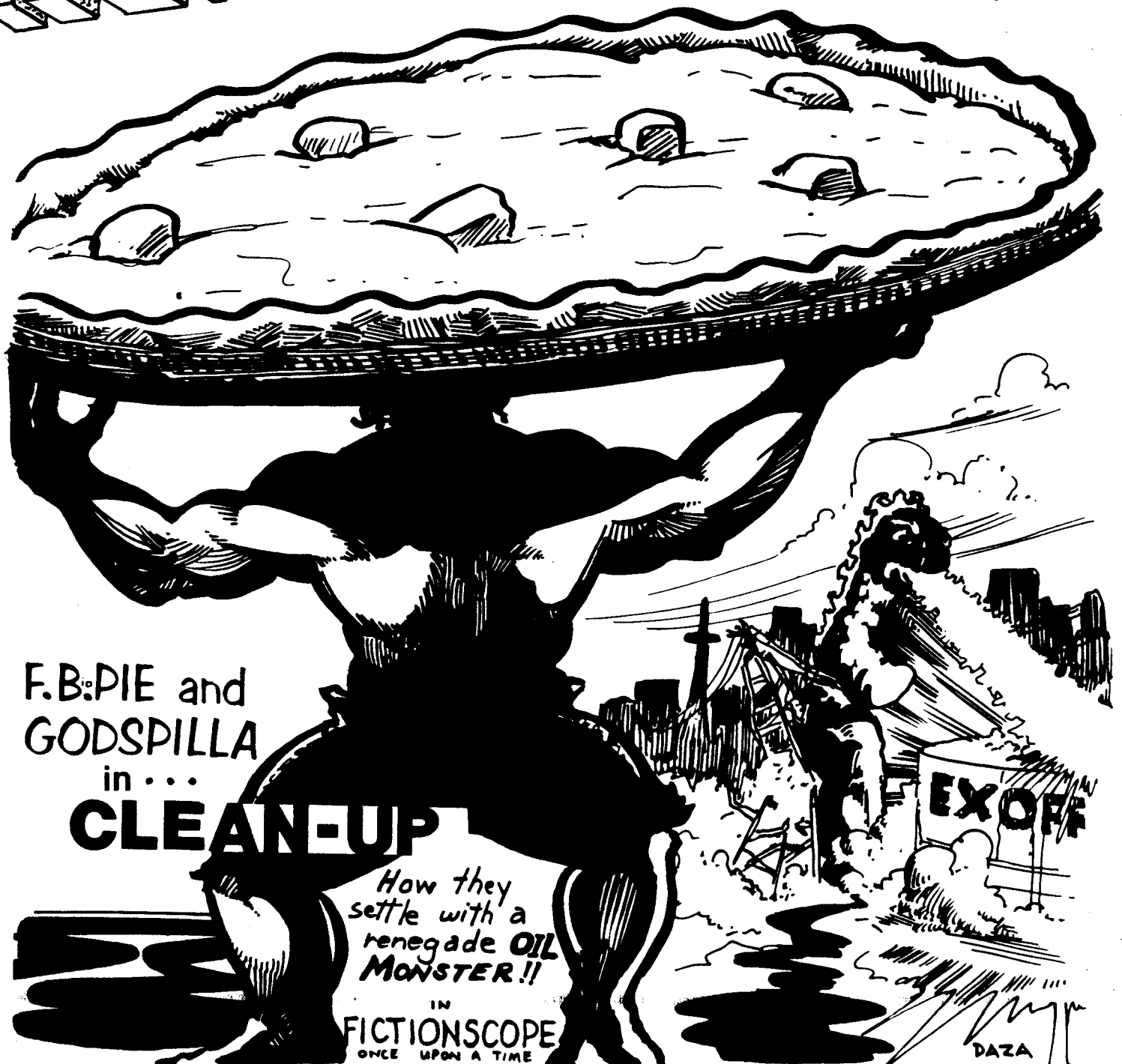


\$1.50

# THE INCREDIBLE INSIDE JOKE

A NEWSLETTER OF  
COMEDY CREATIVITY

#78



F.B. PIE and  
GODSPILLA  
in ...

