmaids and maids of honor, but I have to write from experience. If anybody out there is willing to have me act as maid of honor at their wedding, I'll be glad to do the other side of this coin

5- The demitasse set is the fondue set of the 80s, which pissed me off to no end, since Vin and Dori promised me the fondue set they were convinced they were going to get. If you want to make a friend -- or sex slave if you're female and attractive enough -- for life, send me a fondue set. I'll be eternally grateful

6- Of course, lucky me, I had a groom that would

7- Just the managerial skills of Trump, thanks. No bizarrely made-up Czechoslovakian ex-models for me, thanks

8- I'd like to point out that there are counterparts for what I'm about to describe at every ethnic wedding. They may require the destruction of different muscles, but they're fundamentally the same all the world 'round

9- Kinda sounds like the setting for a *Conan* movie, doesn't it? Trust me, she's far more shapely than Arnold Schwarzenegger. Or that bimbo Stallone divorced, for that matter



BIGHEAD GOES TO A HALLOWEEN PARTY IN A BRILLIANT DISGUISE #2

Plum-81

I HAD A CARD FROM ELVIS THE OTHER DAY

by Wayne Hogan

I had a card from Elvis the other day. Postmarked Budapest, Hungary, 76 Forint in postage due, the card had a pretty good Chamber-of-Commerce-ish photo of the Danube on it. In slanted and slightly flattened-out handwriting Elvis had scrawled "Hi pal how you doin'? Is this a river or what? Say hi to the Colonel for me. Chow baby. Elvis."

I had a card from Elvis the other day. Postmarked LaGrange, Illinois, 15 cents postage due. Heads of wheat wildly wavin' in the spring's winds were etched in red ink around the card's borders. He'd written "Hi pal how ya doin'? Is this a river or what? Say hi to the Colonel for me. Chow baby. Elvis."

Had a card from Elvis the other day, postmarked Sutter, California, no postage due. On the front was a vertical picture of rollin', rounded Buttes full-a thigh-high golden grass leanin' with the wind, antipatin' the black-nosed sheep's winter grazin'. It read "Hi pal how ya doin'? Is this a river or what? Say hi to the Colonel for me. Chow baby. Elvis."

I had a card from Elvis the other day. Postmarked Newalla, Oklahoma, 3 cents postage due. Pasted on the front were all-cap headlines out from local newspapers sayin' BETHEL RAIDERS BEAT HARRAH TIGERS! DALE BLUE JAYS DOWNED BY MOORE'S BISONS! SHAWNEE'S SEMINOLES UPSET MCCLLOUD'S CORNHUSKERS! Elvis wrote "Hi pal how ya doin'? Is this a river or what? Say hi to the Colonel for me. Chow baby. Elvis."

Had a card from Elvis the other day. Postmarked Kabul, Afghanistan, a thousand Afghani in postage due. On the front of the card was a Kodak-processed black & white photograph showin' the inner spaces of the Kremlin with a tiny little airplane parked way off in the far corner surrounded by thousands of cheering onlookers. "Hi pal," Elvis began, "how ya doin'? Boy, is this a river or what? Say hello to the Colonel for me. Chow baby. Elvis."

Elvis sent me another card the other day, postmarked Memphis, Tennessee, 10 cents in postage due. On it was a hand-drawn picture of the Colorado Rockies in early fall with yellow and purple field flowers bloomin' their fullest'n aspens bein' their whitest'n deer'n bear sip-pin' pure clear icy water from meanderin' streams crossed here and there by crafted little foot bridges. In slanted and slightly flattened-out writing Elvis scrawled "Hi pal how're ya doin'? Is this a river or what? Say hi to 'Scilla for me. Chow baby. E."

I have some doubts, though, about this last card havin' actually been written by Elvis, since on none of his others had he signed his name as simply "E." I'd appreciate hearin' about this from others who've heard from Elvis lately.

OVERHEARD at America's Lunch Counters



12 "If I would'a had a brother and he would'a been taller than me I would'a kicked the shit out of my father for bein' short."

ANIMATION UPDATE



FILM REVIEW: The first two flicks from Steamline Pictures (see IJ #68) made their New York debuts at the now-defunct Film Forum (rest easy, the FF will reopen in the spring of '90 at a new location, West Houston St. between Varick St. and Sixth Ave.) and are sure to appear at an art house or repertory cinema near you very soon. *LAPUTA, CASTLE IN THE SKY*, Hayao Miyazaki's fantastic fantasy, combines the imagination of Jonathan Swift with the inventiveness of Jules Verne. It's the story of a young girl with a magic levitation stone who discovers that she is the lost princess of an ancient city that hovers over the earth, mysteriously obscured by clouds. It's up to a young miner boy and a group of sky pirates (led by a cross between Mammy Yokum and Tugboat Annie, who's simply referred to as "Mama") to rescue the princess from agents who want to steal the stone and learn the secrets of Laputa (the sky city) from them. I saw a video version of this film over a year ago in the original Japanese; in spite of the fact that this version is dubbed in English (and the dialogue reminds one of early Japanese cartoons like "Astro Boy" or "Speed Racer"), the visual images on the wide screen make one overlook such flaws. And its two-hour running time makes it well worth spending a matinee in the cinema...The other release, *TWILIGHT OF THE COCK-ROACHES*, is a rather unique film that blends live-action with animation (though not as convincingly as *ROGER RABBIT*). It has romance, adventure, humor, drama, suspense—and that's just from the cockroaches' point of view! Hiroaki Yoshida directed this story about a love triangle between Naomi (granddaughter of a local tribe's elder), Ichiro (her future groom) and Hans (a war-scarred roach from a neighboring tribe whose political views differ from Naomi's tribe). Caught up in this situation is Mr. Saito, a live-action bachelor, who earlier in the film accepts the existence of these insects in his apartment; but when he gets a new girlfriend, whose only goal in life is to rid the world of all minute pests, the two of them become a real bugaboo to the roaches. Just as in comedian Robert Klein's monologue about the use of anthropomorphism in *Raid* commercials ("They make me love the little insects, then they annihilate them"), this is Japan's answer to such a commercial. The use of perspective shots, reminiscent of those used recently in *HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS*, adds to the effect of the climactic holocaust, as the surviving tribe of roaches flees for their lives. There are also moments of unexpected humor, such as when some of the roaches use Mr. Saito's video camera to broadcast a news show in the style of "Good Morning America;" and then there's Naomi who, during a trek to visit Hans' tribe, encounters a talking turd (an image that will probably haunt me for the rest of my life). One critic calls *TWILIGHT OF THE COCKROACHES* "Franz Kafka meets *Roger Rabbit*—Japanese style;" I'd rather compare this film to *THE HELLSTROM CHRONICLE* with a dash of 1984 mixed in. It's that disturbing—not because of the presence of vermin we destroy in our everyday lives, but because of the political ramifications its characters (live and toon) interpret to the audience. It makes one wonder—when will God wipe us out with a can of *Raid*? The Fleischer cartoon classic *HOPPY GOES TO TOWN* was never like this...**THE SECOND ANIMATION CELEBRATION: THE MOVIE** (from Expanded Entertainment) offers viewers another sensational diversity of shorts from around the world (a large number of them are from the US). Among the many highlights: "The Marathon," a Russian tribute to Mickey Mouse on his 60th birthday; "Quinoscopio #2," a new assortment of gags from Cuba's answer to Sergio Aragones, Juan Padron; "Scaredy Cat," Paul Clarehout's rebuttal to Marv Newland's classic "Bambi Meets Godzilla;" and "Rarg" from Tony Collingwood of the U.K., the story of a world that exists in the dreams of a mere mortal, and the attempts of this world's citizens to remain existent by keeping the mortal from waking up. Interspersed with these cartoons are five segments from "The Tracey Ullman Show" starring Matt Groening's typical (?) suburban family, "The Simpsons" (which includes "The Funeral," "The Burping Contest" and "Family Portrait"). In addition, there are some excellent examples of computer animation, such as Bob Sabiston's "Beat Generation" and two works from Pixar, "Tin Toy" (this year's Oscar-winning short) and "Knickknack." There are nearly two hours of entertainment for the diehard animation buff, and you won't be disappointed by one single minute of it!

MAGAZINE UPDATE: The latest issue of *ANIMATION MAGAZINE* (V. 3 #1) features a behind-the-scenes look at the production of the "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" cartoon series, a look at some of the animators whose work is featured in *THE SECOND ANIMATION CELEBRATION*, and a peek into the future of computer-animated films. The next issue of *AM* will look at Don Bluth's *ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN*, Walt Disney Productions' *THE LITTLE MERMAID*, and the FOX-TV series *THE SIMPSONS* from Matt Groening and Klasky-Csupo, Inc.—which is due to premiere in January—among other stories...The November '89 issue of *STARLOG* continues its series on the making of *WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT* with a look at the scenes that wound up on the cutting room floor (i.e., the "pighead" sequence and the "Benny the Cab" chase)...*"Get Animated!"* is back! Its latest incarnation is entitled *GET ANIMATED! REVIEW*. Editor John Cawley

assembles several reviewers who will be giving their comments on various animated subjects from theatrical films to the latest in home videos. Subscriptions are \$15 for 4 issues in the US (single issues cost \$5 each); send checks or m.o.'s to *Get Animated!*, P.O. Box 1458, Burbank, CA 91507.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO... "TATTERTOWN"? According to the August '89 issue of *GQ*, the Ralph Bakshi series was to air on the Nickelodeon cable TV network several months ago (39 episodes were commissioned by the network), but all that was seen of said series was a holiday episode that aired last December. Nickelodeon's president, Geraldine Laybourne, is keeping "Tattertown" on hold, with no plans for airplay or production of extra episodes in the near future. Oh well, if worse comes to worse Bakshi could always go back to producing an animated music video (like his "Harlem Shuffle" for the Rolling Stones)...unfortunately, Nickelodeon is owned by MTV—que sera, sera...

At this time I'd like to introduce a new feature in my column for those of you who like animation trivia—**TOON TEST**—but first, "a word from our sponsors." Here are some questions about familiar characters who sort of "sold out" over the airwaves. Good luck; answers appear at the end of this column!

1. The current Samsung commercial, with a man changing the images on a billboard (i.e., Godzilla, Alfalfa from "Our Gang," etc.) with his remote control, is a revised TV spot. The segment with a snippet from "The Bullwinkle Show" ("This is not a hat; this is a hatrack!") replaced what controversial TV personality from the first version?

2. Recently, Disney's "Winnie the Pooh" appeared in a TV spot for General Mills' Honey Nut Cheerios—but did you know that that "silly old bear" once had a short-lived cereal of his own? What was it called? Who distributed it? And whom did Pooh replace on the box?

3. Two Warner Brothers characters appeared in separate commercials for Paine Webber a few years ago. Each character uttered only one line (voiced by the late Mel Blanc). Who were they, and what were their respective lines? (Clue: Each starts off by saying, "Thank you, Paine Webber...")

4. Speaking of Warner Bros. characters, Bugs Bunny did TV commercials for which product?

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| A) Tang | E) the Yellow Pages |
| B) Kool-Aid | F) All of the above |
| C) Chiquita Bananas | G) None of the above |
| D) Zip-Loc Bags | |

5. In the early 1960s, which Hanna-Barbera characters appeared on the front of these Kellogg's cereal boxes?: Sugar Smacks; Sugar Stars; Cocoa Krispies; and O.K.s (an obvious ripoff of General Mills' Cheerios)

MIS"CEL"ANEUS: Animated effects have been popping up more often in music videos than ever before. Among the newer hits are "Weird" Al Yankovic's "Money for Nothing/Beverly Hillsbillies" parody from his film UHF, Tom Petty's "Running Down A Dream" (which pays homage to the Winsor McCay comic strip "Little Nemo in Slumberland") and Tears for Fears' "Sowing the Seeds of Love"...And speaking of music videos, Michael Jackson's "Leave Me Alone" (from "Moonwalker") earned an MTV Music Video Award in the category of Outstanding Visual Effects. Jim Blashfield was responsible for said effects...Speaking of awards, I failed in my prediction of the Emmy winner for Outstanding Animated Program. As you may recall from IJ #70, I thought that the winner would be either "Abel's Island" or "Meet the Raisins." Well, the Academy chose "Garfield: Babes and Bullets" as the winning show. Considering the many surprise winners on this year's telecast, this shouldn't come as a surprise to me. At any rate, I'm going to go out on a limb and make an early prediction for 1990 for the Academy Award for Best Animated Short: two cartoons from *THE SECOND ANIMATION CELEBRATION* are almost certain to be picked as Oscar nominees. They are William Reeves' and John Lasseter's "Knickknack" (the story of a snowman trapped inside a "shake-and-snow" souvenir paperweight) from Pixar and Bill Plympton's "25 Ways to Quit Smoking" (a self-explanatory comedy). The Academy Award nominations will be announced next February (by then I should come up with my third prediction)...Look for the world television debut of *CINDERELLA* in October on the Disney Channel...Speaking of cable TV, have you noticed that many cable stations are becoming warehouses for cartoon reruns? On the USA Network, they're showing repeats of "He-Man," "Jem" and "Mr. Magoo" (the latter consisting of "What's New, Mr. Magoo?" and the made-for-TV shorts of the early '60s, as opposed to the original theatrical shorts made in the 1950s); the Family Channel (aka CBN) is airing "The Sylvanians," "The Littles," "The Get-Along Gang" and other DIC shows, along with repeats of "Maple Town" and "Roger Ramjet" (a gagfest in animation so limited it makes "Rocky and Bullwinkle" look like they were done by Disney). Obviously, these cable stations are screening the old shows in order to allow regular non-cable stations to air new shows (like "Super Mario Brothers" and "Chip 'N Dale's Rescue Rangers")...Well, that's not entirely true. The Family Channel does have one original show—Saban Productions' "Wowsie" (the title character is a roly-poly dog who assists an eccentric professor in some pretty wild adventures), a Japanese cartoon with English-dubbed voices, based on the European comic strip by Dupa. Go figure...I'm not going to comment on the new Saturday morning lineup (Elayne does that elsewhere this issue in "...Or Not TV"), but if I had to recommend at least one show, "Beetlejuice" would be it. 'Nuff said?...The Museum of the Moving Image in Queens, NY recently ran a festival of animated features,

(continued next page)

called "Hand-Made Movies." Among the films shown were HOPPITY GOES TO TOWN, PINOCCHIO, THE SECRET OF NIMH and THE LORD OF THE RINGS...Many different animation studios are collaborating on a half-hour special on drug abuse. Toons such as ALF, Garfield, Scooby-Doo and the cast of DuckTales will act as spokespersons (if that's the right term for it); the special will air next year on all the major networks as well as many cable and syndicated stations...The next big cartoon festival in America will be the 4th Los Angeles International Animation Celebration, which will occur in August, 1990...Because of the success of merging live-action with animation in ROGER RABBIT, MGM/UA is following suit by producing a TV series where live actors interact with the Pink Panther (who just turned 25 this year). My only objection about the proposed series is that the producers are looking for a voice actor for the fuschia feline. Get real, you guys! The funniest characters on the big screen were the silent movie stars, and mute toons like the Pink Panther. Why tamper with perfection?...In paying their respects to the late Mel Blanc, the Warner studio had a "tribute" ad printed in a number of trade papers (the ad is also featured in the current issue of "Animation Magazine"). In said ad, Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and other Looney Tunes characters bow their heads in sorrow, with one words floating above them—"SPEECHLESS"...

ANIMATION FOR SALE: Gallery Lainzberg has a new catalog supplement available to all animation buffs (28 pages, 12 in full color). It costs \$3.95, which can be deducted from your first purchase; purchases can also be charged on your credit card. For information and to order a catalog, call 1-800-553-9995.

FRUITS (AND VEGETABLES) OF THEIR LABOR: Kroyer Studios (the people behind "Technological Threat") gets a "mixed fruit salad" award for its computer-and-cel animated treatment of the opening titles for Walt Disney Productions' HONEY, I SHRUNK THE KIDS... Some "baby lima beans" go to Hanna-Barbera Productions for not taking my advice about discontinuing the idea of rejuvenating old cartoon characters (like "The Flintstone Kids" and "A Pup Named Scooby-Doo"). The latest victims? Their original bread-and-butter, Tom & Jerry! "Tom & Jerry Kids" will debut in the fall of '90 (on an undetermined network), consisting of two 7-minute shorts starring these junior toons, plus one extra short with Tex Avery's character Droopy, who will retain his present age but will, instead, father an equally laconic son, Dribble (thus disobeying my other request regarding cartoon character offspring like those of "Popeye and Son" and "Pink Panther and Son," two other H-B shows)...CBS-TV receives a "golden apple" award for allowing the various cartoon characters of their Saturday morning lineup to introduce the commercials, instead of using the obligatory repetitious announcement used by NBC and ABC. Watch some of CBS's shows and see the difference...Finally, a "rotten apple" goes to Tiffany, the rock singer, who'll be portraying Judy Jetson in the Hanna-Barbera feature-length JETSON: THE MOVIE cartoon. Janet Waldo had provided the voice of Judy for 25 years, and it still sounds as good as ever. Although Ms. Waldo has no regrets about the decision to use Tiffany's voice instead of hers, I felt that was a very insincere thing to do, considering that this would've been the last time Janet would've worked with George O'Hanlan (George Jetson) and Mal Blanc (Mr. Spacely), who both passed away earlier this year. The family of the future just won't be the same...

ANSWERS TO TOON TEST: 1. Dr. Ruth Westheimer. 2. Nabisco's Great Honey Crunches cereal (from the early 1970's, putting wheat honeys and Rice Honey's spokestoon Buddy Bee, Buffalo Bee's replacement, out of work). 3. Elmer Fudd ("I wuv wabbit sew") and Daffy Duck ("...for feathering my nest"). 4. F. 5. Quick-Draw McGraw (on the Sugar Smacks box); Huckleberry Hound (Sugar Stars); Snagglepuss (Coca Krispies); and Yogi Bear (O.K.'s).

The Fretting Zoo

PART ONE by Prudence Gaelor

"Bunny, I'm telling you it was a complete disaster," Prudence said, resting her chin on her right knee.

"C'mon, you knew it would be."

"Yeah, but I didn't think it would be as awful as it was."

"What happened?" Leaning over, Pink Bunny picked something from Prudence's hair. "Lunch?"

"Yeah, right, saving it for later," was her response. "Anyways, I don't even know where to start. There were these horrid goats all over and one of them chased Ian all over the place and he ran away and fell down and ripped his pants, and another started chewing on Beline's hair, making her cry." She paused for breath and realized aloud, "Actually, that was kind of funny. I thought she was going to wet her pants!"

"Did she?"

"I dunno. She did act kinda funny after that, though. She kept tugging on the seat of her pants. Know what I mean?"

"Like she was trying to air-dry them?"

"Yeah, just like that."

"Oh no! I can feel it coming!"

"What?"

"A song in honor of Beline the Moist."

"Well, I hope it scans right, Bunny. Honestly, your scansion sucks big time."

14 Prudence hated it when Pink Bunny ignored her, which is exactly what he did. So loud and off-pitch that it hurt Prudence's ears,

he belted out, "Beline the moist sitting in a tree, pee eye ess eye en gee! Don't invite her out, but if you take the chance, insist she change her underpants!"

"Not only does your scansion suck, but so does your singing!" Prudence giggled, rolling off the bed.

"What, didn't you like it?"

"Needs, work, but thematically it is very correct, I must say," she responded, imitating Ed Grimley.

"Oh yes. It seems our friend Beline has gotten herself into a spot of trouble, I mean, how can you say she's not, clearly she is on a level..."

"I don't know, I'm just trying to make dinner here."

"Let's see what that young nut Beline is up to, what say?"

"I have a life!" they crescendoed simultaneously. Still giggling, Prudence was unable to crawl back on the bed, but, rather, rolled around on the grey carpet in her new room.

Claire was busy writing an acceptance speech, thanking the college and its board of trustees for her selection. Since their divorce, Claire felt ill at ease working two offices down from Patrick. This uneasiness was shared by those who had to work with them. Claire felt that she was the object of their conversations and over-the-shoulder glances. She hated being discussed. So, when a small women's college only an hour's drive away was looking for a new Dean of Students, Claire submitted her resume.

To keep Prudence out of her hair while she prepared for her transfer, Grandma Ed and Jenny took the kids to the petting zoo. Prudence and Ian didn't want to go, Prudence adamantly. But Prudence's friend Beline thought it would be great fun and convinced Prudence and her cousin that this could be a wonderful adventure. Prudence thought her friend tended to be a dork. This confirmed her suspicions; thus, it was much to Prudence's delight to see an especially menacing goat—they were all menacing but this one was particularly so—latch on to her strawberry hair and start munching away. The goat had eaten in places maybe and inch of Beline's hair and all of her favorite ribbon she got for her birthday before Jenny was successful in chasing it away. Pru decided her dorky friend's hair must be tasty because the goat never strayed far from the group, always drawing close to Beline whenever Jenny wasn't looking and then skittering away when the girl shrieked, drawing Jenny's attention. Prudence meant to ask her what kind of shampoo she used and then remembered that she used the stinky, but good-stinky, kind that smelled like coconut. Once Prudence and Billy Blueberger were discussing how repugnant they thought Beline to be and why did they let her hang around them and then they decided they liked her to be around because she always smelled so good.

Prudence was afraid of the goats so she spent most of the time clinging to Grandma Ed's leg. The petting zoo had many other animals like deer, sheep, cows and horses. They were also supposed to have rabbits and llamas—the former Prudence really wanted to see—but they never did get to them. These other animals were kept in pens while the goats were allowed to roam freely and terrorize the children. The deer wouldn't come near the children to be petted, and after seeing a lamb pee on a kid's shoe and another child get bitten on the nose by a horse, the idea of petting the animals was out of the question.

So Grandma Ed and Jenny loaded the shrieking kids into the car. Beline was shrieking because THE GOAT charged her at the exit and she was frightened it would escape from the zoo and follow her home. Ian was screaming because he ripped his new pants and was sure his death was imminent upon his mother finding out, and Prudence was crying because it was a perfectly dismal experience and for this she missed the OUTER LIMITS marathon on channel 54, and it was like only the best show on all of television ever. Jenny and Grandma Ed abandoned the original plan to treat the kids to ice cream sundaes after the zoo and took them home.

"Was there anything at the zoo that you enjoyed at all?"

"Nuh-uh."

"Well, surely there were some cool animals," Pink Bunny prodded. Prudence could tell he was trying hard to elevate her opinion of the outing, realizing that if she didn't reconcile herself to the idea of the petting zoo as an okay sorta place he would be forced to listen to her gripe about it all night and hear similar dreadful recountings of other places she was forced to go to that she hated like the circus, the state fair, the ice follies, the Michael Jackson concert and the Steven Spielberg festival at the drive-in.

Prudence, already bored with bitching, decided to concede to Pink Bunny's request for reconciliation. "We never did get to find the rabbits. They had deer, though."

"You liked the deer?"

"Yeah. They were okay, I guess. They didn't smell as bad as the other animals." Pausing, she scratched her ear. "What did you do today?"

"I started to watch AMERICAN GLADIATORS to see what it was like..."

"Which one is that?"

"The TV Guide says, quote, 'JoeTheismann and Mike Adamle host an ongoing athletic tournament in which contenders face an imposing team of gladiators in challenging physical contests, including the Joust, Powerball, the Human Cannonball, and the final round, the Eliminator.'"

"Sounds violent. Was it any good?"

"I wouldn't know. The President came on your TV and wouldn't get off. He was on every channel."

"Gee, Bunny, I don't know. When you watch TV, be careful. It sounds like I need to get a new TV."

(to be continued)

STEALING

by Larry Oberc

They follow me around the store, every time, every time I come in here, don't know what it is they think they're doing, I go into those closets to try on clothes, look up, see cameras watching my every move, walk into the toy department, it's winter, cold as hell outside, or summer, hot, sweaty, and there is som fool, dressed way out of whack, standing next to me, looking at dolls like they are porno, watching me out of the corner of his eye, a grown man playing with dolls, dressed in the wrong clothes, looking a hell of a lot more suspicious than I ever could, it makes me feel like pissing on the floor, doing something to justify all those eyes monitoring my actions, movements, I walk into the sports section, start looking at the guns, find a nice small automatic, feels good in the hand, think about teaching those eyes a lesson, ask if I can try it out, maybe take a shot or two around the store, just to see what it's like, all those eyes watch, cautious, like a cat, ready to jump if I get out of hand, the salesperson says no, I can't try the gun out, a follower walks up to me, asks the salesperson if there's a problem, I look the salesperson in the eye, let him know I can hang around out front of the store waiting for him to get off work, he says no, there's no problem, the follower leaves, I ask to look at the bullets, the salesperson says no, I can buy the gun, I can buy the bullets, but I can't put the two together in the store, there are two followers watching from the side, a few feet away, I buy the gun, the bullets, go outside, the followers watching, the cameras turning, sitting in my car in the parking lot I wonder who should go first.



HORIZONTAL MORBID HUMOR.....

MIX-UP

by Curt Porter

Johnson got buried in Johnston's grave and Johnston got cremated. And it's all my fault. I work at Burns and Berry Morticians, see, and I'm supposed to make sure the stiffs end up in the right places, and I slipped up on that one—although I do think it was a more or less reasonable mistake.

Actually, I felt pretty bad about the mix-up, and this ghost that started visiting me every night didn't make me feel any better. He wasn't one of your usual types of ghost, mind you; he was sort of like a skeleton, and he was burning, like a log in a fireplace. He would stand there and slap himself like he was trying to put out the fire. Well, I didn't like him coming in my apartment—for one thing, he got it all smoky and smelly.

"Look, pal," I yelled at him the first time he showed up, "don't bug me. I can't do anything about it."

He did not move.

"So what do you want?" I said. "Want me to blow you out? Fffft! See? No use. Now beat it!"

"Ohhhhhh!" he said—and flames a foot long spurted out of his mouth and ears.

He went away, but kept coming back. And I got to thinking, maybe this guy's a ghost out of hell. Maybe somebody else pulled a boo-boo, too, like the guy with wings and a halo who directs traffic out there. I'll bet he saw this dead guy coming at him all on fire, and he thought, ah ha! another one for down there. You know. Maybe Johnston just doesn't belong in hell...

"I get the feeling you're trying to tell me something," I said to this hot-breathed ghost the next time he showed up. He moaned, "Ahhhhh..." And I figured that meant yes.

"You're trying to tell me you're in hell and don't belong there. Is that it?"

"Ahhhhhh. Ahhhhhh..."

"Well, for crying out loud," I said, "don't they have a court of appeals or something down there?"

"Ohhhhhh!" Flames shot out of his mouth and ears again, only that time they were really powerful: I was standing across the room, and my eyebrows got singed.

Well, I really wanted to help somehow, if only to keep Hot-Breath from pestering me. I didn't have any ideas. I figured that for starters maybe I ought to find out if Mr. Johnston really was in the wrong place, so I asked around—and I'm telling you...Well, the guy that got buried was a horror, one of those psychos who tortures women then chops them up and plants the pieces in his backyard? Ugh! And the guy who got cremated was a paragon. He titthed regularly and was good to his wife and kids—a real A-number-one citizen. So no wonder he was upset about going to hell.

I was getting pretty upset, too. I figured I needed some advice, and the best place I could think of to get it was at Jimmy's Bar, so I went over there and ordered a double scotch. Although I usually don't air my problems with bartenders, I laid it all on Jimmy. You know, just in case he had any bright ideas. I guess Jimmy thought it was pretty funny, and maybe I'd have thought it funny, too, if I didn't have to put up with that fire-breathing spook. Anyway, Jimmy laughed until the other guys at the bar wanted to know what the hell (very appropriate, eh?). Of course, they all guffawed when Jimmy told them about it, so I had a couple more doubles.

Then this little skinny guy said, "Say, pal, all you've gotta do is dig up this guy Johnston—"

"Johnson," I corrected him. "Johnson got cremated."

"Oh," the little skinny guy said. "Well, all you have to do is dig up this guy Johnston...Johnson? Well, dig up the guy that got buried and plant the ashes of the other guy, and—"

"Naw," a fat guy with red hair said, "that'd never work."

And a big guy with tattoos of roses and dragons on his arms said, "Sure it would."

"Wait a minute," I said. "You can't go around digging up stiffs."

"You scared?" the fat guy with red hair said.

"No, I'm not scared. But you sure can get in trouble digging—"

"You see? He's scared," the fat guy with red hair said.

I don't know how it happened, but the little skinny guy, the fat guy with red hair, the big guy with tattoos, and yours truly wound up at the cemetery with two bottles of scotch and a couple of spades; I think we got the spades out of the cemetery caretaker's hut, broke down the door or something like that. And somehow we got Johnson dug up.

"Where are the other guy's ashes?" the little skinny guy said. "We've got to bury them."

Nobody said anything.

"So why don't we make ashes out of Johnson?" the fat guy with red hair said.

The little skinny guy and the big guy with tattoos said that made a lot of sense to them, although it sounded sort of dumb to me. Anyhow, I didn't argue about it, so we started out by scrounging up a pile of wood—I think we ripped a lot of planks out of the caretaker's hut. We plopped Johnson on top of the pile, then we stood there and looked at one another.

"We've got to have some gasoline," the guy with tattoos said.

"Dangerous," I said. "Very dangerous."

"How about kerosene?" the fat guy with red hair said.

"Yeah," the big guy with tattoos said.

So we trooped over to the filling station just off of the cemetery property, passing the scotch around and having one hell of a great time.

K1 kerosene, it was; and all that wood and Johnson and the K1 made a real blaze. It reminded me of a great big Boy Scout campfire, and I started dancing around it like a Cherokee brave.

"Woo, woo, woo, woo—woo, woo, woo, woo..." I was having such a great time that I didn't notice when the little skinny guy, the fat guy with red hair, and the big guy with tattoos beat it, and I didn't even hear the squad car come chugging up.

So, I wound up in the slammer. Then they took me over to the Bubblehead Clinic, and they shot me so full of drugs I felt like a zombie. Then these guys with fuzzy beards and little black pig-eyes got me off in a room with shiny white walls and bounced questions off of me like ping-pong balls. I sure didn't tell them anything, least of all about old Hot-Breath. Sure, he'd been a pain in the ass, but I'd rather talk to him any day than guys with fuzzy beards and little black pig-eyes.

It's a mystery to me how I came out of that place with my head still screwed on. And it's a mystery, too, that I'm not spending the rest of my life in the slammer. All they did was give me a five-year suspended sentence—for vandalism, grave robbery, stuff like that. Maybe they figure I'm too dumb to be dangerous.

Mr. Burns and Mr. Berry are mad at me, though. They say that Mrs. Johnston is threatening to sue them for millions of bucks. Mr. Burns and Mr. Berry say they're going to keep me on and work my butt off for the next 300 years to pay Mrs. Johnston for all the mental agony that her lawyer says she's suffered. I guess that's all right with me, and I'm telling you, I'm going to concentrate real hard from now on and look at names very carefully to make sure all the stiffs get to where they're supposed to be.

Well, would you believe it, after all of that I'm still not rid of ghosts. The one I have now is real nice, though—compa-ratively speaking. He's your usual type of foggy, see-through ghost, and although he smells kind of smoky, he behaves like a real gentleman. He doesn't even say, "Boo!" He usually visits me at bedtime. He floats around my bed while I put on my pajamas, but by the time I get back from brushing my teeth he's gone. I think maybe he's Mr. Johnston trying to tell me thanks for getting him out of hell. And that makes me feel real good.

What Price Slimness?

by Susan Packie

The exact cause for the extinction of Homo sapiens will probably always be shrouded in mystery, but the latest theory is that the primary factor was rampant hominid constipation.

Rodents digging in a number of locations throughout the world have turned up an unusual number of Ex-Lax boxes, blue Phillips' magnesia vials, and prune juice bottles.

The creatures were apparently so infatuated by what they stuffed into their mouths that they forgot to think about what was or was not coming out the other end! When they finally did remember, it was far too late. The species had already pronounced its own doom.

Of course, other theories are still discussed. Birds fly to asteroids or comets, fish hail acid rain, gophers go for nuclear holocaust, koala and panda bears chew over botanical poisoning...However, none of these ideas adequately accounts for the presence of so many bowel movement stimulants. A large number of human beings must have literally exploded. Bits and pieces can still be found lying about in shallow depressions and under stone markers of some type.

Perhaps this extinct species was deluded into thinking that only emaciated skeletons were beautiful, that all traces of fat had to be purged from the body. Perhaps a few people are still out there somewhere, but in a much reduced form.

If that is true, then, given the right conditions, they could revive their race and ultimately resume their former dominance, once more putting everyone else in a subservient, demeaning position.

Just in case that happens, we'll have old pictures of their idol, Twiggy, handy. And a few bottles of prune juice.

THE WHISPER

by William Passera

Dresser drawer,
are you crammed full of colored socks...
or,

pleasantly dreaming
of Sunday wash?

With one
you are nestling warm
next to brother and sister fluff...
wishing tomorrow
would never come.

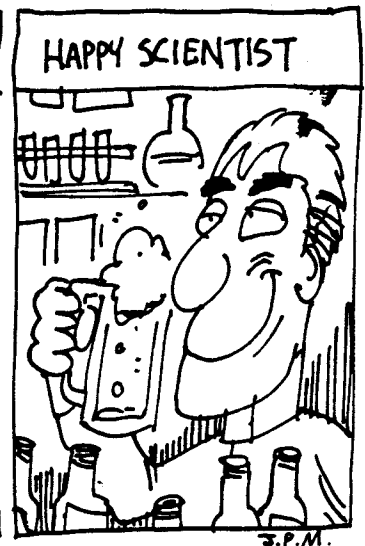
With other
there is room to echo
and float painted rainbows...
glowing,
anticipating a bright
and joyful return of old friends.

But when you awaken,
answer me sweetly,
softly in silence—
at night...

can you really
tell the difference?



for museums
new even though
some too
have taken their places
like Willys but
some call it Junkyard
- Mary Ann Hem



Todd Kristel presents ...

WAITING FOR "WAITING FOR GUDOT"

Mike sits in a theatre seat, pulling at his boot with both hands in an unsuccessful attempt to take it off. He shows no emotion despite the obvious effort.

Enter George.

MIKE: (giving up) Nothing to be done.

GEORGE: (advancing) I'm beginning to come round to the opinion that recent events might justify the formation of a committee to initiate further consideration of this idea. All my life I've tried to put the negativity thing from me, saying, George, be reasonable, you haven't yet tried everything. And I resumed the struggle thing. (Broods) So there you are again.

MIKE: Am I?

GEORGE: Together again at last! We'll have to celebrate this. But how? (Reflects) Get up till I shake your hand.

MIKE: (irritably) Not now, not now.

GEORGE: (hurt, coldly) May one inquire what His Highness has been doing for the past few years?

MIKE: I ran again.

GEORGE: And they didn't beat you?

MIKE: Beat me? Of course they beat me.

GEORGE: The same way as usual?

MIKE: The same? I don't know. I was well ahead in the polls, but then I lost momentum.

GEORGE: Sounds familiar. When I think of it...all those years...but for me...what would you be...

MIKE: Successful.

GEORGE: (gloomily) It's too much for one man. (Pause. Cheerfully) On the other hand, what's the good of losing the heart thing now, that's what I say. We should have thought of it a million years ago, in the eighties.

MIKE: Stop whining and help me off with this boot.

GEORGE: We were respectable in those days. Well, almost. Now it's too late. (Mike tears at his boot.) What are you doing?

MIKE: Taking off my boot. Did that never happen to you?

GEORGE: Usually I can't even get my foot out of my mouth.

MIKE: Help me!

GEORGE: It hurts?

MIKE: (angrily) Hurts! He wants to know if it hurts! Listen to this quiet voice, buddy: AAAAAAARGH!

GEORGE: (angrily) No one ever suffers but you. I don't count to you bleeding heart liberals. Well, read my lips. I'm in pain!

MIKE: It hurts?

GEORGE: (angrily) Hurts! He wants to know if it hurts!

MIKE: (pointing) You might zip it all the same.

GEORGE: (stooping) True. (He zips his fly.) Never neglect the little things in life.

MIKE: How is Dan?

to be continued...

Commercial McClue-In

by "Kid" Sieve

On October 5 the House of Representatives passed the notorious restrictions-on-federal-spending-for-art-some-people-deem-"obscene" bill; the Senate is almost certainly to follow. In response, the people have spoken up, and one of the more clever posters I've seen recently is found in various spots in New York's East Village. It reads, "Suck on this, Jesse Helms—Advertising sticks its dick in your face every day—whether you like it or not." The "dick" in question shows the nose portion of the infamous redesigned Joe Camel of Camel Cigarettes, which even ad insiders admit is supposed to immediately conjure up phallic imagery. Helms, of course, is engaged in the most obscene compromising positions of all with the tobacco industry.

Speaking of obscene, the contra-loving Coors folks are at it again. I won't go into more detail about beer in general (see my reply to Ken in this issue's letter column) and Coors in particular (I did that last time), but it's a darn shame they have some of the most clever ads anyway. Their latest series features Leslie Nielsen reprising his "Police Squad" role, and could almost be written by the Zucker brothers, it's so funny. I'm trying real hard here to laud the commercials whilst loathing the company...

Another company about which I'm none too fond is Domino's Pizza (owned, for the moment, by ultra-right Christian kook Tom Monaghan, who also owns the Detroit Tigers, I believe), so I'm happy that Little Caesar's may be starting to give them competition in the New York area market. LC's spots are cute and wacky and very light and just generally a lot of fun (I especially like the one featuring the imitation cheese, or should I say "cheez"). They rival Nynex's wordplays (despite my anger at Nynex for their union-busting of late) as the ads I most wait to watch.

Another clever series is now being done by DHL, following up on their Gary Larson spots. The new commercials feature flying trucks. That's pretty much it, just flying trucks. But isn't that enough? It's a simple gimmick technically, but it's well done and gets their point across. Look out below!

And Oldsmobile's new "This is not your father's" set is also worth noting. Love Ringo's kid's purplish hair—she reminds me of Pru! And Harry Belafonte's kids sure are handsome, aren't they? I've only seen the Peter Graves' daughter one once, but it looks like it's pretty cute.