## CLEANUP

How they  
settle with a  
renegade **OIL**  
**MONSTER!!**

IN  
**FICTIONSCOPE**  
ONCE UPON A TIME

DAZA



# Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER 30 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #79  
 OCTOBER 1 - Universal Children's Day; World Habitat Day; Jimmy Carter (66); Groucho Marx (b. 1895)  
 OCTOBER 2 - Sting (39); Mahatma Gandhi (b. 1869)  
 OCTOBER 3 - Gore Vidal (65)  
 OCTOBER 4 - Susan Sarandon (44); Alvin Toffler (62); Buster Keaton (b. 1896)  
 OCTOBER 5 - SUSAN PACKIE (44); JAMES WALLIS (24); Nicaraguans nab Hasenfus (1986); Bob Geldof (39)  
 OCTOBER 6 - Carole Lombard (b. 1908)  
 OCTOBER 7 - PHIL FRIEDMAN (58)  
 OCTOBER 7-13 - National Newspapers Week  
 OCTOBER 8 - Jesse Jackson (49); Chicago Fire (1871)  
 OCTOBER 9 - DAZA (36); John Lennon (b. 1940); Jackson Browne (40)  
 OCTOBER 11 - Eleanor Roosevelt (b. 1884)  
 OCTOBER 12 - Aleister Crowley (b. 1895)  
 OCTOBER 13 - Art Garfunkel (48); Crash of 1989; Surrealist Masquerade Ball in St. Petersburg, FL  
 OCTOBER 14 - Interplanetary Confederation Day; e.e. cummings (b. 1894); C. Everett Koop (79)  
 OCTOBER 16 - World Food Day; Oscar Wilde (b. 1854)  
 OCTOBER 16-24 - Peace with Justice Week  
 OCTOBER 17 - DOUG PELTON (37); Black Poetry Day  
 OCTOBER 19 - "Uncle" Floyd Vivino (39); Peter Max (53); Amy Carter (23); Crash of 1987  
 OCTOBER 22 - ANNI ACKNER (37); TOM GEDWILLO (39); Doris Lessing (71); Timothy Leary (70); Jeff Goldblum (38); Christopher Lloyd (52)  
 OCTOBER 24 - U.N. Day; "Weird" Al Yankovic (31); Kevin Kline (43)  
 OCTOBER 25 - Pablo Picasso (b. 1881)

INSIDE JOKE is put on hexameekly (so remember those deadlines please!) by Elayne Wechsler-Chaput and a host of dear friends, and emanates from beautiful downtown Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, to which the subtle shades of autumn have begun arriving (mostly, however, in the form of multicolored gambling machines...)

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

## STAFF WRITERS/ARTISTS

--ANNI ACKNER-----ACE BACKWORDS-----KEN BURKE--  
 MIKE DOBBS-----PRUDENCE GAELOR-----GARY PIG GOLD  
 --WAYNE HOGAN-----TODD KRISTEL-----JED MARTINEZ--  
 J.P. MORGAN-----LARRY OBER-----SUSAN PACKIE  
 --WILLIAM RALEY-----STEVEN SCHARFF-----LARRY STOLTE--  
 DORIAN TENORE-BARTILUCCI-----KERRY THORNLEY-----PHIL TORTORICI

Front Cover by DAZA

## OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE:

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MARK HATHAKER	BRIAN RUDDY	DAVID WILLIAMS
MARY ANN HEHN		and "KID" SIEVE

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OCTOBER 27 - ERIC EWING (22); Oliver Tambo (78); John Cleese (51); Dylan Thomas (b. 1914)  
 OCTOBER 28 - JIM VALENTINO (38); Fran Liebowitz (40)  
 OCTOBER 29 - Crash of 1929  
 OCTOBER 30 - Dick Gautier (53); Grace Slick (47)  
 OCTOBER 31 - Hallowe'en (IJ High HolyDay); National Magic Day (naturally); John Candy (40)

(November events listed on p. 4)

## ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

Welcome to autumn 1990, INSIDE JOKE's final season before our "extended hiatus" (only two more issues after this one). Time to recap where we're at: The following contributors need not (nay, should not) send me any more submissions, as I have plenty to last through the end: Mario Acevedo, Ted Brohl, Elliot Cantin, Roger Coleman, Vernon Grant, Mary Ann Henn, Wayne Hogan, Eric Hollobaugh, Dave Kocher, Tuli Kupferberg, Jim Middleton, Richard Millard, Susan Packie, Andy Plumb, Brian Ruddy and Kerry Thornley. All others, especially staffers, take note: we've only two issues left, and I'd like full staffer participation for them if possible. Tom Deja moved and left us no forwarding address, and since he hasn't contributed since #71, I am (retroactive to #72) no longer considering him a staff writer. Alas, Kathy Helms-Stadalsky's submission got lost in the mails, and Rory's had to bow out again, but they should return for #79.

Next issue, as you may know, will officially commemorate our 10th anniversary, and should have a special cover by comics artist Evan Dorkin. Staffer Phil Tortorici is coordinating the collective front-and-back cover for #80, and reports that so far only one person has written to express interest in participating! Come on, IJ artists--there are so many of you out there, I know you want in on this collaboration! As Phil says, don't miss out on a historic event! Please write him ASAP for info. In this issue, after Anni's column, is our most recent address listing for all our staffers.