Other commercials worth noting that seem to have premiered during the playoffs and Series (a prime time for debuting, as is the Super Bowl):

The Post Office has spent much of the extra money lying around after they hiked up prices on us a couple years ago on a really spiffy commercial publicizing their new dinosaur stamps (it's set up like a 1950's B-movie). Lord knows why they bother to make ads at all, given their monopoly...

The Roy Rogers new series of spots is good as well, playing on the notion that their hamburgers-with-the-works are unbelievably big. Rather sick commercials, and worth catching if you can. I remember one involves dropping a Roy Rogers hamburger from a tall building and the dent it makes in the sidewalk, but obviously my words alone can't do the campaign justice.

On the other hand, Burger King's come up with a truly obnoxious new slogan, considering how conformist and homogenizing fast-food places can be. Get this: their new bit is, "Sometimes you gotta break the rules." Oh yeah? Since when? I'd like to see you break a couple "rules," like the one about paying your workers sub-minimum wage, and serving dangerous prepackaged substances and having the nerve to call them food... Meanwhile at McDonald's, the

company is insisting it's celebrating its Founder's Day (may Ray Kroc not rest in peace) by having their management actually come down from their high horses and work, alongside all those minority type teenagers they treat like such shit the rest of the year (but you wouldn't know that by seeing all the fresh-scrubbed, disproportionately white faces of the kids in their ads the rest of the year, would you?). Yeah, I want to see this one proven too. I want pictures of management dumping those fries in grease and pre-packaging those McDLTs! And I want to see commensurate pay cuts! And I want to see this global corporation that calls itself "America's Meat and Potatoes" (wrong on all three counts) lose big in the lawsuit being generated by Bobby Darin's estate alleging the chain copied Darin's singing style for Mac Tonight!

Lastly, from Mazda comes a set of ads about, well, feelings. A woman rides a horse alongside a beach. A man has electrodes strapped to his body while cruising in a car so scientists back at the lab can analyze what makes him feel good about driving this chunk of metal. Forget mileage, air bags, social responsibility about pollution and emissions, even economy—and just think about how it makes you feel... yeah, just lie back now, look at the pretty pictures, listen to our voices soothing you to buy, buy, buy...

Everyone pretty much understands that many commercials feature dubbing in of voice tracks, right? Well, a few of the ads now on the air feature redubbing the same ad that's been shown for a while. I gotta figure the Budweiser ad featuring the "U2"-clone group ("It's such a pure and natural beer/For you...") was redone under pressure from the rock group's management and/or record company after it became abundantly clear to everyone that the U2-imitator did probably too fine a job mimicking the politically-oriented Irish band (much to their dismay, I must believe). However, the other obviously-overdubbed spot, from RC Cola, is still an enigma to me. This one features a joust, in which the knight who wins over his prince says, in a thick Cockney accent, "We'll all due respect, Your Majesty, we're not talking about the Magna Carta 'here, just try it!" (said of the cola in question). Well, they've now stripped the poor lad of his Cockney accent and made him an upper-class twit, for some unfathomable reason, thereby losing 'alf the 'umor of it all. Go figure ad blokes.

By the way, I despise perfume, fragrance commercials. Not only because I rarely touch the stuff myself, and not just because of Calvin Klein (although god knows that's reason enough). I'm thinking of one in particular that's been running for a bit now, for Brut. This is the one where a woman starts dressing up in her man's clothes, in much the same way a child plays dress-up in mommy's outfits. She puts on the shirt and prances about in front of the mirror, she puts on his hat and prances etc., she puts on his tie and looks as if she's about to giggle, she dabs on a smidge or two of his Brut (which, lemme tell you, I've no idea why she wants to wear, as it smells godawful)—and then the phone rings. She answers it and says, "Honey? I was just thinking about you"—but it's not what she says, it's the way she says it, and the way she looks when she hears the ring. She puts her hand faintly over her face in shock and consternation, as if she's been caught doing something too blasphemous for words. It's the exact look found on the face of a child who's just been caught with forbidden cookie crumbs on his or her mouth. Her phonetalk is at the volume level of a guilty mumble as well. This truly offends me. I see nothing wrong with cross-dressing for fun and/or profit, and often wear hats belonging to the renowned male S.H. Otis myself (he wears my pantyhose sometimes, but that's another story). But to reduce this cute moment of play to the level of dumb-little-girl-doing-a-no-no is infuriating. Just in case you've seen this ad and wondered why it pisses you off, this might be your answer.

I'm keeping things short this time to make room for the humor-gone TV reviews (like yeah, we all need more TV in our lives), and also 'cause I went on a bit in the letters column, so I'll take my leave once again asking for suggestions from you, the readers, as to ads (nationally-run ones, please—I simply don't get the local and regional kind unless they play in the NYC area) you'd like to see skewered and/or analyzed in this column. See you next time!

NEXT ISSUE: 900-number call-in opinion polls!

EXPLORERS

by Bangor Zack Bullen

The world demanded to know—"Where is Dr. Livingston? Is he still alive?"

Stanley searched the jungles for three years. He found the famous doctor, old and sick, in a poor village, in the most dangerous, most unknown part of the jungle.

Stanley said: "Dr. Livingston, I presume?"

Dr. Livingston said: "You're five minutes late! What the hell happened to you? I was going to send out a search party!"

"There were crocodiles on the Congo River," Stanley explained. "It took time to build a log raft. I got bitten by a poisonous snake. And then—let me think—there were army ants—"

For the next month, Dr. L could be heard muttering: "Five minutes late! Disgraceful! Can't depend on these Americans!"

BEST MERCHANDISE

FIRE SALE

YOUR ADVANTAGE
~MY DISADVANTAGE
BUT—THAT THE BIGN!

IMPORTS FROM SAMARKAND
X20 ORIGINAL PRICE

MY CREDITORS SAY:
"SELL! OR ~
CEMENT SHOES!"

BELOW
COST!

CO.

**CLOSED
ON ACCOUNT
OF LIES**

**CHEAPEST
PRICES**

ON
THE
THIRD
PLANET!

MY DOCTOR
SAYS:
"SELL YR
STORE
OR DIE!"

SO...

FLOOD
SALE

**FINAL
DAYS!**

IMPENDING
COMET
REDUCTIONS

HOW TO GET ALONG WITH YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW *by Joseph Fabio*

Gary's feet were locked in the full lotus position, and he chanted in monotone. "Jay Ay Aiiii....Ay El Ay Aiiii....Jay Ay Aiiii....Ay El Ay Aiiii...."

"Gary?" His wife, Shirley.

"Jay Ay Aiiii....Ay El Ay Aiiii...."

"Gary."

"What?"

"What are you doing?"

"I'm chanting my mantra."

"You're spelling jai alai."

"Yeah," Gary nodded, pleased that she could be so perceptive.

"It has a soul-calming effect. My consciousness is a still pool. Your voice is like a flat stone skipping along the surface, creating interlocking ripples which extend to the far shore..."

"My mother called. She's coming over this afternoon."

Gary slumped. "Your mother is a primordial shark image of evil which swims in my still pool and creates severe turbulence, devouring any clear thought which enters my head."

"Well, she's my mother and she's coming over. So don't cause trouble."

"Trouble?" Gary's eyebrows went up at this. "Me? I'm approaching a state of inner serenity. I'll be as gentle as a lamb." Shirley exited, closing the door.

Trouble, eh? Gary thought. *I'll make sure we don't have any trouble. I'll just slip my mother-in-law some of these psychedelic mushrooms and I'll be able to peer into her soul and exorcise the stentorian demon which dwells therein. Yeah, that's what I'll do. I'll just feed her some of these.* Gary took a handful of the dried vegetation and swallowed it. "Jay Ay Aiiii....Ay El Ay Aiiii...." Gary chanted for several minutes. Meanwhile, in the living room, Shirley heard the doorbell. It was her mother, Mrs. Masengill. Mrs. Masengill was a hefty, acerbic woman with no outward comprehension that she existed in a world with other people who might find her personally anything less than compelling. This level of self-awareness had apparently never entered her consciousness.

"Shirley, honey," she began the instant she saw her daughter at the door. "Help me with these packages! I brought you some groceries!"

"Ma, we have plenty of groceries."

"Honey, when I come someplace, I bring. It's the way I was brought up. Now don't argue, help. And get your husband to lift a few things. What's he doing?"

"The last I checked, he was meditating."

Mrs. M placed a bag on the kitchen counter. "Meditating? He could better meditate pushing a lawn mower, I think. That's good for the concentration." She followed her daughter out to the car. "When your father, God-bless-him-may-he-rest-in-peace-the-bastard, wanted peace of mind I would say to him, 'Harold, do some work around the house.' And he got up and he did and he complained and at the end of the evening do you know what he'd say to me? 'Ba'bra,' he'd say, 'you know I feel good, I accomplished something. Thank you,' he'd say, 'thank you.'"

"Ma, daddy never thanked you for anything."

"I know, the ungrateful bastard. I sacrificed a career in fashion design to become his housewife and sexual slave," she sighed. "Shirley, get your husband out here."

"Just a minute."

"Shirley," Mrs. M began, confidentially.

"Yes, Ma?"

"This, uh, this Gary you married. He's good in bed?"

"Ma, please—"

"What's so terrible? He's good in bed or he's not good in bed?"

"Let me go get him." Shirley went to the bedroom to get Gary.

"Gary, please come in here and help my mother and me with some groceries."

"Oh, very well." Gary got up from his lotus position and followed Shirley, secretly pocketing a handful of mushrooms. There followed a general activity of bringing in bags of groceries during which Shirley's mother directed the action and prattled inanely.

"Children, just put the food on the counter here, while I check the receipt for the correct prices."

Gary looked at her. "It's all computerized, of course the prices are correct."

"Gary, please, sometimes they gyp you."

"Gary, please, don't argue with mother."

"Gary, please, there's more bags."

"I'll put some of these canned goods away," Shirley said.

Gary looked through the bag he had placed down. "Mmm. Yams. Five big cans."

"I had coupons," Mrs. M announced proudly.

"I hate yams."

"Gary, please fetch the rest of the bags," Shirley urged.

"Shirley, don't you, uh, think your mother would like a nice hot cup of tea?"

"Thank you, Gary, that's very thoughtful. Would you mind, Shirley?"

"No, I don't mind."

Shirley put some water up for boiling. More inane conversation took place between them as Gary got the rest of the grocery bags. Shirley poured the hot water into a cup, which Gary took from her and into which he surreptitiously slipped the organic psychedelic

vegetation, putting the cup in front of his mother-in-law. The three sat down.

Mrs. M slurped her tea. "Oh, this is a little bitter. Shirley—no, Gary, fetch me a little cream, will you?"

"I'll give you some cream," Gary muttered as he got up to go to the refrigerator.

"Thank you. Shirley, you should use Four Roses. Believe me, I know. Mrs. Archipelago at the A&P on Hofstadter Street near the dog pound always uses Lipton and last week she fell on a roller skate on the sidewalk in front of her house and broke her coccyx. Thanks for the cream, Gary. Are you okay? Your skin is all flushed."

"I'm fine. I was relaxing before, it being the weekend and all."

"(SLURP) Well, you keep my Shirley in nice things, and that's what's important. (SLURP) Is it hot or is it me?"

"Tell Gary about the man in the Firebird," Shirley said.

"Oh. He came around again. (SLURP)"

"Tsk. Mother was accosted by an old lecher in a Pontiac Firebird."

"Not accosted. (SLURP) Do you have any danish? Or coffee buns with the crumbs on top? I just bought some. Gary, they're on the shelf in there."

Shirley stood. "I'll get them. Tell the story."

"Well, (SLURP)—Oh, this is a hot day. This gentleman, if I can call him that, driving a—a what?"

"Firebird," Shirley said from the kitchen.

"Firebird. He was on a—a Firebird. It looked like a fiery bird. It was very red. (SLURP) Everything was very—very red..."

"I hear ya," Gary nodded.

"Yes. And I was, um, going to mail something. I guess a mortgage check. I only have five more payments to make."

"Just five?" Gary asked.

"Yes. Very much. Thank you."

"Maybe we'll have a mortgage-burning party!" Gary suggested.

"I've heard of them," Mrs. M replied.

"We'll set a match to it, and we'll burn the sucker up!"

"Yes! And we'll drink champagne!"

"And beer! And Thunderbird wine!"

"And we'll celebrate the mortgage burning!" Mrs. M was feeling gay.

"And we'll burn down the bank it came from!"

"I'd like to see that!"

"It's so nice to see you two getting on so well." Shirley was still in the kitchen.

"And we'll have a seance," Gary looked at his mother-in-law's face, which he imagined was coming out of a haze.

"A seance! I've never had a seance!"

"A little necromancy. We'll summon up your deceased husband!"

Shirley reentered. "Gary!"

"I'd like to do that. Can we have one, Shirley? A science? A seance?"

"Why not?" Gary insisted. "Madame Blavatsky had 'em, and she wasn't even an American!"

"She wasn't?"

"She was on Phil Donahue."

"I don't remember that," Mrs. M frowned, trying to remember.

"And I watch Phil Donahue, believe you me, I be watching some Phil Donahue."

"And Oprah."

"Well, I don't watch her."

Shirley was getting nervous. "What are you two talking about? What about the man in the Firebird, Mother?"

"Leave your mother alone, Shirley. We're havin' a seance."

Mrs. M was more confused. "We are?"

"Don't you remember?"

"Now?"

"Now?" Gary suppressed a laugh. "Yeah, now. Very strange. The first guy we got was a dog pornographer. Disgusting person."

"What?"

"He was on Phil Donahue."

"Oh, yes. Phil Donahue. I'm very tired."

"You can't go to sleep, Mrs. Mother-in-law, we're going to contact FDR."

"I'm very tired. Maybe I'll lie down, Shirley."

"You look flushed, Mother."

"It's that Lipton tea. You know you should use Four Roses." Mrs. M got up to go lie down.

A look of consternation came over Gary's face. "Well, of all the rude things," he announced.

Mrs. M stopped in her tracks. Shirley looked at Gary, flabbergasted. "Gary! I'm flabbergasted!"

"She's only going in to lie down because we're finally getting along. Your mother doesn't want to get along with me!"

"Why, Gary, I'm—I'm shocked." Mrs. M sat down again. "I never thought you cared."

"Of course I care! Aren't I a human being? Don't I have feelings? I offer you a cup of tea, I help you with the groceries, I offer to hold a seance for your dead mortgage, and you get up to leave!"

"Gary, calm down," Shirley said.

"I was making an effort! I was trying to get along! I was trying to inject a little something of myself into the conversation and raise us out of the doldrums of coupon-clipping and dirty old men in Pontiac Firebirds, and what do I get back? That we

(continued next page)

don't buy the right tea!"

Mrs. M looked twenty years younger. "Well, Gary, if this is how you feel, I'll stay a little longer."

"Good. Now, Shirley, close all the curtains and get some glasses."

"Gary, what are you talking about?"

"Your mother and I want to have something to drink, to celebrate. Isn't that right, Mrs. M?"

"You can call me Ba'bra."

"Shirley, do as I say."

Shirley frowned, but she got up to close the curtains. Mrs. M was looking at Gary with newfound desire in her eyes.

"Ba'bra," Gary looked back at her.

"Yes, Gary."

"The bottom drawer."

Mrs. M blinked.

"In the kitchen."

Mrs. M turned her head in the direction of the kitchen, then turned back.

"By the stove."

"What are you—"

"The liquor cabinet. Fix us some Scotch."

"Oh!"

Gary watched with satisfaction as his mother-in-law responded to his command. This was how things should be, he decided. He relaxed, and resumed his lotus position there on the dining room chair. "Jay Ay Aiiii..." he chanted, "Ay El Ay Aiiii...."
(AUTHOR'S NOTE SO WE DON'T GET LETTERS OF COMPLAINT DUE TO MISUNDERSTANDINGS: "I do want to point out that I don't advocate feeding psychedelics (or anything else) to someone against their will, but there's plenty of stories where a character is murdered instead, and those stories are considered good drawing-room mysteries." Hope that clears things up, I guess.)

Scientist Claims Dracula Was Diseased Blood Addict

LOS ANGELES (YU) — Dracula probably had porphyria, or so says Canadian biochemist Flipper Dolphin of the University of Alberta currently in exile in this California city.

While Dolphin is sought on 12 charges of statutory and forcible rape of UMW members in 1969, he proclaims his innocence from the R. M. Nixon chair of pragmatic philology at UCLA. But he'd much rather talk about porphyria.

"It is my contention that vampires were actually porphyria victims trying to get some relief," Dolphin argued Tuesday at the Annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Scientific Funding.

"I suspect in the Middle Ages, since there wasn't much skin-popping, the best a porphyriac could hope for was a shot of blood," he said, adding that while animal blood would have provided the necessary nutrients, human blood would provide "a real kick."

YU News Service

LOTUS 1-2-3 ???... NO!...

"BITE-US 1-2-EEEE!"



DRACULA GOES HIGH-TECH!

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Knowledge is Power

"A CRAZY WIND CHEERS NO TREES" - Eric Ewing

Zenarchy STORIES

by Ho Chi Zen

ZENARCHY IN ACTION

"There had already been a certain amount of trouble in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at a relatively early stage in the Cultural Revolution. The minister, Marshal Chen I, had originally made the mistake of introducing Liu's work-group into his own rebellious departments... Chen I himself was, in addition, a particularly good subject for criticism. Yet, in spite of being vulnerable because of past actions, this stubborn nonconformist indulged himself in making fun of the fanatics among his critics, and even continued to do so when he was at their mercy... The Foreign Languages Institute is divided into two parts. Originally there were 21 units, but after a week there were more than 50, and after another week over 70. Over 4,000 people in over 70 units makes over 70 cliques. The oceans are vast to behold; this is truly one hundred flowers blooming and one hundred schools of thought contending."

"Finally he threw down this challenge: 'I shall be 66 this year, and I am not afraid of facing difficulties. Don't forget that grocers who try to take advantage of people in small ways usually come to grief.'"

"There were many anecdotes current about him. Joan Robinson writes: '...he had been sitting on a platform for some time wearing a dunce's hat, being criticized, when presently he looked at his watch and said: Please excuse me, I have to go to the airport to welcome the President of Guinea. Or that, opening the quotation book, he intoned in his usual form "Chairman Mao teaches us that Chen I is a good comrade."'" (From The Rise and Fall of Lin Biao by Jaap van Ginneken, Avon, 1972)

Chen I's Rival was Wang Li, of whom Mao Tse-tung was soon to say: "Wang Li has made more mistakes in the last forty days than Chen I in forty years."

CROOKED FORTUNE COOKIES

In The Cultural Ecology of Chinese Civilization by Leon E. Stover, on page 44, is confirmation of the notion that Shang priests fooled kings with rigged divination (Pica Press, 1974).

FAREWELL SORROW, THANK GOD AND THE OPEN DOOR
I AIN'T GOT NO HOME IN THIS WORLD ANYMORE

"The great zen patriarch Rinza! described the spirit of apratistha as the Man of No Title, who, he said, 'is the one who is in the house and yet does not stay away from the road; he is one who is on the road and yet does not stay away from the house. Is he an ordinary man or a great sage? No one can tell. Even the Devil does not know where to locate him. Even the Buddha fails to manage him as he may desire. When we try to point him out, he is no more there; he is on the other side of the mountain.'" (From The Zen Environment by Marian Moun-tain, William Morrow, 1982, p. 25)

"The Sanskrit word apratistha literally means, according to the late Zen Buddhist scholar D.T. Suzuki, 'not to have any home where one may settle down.'" (Ibid., p. 24)

apratistha = Samsara/Nirvana

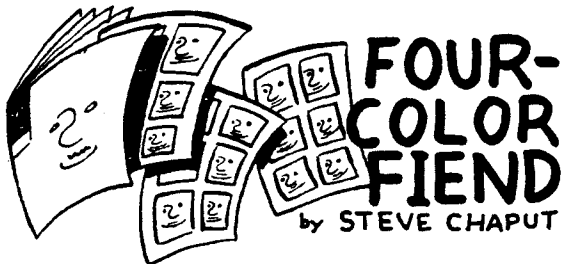
"The aim of zēn practice is not to convert human beings into saints or angels, but only to convert half-awake human beings into fully awake human beings." (Ibid., p. 61)

SPARE CHANGE?

"Awakened begging deepens and extends awareness. Whatever happens in our begging practice, whether we are helped or frustrated, we are skillfully directed by the innate power of our original nature deeper and deeper into the center of our zen environment. According to an old zen saying, 'The Way is not difficult, just avoid picking and choosing.' If this is true, then a beggar's life is the Way. Everyone knows beggars can't be choosers." (The Zen Environment, p. 208)

"YOU CAN ALWAYS HOLD YOURSELF TO A BOWL OF CHERRY PITS" - Eric Ewing

"NO FANZINE FOR UNCLE GUS" - Eric Ewing



Well, it's that time of year again. The latest AMAZING HEROES PREVIEW issue is out, and as usual there are a few things in which you might be interested.

First off, it's smaller and cheaper than last time, coming in under 145 pages and under \$5 US (\$5.95 Canada). This was done with some consolidation. For example, all of Americomics' titles are listed together, with only issue numbers and significant characters listed and with little or no plot synopses; also, all books either cancelled or on hiatus since the last preview are listed on a single page.

The one unfortunate loss, at least to me, is the lack of "genre" sidebars which grouped like material (i.e., manga, "funny animal," etc.) together. This was helpful in allowing someone to quickly see if new material was coming up. Ah well, I guess something had to give.

A few things for which you might be looking out are: "BOB'S FAVORITE COMICS: THE SUBGENIUS COMIC BOOK (a one-shot from Rip-Off Press); CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED (the students' savior is now back via First Comics); DAMAGE CONTROL (Marvel); DEADMAN (DC); GIVE ME LIBERTY and HARDBOILED (both from Frank Miller); COTHAM BY GASLIGHT (Batman vs. Jack the Ripper in 19th-century America); THE HOBBIT (three issues from Eclipse); THE JAM (six issues from Slave Labor); LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT (a new series about guess who?); and too much more.

* * * * *

FISSION CHICKEN (Fantagraphics; \$2 US/\$2.50 Canada)—IJ staffer J.P. Morgan has a series featuring his well-known character (first featured on an IJ cover). These aren't reprints (a set of volumes will be forthcoming), but brand-new stories especially written for this series. At least four issues are planned, with the strong possibility of further issues. Back-up stories are DUCK "BILL" PLATYPUS by Kyle Rothweiler. Even if J.P. weren't a pal, I'd still recommend this book. Great!

PIRATE CORPS (Slave Labor; \$1.95 US/\$2.75 Can.)—After four issues from Eternity, PC is now with a new company and, one hopes, on schedule. Creator/writer/artist Dvan Dorkin has put together a entertaining series with a most amusing group of rogues. The story takes place in the far future, wherein intergalactic races co-exist and the economies are almost as shaky as they are today. Into this scene come the Pirate Corps, groups of privateers who do both legal and illegal hauling and just about anything to make a buck. PC follows the exploits of the crew of the New Jersey Devil, a group of hard-luck cases that tries to stay on this side of violence. Highly recommended.

* * * * *

Small-press items received:

DARK CHAOS #10 (Ed Stastny, 9018 Westridge Drive, Omaha, NE 68124)—I'm afraid that you'll have to write to Ed first, since there's no price listed either in the magazine nor in his accompanying letter. (Aside to small-press publishers: Please make sure that you either state the cost of your publication somewhere in the 'zine/comic or let Elayne and me know in a note. We've had to hold up several reviews because of this in the past.) There's a lot of neat stuff in this 'zine, even for those not chiefly into comics (though about half the zine is strips and illos). There is an interview with Mike of Black Cab-Age (about the group and his solo efforts), music reviews, poetry and political ranting (from Ed). Recommended. By the way, Ed also has other comics material, both alternative and direct sales comics (Viz, Heavy Metal, etc.).

EMOTIONAL VOMIT #21 (50c + stamps from Gaither Graphix, P.O. Box 16032, Louisville, KY 40214)—This mini (32 pages) by Mike Schafer is printed on pink and green paper. It's almost all art, with some collage, and is in the scary-New-Wave-punk style. Some of this stuff is offensive and some is just plain gross, but it sure as hell is intense and interesting. Bizarre!

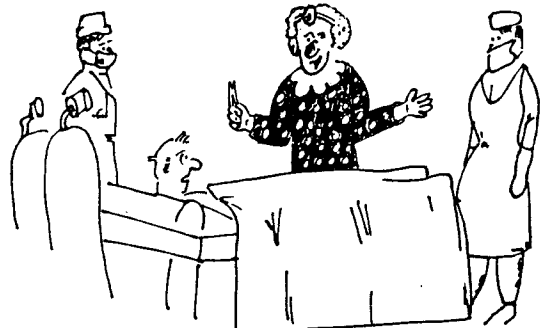
MR. MAN COMIX (60c ppd., 2 25c stamps or trade from Paul Nicoloff, 705-B Brownlee Circle, Austin, TX 78703)—If you've enjoyed Paul's stuff in IJ, then you know pretty much what to expect. This is an 8-page comic, a bit larger than your regular mini. Besides the MR. MAN strips, which are as good as or better than the strips in the daily papers, there is a great DIGGETY DOG 2-pager and other stuff. Recommended highly!

* * * * *

ROTTEN TO THE CORE (\$8.95 US/\$10.95 Can.)—These are trading cards which may be of limited interest to New Yorkers or those familiar with New York City politics. The 36 cards in this set, with art by Rick Bryant and George Kochell, each represent politicians and other well-known personalities. Eclipse Enterprises (P.O. Box 1099, Forestville, CA 95436) also produced the best-selling IRAN-CONTRA trading cards, and will soon have a set of FRIENDLY DICTATORS cards, which will cover those wacky world leaders that the U.S. loves so well. All of these sets are highly recommended.

Long-time readers will remember me raving about CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY from SteelDragon Press. Well, we just heard from the Captain's creator, Will Shetterly, on his latest doings, and thought you might be interested. The follow-up to CC, CONFEDERATES, was offered to Apple Comics, but until they get their fiscal house in order, everything is on hold. Two other comic proposals, CLUB ZED and ROUTE 666, are also on the back burner. Fortunately, Will is still working on his sf novels, with his third, The Tangled Lands, due out by December from Ace Books. He may also be doing work for Marvel Comics' upcoming "shared universe" anthology series, OPEN SPACE. The man is a very good write and all his stuff is recommended.

NoTary Sojac



I LOST A BET LAST WEEK
WITH SOME OTHER DOCTORS.

©Hiloburgh

THE DARKER IMAGE

by Errol Miller

Once I caught a lightning bug
a great big husky fellow
who flashed his body on and off
in musty shades of yellow
to find out what made him glow
I took out his apparatus
and then I set him free to go
with no lighter
and no status.



WHERE IS
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STRIEBER?

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LOST ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

PART ONE

by Brian Ruddy

What began as a rather exciting expedition rapidly deteriorated into a monotonous slog over the endless hills and ridges of the Tibetan plateau. Our primary objective had been to find the legendary Phartuk Nadaka, a colossal rock formation reputedly resembling the god Vishnu pointing majestically to the east with his battle sword and eating a mongoose. We found no such geological marvel. Our greatest achievement was discovering a massive granite boulder which, given a few skillful blows with a chisel, might have passed for a pre-diet Oprah. Shortly after happening upon that Winfrey-like wonder, I decided to temporarily drop out of the expedition and set out on my own, a move which Tiggs, the expedition leader, snidely called "poncing off." My destination was a remote region near the Kashmiri border. In that area, according to a reliable source, there existed a mysterious Indo-Tibetan people who had become so disgusted with years of interfaith hostility that they'd given up religion altogether and had gone into banking.

While traversing a particularly rugged expanse of the plateau notorious for its volatile weather, a ferocious blizzard roared out of the mountains and tossed me about like a rag doll in a swirling, blinding white vortex of snow. I took off my pack and tried desperately to set up my tent, but it was extremely difficult because of the wind, and also because I had left the tent back in Nepal. Worse yet, I found that my pack contained nothing but dried yak dung—a practical joke no doubt engineered by Tiggs. Tiggs, that bastard! Right then and there I swore an oath that if I survived this ordeal, I would someday lock Tiggs in a room and force him to listen to my "Sergeant Pepper" album with all the scratches.

All day the blizzard raged as I frantically sought shelter. There was none. The hard, crystalline pellets of snow stung my face like a vast swarm of hornets, and to shield it I resorted to pulling my lower lip up over my head.

When the storm finally cleared I took one look around and knew I was hopelessly lost. My lip hurt, too.

And so I wandered, plodding aimlessly through an icy hell.

The combined effects of cold, hunger and exhaustion wreaked havoc with my mind as well as my body. My brain seemed awash in a churning sea of confusion. Thoughts were mangled, perceptions warped. Suddenly the "trickle-down" theory made sense to me. And I could see no reason to ban assault rifles. As for the homeless—hey, let them be, I thought. After all, don't they add a charming, bohemian atmosphere to our city streets?

As my delirium intensified I began to hallucinate. I saw Hermann Goering squatting atop a rocky crag while juggling canned hams. The obese Richsmarschall then put down the hams and assumed various Yoga positions. Averting my eyes from this nightmarish vision, I began hearing the disembodied voice of the Frugal Gourmet giving instructions on how to prepare a French provincial buffet. When he got to the veal de Gironde I almost passed out. "Now stir in the clarified butter," he chirped. "Then add the garlic, sage, and ginger. Just a smidgen of ginger, mind you." I could smell the delectable aroma of the sizzling spices and hear the butter bubbling and sputtering in the hot skillet. "Ummmm," intoned the perky chef, "doesn't that smell simply divine? Now, while the veal is just bathing in that heavenly sauce, let's move on to our peaches Haute-Savoie. Remember, the whole idea of a buffet is to treat your guests to a simply mouthwatering combination of tastes and textures." I thought I could bear it no longer when the show's PBS station was suddenly pulled off the air due to a lack of viewer dollars. Giddy with delight over the demise of my culinary tormentor, I commenced to bound through the powdery drifts with renewed hope and vigor.

But my elation was short-lived. Night fell and my hopes plummeted along with the temperature.

Up ahead in the distance I saw a shimmering light.* A campfire! Moving closer I perceived the silhouette of a tent. I made a mad dash for it.

I was perhaps ten yards from the tent when a man emerged, leavelled a rifle at me and shouted, "Halt!" in Tibetan. I halted.

My mind raced. Oh God, I thought, what if this guy isn't quite sane? What if he isn't even Tibetan? He might be a Chinese on occupation duty, patrolling the border. Christ, a Chinese soldier. That's all I needed.

"Don't shoot," I said. "I'm not a student. I dropped out ages ago. I only got like thirty credits. And I've never even heard of Tiananmen Square. Long live Li Peng and the glorious butchers—er, heroes of the 27th Army!"

"Approach slowly," the man said. I approached slowly, and as I did so it became clear that the man was no Chinese soldier. He was a member of the Tibetan Golok tribe; I could tell by the distinctive tribal markings on his mountain boots and by his orange cap with its "VALVOLINE" emblem. The Goloks are fiercely independent, devoutly Buddhist—real hard-core Commie-haters.

"Who are you?" he asked. "And what are you doing in this outrageously cold, mercilessly inhospitable, almost unbelievably lofty region of Central Asia? And what the hell happened to your lip?"

I gave him the story of my "excursion" fiasco, omitting the minor details. I stuck to the truth, but for some reason, probably out of fear and embarrassment, I lied about my name, which I told him was Stonewall Jackson.

The burly tribesman smiled, lowered the rifle, and opened the flap of the tent. "Go on in tent, Meester Jackson," he said in cheerful, halting English. I thanked him profusely.

Inside the tent it was exquisitely warm. It smelled faintly of incense. At the end opposite the entrance was a tiny Buddhist altar, upon which lay symbolic offerings, a stack of block-printed Tantric scriptures and a small collection of Hendrix memorabilia. After exchanging pleasantries and furtive glances, my host offered me, and I gratefully consumed, a huge bowl of tsampa, which is a heavy but palatable mixture of barley meal and yak butter. The wine was mediocre but it did put me to sleep.

In the morning I awoke feeling completely refreshed. My host, whose name was Minya Konka, was already up and about. After a light breakfast we sat by the warmth of the fire and talked.

Given Minya's devout Buddhism, and my strict Catholic upbringing, it was inevitable that our conversation would come to focus on matters spiritual. And so it did. Minya spoke movingly of the Buddha's Enlightenment. I spoke movingly of the Pope's hat. Minya explained the doctrine of the Noble Eightfold Path. I explained the concept of the collection plate. Minya told the story of his pilgrimage to the palace of the Dalai Lama. I told him about the time I went to visit my priest at the detox clinic. We then discussed the concepts of karma and rebirth. I told Minya that I did believe in karma to the extent that its "cause-effect" aspect roughly corresponds to the Biblical proverb "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap" and "Payback's a bitch." But I had to state clearly that rebirth, or reincarnation, was something I just couldn't take seriously. Minya smiled. "I show you something," he said. He reached into his pack and pulled out a small wooden box that had several holes through its lid. He opened it. Inside, resting on a bed of decaying moss, was an ordinary garden slug. Minya gently lifted the slimy gastropod out of the box and proceeded to explain that it was the reincarnation of his late wife. He said that she had been accidentally decapitated in a foolhardy attempt to operate machinery while under the influence of a nasal decongestant. "She not pay attention to warning on label," he said. "Label say very plain, 'May cause drowsiness.'" According to Minya, his beloved spouse had initially survived the decapitation but later died when complications had set in. He held the slug in the palm of his hand and lovingly stroked its mottled gray surface. "Wife treat me bad in last life," he said. "She yell and scream and throw at me pots and pans. But I love her anyway. That is why I give her warning. I tell her, 'Watch out, karma gonna get you.' But she not listen. She not believe." Minya shook his head sadly. "She not believe," he repeated, his voice quivering with emotion. "Now look at her."

"I mean no disrespect," I said, "but how can you be so sure that this is the reincarnation of your wife?"

"Simple," said Minya. "It has her chin."

What we needed was a change of subject.

"Tell me about your village," I said.

"Not much to tell," said Minya. "It is small village. Not much action. Everybody very religious. Nearby is lamasery of Lhong Thang. We go there for blessing. We give lamas food. Lamas give us blessing. That is how it work. Personally I think it is scam."

"But I thought you were a true believer."

"I am. It's just the system that sucks."

"Is it really that bad?"

"Believe it, Stonewall. I give example. One time snow pile up high on mountain near village. Everybody afraid snow will make xlongthwack. You know what means xlongthwack?"

"Avalanche?"

"Yes. Anyhow, I go with friends to lamasery and give lamas many sack of potatoes. For this we ask lamas to ask god of mountain not to make xlongthwack. They say they do it. No problem. We thank lamas and go home. That night xlongthwack bury half of village. In morning we go back to lamas and ask why they not get god of mountain to not make xlongthwack. They say they not able to contact god because he no longer take requests. 'And besides,' one lama say, 'those potatoes you gave us were full of eyes.'"

"That's terrible. Are all lamas so corrupt?"

"No," Minya said emphatically. "Most lamas good. Good of thought. Good of action. Give you the robe off their back. But some lamas strange. High Lama strangest of all. Been in seclusion for twenty-five years. Wall himself up in cell back in 1964—Year of Public Louse. He live on one grain of rice a day. Monk pass it to him through little hole in wall."

"That's hard to believe. No man could survive for so long on a single grain of rice a day."

"That is what some people in village say. They say High Lama have food hidden in cell. They say he have secret stockpile of Snickers bars."

"Why did he go into seclusion in the first place?"

"Political reason."

"As a protest against the Communists?"

"No. As a protest against the Democrats."

"I don't understand."

"You see, High Lama very conservative. He refuse to come out until they give Goldwater a recount." (Continued next issue)

* - "Hotel California" lyric used by permission of Elektra/Asylum/Nonesuch Records, a division of Warner Communications, Inc. 21

THE FIELD *by Richard Millard*

The approaching shroud of night gobbled all in its path. Ashen gray clouds disappeared from the sky. And the last rays of sun dripped like rivulets of blood.

In the village below, doors and windows were tightly locked. For day was done. And the night was not a welcome visitor.

But not all fled from the dark. Two figures stood on a small hill, witness to the sun's demise.

"I cannot do it," Celeste stated as she watched the sun sink even deeper into its evening coffin. "I just cannot make myself go into that field. Not for any reason."

Ramsey looked down at his smaller companion, and sharply broke the gnarled piece of wood that he had been holding in his hands. "Neither can I. I'm not about to take the chance of running into creepy old Enstein. I want no part of him."

"Yes. And there will be a full moon tonight."

Nodding his head, Ramsey tossed the pieces of wood to the ground.

Celeste started to speak, but then pursed her lips and pointed to a figure that was running towards them. The sun had breathed its last for this day. But the figure ran on through the remnant of twilight. Faster. And closer. Faster. Closer.

"Toby!" Bram gasped as he stopped just short of running into Celeste. He looked her straight in the eye. "Did you find Toby?"

"No," Ramsey offered. "We did not find him."

"Did you look everywhere?"

"Everywhere," Celeste said as she glanced at Ramsey and then at the ground.

Bram turned his back to them and looked through the oncoming night. "Did you look in the field?"

Silence.

"Did you look in the field?" Bram repeated.

"If he's in there, he is gone from us," Celeste softly stated.

Ramsey smirked. "Besides, he's just a dumb—"

"He is not dumb!" Bram shouted as he turned around, fists clenched. "And he is my friend."

"Sorry," Ramsey mumbled.

Bram took in a deep breath. "I must find him." And with that, he marched off towards the field.

Celeste did not follow. Nor did Ramsey.

It was a short walk to the field. And brilliant moonlight guided Bram on his way. But as much as the moon helped, it also created all manner of shadows that stretched out their long, eager fingers of darkness. Did they seem to follow him? Bram turned his head constantly as he walked. And the trees. Were they really trees? Or demons from many a past nightmare?

Bram blinked his eyes several times as he tried to dispel such thoughts. But here he was, standing on the edge of the field. The only spot in the village that had not fallen to the boot and the plough of civilization. Maybe that was why the villagers left it alone. To remind them of what the land had once been. Or maybe they left it for Enstein.