Since I plan on running my last "...Or Not TV" fall season review section next issue (hope Ken's submission this time puts you in the mood!), and our concluding issue will contain short bylines for each staffer, in their own words, of where you'll be able to catch their work after we fold (note: any non-staffer contributors are also welcome to submit a byline for #80), thus limiting space a bit for those two issues, I've decided to jump the gun a bit and publish my final edition of "Fan Noose" this time, with apologies to anyone I may have left out last-minute. Also in this issue, we welcome new contributors Leola Calamita, Kenneth Leonhardt, "F. Scott Manson," Stephen Tierney, Jess Wilbanks and David Williams; Gary Pig begins a serial (a short one, we hope!); Susan Packie and Ralph Sharaga get us in the mood for school; Ace stirs up some more controversy, as does our letter column; the Snide Critic makes a return appearance; David W. is a bit out of season but we won't be publishing by the new year; and Steve and Brian S both tackle the western, in their own ways. Glenn Five assures me his story will continue or conclude next issue.

The deadlines for the last IJs are September 30 for #79 and November 15 for #80. If there's an X by your mailing label, why not send in \$3.00 for the rest of our run? Issues of IJ are \$1.50 each, limit three per person since I only make 150 total (make checks payable to "Elayne Wechsler-Chaput"). Please buy back issues for \$1.50 each, as I plan on keeping them around only a few months into 1991 before schlepping them into my parents' attic. IJ is also available at SohoZai for as long as we last--thanks Jessica! Writers'/Artists' Guidelines can be had for a mere SASE, get 'em while they last. Contributors and letter writers may, if they wish, get a discount on their IJ by sending me a 65¢ stamp instead of the \$1.50 cash/check/money order for the issue in which their work will appear. Donations are always welcome; thanks to J.C. Brainbeau, Ted Brohl, Roger Coleman, Tammy Dwyer and Dan Falsetto for their generosity. Thanks also to all of you who've sent me stuff camera-ready; if you want specifications for camera-ready copy, please ask. Please send all subscription requests, writing, art, letters and everything else to me at

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

This IJ is dedicated to the memories of Irene Dunne and B.F. Skinner.





# DIARY of The ROCK FIEND

by  
Anni Ackner



## Some Enchanted Evening

Well, frankly, I, for one, am tired to death of the whole business, and I don't intend to put up with it another minute more.

Oh, you know precisely to what business I am referring--don't carry on as though you don't. We've all been through it at one time or another, some of us, admittedly, more than others (Marla Maples comes most immediately to mind), and it's always the same old thing, over and over again, with almost no variation, until a person could just yip: You meet someone, somewhere (it used to be that you met them in a bar, if you were a sensible person, or at an Alternative University Walking Tour of the Street Vendors of Soho if you weren't, but, things being what they are these days, you're just as likely to come across one at a lecture of the Seven Holy Chakras and the Concept of Safe Sex or the bimonthly Gaia's Web Old Growth Tree Planting and Vegan Dinner Dance), and, during the course of the conversation (assuming, of course, that you had a conversation--at least a few of those Chance Encounters in Drinking Establishments led in another direction altogether, but that is an entirely different column and one that, all things considered, I no longer expect to have to write), it is decided that the two of you ought to Go Out. Now, Going Out, in this circumstance, did not, as you know perfectly well, mean Go Out and Have a Little Snack or Go Out and Talk A Walk or even, more generally, Go Out and Have a Good Time--in fact, it may even be considered to be antithetical to this last--but instead revolved around a ritual so elaborate and stylized as to make the annual reconvening of the Supreme Court of the United States look like Saturday afternoon on St. Mark's Place, and so fraught with tension and anxiety as to make it eligible for fundraising status for the Loyal Order of Valium Manufacturers, a ritual involving (a) the Initial Get-Together, which entailed, if you were a woman, frantically pitching three weeks' worth of newspapers, pizza cartons and dried-out plates of cat food underneath the sofa so HE shouldn't think you were a slob, or, if you were a man, frantically attempting to take your second shave of the day while sitting on a crosstown bus so SHE wouldn't think you were a slob, or, alternatively, if this was one of those dreadful aberrations known chillingly as the "Blind Date," frantically scanning the faces in some restaurant named after a technicolour mammal while praying fervently that the pleasant soul in the pink paisley blazer cheerfully scratching his or her back with the salad fork was not your companion of the evening, as he or she almost inevitably was; (b) The Festive Meal, generally held at the previously-mentioned restaurant, during which absolutely nothing was tasted as each party desperately attempted to appear interested in the hobbies, career goals and recent Twelve-Step therapy of the other, all the while wondering whether that really was a piece of arugula stuck in his or her teeth; (c) The Time Killer, which might be a play or a movie or some other form of harmless entertainment, or might, for that matter, be a slide show of the lesser works of the Card-Playing Dog School for all the attention due to be paid to it, what with He worrying about whether the price of the tickets had irrevocably sent his bank balance into that strange and exotic land where personalized checks bounce like so many bright and tiny basketballs, and She worrying about whether

He'll think She's pushy, aggressive, strident and maybe even a subscriber to Off Our Backs if she offers to pay for half the evening, and both of them worrying about which one of them it is that appears to be sweating garlic; and, finally (d) The Denouement. Should they or shouldn't they? Should they ask for blood tests in advance? Which one supplies the condoms? When was the last time the sheets on the bed were changed? Are her hips too big? Is his penis too small? Does the visiting team stay the night? Who sleeps in the wet spot?

And do you wonder that I'm tired?

I mean, if you figure that the average person does this sort of thing perhaps a couple of times a month (considering both those fun-fun types who insist on doing it every evening and, on the opposite side of the scale, the sort who thinks, quite rightly, that the rest of us are all crazy and retires at an early age, to a life of good works), over the course of the years, say, from 15 through 40, that amounts to approximately 600 times before he or she either gets married or gives up in despair and spends the rest of his or her life passing Saturday nights in the company of "The Golden Girls." Six hundred times. And the Surgeon General can't figure out why so many of us still drink to excess.

As I have absolutely no intention of doing any one of those things mentioned in the previous paragraph, yet cannot and will not face another "date" of the variety already described, it's obvious that some form of alternative must be achieved. As it happens, I believe I have hit upon--after many nights of tossing, turning and listening to hysterical descriptions of real, genuine Swiss cuckoo clocks complete with real, genuine, cubic zirconia cuckoos--just the very thing to solve the problem.

Now, I admit that this won't work for all of you. It is my own, personal little solution to a problem that has plagued me for many years, and you must all find your own, I'm afraid, but perhaps I can serve as a sort of example, or a guidepost, for those hunting in the wilderness for Answers. In any event, it's pretty well guaranteed to make me feel better, and that's all the excuse I need for announcing:

## CONTEST! CONTEST! CONTEST!

### WIN A DREAM DATE WITH ANNI ACKNER!

*Yes, you, YOU, may be the lucky person, chosen out of thousands of entries, to win a night on the town with that well-known and much-loved witty, acerbic, sophisticated commentator on the American Scene, ANNI ACKNER. Imagine your thrill and delight and unsurpassed joy as you set out in the evening of Anni Ackner's dreams:*

*Just picture it:*

1. You travel, at your own expense, by car, bus or private jet, depending on your circumstances, to the fabulous city of Reading, home of the Reading Phillies, the Tom Sturgis pretzel bakery, more factory outlets than you can shake a stick at, and, not incidentally, Anni Ackner.
2. You stay, at your own expense, at the luxury hotel of your choice. Take your pick from among the 5th Street Highway Holiday Inn (host to the annual Antique Postcard Collectors Convention), the Inn at Reading (world-renowned for the Hunt Club Bar and Grill, birthplace of the 75¢ Bullshot), the Penn Motel (site of the always-popular Reading High School Post-Prom All-Night Party and Police Raid), and many other palaces of delight, romance and, periodically, clean towels, conveniently located in or near the Greater Reading Area.
3. You arrange, at your own expense, for transportation to take you to Anni Ackner's apartment on the appointed evening, where you wait in Anni Ackner's plush living room as she finishes up various chores, makes a few phone calls, coaxes the cat off the bathroom window ledge, watches a rerun of the old "Saturday Night Live," and completes an article with a last-minute deadline, preparatory to leaving for your romantic Night on the Town.
4. You take, at your own expense, Anni Ackner to one of the finest restaurants in town, smile placidly as she orders the most expensive item on the menu--you, of course, may order anything you choose as well, provided that you have enough money to cover the bill--then listen in

*(continued next page)*



## ROCK FIEND cont'd.

appreciative silence as Anni Ackner discourses on Life, The Universe, and the probable fate of the New York Yankees freed from the bondage of George Steinbrenner, after which you make appropriate and complimentary comments.

5. After dinner, you take, at your own expense, Anni Ackner to three or four different movies, starring three or four of her favourite actors, one right after another, supplying, as you go, appropriate amounts of popcorn, Diet Coke, and recognition of her superior taste in film, after which you whisk Anni Ackner off to another exclusive restaurant for a late-night snack of coffee and cake.

6. At the close of the evening, you return Anni Ackner to her lovely apartment and sigh with gratitude as she closes the door firmly in your face, after a hearty handshake and her warmest congratulations on an evening well spent.