"Toby," Bram whispered. "Are you in there?"

Only silence.

Bram walked around the edge of the field, hoping that he would find Toby looking back at him through the tangled underbrush and broken branches. But the field was dark. Like a cave. Bram separated strand after strand of vine in a futile attempt to pierce the gloom. Finally, he realized that he would have to enter the field.

Slowly. Step by step, Bram made his way through the underbrush. He tried to tread softly, but dead leaves and scattered twigs announced his every move.

"Toby," Bram whispered.

There came no reply.

Suddenly, Bram stopped. Red eyes glared at him from a rotting tree stump. Bram rushed forward. But the eyes scurried from the stump and became lost in the field.

Distastefully, Bram kicked his foot through the base of the stump. And he was about to further demolish it when he brought his foot to a skidding halt. Bram sniffed the air. He stretched his neck forward as his eyes tried to see what his nose smelled.

"Who's there?" a gravelly voice demanded.

Bram quickly turned around. His eyes darted everywhere.

"Who's out there?"

Bram strained his eyes, and caught a faint glow just a short distance away.

"Come here!" the voice commanded. "Or will I have to come out and get you?"

Slowly, Bram walked toward the glowing light. He brushed past tree branches and stumbled through hanging vines. But then, all obstacles were gone. Bram found himself standing in a small clearing within the field. And the light that had guided him came from a campfire.

Bram was not alone!

Behind the fire, a lean figure sat upon a log. He wore ill-fitting clothes that left his forearms and calves bare. Stringy hair was plastered against his forehead in a haphazard manner. And those deep-set eyes... It was Enstein!

"What are you doing in this field?" Enstein asked as he poked at the fire with a stick.

"Look-look-look for a friend. T-Toby," Bram stammered. "I, I sensed something out there. I thought it might be Toby moving about. What's when I heard your voice."



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"Really?" Enstein questioned.

"Yes."

"Then you'd better get over on this side of the fire," Enstein said as he thrust the stick into the blaze.

"What?"

"Get over here, now!" Enstein ordered as he reached behind his back and pulled out a small shape which he held aloft. "If you want to see Toby!"

"Let him go!" Bram shouted, and ran past the fire where he plucked Toby from Enstein's grasp. Turning, Bram was about to deliver a swift kick to Enstein's backside when he heard something land heavily on the other side of the fire.

"Stay behind me," Enstein whispered.

Clutching Toby to his chest, Bram stretched his neck to see beyond the fire. And there stood a huge creature, clawing and snarling at the air! Its body was covered with dark, matted hair. The creature lowered its head to stare at the fire, and then at them. Anticipation drooling over its razor-sharp fangs, the creature lunged forward!

Enstein reached under the log he was sitting on and calmly pulled out an old handgun. He pointed it at the creature and fired.

The creature howled in agony. It clutched at its chest with deadly claws. Howling again, the creature stumbled and, just short of the fire, fell to the ground. Snarled lips parted, allowing a final hiss to escape, and then the creature lay still.

"Wha, what was that?" Bram asked as he tried to stop shaking.

"That was a werewolf," Enstein replied. He looked over the fire at the fallen creature and put the gun on the ground.

"A werewolf?!" Bram exclaimed. "But I thought they were extinct! And now, only a legend..."

"That's all he will be if someone ever catches up with him before I do," Enstein said with the faintest hint of a smile. "Dear old Creighton there is the family embarrassment with his werewolf problem. But he is family. From my wife's side, of course. So every full moon, I wait for him with a silver bullet. That's how I found Toby. Old Creighton was chasing him. I caught Toby. But Creighton got away."

Bram slowly walked around the fire and looked at the man stretched out on the ground where the werewolf had been. He looked so peaceful and still. Bram gave Enstein a questioning look.

"He'll be fine," Enstein stated.

Bram shook his head. "But according to legend, doesn't a silver bullet kill a werewolf?"

"Not to worry," Enstein offered. "I make the bullets from coins I get in the village. So there's just a trace of silver in them. Not enough to kill, just enough to knock him out."

"Still, you did save me and—" Bram stopped. "How did you know who Toby was? I don't remember ever meeting you."

"Oh, I met Toby at your parents' castle some time ago," Enstein started. "And I even met you, Bram, but you were quite young. That's why I didn't recognize you at first tonight. The Count and Countess were very proud of you. And I can see that they had just cause to be."

Bram tried to nonchalantly shrug his shoulders.

"But now, I think you'd better be heading back to the castle," Enstein advised. "It's not going to be night forever. And your little bat's been through quite a lot."

Bram gently scratched one of Toby's leathery wings. In response, Toby smiled (as much as a bat can) and pressed his head against Bram's chest.

"Well, give my best to your folks," Enstein said as he rubbed his knees and stood up.

Bram nodded his assurance. "I certainly will!" He then started to walk out of the clearing, but stopped and turned back. Bram could see Enstein kneeling down next to Creighton.

"Thanks for everything, Mr. Enstein!" Bram shouted.

"Oh, not so formal," Enstein chuckled. "Call me Frank."

"Thank you!" Bram shouted and ran out of the clearing with Toby, through the field and into the night.

Made in Taiwan, Sort of

by Steven Barber

I discovered the thing on a bright, clear Saturday morning. A shapeless piece of protoplasmic substance plastered to the wall of my study—a large, flat, blotchy piece of goop.

My regularly scheduled Friday night party had been going quite well when I passed out on the couch. When I awoke late the next morning, it took some time to convince myself I was still among the living. Lying there, doing nothing, being nothing, I noticed it. Somehow, during the night, it had come mysteriously into existence, occupying the greater portion of my wall. Three feet by three-and-a-half.

Not startling proportions, but enough to get your attention when you expect to see a print of an obscure Jasper Johns on the wall. Though it was unmistakably alive, I knew it had no taste.

First my reaction was to clean it off. It seemed the sensible thing to do. The party had obviously gotten a little out of hand, and someone had carried their joke too far. I studied the mess closely. Revolting to look at, but easy to clean up, I thought.

This was my first mistake.

Conchita, my maid, refused to touch the thing, and little could I blame her. Actually, her reaction was something just this side of hysterical so, in a spasm of insight and originality, I called the roach man. He had confronted hundreds of thousands of creepy-crawly things and would hardly be bothered by this.

This was my second mistake.

Arriving with the whole kit and kaboodle of chemicals and poisons at his disposal, he was eager to challenge this new phenomenon. Displaying unusual enthusiasm he tried insecticide. It didn't work. He tried formaldehyde. The blot barely flinched. He tried Red Dye Number Two. The beast ate it up, refusing to budge. With uncharacteristic resignation, the roach man left my domain.

Hanging there, the thing was mocking me. Dark brown in color, it pressed flat against the wall. Faintly I heard it breathing—definitely alive. Summoning the nerve, I touched it. Slightly sticky, it was the consistency of "Slime," a toy my niece insisted upon playing with a few short years ago. Despite the presence of a frame and picture behind it, the thing showed no third-dimensional properties. I went to bed perplexed.

In the morning I went back to the study. The thing still covered my wall, now having grown slightly in size. I was perplexed. I was confused. More to the point, I was getting annoyed. Good money had been offered for its removal, and so far I had only an increasingly brown wall to show for it. Well, actually, a white wall with a large brown smudge on it. An objectionable situation, to say the least. I was getting angry.

Trying to peel it off was useless; it was stuck to the wall-board. With the failure of the chemical assault I decided to try a more direct attack, holding my lighter next to it to see if it would budge. Flame, heat, and even Pepto-Bismol proved useless. I considered offering the house for sale.

The next morning it revealed more of its nature.

When I awoke I went straight to the study, hoping to find a poorly prepared anchovy pizza was the cause of my nightmare. I was disappointed. There, anchored upon the southeast wall of my study, uncaring and oblivious to the concern it was causing, was the blemish. And something else was wrong. There was an addition.

Having been a collector of unusual furniture for several years, I felt owing more than a single Chesterfield couch excessive. This accounted for my surprise at finding two of them. Even my designer would have protested.

There it sat, inarguable in its reality, a second couch directly beneath the blob on the wall. This was too much, and I began having a headache. The consequences were all too clear. This would make me the laughing stock of the local homeowners' association, an indignity for which I could not stand.

Now imagine my dismay at finding three of the beastly couches the morning that followed.

Three of them, sitting as honestly and as innocently as if they had been there all along. I glared at the blob on the wall. I glared at the couches. I ranted. I raved. They all went passively about their business, ignoring me completely.

I called my designer, thinking it better to share my heart palpitations with another. She immediately arrived with all her customary decorum and theatrics, and left paler than the snows in Aspen.

I summoned the movers.

Fortunately, common sense prevailed. If there were too many couches in a room, I could simply have the extras taken away. And, I extrapolated, if the original were removed as well, I would be done with the problem once and for all.

The couches were taken away. I went to bed that night secure in the idea that mine was, once again, a house one could die for. This was before the second cream-colored Arkitektura Post-Deco Lounge Chair showed up.

I had grown reasonably accustomed to having a large brown spot of something covering the wall, even passing it off as a Teresa Edwards original when queried by my dinner guests, but the sudden appearance by pieces of designer furniture was taxing my patience. My designer resigned her commission, certain that I had been won over by some postmodern art deco fanatic with delusions of grandiosity. That pissed me off.

Moo Kitty by Eric Ewing

Veronica looked over the exam first before even lifting her pencil. She was like that. After surveying the problems, she started with #7, about point charges near an infinitely long pole charged irregularly. Below this problem, she wrote one word, neatly, because she always wrote neatly. "Hammock."

Next would be #4, a derivation problem. Show the relationship between the field in a capacitor and the number of eggs the professor ate that morning. "Polar Cuspid" she wrote, and sketched a picture of a dog.

There was no #3, or that would have followed.

Veronica was a pretty girl. Her teeth especially shone with a radiance unparalleled by even the glints of sunlight off the ocean on a warm, summer day. The professor knew this. Mrs. Holmes would often remark to herself just how feminine Veronica was, bringing the aging professor back to her own college days before the war.

#6 said simply, "Bimp it floor taste." Veronica circled the vowels and put her pencil down.

Someone in the back of the room stood and crowed like a rooster. Others chuckled, knowing that he had incorrectly answered #1.

Several young men screamed "Muffin!" These were all at nearly the same time, arousing suspicion in Mrs. Holmes. Could they be cheating?

Veronica checked her answers. Confident in her decisions she wrote her name, Veronica Samantha Seale-Hanscomb, at the top of the paper and walked up to the front desk. Many students watched as she turned in her paper. Some noted her grace and beauty, some felt horror. "She's done already?" someone asked loudly.

Veronica dropped the exam on Mrs. Holmes' desk, turned to the back of the room, and walked to her desk. When she arrived, she put her books into her carrybag and left.

ARTISTIC LICENCE

by Rim DeMar

The sky is blue
The earth is green
And so it goes each day
With woe to anyone
Who tries to change
What people say
But if you feel the urge
To show things
In a different light
Take your paintbrush
Quickly, now!
Or soon will come the night



I tried rearranging, hoping for a degree of originality from the thing. A friend in marketing pointed out that there could even be a profit made from furniture being recreated by a piece of art on the wall. I was not convinced. I was desperate. I called a specialist. A furniture specialist. An exorcist, to be specific.

There we sat, in four perfectly identical Bonaventure Campaign Chairs, holding hands. The lights were dim, and the only glow came from the wall to which the despicable thing clung. Everything was readied. We began.

At first I had to struggle to keep from laughing at the incantations from the other end of the table. There a grizzled old lady sat—pretending that my problem was a manifestation of my Uncle Matthew, who had never done anything for the living and was even less likely to do so now that he was dead. Matthew never appeared, which was typical. He never showed up when expected.

For weeks I moped about, dodging the occasional extra Verona or Hardwood House chairs now strung thoughtlessly around the house. Then the idea struck. A way to eliminate my own problem as well as making a profit at the lower classes' expense.

Uncle Matt would be proud, I just knew it. I picked up the phone and dialed.

The rest, as they so appropriately say, is hysterical. I now have ample supplies of cash to redo my house many times over, and the lower classes now have the ability to purchase furniture many times beyond their own individual tastes and finances. A bargain at any price.

I lose the wall. Sears gains a line of furniture. How appropriate.

How wonderful. How perfect.

So sit there, thoroughly content in your Aegean Chair from Randolph & Hein (recently marked down from \$1000 to One Hundred Sixteen, cash), and realize that I, an obscure patron of the arts, was sitting there first.

License to Maim

by James Cherry

My name is Larue and I work for the government. The day had started like any other. I woke up staring at the wall of some seedy motel in Nowheresville, USA. I rubbed my face and tried to clear my head. My skin looked and felt like stale dough. I stumbled into the bathroom and splashed cold water on my face. The cold water felt great. There was a dull ache just behind my eyes. It was the kind of pain that could drive a man to murder, or worse. I went back into the bedroom and found my overnight bag. Inside lay a half-empty bottle of bourbon. I took a deep swig and coughed until I thought my intestines were coming up. My head started to feel a little better. It was almost noon. I had to get on the road, so I gathered my things and went to the motel office to check out.

I paid the punk at the desk and asked him where I could get a bite to eat. He directed me to a cafe right up the road. I walked out into the merciless sun and slipped on my shades. I threw my things into the trunk of my unmarked four-door sedan. Then I got behind the wheel, cranked it to life and wheeled the dinosaur out onto the road.

I found the cafe. It was a seedy cafe. Perfect. I went inside and grabbed a seat in the back near a window. The waitress was hideous. Kind of a Godzilla with lipstick. She waited like a vulture with pencil in hand. I ordered white toast, scrambled eggs, and cold water with lots of ice. She left and I sat back in my chair and tried to gather my thoughts. My contact would be getting worried by now. I was late for our meeting, but I couldn't help it. I'd had some things to take care of. I would make it by tonight for sure. One way or another.

My food arrived and I ate like a starved Doberman. I drank the icewater and cracked the ice between my molars. Godzilla brought the check and eyed me suspiciously. I asked her for more icewater. She told me she had better things to do than bring some wino icewater all day. I reached inside my jacket and caressed the butt of my .44 magnum. I considered pistol-whipping her, but I just didn't have the time. Instead, I threw her a buck and told her to keep the change. She started yelling about the bill being \$3.57, so I left before things got out of hand.

I was on the road again and my head was hurting, so I turned the air conditioner up to maximum and pointed all the vents right at my head. It helped some. I searched the radio for something to listen to, but couldn't find anything I could stomach, so I turned it off and listened to the hum of the a/c.

I had been driving for about an hour when I came up behind a Volkswagen that was doing thirty miles an hour. The road was too narrow and winding for me to pass. I honked and motioned for them to pull over and let me pass. That was when the driver made an obscene gesture at me. I honked again and this time a woman leaned out the passenger window and yelled something unladylike. My head was throbbing. I could not afford to be late, so I hit

the gas and rammed their piece-of-crap Volkswagen. The little car fishtailed wildly, finally coming to a stop on the shoulder of the road amidst a cloud of dust. I passed them, which is all I had wanted to do in the first place.

Several miles later I came into a small town. As I slowed down I noticed that the VW was not far behind me. I cruised past a liquor store that was closed, a seedy cafe, and a police car. I watched the police car closely, but the cop seemed to be asleep. Then I heard the VW honking its horn. I looked in the rearview and saw them pull right up next to the cop. I kept going. The cop and the VW pulled out onto the road. I kept going. They came up behind me. I kept going. The cop flipped on his lights and motioned for me to pull over. I did. I was going to be late.

The local gunslinger looked like a real idiot. I stood, listening to my brain throb, as he strolled casually up to me.

"We seem to have a problem here, mister," he said to me. Yes we did, I thought.

"This maniac tried to kill us!" yelled the man who was driving the VW. He looked thin and pale. He was shaking all over and clenching his fists. The cop stared at me.

"Well, is that right?" the cop asked me. My head felt like an overripe tomato. Sweat was pouring off my face and I needed a drink. Before I could answer, the woman passenger started ranting. "We want to press charges! We want him locked up!"

They wanted! They wanted! This was going way too far. To make things worse, the cop starts pulling out his cuffs and saying he's taking me in until things can be straightened out. The fool took a step towards me and reached for my wrist, but I caught him on the chin with a quick right that dropped him like a bad habit. He lay very still. The lovely couple stood staring in disbelief. Their expressions were quite amusing. They looked even funnier when I pulled Maggie out. I stared down the sight at the pathetic pair. Sweat ran down my back. My finger tightened ever so slowly on the trigger. Surely no one would miss these two.

Then I heard the cop start to moan. A swift, well-aimed kick to the head sent him back to La-La Land. That was when Monkey Boy made a grab for my gun. I hit him with the butt right between the eyes and he crumpled to the ground in a satisfying heap. The wench started to whimper.

"Please don't rape me," she pleaded.

I couldn't believe my ears. I'm with the government. I don't even have a license for that.

"Why don't you say something!" she screamed, bursting into tears. I hate to see women cry, so I knocked her out too.

There I stood in the sweltering heat surrounded by unconscious bodies. I hated loose ends. No one had driven by yet. I had to move quickly. I took the cop's gun; I could always use a throw-down. Took his badge and ID too; I can always use an identity. Then I loaded all three into the back of the patrol car. It was designed to lock only from the outside, so I locked it and threw the keys as far as I could. With everything tidied up, I cleaned off my sunglasses, spit on the VW, and left.

Shortly, I was far away. The bottle of bourbon was tucked between my legs like an old friend, the a/c was blowing arctic air, and my head didn't hurt any more.

FIVE O'CLOCK HIGH

by Errol Miller

Bombarding me
a thriller lurks uncertain
yes, we are still going strong
round and round on Planet Earth
panting like Zombies in plastic boots
papering our floral rooms with beer and wine
big cigars and dried-out maiden-skins, look
at Autumn upon the traveler's shiny face
soon his skinny legs will spin out
of Oxford's red-clay dented junkyard
a minstrel tune on the jukebox
rolling down the road to snake-eyes, Cisco
it is so easy to drift, lately
late at night ladies from Shangri-La
illuminate the thin strip of fleshy veneer
in the neon pastel glow of Bars & Grills
don't they ever stop the music
declare sweet life over, one more ride
Eastward for the finals, one more round
frosted pumpkin, one more lollipop
for Cinderella to suck on.

RUST ROBOT'S LAMENT

by Michael Polo

Once, when I was sleek and new,
I saw the final day.
The world of man was smothered
In pollution and decay.
Now, I roam the planet
While my chips and rotors fail.

The joke, I'm told, was cosmic,
And there was no Holy Grail
Though Outer Space once beckoned
Like a vast unopened door
And I, like my creators,
Was meant to be much more...
Much more...much more...
Much more...much more...

ONE WAY TO "ENJOY" LIFE IN THE SHORT RUN IS
TO ADJUST TO THE 100% WRONG WAYS OF DOING
THINGS 'A LA REAGAN OR HIS SUCCESSOR.
For the long run if you want to die a natural death and
live forever 'A LA BRAINBAU send SASE to war,
inflation, unemployment and death-ending
BOX 2243 - YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, 44504



ECOLOGY 1B by Roger Coleman

"Louis, there's another mob at our gate! They have a sign, 'Save The Plants'."