Yes, all this can be yours as you accompany Anni Ackner on the date of her dreams! Sounds good, you say? What can I do to make this bliss mine, you say? Easy as pie, we say! All you have to do is send your name, address, telephone number and proof that you were born before Meet the Beatles was released to: Win a Dream Date With Anni Ackner, c/o this magazine. Winners—there may be more than one—will be selected on the basis of neatness of entry, ability to keep drool marks off the paper, and calmness upon discovery that Anni Ackner has reversed the charges in order to telephone you. Contest open to males and females. Void where prohibited and in any part of North Carolina that came out heavily for Jesse Helms. Licensed drivers only.

If this doesn't work, nothing will. If this doesn't work, I'm finished. If this doesn't work I'm going to make sure my subscriptions to HBO and Cinemax are paid up, lay in a supply of flannel nightgowns, and take stock in the Godiva Chocolates Company. If this doesn't work, That Horrible Cat and I are going to spend Quality Time together. If this doesn't work...

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"THE MAN WITH A NEW IDEA IS A  
CRANK — UNTIL THE IDEA  
SUCCEEDS" — MARK TWAIN  
(1835 — 1910).

My guess is that in a spiritual sense  
I was a crank until the late 80's.  
In a secular sense let's not wait until  
the 90's. At 80 I and other oldsters  
want to at least watch the dancing  
in the streets. Spirit a SASE to  
must-be-adopted  
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YOUNGSTOWN — OHIO, 44604

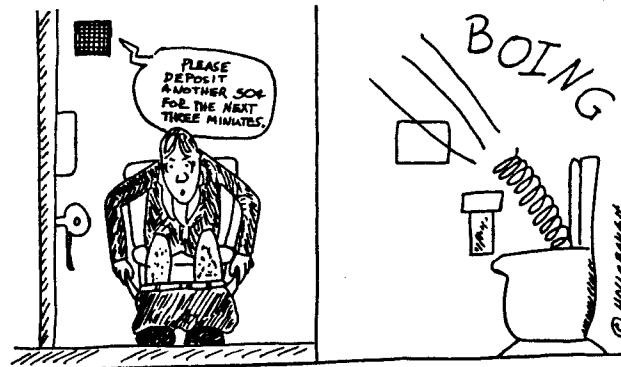
## Inside JJ Staffers

Whether it's to complain to Ace, answer Jed's questionnaires, participate with Phil in our final cover or just keep in touch, JJ staffers love hearing from you! Here are their current addresses:

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## UPCOMING EVENTS cont'd from p. 2

NOVEMBER 1-2 - Dios de los Muertos  
NOVEMBER 1 - National Authors' Day  
NOVEMBER 2 - Steve Ditko (53); Ray Walston (73)  
NOVEMBER 3 - Sadie Hawkins Day; Roseanne Barr (38)  
NOVEMBER 4 - Will Rogers (b. 1879)  
NOVEMBER 5 - Guy Fawkes Day; Paul Simon (48); Roy Rogers (78); Eugene Debs (b. 1855)  
NOVEMBER 6 - JOHN P. MORGAN (38)  
NOVEMBER 7 - JOHN SCHARFF (33); Mary Travers (53); Joni Mitchell (47); Marie Curie (b. 1867)  
NOVEMBER 8 - Katharine Hepburn (b. 1909); Rickie Lee Jones (46)  
NOVEMBER 9 - Carl Sagan  
NOVEMBER 11 - CANDI STRECKER (35); Jonathan Winters (65); Daniel Ortega (55); Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (68)  
NOVEMBER 12 - Neil Young (45); Elizabeth Cady Stanton (b. 1815)  
NOVEMBER 15 - Pinky Lee (b. 1916); Georgia O'Keeffe (b. 1887); DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE LAST IJ!!!



I have discovered that Gilbert & Sullivan can be turned into rap music with only minimal changes in the lyrics (indeed, the changes are so minimal that you might not want to print this). Anyway, this is the hip-hop version of "The Yeoman of the Guard."

From Gilbert & Sullivan's *Funk Jam Party*:  
YO! MEN OF THE GUARD

(or Mix-Master Mel and his Maiden)

Rap #1: Phoebe's Groove

Jazzy Jeff: When maiden loves,  
She sits and sighs,  
She wanders to and fro;  
Doug E. Fresh: Tears fill her eyes,  
And to all questions she replies  
With a sad  
"HEIGH HO!"  
Rahiem: It's just a little word  
"HEIGH HO!"  
You can scarcely hear  
"HEIGH HO!"  
Jazzy Jeff: An idle breath—  
Doug E. Fresh: Yet life and death  
Rahiem: May hang on a maiden's  
"HEIGH HO!"  
Howie Tee: When a maiden loves,  
She mopes apart,  
As an owl mopes on a tree;  
Grandmaster Dee: Although she knows what she's  
feelin'  
She can't tell what's illin',  
So she says  
"GROOVE ME!"  
B-Fine: It's just a foolish sigh—  
"GROOVE ME!"  
Born to jam or die—  
"GROOVE ME!"  
Howie Tee: Yet all the same  
Grandmaster Dee: Of eloquence  
B-Fine: Lies hidden in a maiden's  
"GROOVE ME!"