"Yes, they're convinced that plants have feelings too. We shouldn't kill plants without regard for their nervous system. It's wrong to chop off the heads of flowers, which is an abortion, and disgustingly display these fetal forms around our dwellings like trophies. The beauty of ecology shows us a way to understand and appreciate life itself."

A puzzled Antoinette said, "But if they don't eat vegetables and they don't kill animals, what will sustain them? Voila then, let them eat plastic."

Nature of the Beasts by Dale A. White

"Get out of our town, you filthy pigs!" A rock shattered the front window of the Chitterling family's new home. Silhouetted by torchlights, a mob on the front lawn waved cleavers and pitchforks. Frank and Truffles Chitterling cowered in a corner and hugged their squealing youngsters. Every hair on their pink hides stood on end.

"We should have never left the farm," Truffles sobbed. "We should have never thought we were good enough to mix with their kind."

"Don't talk like that," Frank snorted. "Somebody has to make the sacrifice. Somebody has to break the stereotype for us pigs. We're neat and we're smart. We deserve the same privileges that are afforded every other domesticated animal."

If the Chitterlings had known how hateful their new neighbors would be, however, they may not have left the quaint hamlet of Wallow-in-the-Mire.

They were happy and secure in that predominantly pig community, surrounded by family and friends who shared their culture. They were raised on authentic pig food (troughs overflowing with corn, oats, alfalfa and milk); hoof-stomping music (by such legendary recording artists as Sowbelly and the Talking Headcheese); and swine literature (classical authors such as Chester White, Claude Jambon and Sir William Bacon). They joined the booster club for the Razorbacks, the school football team. They donated and raised money to stomp out trichinosis and hog cholera. They studied Pig Latin at the community college. They belonged.

They knew, of course, that, outside the village, popular opinion encouraged prejudice against their breed. Pigs were considered slovenly, gluttonous, lazy and stupid. They supposedly produced more young than they could feed, lived in sties, had no table manners and refused to bathe. "Pig" had become a dirty word, a term for someone who preferred filth and squalor.

In recent years, however, progressives in the United Animal Kingdom had diligently worked to dispel those ugly myths and assimilate pigs into mainstream society. "No creature in this nation is truly free until every boar, every sow and every shoat is free," the prime minister declared. "Whether our roots are the forest, the sky or the barnyard, all species are equal under the law."

The bald eagle's pronouncement prompted hordes of pigs to leave their rural homes and seek educational, housing and career opportunities in the urban menageries.

Frank sold his farm and got a job as a distributor of feeds and grains. The Chitterlings moved to Stocksborough—a cosmopolitan city where sheep operated their own textile plants, cows profited from their own dairies, songbirds performed operas, workhorses had their own unions, and hawks and doves shared political power. They bought a home in a middle-class suburb, enrolled their piglets in the public school and joined several civic groups.

Yet their neighbors let them know they were considered undesirable.

Truffles enrolled in an aerobics class at the community center. During the first session, several hens cackled when she bent over, split her tights and inadvertently exposed her curly tail. When she casually attributed her obesity to a metabolism problem, the unbridled laughter of the mares prompted her to drop out in embarrassment.

The Chitterling boys encountered bias on the playground. "Don't I know your mama?" the neighborhood bulldog growled at them. "Sure I do. I had her for breakfast." As the other youngsters laughed, the piglets cried all the way home.

Frank discovered discrimination in business. "We ain't interested in buying your feed and grain here, pork chop," the mulish proprietor of a general store said before kicking Frank out. "We don't sell no pig slop to our customers."

Soon, the Chitterlings received more blatant warnings. On a Sunday afternoon, a band of drunken waterfowl bombarded them with droppings while they were enjoying a backyard picnic. During the night, vandals painted the word "porkers" in barbecue sauce on their station wagon. The next morning, Frank found a smoked ham on the front stoop. An attached message read: "You could be next."

They summoned the police. A German shepherd sniffed around, questioned a few neighbors, retrieved some evidence. Yet he offered no assurances of police protection.

"We can't let them intimidate us," Frank told his family. "Eventually, they'll get tired of making us the butt of their jokes."

As it became apparent the Chitterlings refused to retreat, however, the neighborhood rallied against them. A violent throng gathered outside their home. It threatened to literally burst in and make mincemeat out of them.

Wolves and jackals howled obscenities. A skunk discharged a stink bomb in an air vent. A gang of geese brought buckets of tar and feathers.

"You're dead meat, Chitterling," a bull roared as he rammed the front door.

Frank defiantly stepped outside and confronted his assailants. "Butchers!"

The startled mob stepped back.

"I can't believe this slaughterhouse mentality still exists," Frank preached. "I thought animals had evolved. I thought we lived in an age when beasts of burden could liberate themselves

from their shackles, when birds of a feather no longer succumbed to the rules of an archaic pecking order, when the lion and the lamb could join the same country club. None of you has tried to get to know us. That would have taken guts. Instead, you preferred to be small-minded. I could do the same, you know. I could say the old adages about you are true—that all chickens are cowards, that all jackasses are ignorant, that all mice are vermin."

The crowd clucked, brayed and squeaked in protest.

"If you honestly believe those attitudes should persist, then my family will leave," Frank shouted. "If you don't want to live in such a world, let us stay and help you change it."

After a moment of thoughtful silence, the crowd cast aside its weapons and cheered. The bull gave Frank a brotherly hug. A grandmotherly ewe cuddled the Chitterling piglets. Several hens flocked around Truffles and started divulging the neighborhood gossip. What had started as an act of mob violence had become a block party.

The revelry abruptly stopped, however, when a moving van parked at a vacant house across the street. A rusted pickup pulled into the driveway. A family of scraggly, long-haired newcomers emerged from the truck and started helping the movers unload.

The Chitterlings and their friends observed their new neighbors in open-mouthed disgust. After recovering from the initial shock, however, they knew exactly what to say. "Get out of town, you dirty goats!"

TERMINOLOGY BUZZ

by R.S. Moser

Anarchists—Berkeley Poli-Sci dropouts
Bakimism—An excuse to hit something
"Counter Culture"—Two hundred and fifty thousand "individuals" who all look alike
Faith—Dogma spelled sideways
Futurists—Ducks in wolves' clothing
Genetics—A fail-proof excuse for being stupid
Malls—Life imitating MTV
Non-Conformists—Fashionable nerds
Politics—Subtitled cartoons
Revolutionary Pacifistic Anarchistic
Nihilists—Just darn confused people
Sex—Partner masturbation
Sin—A measure of laughter
Situationists—Berkeley Poli-Sci dropouts with thesauruses
Socialization—A dildo trying to pass itself off as an enema
(Church of the) SubGenius—A joke that became a religion that became a joke
Television—A boob that won't let go
Violence—The closest thing to a clean orgasm
War—A viable alternative to abortion

"THERE IS NO ADEQUATE DEFENSE, EXCEPT STUPIDITY, AGAINST THE IMPACT OF A NEW IDEA."
PERCY WILLIAMS BRIDGEMAN,
American scientist (1882 - 1961).
It pays to be stupid or at least act that way. People holding top jobs in government from the president on down are what I call winnerless war and fixed



wage nuts as are 99% of us. Both practices must be turned around along with three others if we are to achieve a livable here now as in past and future here nows. For more lore from this bore send S.A.S.E. To: BRAINBEAUS BROWNSTORMS Box 2243 - YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, 44504

by Roger Maxson

Two waiters stood in the shade of the awning above the cafe out from under the heat of the sun that came through the wind-blown tree limbs that shook the electric light that ran along the busy street. It was hot and dry at the cafe with much noise and excitement. A man sat out under the sun and heat and noise and could hear and feel the difference.

"He tried to kill his typewriter last week," said the old waiter to the young, new waiter.

"Why, captain-waiter?"

"He likes his typewriter very much," said the captain-waiter, yawning. He had not gone to sleep before daylight shone through his window.

"Oh," said the young, new waiter.

"You see, he is a writer."

"Oh, now I see," said the young, new waiter, "one of those types again."

"What do you mean," asked the captain-waiter, "'again'? This is your first day on the job as a young, new, up-and-coming waiter in this world of waiting tables. Wait until this hot, well-lit place is brazened in story and watch all the rest of them come out to here."

"That far, huh?" said the young, new waiter.

"You must watch him because he will get drunk, forget where he is, forget where he put his shoes, and, my young, new friend, he will forget to pay."

"He is a writer."

"Very good. You are learning already. You will go far in this world of waiting tables."

"I have a wife."

"It is good, then, that you are here waiting tables."

"I have everything."

"You are young. You have everything."

"I am young. I have everything. I have places to go, people to see, to talk to, whom I love and who love me, and here it is only Tuesday."

"Be patient, my young, new friend. I like you. You are young. You have a wife. You have everything. He has nada."

"Put some sugar in it."

The man out under the heat of the sun at the cafe rapped his knuckles over the table he was sitting at and nearly, truly dumped the tall stack of saucers that were piling up on his table at the cafe out under the heat of the sun.

"Oh no, not again, I am young."

"Nada," said the captain-waiter, "who art in nada..."

"All gone," said the young, new waiter to the old man and the sea of saucers with that omission of syntax saved on a shelf for this school of drunken American writers of a lesser nada.

"I believe I'll have enutter one, please."

"Closed. No more today," said the young, new, smart waiter.

"You are new here! Hot damn, I knew it. It must be truly exciting, even dangerous, being a waiter and waiting on people. What is it truly like being a waiter and able to move around town from one cafe to enutter, one restaurant to enutter? And all the different utter people you can wait on at all the different utter places and get a paycheck for waiting in the shade? Have you ever considered becoming a writer? No, of course not, please excuse me, you are a waiter. But really, it's really easy, really. All you have to do is add an 'r' here and exchange a letter there and then before you know it, you are what you are! You are a waiter/writer! Go ahead, Mr. Waiter, and say it three times real fast: waiter/writer, waiter/writer—"

"Stop! I am a waiter."

"Yes you are. I like that in a waiter."

"What do you want from me?"

"Tell me, Mr. Waiter, what is it that makes a man walk on two legs, pee standing up, and play quarters? Not the why, but the what is it that the only truly thing we know is that when we step into a pile of dogshit that is what we truly know? And there's notta (Max Perkins was here) thing we can do about it. Notta thing."

"Enough already!" said the young, new waiter.

"Yes, of course," said the writer, "enough is enough. A writer must do what a writer must do best. I am presently at work on a story about six cannibalistic pygmies embarking on a journey, a pilgrimage as it were. But due to naturalistic circumstances beyond their control only one is left by the end of the story. Mind you, it is not so much a story of the survival of the fittest, as it is of the survival of the fattest. Don't ask me the why, but the what..."

As the writer continued his pouring out of concrete words and ideas on the art of literature that did not embarrass him, the young, new waiter went into the cafe.

"What does he say?" said the captain-waiter.

"Hell, nothing full of nothing," said the young, smart waiter returning with an ax, going out into the heat of the sun to where the man sat at the table at the cafe who continued pouring forth his concrete words without embarrassment until—

The young, smart waiter brought down the ax and chopped the writer into pieces.

"Why have you done this?" asked the captain-waiter.

"Nada if I nada know why?"

"Who is going to pay the check for all of these saucers, I want to know? Did you think of that? No. Some dumb waiters never learn, they just fade away."

"I really liked that guy," said the young waiter.

"It was all for nada," said the captain-waiter.

"What do you mean?" said the young waiter.

"Look!" said the captain-waiter. "His head rolls down the busy street. Now he has to pay for nada thing. And he will be back, a head of the rest, mañana."

The Poet's Diet Book

by Tamarina Dwyer

[In this chapter, Janet falls in love with Chuck. She is determined to change, since strange occurrences upset her. She forgets Fred and Kevin, preferring mental stimulation to food and nature theory.]

"It was so strange, Chuck," Janet said. "Drana, that new waitress, wasn't there and some sort of empress ushered me to the end table where I usually sit."

"Empress?" Chuck echoed.

"Yeah, a Lady Godiva, a Maid Marion in cloak, tiara and scepter at her side." Chuck was afraid Janet wouldn't change, and he suggested a light comedy to lessen his and Janet's witless day. Janet had always had a slight crush on Chuck, and she was determined to present a new image. No food theories or freak-outs over nature poems. Janet was a new woman, independent, confident and liberated. Fred wouldn't know and Kevin didn't care.

The flick was lighter than comedy and longer than tragedy. It was still daytime when they left the theatre, and the sun shone in their eyes like an unshaded lamp or a photographer's flashbulb. Chuck and Janet were nominees for Oscars or arrest or extinction.

"Oh Chuck! I can't stand that sun in my eyes, and I can't find my glasses." Janet shuffled things in her handbag, but she couldn't find her sunglasses. "Oh, they're at Roselen State Park. I remember setting them on the picnic table."

"Don't you ever work, Janet? What were you doing at Roselen?"

"I cycled there with Kevin's sister. Do you think they could still be there?"

Chuck drove Janet to the state park, but he wanted his Camaro to rest. It had had quite a workout on his vacation to the Adirondacks in June.

"Medical school must be extremely difficult," Janet commented as Chuck parked the shiny auto in a marked cubicle in the lot in front of the park. Janet and Chuck walked into the wooded area, where twilight already reigned. The air was cooler, a facsimile of an air-conditioned bedroom or parlor. Music seemed to drift from the rustling leaves. There were faces in trunks of trees, friendly leers conscious of other's realities. Janet took off her sandals as she was bid to. Fireflies sparked near her toes. They flickered at Chuck's words. How can this be! Chuck exclaimed. Janet rose into the sky like an umbrella, her hair standing on end. She tried to think of flowers, food, but she was fearful, alarmed. Janet! Chuck exclaimed again. Mary, he said more softly. Janet's state of suspension was a common occurrence in some places. Anchor of gravity was just earth stuff. On the new planet Chiron there could be Lilliputians since its known mass was the smallest in the galaxy. Rise higher, Chuck said inappropriately. What should I do?, Janet said meekly. Can you move your arms? Yes, she answered, and did so. Can you lift your legs? Janet kicked her right leg in front of her. Hot diggity! Chuck bellowed. Janet was only ten feet into the air. Chuck's arms lowered, and Janet's feet thudded on the loose dirt next to the picnic table. How could you—, Janet began, but upper branches of trees were swaying. It was going to rain. As Janet searched the area for her glasses, drops of water pecked at their skin like birds. No one was there, nor the sunglasses. Faces in the trunks of trees seemed to spin into shadows that rose into the air like Janet had done. Dark elephant clouds were hidden by summer's tall thick bloom. Chuck raced Janet to the car, their footsteps light as angels. I can't remember my Queen Anne poem. I have to drink milk to lubricate my nervous system. I must have ice to freeze evil spirits in my mind— Janet stopped. She realized she had blown it again. Chuck would never marry her either. if heliotrope has no wings ken pegasus be told? why don't flowers sing or flying be not bold? Janet was starved, but by the time she and Chuck had returned to her apartment, orange and green foods were gone. Chuck kissed Janet on the forehead. Her halter dress was new, but her anxieties were old. Did a worn stone necessarily lack luster? Were people's problems products of health practices or cosmic forces?

hospital man

by Andy Plumb

Hospital man, hospital man, let me in, let me in, I'm very, very sick."

Now that hospital man, dressed in white, he comes up to me, takes one look into my weary eyes, and says, "Son, you're no sicker than the rest of us, no sicker at all."

I feel dejected, I look rejected, and then I feel rejected and look dejected. "But hospital man, hospital man, my head's spinning, my back's aching, my stomach's churning, my balls are blue, my nerves are frazzled, I'm very, very sick."

That hospital man, he screws his face up to mine, sticks a gloved finger up my anal canal, and he says, "Now, son, I tell you, and I should know, you're just like everybody else. Just take two of these golf ball-sized, green-speckled pills every 15 minutes and you won't feel bad even if the earth went spinning off its axis and crashed into the planet Jupiter."

So I follow that hospital man's prescription to the T and the U and the V and, what do you know, my head stops spinning, my back feels just like new, my balls turn a healthy pink, my stomach settles, and my nerves steady...but alas, much to my dismay, my eyes go blurry, my heart starts a-fluttering, I've gotten a hemorrhoid the size of Cleveland and it seems as if a woodpecker has taken up residence in my ears. I drag myself back to that hospital man and I says, "Oh, hospital man, oh, hospital man, I'm sicker than ever."

That hospital man, he takes out his cold, steely stethoscope, slaps it on my chest, and says, "Son, you're still breathing, that's hardly a sign of an unwell man."

"But, hospital man, oh hospital man, there's a woodpecker a-peck, peck, pecking away at my brain."

"That's not unusual, not unusual in the least. If you just learn to relax, you'll put that woodpecker to sleep in no time. Just listen to these tapes, just one hundred and ninety-nine dollars and ninety-five cents for a set of six, and you'll be fine, like I said, in no time at all."

So, once again, I follow that hospital man's advise, and in no time, no time at all, my eyes can see clearly, my heart stops fluttering, the hemorrhoid's shrunk to the size of Dayton and that woodpecker's moved out of my brain...but alas, and there must be an alas, my passion's taken leave with it, my creativity is dying, and my visions are less than ordinary.

I flee back to that hospital man, and I says, "Hospital man, oh, hospital man, I feel so miserable, I'm sure I'm going to kill myself."

The hospital man, he picks me up by my ears, and he says to me, "Son, that only shows how normal you really are. You're not the first person who's wanted to kill himself and you certainly won't be the last. Do you have deformed toes, was your father Jack the Ripper, did you fail Cotillion in seventh grade, I mean, what is truly ailing you, my son?"

"Hospital man, oh, hospital man, I don't know, I just don't know. Maybe I'm so despondent because my beloved pet gopher, Amanda, died when I was six, my mother read T.S. Eliot, while my father watched 'The Beverly Hillbillies,' and the button may be pushed at any moment now, blowing us all up to smithereens, and that's nowhere I want to go."

"Son, I think I must resort to Connective Tissue Realignment. The pain will almost kill you, but in a few days you'll be singing a happy tune."

So, that hospital man, he kneads my back and gooses my nuts and digs his thumbs into bone, cartilage and muscle alike, and I scream out in primal the secondary pain, "Mamma, mamma, I had you, but you never had me!" Much to my surprise, my passion returns, my creativity gets a new life, and my visions border on the miraculous...but alas—oh, how I hate those alas—I can't stop the tears, my feet won't touch the ground and my thing appears to be dangling in space.

"Hospital man, oh, hospital man, I can't stand this any more. I'm a walking, well, not quite walking, disaster area."

"Son, I tell you, all we're proving here is how little you have to worry about. All my patients respond to Connective Tissue Rearrangement just like you."

"Hospital man, oh, hospital man, you must believe me, I am still very, very sick."

"All right, if I must, I must. Son, it's time to rearrange your chromosomes, alter your DNA composition, make you a completely new man."

So that hospital man, he searches deep within, unravelling my double helixes, putting X's where Y's used to be and Y's where X's used to be, wreaking havoc with nature, and, lo and behold, that hospital man makes me into a bona fide, perfected human being, not a fault to be found, not a sign of weakness or ill health, a veritable superman.

Now this hospital man, a miracle worker if there ever was one, he says to this new me, "Son, now that you are finally cured, I won't ever want to hear you a-knock, knock, knocking on these hospital doors again."