- Todd Kristel



# Fan Noose

by  
Elayne  
Wechsler



Welcome to the final edition of "Fan Noose" in the pages of INSIDE JOKE. If you are an editor of a publication I have reviewed in this column (as I send free copies of this page to editors who do not subscribe to IJ itself), please note that INSIDE JOKE will be going on "extended hiatus" at the end of this year, with our post office box to close soon thereafter (April of 1991). If you wish to continue sending me copies of your work, you are of course free to do so, as I still wish to keep in touch with the small-press world, but I'm afraid I have subscription money to spare for only a few select publications (lack of ready cash being one of the reasons for IJ's imminent demise). I will be sending some

of you my home address, and herewith request that you alter your mailing lists so that I may receive your publications there; if you still want to keep in touch otherwise, please let me know...

Apologies to Margot Insley, who doesn't even subscribe to IJ any more, for the reduction of her logo on this article, but the original was torn beyond repair and all I had was a reduced copy...

I'd like to start by reviewing a rather unusual offering sent to me, a videotape. This one's from a San Fran-based group called TRAUMA TV, a public access show that features independently-produced short videos. According to producer Victor Ariel, the compilation "60-minute dosage" best-of tape sells for \$13 (send to Box 42405, San Francisco, CA 94142-2405). Frankly, I'd be a bit hard pressed to recommend it—I found the first two pieces, "The Wonderful World of Animation" and "Dead Friends," pretty good, but the rest of it was pretty high incomprehensible, as performance art usually is to me. Lots of women getting chased or mock-raped (in one notable exception, "PMS," the protagonist's a downright bitch who gives herself her own come-uppance at the end), lots of shots of people doing nothing much...you know the score. I'm the first person to rail against the NEA for denying money to performance artists on the basis of political activity, but I'd probably be one of the first on line to deny grants on the basis of stupidity. Sorry folks, I really wanted to like this, but it lost me... A "you're quite welcome" to Charles Rick Kelly (P.O. Box 11304, Dallas, TX 75223), who sent out lovely thank-you postcards to supporters of his music, which he likes to describe as "a truly independent songwriter-rocker, kinda funkrockfolksci-fi...While I'm thinking of music, I'd like to thank my friends in the band TY-PHOID MARY, especially Steve Hammond, for keeping me on their mailing list (for a copy of their newsletter and other info about their demo tape and such, write to Ravenshead Productions, Box 67081, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44222)...On to publications! The most unusual I've received these past few months is a collection of essays and stories called A JAR BY THE DOOR, written by Charlie Dodge. Dodge's work is so chock-full of cross-references, cultural winks and nods and fifty-dollar words which are actually used correctly that I got the feeling it was way over my head at this stage in my life, but I'll really get a lot out of it in a few years when I reread it. To that end I'd highly recommend it as worth the \$5 price (5 for \$25) to Charlie at The Bureau of Jars, P.O. Box 10707, Arlington, VA 22210. Honestly, I don't know where to begin to describe this wonder, so I won't try...If you can deal with some real wrenching stuff, the kids from STEP BY STEP, an organization sponsored by Action Youth Care ("a non-profit group that works to reduce or prevent child abuse and neglect, teen pregnancy, substance abuse and juvenile delinquency") and Words Walking (which "exists to preserve, develop, publish and distribute...community story collections"), have compiled a moving collection of child abuse stories. If you're interested in finding out more about any of these groups or their activities, you should probably write to P.O. Box 510, Ripley, WV 25271-0510 and, yes, they are looking for "articles on your experience and concerns" on suggested topics like divorce, economic challenges, AIDS, suicide and so forth, presumably from teens (confidentiality assured)... Every now and then someone in fandom runs across IJ and thinks I'm in fandom as well and gosh but wouldn't I like to read something put together by a bunch of people talking about cons they attend and how they put together their fanzines and fan-this and fan-that and lots of cute jargon about how it's Us versus The Mundanes (non-fans), and I just sort of say things like, Thanks, folks from the PROPER BOSKONIAN and the New England Science Fiction Association, aka NESFA, at Box G, MIT Branch P.O., Cambridge, MA 02139, and the Jon Singer article on sushi chefs was great and I'll be sure and tell my fan-friends about you, only I don't really know any fans who read IJ, or IJ readers who are fans (okay, maybe one or two), and good luck to you but I'm afraid I'm not really interested. And, just to be fair, after I say things like that to them I assure readers that places like this are always looking for art and writing, but it should probably be fan-related, so you see how insular a circle this can all get to be...Lots of new publications coming my way, which is wonderful to see as there'll be no dearth of worthwhile (and other) stuff out there after we're long gone. One I really liked is from Shawn W. Swagerty (P.O. Box 18743, 20th Street Station, Washington, D.C. 20036) and is called STOREFRONT BAR-B-Q. Shawn's Spring 1990 issue features a long tale about the fight to preserve women's clinics from antiabortion trespassers, a few zine reviews, cassette reviews and a concert review, and it seems to have much potential—to get a copy send Shawn 50¢ worth