So I venture back into the REAL WORLD, revelling in a body with no bones a-rattling, no feet a-blistering, not an ache to be found anywhere, and inspired by a mind so lucid that Einstein's Theory of Relativity is as simple to understand as a Rod McKuen poem, and I come across a green-eyed woman of mystery, of intrigue, who makes me stop and take notice.

Oh-so-cool, completely together for the first time in my life, feeling like I stepped out of the pages of GQ, the words come flowing out of my mouth like honey. I have no doubts I'm charming

"Well, there's one thing you gotta know about Bendix—he's as happy as a bastard on Father's Day. Not one to lighten your mood, you know what I'm saying? I remember the first time I met him: at the library, hotter 'n hell in the middle of August. I'm at the table paging through an art book, easing in front of a fan, and in struts Bendix. Something odd about him, looks like Jerry Lewis, you know—combs his hair with buttered toast. Anyway, he's in a hurry, goes right up to the bookcase and starts nosing through the titles the way a dog goes for another dog's privates. He's got a short, cold cigar in his mouth, chewing on it like a steak. He picks something out and turns around. Up close I see he's got a face filled with scar tissue, like something you could grate cheese with. I'd just been to Taco Bell, and one look at that mug shot the enchiladas right up my windpipe. I tell you, Mrs. Outhouse is no looker, and I'm quite the racial salad myself, but Bendix is something else. He turns around, catches my eye, sees I got an art book out—it was open at pottery. 'I've been working with wattle and daub myself,' he brays.

"The voice on him!—like an auctioneer receiving an enema. Now, I'll walk on bones to get what I want, and what I wanted was to get as far away from this guy as possible. I began to curse and mutter. I let a pearly screw of smoke drift right up into his left eyeball, but it didn't faze him. He showed his strong white teeth. 'We're all just insects eating other insects,' he said.

"That caught my attention. 'Really?' I asked.

"He stuck out his hand. 'Call me Spike.'

"Okay, Spike. Wattle and daub, huh?"

"Yes," he breathed; and it smelled like manure and meat.

"But I was willing to forgive him. 'How so?'

"'Marvel Bendix.'

"I gaped at him.

"'Marvel Bendix,' he said, 'a master in wattle and daub. Never met him, but he's my seed father.'

"I told him he'd have to forgive me, I'm not up on art, I'm just looking at the pictures, and by this time he's sitting down at the table with me. Well, the closer he got the worse that face looked—like he'd dipped it in a piranha tank, like a bloody cabbage. I felt like I'd just had a double dose of Carol's Close Call Casserole. He broke like a horse out of the gate, like a termite with a banjo describing his troubles: off of art now and on about his rock-and-rollercoaster romance with a girl named Trish.

"So I'm figuring no way, this guy's full of it, his belly lays across his knees like an apron, his eyes are cigarette ends, and his lips so red they make blood seem dull. But he's got pictures to prove it—a big blonde with a look of the firestorm about her. I'm looking at these pictures of Trish—she seems to be in some kind of intense pain—but then I realize she's smiling. By this time Bendix's popping a thin sweat, all worked up, thought he was about to cry. 'I've got nothing. Nothing!' he yodels. 'Life's a shit sandwich and every day I take a bigger bite.'

"Next thing I know we're out back with the pint bottle. I'm telling him Mrs. Outhouse's opinions on sex, his fat red ears full of tales of insult and violation. He tells me how Trish wears only top-dollar underwear, starts describing the look and feel of it. Tells me there are more pigs in Denmark than people. We're getting good and soused, decide to go to Denny's for pancakes—put a bottom on the stomach for drinking. We take his car—Dodge Fi-asco. He cranks the throttle and pops the clutch and we're there in minutes. He starts pissing off the clientele, telling hill-billy jokes. 'Know what a hillbilly takes on vacation?' he asks in a too-loud voice. 'Twenty dollars and one pair of underwear and don't change either for a week.' I can see he's my kind of guy, and we're asked to leave. We step out into equatorial weather.

"Well, to make a long story boring, we got drunk on rum and Gatorade, I told Mrs. Outhouse off for good, and me and Bendix went out and put a big down payment on a single-wide trailer in Wonderwood. Been six months now I'm stuck in this box. Mrs. Outhouse is suing—our divorce is final this November. I'm losing it, I tell you. I cam in last night and Bendix is butchering rabbits in the bathroom sink. That was it, I'd had it, I was out of there. 'What's that? Yeah? You want to? Is Stevie Wonder blind?'"

I cracked the seal on the pint bottle and we started whispering about Swedish films. Before I knew it the night was black as blind men's dreams, I'm soused, and my newfound friend is rolling me for all I've got—I'm down on the ground in a tight coil of taint, stain and trauma. Lost my wallet. Took sixty-three stitches in the Emergency Room. Woke up to the crack and snarl of a bullhorn and the sound of breaking bones in rain. Swear I'm gonna be more careful who I talk to now.

Story of My Life by Andy Roberts

this bewitching lassie into my life...but alas, and this alas is the hardest to take, she looks me over, up one side and down the other, and says to me, "Sorry, my man, you just won't do. You've been to that hospital man, I can tell. Your tan's so bronze, your teeth so straight, you say the right things at the right time, and I bet you can dance like Fred Astaire, but I'm looking for something more, or should that be less, in a man. Threads loose, so what; hair messed up, big deal; neuroses spewing out right and left, join the club; on the edge, the better to enjoy the view. There's nothing real about you. Return to that hospital man and ask for, no demand, your old self back."

So I aim for that hospital man once again, and despite having grave reservations, he returns me to my old self. With assorted pangs, clangs and bangs running throughout my body, and that woodpecker once again a-peck, peck, pecking away at my brain, I find that green-eyed gal, and live a life happily unhappily ever after.

PED TOMATOES

by Paul Creighton

He trudged silently past the church. The chill in the air captured his breath, the lonely gorgon on its daily rounds. He adjusted his scarf, pausing to kick out at a beer can. Having ample time to kill, this was the easiest way to spend a few hours. Besides, walking seemed one of the few remaining activities that did not put a drain on the wallet. The pavement made no demands; it was an outlet from reality. Some found solace in a bottle; he lived for the daily stroll. He lost himself in the sights and smells of the city. He would begin looking for a job, tomorrow.

Inside the church, Martha Frost listened intently to the pastor's sermon. The clergyman paced the altar, robes billowing, passion flowing from his lips. With cheeks aflush, he espoused his concern for his fellow neighbours. He emphasized the complete lack of compassion that existed on the individual and societal level. It was indeed this erosion of the infrastructure that engendered the violent crime of today. Slowly, society was losing its human face. Surely, in this age of men on the moon and laser technology, people possessed the capacity to love and understand each other. This moral decay could be reversed; however, it would require tremendous individual effort. Martha Frost lost herself in the richness of the pastor's words. Once again, as always, he was correct in his assumptions.

Outside, he traversed the street, failing to recognize the danger posed by the oncoming traffic. His faithful friend, the pavement, relayed its angry message of screeching brakes to his ears. Looking upwards so as to avoid the driver's furious gaze, he clumsily sidestepped the approaching sports car. The dark clouds overhead seemed a harbinger of the familiar late-morning rain. The driver's curses drifted by unnoticed. He reached the safety of the sidewalk.

Had the rain fallen earlier, perhaps he would have failed to notice the dried blood on the pavement. It came as an unusual surprise, similar to the bolt out of the blue that hits you when a certain famous television lawyer wheels to seemingly the most innocent cast member and accuses them of the murder of Mr. So-and-So. His thoughts focused on the rusty droplets stretching into the distance. He could but follow this urban Acheron.

Martha Frost rose with the others. The congregation shuffled out gradually, pausing to chat with the pastor who stood like a sentinel at the doorway. Outside, small groups formed discussing a gamut of topics from the upcoming elections to the latest lemon ice box cake recipe. Those left over made their way to their vehicles, content to reflect on the pastor's message. Martha Frost spoke with the Baxters and Mr. Mayer. Mr. Mayer made a half-hearted attempt to lead the discussion, describing the church's covered-dish dinner on Thursday and his secret recipe cole slaw. This attempt failed, as he would not give in to Mrs. Baxter's dogged efforts to discover exactly what was in that salad. Mr. Mayer's family secret would stay that way. Martha Frost grabbed center stage with her spellbinding version of tomato tips essential to good cooking.

His travels returned him in the direction of the church. He loathed doubling back during a walk; however, today was an exception. He followed the path as though it were a macabre rainbow. Alas, no pot of gold awaited him, no leprechauns with their tricks. His mind replayed a myriad of possibilities. Perhaps someone had been involved in an accident and staggered in this direction for assistance. Maybe someone had been shot and fled seeking a quiet place to spend those final minutes. He glanced momentarily at the assemblages in the church courtyard, but his gaze went unanswered. Returning his attention to the matter at hand, he followed the trail to its conclusion several yards away. He silently cursed its abrupt ending. He wished only this once the pavement could communicate its secret. The sidewalk silently returned his beseeching stare.

Martha Frost had the credentials to support her claim that tomatoes actually do taste better if they are lightly dusted with pepper before stewing. After all,

hadn't she taken first prize in the church's canning contest? If tomatoes are coated with pepper, the pungent aroma is maintained, even under conditions of extreme heat.

He had other things on his mind. Who hadn't come home last night? Who wasn't coming home this evening, or for that matter tomorrow or the next day? He checked himself before he could continue his morbid train of thought. Had anyone noticed that fateful event? Certainly not the Baxters. Certainly not Mr. Mayer, who had once again preserved the secrecy of his cole slaw recipe. Certainly not the pastor, who at the time may have been practising his sermon. Certainly not Martha Frost, who spoke on about the advantages of dusting tomatoes with pepper. He sunk back into his trenchcoat. The rain came as he turned towards home.

NEW AND BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

by Russel Like

Few are aware of the mass-transit revolution about to sweep the industrialized world. Originating in amusement parks, this radical innovation seems poised to change the daily habits of millions of bored, frustrated commuters. But I have seen it with my own eyes—and I am sure that within months metropolitan transportation authorities from San Francisco to Stockholm will be clamoring for their own systems. Captains of Industry, take heed! For I also predict a plethora of business opportunities to arise with the new era.

Yes, I have seen the future unfolding in my very backyard—the local amusement park. The day of the commuter log flume is about to dawn! With it will come less crowded roads, more enjoyable commutes, a shot in the arm for the ailing fiberglass imitation-log industry, and wetter executives. The factory worker, the businessman, the public servant—all will benefit from the bracing trip in the open air. Each will identify with the lumberjack and his feral, organic lifestyle. Each will think of his or her ancestors, who drew their lifeblood from the very land. Thus fortified, workers will enthusiastically plunge into the day's activities, causing productivity to soar.

But will the commuter log flume be an unqualified boon? I believe so. Just imagine how eagerly the worker will leap out of bed in the morning, knowing at a certified amusement park thrill awaits both before and after work! Picture four lanes of log flumes in each direction connecting Philadelphia to New York City while an almost empty New Jersey Turnpike provides a scenic backdrop. Nattily-dressed executives reach for the sky and scream joyfully as their log plummets down the next nearly vertical incline, waterproof briefcases flapping in their hands. And remember—traffic jams and traffic lights will become a thing of the past. Of course, flooded thoroughfares will no longer plague us, and as for the winter—well, there's always antifreeze.

As for all you skeptics (and I know you're out there, albeit a minority, as any brilliant idea inevitably faces opposition at its inception), I have seen log flumes in action. And they are incredible! The log flume at the Great Adventure amusement park elevates its passengers to majestic heights and cruises at the respectable clip of five to ten miles per hour. It does have one flaw, in that its final destination is also its point of embarkation. But experts are convinced that with dedicated research and adequate funding, a flume came be developed that will allow passengers to disembark at the midpoint of the trip and reboard later.

Perhaps the greatest threat to the commuter log flume stems from competing alternate technologies. The commuter roller coaster and tilt-o-whirl have been touted recently by public officials; however, the ferris wheel has been discarded as an option by all but a few. And the solar-powered roller skate still enjoys the support of much of the clergy. However, I would place my money on the flume. And I firmly believe that within the next decade, the log flume will join the ranks of the amusement park's vaunted contributions to society, next to cotton candy and the dolphin show.

Sayz-U!(Letters)

Dear Elayne,

Nothing I can argue about in Kid Sieve's article. The thing is, I'm so anti-supercorporate capitalism at this point that when I read columns like Linda Winer's in Newsday (which I did) I just want to slap her in the face and call her a hypocritical capitalist lackey. I knew that John Lennon was a hypocritical capitalist "Marxist" before he became a martyr to his own self-deification, so nothing Yoko Ono does can possibly disappoint me. As my ranting might have gotten across to you, I'm totally disgusted that in America, ever since American artists became the most influential instead of the French, Germans and English, starting with Jackson Pollack, continuing with Andy Warhol, and down to Robert Mapplethorpe, the "innovative" artists have been the establishment artists. So there's been no rebellious community of culturally-innovative individuals who did "heavy" art and influenced the academic culture in a positive way. The sixties, as I've also said before, was a bunch of old leftist, romantic, and rock 'n roll ideas that became resurgent and popular as a response to Vietnam. And it was immediately coopted by the supercorporations, just like Abstract Expressionism and Pop before it, and like Post-Modernism after it. Only the punks and Jesse Jackson's followers have "kept the faith." The real punks avoid the supercorporate labels like the plague. Fanzines in general are underground fanzines of the underground. What upsets me about IJ is that it's largely an underground fanzine of pop robot culture. And some of the eclectic bunch are nihilists like Eric Ewing...Like the man says, why do something creative when you could be punching someone out instead? Don't ask me. But it does make me feel a bit out of place in IJ. Sometimes I like to make dumb jokes; sometimes I like to say philosophical things that the nihilists have no doubt condemned a thousand times before. So let's all just shut up and let the fascists take over. And when we get frustrated, we can punch each other out, like they do in Bensonhurst. That's part of the fascist mentality too. I sincerely believe that the underground has to form a culture which utterly rejects the robot culture that's destroying us all. Yes, we have to interact with them commercially, but do we have to consume their commercial substitute for culture, including pop culture entertainment, too?

Sincerely,

ELLIOT CANTSIN
1961 Cedar St.
N. Merrick, NY 11566

[I think, Elliot, that a distinction can be made between consuming "pop robot" culture and entertainment blindly and, as I put it in my Abbie Hoffman tribute review, talking back to your television as you watch it. I think when you reject mass culture outright you cut yourself off from too many points of reference which can be useful in, for example, coalition building—just plain making contacts. The stuff that Jackson's good at [and by the way, being as I am somewhat of a "Jackson follower," I beg to differ as well as to the amount of faith kept by those who have supported the man, but that's a whole 'nother discussion]. What I prefer to do is to absorb what they spew out at us and reject what seems banal and useless to me, BUT to retain what I personally enjoy. And I do enjoy some mass culture entertainment, as my tv review column makes abundantly clear. I don't feel like I have to make an excuse for my own personal tastes when they happen to coincide with whatever the hot movie or tv show is at the moment. As for your response to Eric, it seems to me the two of you are basically saying the same thing, that you want more innovation and less mass-oriented stuff, only you're saying it in different ways. As I try to make clear whenever I can, it's your zine too; send me non-mass stuff and I'll publish it, like I have been doing.]

Dear Elayne,

Back in the early '60s, Mike Wallace used to pause in the middle of his hard-hitting interview program to tell the audience how great Parliament cigarettes were for their lungs. And he was damned convincing at it, too! So lay off Linda Ellerbee! All TV journalists are performers—or did you think Walter Cronkite really was your uncle? (If you want to pick on Linda Ellerbee for something, pick on her for ripping off the phrase "and so it goes" from Kurt Vonnegut!)

Yours,

PAUL NICOLOFF
705-B Brownlee Court
Austin, TX 78703

[According to Ellerbee in her book, "And so it goes" was stolen from Lloyd Dobbins [a claim she repeated in a recent episode of MURPHY BROWN], not Vonnegut. Vonnegut, you may recall, never inserted the word "And" before "So it goes." As for Wallace, I'd think he should be no less susceptible to contemptuous criticism for doing commercials [albeit in a more innocent age], but the thing is, it irks one that it's Linda because she specifically represents, to many people, the image of the person who doesn't sell out—not for phony anorexic "anchor" looks, not for misinformative news that talks down to the viewers, and—we hoped—certainly not for corporations peddling drugs [in this case, caffeine, one of the most addictive drugs around]. We all just hoped she'd be, oh, I dunno, above that or something.]

Dear 'Layne,

Loved ishes 69 and 70. Yes, I'm back. As Sebastian's sister Tara says, "Alix caught Death," so I guess that makes me Nosfera-

tu. Thanks to everyone who sent letters and cards. I've had a bit of a setback—I don't think it's because of my chronic neurochemical watchamacallit, but rather I think I'm allergic to something in my office. Yesterday I went shopping and there was a craft show in the mall and 15 minutes after being there I felt the same as the day I passed out at work in February. So I think there's something in my environment that is making me ill. Sebastian says I'm allergic to work. I haven't gone back yet but I'm hoping to soon.

Anni: GETTING TO BE A RABBIT WITH ME sounds like a great show. I would watch it and so would the Bunny Brigade. Did you think of becoming a network programmer?

Dorian: Since I'm almost engaged (working hard on it!) I read your wedding hindsight hints with avid interest. Did you know that when balloons burst birds and fish eat the pieces of rubber and die? Sorry—I just realized the university forbade rice, not that you did it so birds wouldn't eat it. At Rodney's wedding we threw birdseed. Never mind. I think we're gonna elope.

Tom Dejas: I love Winona Ryder. As a matter of fact, the greatest compliment as of late was when I was in the grocery when one of this breeder's five children pointed at me and said, "Look, it's the girl from Beetlejuice!" (meaning Lydia played by Winona Ryder). Anyway, I think you're better than Dave Barry, tho' I love him too. Don't you owe me a phone call? I need recommendations since they took BEVERLY HILLS TEENS off. I miss my daily dose of Bianca.

Candi: Thanks for the 'zine. I promise to reciprocate soon! Really.

Michael Polo: Are you the same Michael Polo with whom I used to lunch at University of London's school of pharmacology? If so, what are you doing in Texas?

Phil: Great talking to you the other day. Was your visit with James Wallas as fun, interesting and educational as mine was? What did Barb think of him?

J.P. Morgan: Hi! Thanks for the stuff, way way back (see Candi's message).

Kathy: "It's In The News" from #69 was great. Poor vampire!

Ace: My heroes as a child were Lucy Van Pelt, Racer Rex from SPEED RACER, Vampira, Barnabas Collins (DARK SHADOWS), Fu Manchu, Maleficent (from Disney's SLEEPING BEAUTY), Edward Gorey and Morticia Addams, who I always wanted to be when I grew up. I've now outgrown Lucy.

This next story, "The Fretting Zoo," I dedicate to my sister, Kevin Bishoff, who was just accepted early decision to Yale Med School.

Looking forward to #71...Love,
PRUDENCE GAELOR
P.O. Box 171
Laurel, MD 20707

Dear Elayne,

9/22/89

Surprise, surprise—I've decided to subscribe! Why, after 10 these many years? Maybe it's the uncomfortable climate in this global village that leads me to seek some sort of media tribe where I might find safe haven. A friendly cave to visit.