of stamps; ads will also begin to be considered...You want weird? I'll give you weird. Now about TOILET SUCK from publisher Peter Warner and editor Charles L. Webcore (I think Charles is the ventriloquist's dummy)... Lots of strange sex rituals, odd playlets and poetry, women from a very male point of view—if it had a gay subtext it would be Bill-Dale Marcinko's APTA, only 16 pages, and that's a pretty high compliment coming from me, I'm almost sure... oh, it's free, says P&C, from P.O. Box 2581, Times Square Station, New York, NY 10108...IJ friend Ken Wagner has a neat little idea he calls HEATHEN ZINE, which features excerpts from underground and small-press zines, alongside ordering info for those pubs. Mostly poetry but a few odd stories too. An excellent resource, full of places of which I've never heard—it's \$2.25 from Ken at Split Personality Press, P.O. Box 587, Olean, NY 14760 (thanks for the plug, Ken!)...Wanted to remind you that another IJ friend and ex-contributor, Eric Ewing (The Prime Minister of Livestock and Heavy Machinery), is still regurgitating his personal zine called SASQUATCH, creative nihilism at its most cynical and gloriously incomprehensible, gods love 'em; it's probably free or a stamp or something, from Eric at P.O. Box 126, Mildford, MA 04661...Eric, I think you'd really love FNORD, another classic nihilistic act that certainly oversteps my barriers (so you know it's no wuss like me) and features lots of violent story endings and a great review column to which I'd love to contribute if I weren't so afraid of them. Paul Leonard (P.O. Box 993, St. Charles, IL 60174) handles general stories and art and Seth Tissue (P.O. Box 1083, Wheaton, IL 60189) does the reviews—\$1.50 an issue, just like us, and disturbingly recommended...I love getting zines where I can't tell if the info within is a put-on or for real, and FAR CORNER, The Bulletin of Obscure Research, is such a pub. This 11' 8-page sucker from Obscure Research Labs, P.O. Box 15266, Santa Rosa, CA 95402 goes for \$2 for 4 issues and reports on the search for UFOs and related coincidences (one revelation asks, "Can it be that the Grateful Dead is actually a part of the sinister 'Education Program' designed to prepare an unwitting Earth for the reality of ALIEN CONTACT?...one of our nameless researchers discovered the amazing similarity between the band's logo...and the head of the famous 'Greys' so common in saucer...lore—cute stuff!)...If weird news is your thing, IJ contributor John P. Doucet (R.R. #1, Box 135, Concession, N.S. BOW INO CANADA) has compiled a one-pager full of strange articles and sent it out to friends, presumably gratis...My latest chapbook present comes from IJ contributor Sr. Mary Ann Henn and is called NUN-HUMAN. The Sister's a great penpal and nifty poet (and her cats are beautiful), and I'm sure if you'd like to write her she'll send you a copy too. She can be found at St. Benedict's Convent, St. Joseph, MN 56374...From another angle on the religious spectrum comes the return of, yes—it's-back, BABUSHKIN'S DIGEST, Jewish-tinged blasphemous humor so avant-garde that even Tikkun won't touch it! Babushkin (aka Lawrence Bush) now lives at 30 Old Whitfield, Accord, NY 12404 and has resurrected (if you'll pardon the goishy expression) BD, "the only Jewish publication that Elie Wiesel won't endorse...where self-hating Jews learn to hate other Jews, instead!...And you thought you weren't easily offended!" L'Chaim, Babushkin my buddy! Write to him for the special Yom Kippur "Public Apology" issue...When he's not writing up imaginative computer games, Robert Carr brings out SMURFS IN HELL to remind us all with great collage graphics and witty wordplay about the treacherous Mormonoids but, more importantly, sneaks us excerpts from the orientation manual of the Herpes Simplex company in the year 2020 or so—a great future history/Omniscorp warning you NEED to survive in The Future! To order this and other Carr productions, like "MacJesus—Your Personal Savior on a Floppy Disk," write P.O. Box 2761, Borah Station, Boise, ID 83701...Meanwhile in the present, the saga of the Snopes family rolls on, in the fourth installment of Stephanie duPlessis' serialized novel THE SNOSES GO CAMPING. The Addams family meets Nee-Haw? See for yourself, for only a buck to Box 4697, San Francisco, CA 94101...Always welcome in our mailbox is AMERICA'S AT OUR DOORSTEP from Dennis Brezina (P.O. Box 411, Churchton, MD 20733), full of quotable quotes, poetry, essays and, of course, an occasional "Saga of the South Slope, only \$1 a copy!...Every time Nancy Bonnell-Kangas puts together another issue of NANCY'S MAGAZINE, it's a new and delightful surprise, and her latest masterpiece reviews the strange world of pamphlets (including her own historical review thereof). Next to my husband, Nancy's the coolest librarian I know, and her stuff is always worth the \$2 (\$4 for two issues to P.O. Box 02108, Columbus, OH 43202—write and find out how you can submit stuff!)...One of the best places to which you might consider sending your creativity after IJ folds is produced in the Great White North—THE PRESIDENT JOURNAL features fun quizzes on pop culture, reviews of just about anything in the zine and indie-music world that might come to mind, an overview of The Firesign Theatre's "Nick Danger" by some chick named Elayne who sounds vaguely familiar—oh, tons and tons of good stuff, and they have more to come! Simply send editor Chris Laurson \$3 if you're in the US or Canada for each issue you want (they publish pretty regularly and have three issues out already) to General Delivery, Fortfield, Alberta T0B 4J0 CANADA and be welcomed to the President posse!...Speaking of pop culture, here's two must-have zines for aficionados: For Jay Ward fans (and NY-area ones are thrilled to have a whole hour of JW stuff on Saturday mornings now!) there's the FROSTBITE FALLS FAR-FLUNG FLIER, featuring overviews of JW work, quizzes, news snippets and many fun facts, available for \$5 for four issues from Charles Ulrich, c/o Swick, 6002 Redondo Ct. NM, Albuquerque, NM 87107 (oh, you do know by now that if I under-