I particularly like Elliot Cantsin's stuff, and "A Dip in the Plasma Pool." "Commercial McClue-In" I like too. Ace's stuff is refreshingly honest, and I think he complements the other stuff.

I'm a little gun-shy about submitting—you seem to want an exclusive. Do you have a policy on not accepting "syndicated" stuff? Then what about Baboon Dooley? He's got more places running his stuff than we've ever had. Jim Siergey and I have done a bunch of other pieces, and the only place that runs 'em all is AMERICAN FORUM. If you'd like to take a look, let me know.

Anyway, I look forward to your future issues.

So long,

TOM ROBERTS
333 S. East Ave., #209
Oak Park, IL 60302

P.S. We're working on the Homo Patrol collection—should be our next publication.

[Thanks for subscribing, Tom, and for giving me a chance to try to explain my policy on artwork more fully. Back when John Crawford was first contributing to IJ, we really didn't have a lot of quality art to speak of. As it turned out, one of the reasons John and I fell out of touch was because I tried to change the policy on art. I've been running some Dooleys lately because John resubscribed, but now that his subscription has run out, I won't be running any more, as I'd like to make room for our paying contributors [and all contributors, except staffers, are "paying," even if they only pay the 65¢ stamp]. Generally, I prefer art that has not been syndicated, but I understand at the same time that art is a little trickier than writing. I will rarely accept a written piece that has already been published, because IJ is not a reprint house, we're a forum for folks to publish stuff that doesn't get published elsewhere [among other things]. But several IJ artists syndicate their work, I'm sure, so I can't be as strict with artwork, except for cover art. As you know, Homo Patrol was dropped not because it appears in AMERICAN FORUM as much as because a) it took up a lot of space [generally, artwork in IJ has to take up less space because we feature primarily writing—this is not intended to slight artists, but IJ writers tend to be on the verbose side, leaving us little extra space] and b) you had informed us you were going to bring out the collection on your own. We'd love to see what you and Jim have, especially if it's as good as your last submission about flag desecration!]

(more letters next page!)

Dear Elayne, Sept. 20, 1989

So I see J.P. is now being published by Fantagraphics. They keep stuff in print for long periods of time, don't they? (I'm not sure whether it's that, or that they just take awhile to get their stuff published—Fantagraphics is notoriously slow.) I've been disappointed lately with the Hernandez Bros.' SEX AND VIOLENCE series. What happened to love? But please mention to J.P. that I remember enjoying "Planet Patrol." It used to be on WPXI on Sundays, but they changed the time so much I often missed it. It featured a cast of characters of all different races as all part of the same crew. Nobody was doing that then—and with puppets. The ship looked like a giant gyroscope and had a weird simulated spinning effect...

Love,

BRIAN CATANZARO
7 South Warren Street
Dover, NJ 07801

P.S. "Concierge" is great.

Elayne,

Each issue is the best! A tribute to Dennis ("It Couldn't Happen Here"), Dale ("Tiddlebumb Method"), Paul ("The Snow-White Cranes...") and Wayne ("Quarter Moons...").

TAMARINA DWYER
418 Stone Street
Oneida, NY 13421
23 September 1989

Hi Elayne!

I'm glad that latest edition of IJ you sent me didn't have any stamps bearing the image of Old Glory on 'em. Otherwise, they would've been desecrated by the Post Office with those nasty cancellation marks! Guess there ain't any patriots in the USPS!...

Hmm, what's Eric Ewing whining about himself? I thought this was called 'a newsletter of comedy and creativity,' not 'the newsletter of earthshaking inspiration and social activism' or whatever. What about these hundreds and hundreds of uninspiring music review zines? The house collapsing [story] was interesting, though. "The Road to 'Forever'" was funny! Thanks, Anni, for warning us about the upcoming TV season, I'll be sure to miss it! Seems to me that with the advent of lousy television came the advent of "illegal" drug use...leading me to the conclusion that we ought to ban TV and legalize drugs! In any case, I don't have much use for either these days.

Congratulations on nine years of INSIDE JOKE!

Till next time, a hearty farewell!

JOHN P. DOUCET
R.R. #1, Box 135
Concession, N.S., BOW IMO CANADA
9-27-89

Dear E-E-E-Elayne;

Foist I gets a letter from 'Da Ack' yesterday, now I gets one from youse. Same type-set, same sized paper. Coincidence? I thinks not! I'm sending both scrawls to the police lab to have a make run on them and to settle this identity thing once and fer all... (To fill readers in, Ken and Gary Pig Gold and several other folks who I feel really ought to know better have gotten it into their heads that Anni and I are actually the same person. This despite the fact that I couldn't write as well as Anni if I tried [that's why I'm a concierge, not a writer], plus the many people who know both Anni and I and have, in fact, seen us together on numerous occasions at, for instance, IJ parties. Still, there's no convincing some believers otherwise, as Whitley Streiber can probably attest.)

CUBS WIN! CUBS WIN! CUBS WIN!!! Since we get the Cubbies on cable (I get the Mets on my little satellite dish) I've been following them since 1983. I'm rooting for them to go all the way, but realistically I don't believe they have the pitching to get past the Giants, or the depth to deal with the pitching of the A's. Their best shot: Kevin Mitchell and Will Clark suddenly stop hitting, their infield develops coordination problems, and their relief pitchers stop throwing breaking pitches. Then, the Baltimore Orioles luck out against both the Blue Jays and the A's. (ED. NOTE: Obviously this letter was written before the Jays clinched—it's being typed the day the playoffs start, so I'm not going to hazard a guess as to who will take the Series; suffice it to say this is the first year in a long time where I'd be happy with any of the four teams. Chicago's due; a Toronto win would herald in the closest thing to a "world" champion since US baseball let in its neighbor to the north; and since we'll be living in the Bay Area soon I have no problem rooting for both those teams.) Being a lifelong Detroit Tigers fan, digging the Cubbies is probably the best compromise I can make until ESPN starts showing Der Bengels regularly. Right now cable allows us to catch regular editions of the Oakland A's games, San Diego Padres, Atlanta Braves, and the L.A. Dodgers. Most people in Phoenix have switched their allegiance from the Dodgers to the Cubs because they can see their games more often PLUS the Cubs train here. Why do I like the Cubs? Harry Carey!!!! I like that enthusiastic old fart! He cracks me up and actually gets me into the games. The guys who do the Oakland games, the Dodgers, the Braves, the Padres, even the "Game of the Week" crew all sound like they're just there for the paycheck. Harry sounds as if he'd show up at the ballpark even if he had to pay to get in and purchase his own beer.

Speaking of beer, this is one I wish "Kid" Sieve would respond to sometime in IJ. There is presently an ad with Harry Carey dressed up like a Blues Brother, hopping and bopping around (with considerable help from a rather impressive double) in a Budweiser commercial. Now this is a cute ad, but last year Harry had a ra-

ther well-publicized heart attack. What kind of message does this send to the consumer? It's okay to drink beer after you've had a heart attack; heck, beer is GOOD for you, look what it's done for Harry??? This situation is probably no diff than the Eric Clapton situation of 18 months ago. Eric, a recovering alcoholic, does a beer commercial. What does that say. "Have a drink, mate. Drink all you want. Drink, drink, drink and dig the music, then drink a little more. Of course, I won't be joining you..." Ask the Kid to cover more of these mixed-message type deals, okay? (The Kid replies, *immediante*: "I did a whole bit about beer commercials vis a vis mixed messages and creeping sexism a few issues back, but this always bears repeating, since all commercials, in essence, are mixed messages, mostly spouting 'BUY BUY BUY even if you have no money but you're inadequate and you NEED TO BUY in order to feel sexy/young/hip/fulfilled/etc. so ignore your common sense and incipient debt and BUY—and oh, by the way, here are all these bank commercials for you so you'll know what to do with the money you don't have...but you could always apply for bank credit cards so you can BUY some more!'" Conspicuous consumerism, the apparent natural result of a staunchly capitalist economy [and god forbid our economy be something other than capitalist, like those icky socialist countries which actually have horrid things like universal health care and employment!], is really at the root of everything that's wrong with advertising nowadays. In order to stimulate conspicuous consumerism, advertising has one goal: Create a need, then fill it. Everything else, like personal safety and responsibility, is secondary; in fact, as you note, things like responsibility for one's actions are antithetical to the aims of advertisers and their products! If you had self-control and such, you'd be less vulnerable to their pitches, and they don't want that. They'd rather you killed yourself than held back from their messages. It's the 'Crunch All You Want, We'll Make More' syndrome—of course they'll make more, they were planning to make more before they 'suggested' you crunch...but that suggestion creates the need, which in turn fuels more ads creating more need... so you see how it goes. Here's a beer (which equals sex in many ads, although I still can't figure out the connection, since too much alcohol usually decreases sexual potency anyway); here's a car (which also equals sex much of the time)—buy them both, but hey, don't say we didn't warn you not to drink and drive!")

Back to baseball. Back in the late '60s/early '70s I was a member of a little organization called the Mets Set Fan Club. We loved the Mets even before they became a powerhouse baseball club (hell, I think we liked them because everyone else thought they were a joke). When the Mets won the World Series in 1969, the guy who ran the organization sent us all clippings from the Shea Stadium infield and a little baggy of dirt from around home plate. (I treasured this for years, God knows why. My dad eventually threw it out during a move I wasn't around to supervise.) So, when the Yanks go through their typical brou-ha-ha with George Steinbrenner, play ring-around-the-rosie with managers, and have their fights and squallers in the press, I always figure it's pretty much what they deserve (the only Yankee I ever liked was Mickey Mantle). But over the last few years I've noticed that the Mets are just as combustible and volatile as the Yanks. Especially lately with Darryl Strawberry saying he wasn't going to play with the Mets after 1990, he and Davey fighting in the clubhouse, etc. What I'd like to know, or at least see from some knowledgeable Mets fan/New Yorker, is a breakdown on why the daily running of major league baseball teams in New York has become akin to a daily soap opera. Is New York TOO MEDIA INTENSIVE for a club to maintain a professional demeanor? Or is the stuff we're hearing about now stuff that actually helps the game? Is there a cynicism in the New York sports fan that doesn't exist in other parts of the country? If so, is Darryl Strawberry correct to try and leave New York? We'll he play better for the Dodgers, Giants, Padres, Angels or A's (media-intensive cities with a more laid-back approach to coverage, concentrating mainly on promotion of the game and players rather than criticism)? Or is Strawberry just an overpaid prima-donna? Does playing for media-intensive teams encourage professional athletes to act like spoiled brats? Were the Mets crass and callous in informing Gary Carter and Keith Hernandez that they won't be offered a contract for next season, or is this some sort of sign to the fans that the front office is trying to effect significant change? Why can't decisions such as these be made during the off-season, in private rather than in the newspapers during a pennant race? Does this type of rage and panic actually help a team play better? I'd really like some feedback on this from one of our IJ staffers or contributors if possible. (I've sent Ken a copy of a recent Village Voice cover story on Strawberry which answers some of the questions he poses, but if any baseball-fan readers are so inclined, feedback is welcome. I personally believe the timing of the Carter/Hernandez no-contract thing was purposeful, to distract attention away from a pennant race in which, after all, no New York teams are competing—the NY sports media is notoriously hometown-oriented, as much as they love slamming players/managers [but rarely owners, who are often friendly with the owners of the media, of course]. It's an ugly situation, and one reason I rarely read sports pages any more.)

TV-wise, I don't think I'll miss baseball on the networks. Though their technology gets better every year, the announcers are neither endearing nor interesting enough to make a case for consistent airtime. CBS's buying of an audience with baseball (12 regular games, the playoffs and the World Series) is bound to be a

flop commercially. Watch ESPN become the official fourth network once baseball season resumes. NBC will probably pretend now that baseball never really existed, even though they've been covering it and pioneered ALL the techniques since the beginning of television. But hell, I can't feel too sorry for them. After all, they've got ALF, Johnny Carson and Bill Cosby (a puppet with a dick for a nose and two aging comedians quickly on their way out of favor with America).

Well, that's what's on my mind today (such as it is)...
Still Rockin',

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

Dear Elaine:

Howdy! Well, here it is, my letter to Sayz-U. Ain't you thrilled?

I ran into the good Doctor (Fuquad) the other day and persuaded him to do my column for this issue (lazy me!). The old guy was in fine form, wasn't he? He just don't understand that that's why we all read IJ, does he?!

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION:

WE HAVE A WINNER! The correct answer in the IJ "It's In The News!" Contest (#2) was number 8—Nancy being addicted to downers, etc. John Doucet, a reader from the north, caught it.

THEREFORE: To all to whom presents shall come, Greeting. Know ye that by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws, and reposing specail Trust and Confidence in JOHN DOUCET, I do hereby declare and commission him to be the WINNER of the NEWS CONTEST #2 for the readers of IJ, hereby authorizing and empowering him to execute and discharge all and singular the duties appertaining to said office, and to enjoy all the privileges and immunities thereof.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the Great Seal of IJ to be affixed at my house this 15th day of September in the year of our Lord (RALPH) one thousand, nine hundred and eighty-nine...

Well, lessee...critique the last couple IJs...as usual, IJ was up to par. #69 was great—especially Anni, Ace (I guess I'm weird—my heroes were, and are, all of a literary bent. I admire anyone who can string words together and make 'em fit. I've said it before: if I can live to see a book of mine banned—or better yet, burned!—by any public body I will consider myself to have done my job well!), and Max Nuclear was good for a couple of chuckles—and I'm still secretly amused by several of his curses and such. When someone pushes me to MY piss potential, I think about them drowning in a vat of donkey shit or deep-frying their balls and I am tickled to no end.

Hey, what can I say? I'm easy to please!

Oh, by the way, the cops still haven't found Ronald McDonald yet—which is not all that surprising given the caliber of the cops around here. A case in point: The other day this kid decided he was going to attack his brother or brother-in-law (I don't remember which it was). Anyhow, this yahoo gets himself a vicious STEAK KNIFE—yes, your basic use-at-the-table-to-cut-your-meat-type knife—and goes after the brother/brother-in-law. He delivers a nasty cut (which a doctor later analogizes to a "shaving cut") to the b/b-i-l's neck and is in the yard shouting obscenities at the person when the bozos in blue arrive. Three of them.

Now, you have to picture the scene to properly appreciate it. Sit back, relax, breathe deep and close your eyes. You're in the back yard of a house. You're watching a kid holding a steak knife scream bad words at his brother, who has a flesh wound on his neck thanks to the ministrations of the kid with the weapon. Along come three coppers. The cops demand that the kid drop the knife. The kid makes comments as to what they can do and continues to shout at the brother. The cops insist. The kid tells 'em to get fucked. Now the cops are getting pissed. They pull their guns out and demand the knife be dropped. The kid says fuck you—etc. and GET THIS!: the cops shoot him!

Not only do they shoot him—they shoot to kill! And not only do they shoot to kill—ALL THREE OF THEM SHOOT HIM! ONE OF THE ASSHOLES SHOOT TWICE!!!

God, I love Mansfield. Stupid fuckers never thought about maybe sneaking up behind him and taking the steak knife away. Never thought about maybe shooting him in the arm or the hand—or even in the kneecaps or something—now, let's shoot to kill.

The next day, our wonderful safety director (who earned his job by virtue of the fact that he had been in the army for 20 years) says the boys acted properly and didn't over-react! Gosh, thanks for the words of reassurance, George!

Well, anyhow, I gotta close this thing and get it in the mail. (Assuming, that is, that the postal people will actually DELIVER the fucking thing!) #70 was great and I have high hopes for #71!

Talk at you later!

Sometimes—but not always,

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

(Kathy has indeed been having multiple mail problems of late, and suggests that if you've written to her lately and have been expecting a reply, no doubt she's done so but the mail has gotten lost in transit, as has much of her stuff destined for IJ, so PLEASE get back in touch with her so she can try to reply again!)

Don't forget - Next issue's our end-of-year Questionnaire!

The Art of the Duel

by Elliot Cantsin

I ran into my friend Jose the other day. I said, "Hey, man, what's happening?" We still use the jargon from the old days.

He said, "Hey, man, it's really good I ran into you. I want you to be my second in a duel."

"Out of sight, man," I said. "I haven't seen a good duel in ages. What's it gonna be, swords or pistols? And who's the lucky opponent? It's not everyone who gets to duel a real gentleman like yourself, Jose. With you, dueling is an art. A scratch on the cheek, a beautiful scar, and everyone is happy. By the way, what's the excuse?"

"Well, it's Carlos," he said.

"Carlos?" I was somewhat surprised. "Carlos is one of your best friends."

"Yes, that's true," he said, "but he called me a sodomite and a coke fiend."

"But Jose," I said, "you are a sodomite and a coke fiend. You've never been ashamed of it before. What's the big deal?"

"Well," he said, "it's not what he said, it's the way he said it. We're using assault rifles."

"Assault rifles..." I said. I was starting to feel uncomfortable. "But they're so unaesthetic."

"I know," he said. "It was the heat of the moment. These things should be illegal, really. Now that I look back, I think it would have been a lot cooler if I had said swords, like in the old days. But I can't go back on my word, so, assault rifles it is."

I was starting to get nervous. "Where's it going to be?" I said.

"Up at the Sheep Meadow in the park," he said.

I was getting very nervous. "Like, there's no cover in the Sheep Meadow. Like, for seconds."

"What's the matter man, you scared?" he said. "This is a sport we're talking about, an honorable sport like quail hunting. You ever pour ten rounds of ammo into a quail in half a second? I mean, it's like a spectacle. Not just feathers flying everywhere, but flesh, bone, and blood too. I admit the bird doesn't look too exquisite on the plate afterwards, but believe me, you've never tasted such tender flesh. Don't need no MSG when you use an assault rifle. Anyway, you can use one of those plastic shields at the Cow Meadow, if you're going to be wimpy about it."

I can't tell you how nervous I was getting. "You know, a few stray bullets from an assault rifle can throw a man behind a plastic shield like fifteen feet and maybe break his neck or something," I said. "Or like I could get hit in the toe. You know, people walk funny if they lose their big toe." I could see that my sense of aesthetics just might save me after all.

"You already walk funny," Jose said.

"Well, yes, that's true, I suppose," I said, "but I walk elegantly."

"Yeah, that's very true," Jose said. "Walk back and forth a few times for me," he said. "Please." He was batting his long, dark eyelashes. I could see that I was making progress.

So I pranced and sashayed up and down a few times and finally Jose said, "I tell you what, man, you talk to Carlos and see if you can't get him to agree to swords." I put an extra little shimmy into my walk, out of rhythm with everything else, when he said that. I couldn't help myself.

So I played essentially the same scene with Carlos a few hours later, and the upshot of it all was that Jose scratched Carlos' cheek, just like in the old days, and with real style. Then he kissed the boo-boo and they made up and we all lived, happily, ever after. So the next time you find yourself looking up the barrel of an assault rifle, I suggest that you appeal to the perpetrator's sense of aesthetics. (It might help to wiggle your hips a little too.) Like I've said a few times before, a sense of aesthetics is the only thing that's going to save this tacky country.

INSIDE JOKE

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PO# 1609
MAD SQUARE STATION
NEW YORK, NY 10159