(continued next page)



line someone's name that any checks should be made out to that name, don'tcha? I thought so)...And for Beatles fans, one of the best and most informative newsletters around is GOOD DAY SUNSHINE, 55 issues strong and still going; subs are \$10 for 6 issues in the US (\$15 in Canada/Mexico and \$10 elsewhere, in US funds) to editor Charles M. Rosenay!!! (yes, three exclamation points), 297 Edgewood Ave., New Haven, CT 06511...If you like your pop culture skewered and served to you piping hot, IT'S ONLY A MOVIE is so much more than that! The latest issue (#2) looks at pure psychotronic TV, and we all know that means weird shows from the '50s and '60s (ex-IJ staffer Candi Strecker has a great article comparing the Munsters to the Addams Family insofar as buried messages). Subs are \$12 for 6 issues or \$20 for 12, and editor Mike Flores welcomes "lowlife scum" type contributors! Write to P.O. Box 14683, Chicago, IL 60614...Political culture also being skewed (perhaps more so than pop culture), publications like THE REALIST are indispensable, even if Paul Krassner and company do come up with great throwaway lines—all available for recycling! Steve and I saw Paul perform live a couple weeks back, and had ourselves one helluvan evening—his publication's even better! Subscriptions are \$23 for 12 issues (three years' worth) to Box 1230, Venice, CA 90294, and I think Paul may even pay his writers!...The modern office culture is nothing if not political, and it's getting scarier by the minute, which is why it's a blessing to have PROCESSED WORLD around to help balance out the bullshit. In their latest issue (#25) PW goes on vacation, featuring incisive articles from travelers around the world, as well as their usual brilliance and snappy layout. Best of all, the PW collective says "We urgently solicit your writing, your art, your participation" in their venture, so send your stuff in to them; you can subscribe for the low rate of \$12 for 4 issues to 41 Sutter St. #1829, San Francisco, CA 94104...I shan't plug all the other political publications I read, but I do want to mention a few underground standouts that I think are worth seeking: The new ZENGER discusses "The Battle for Cyberspace" and the government's fear of hackers; the latest news on the marijuana front; radio waves and their relation to nuclear weapons; the assassination attempts on Earth Firsters; and other news from around the world and country. Subs are \$10 for 12 issues, quite a bargain considering the amount of information you get and the fact that, Zenger being a part of the Wisconsin-based Alternative Press Syndicate, they always throw in an extra newspaper like GREEN ACTION, which discusses social ecology, the addiction cure Ibogaine and other solid, informative stuff you'll never read about in the NY Times (feh!). Their address is P.O. Box 3323, Madison, WI 53704...Closer to home, Chris Flash and his dedicated band of anarchist activists give the lowdown on what's happening in Loissaida (the Lower East Side), a real hot spot where the police state is forming right now under the watchful approval of the city government. Scary stuff, of which everyone ought to be aware, and while I often disagree with the methods expressed in the SHADOW (my letter saying so's in #12), I don't hesitate to recommend the publication to help balance out stories of which you may only be hearing one side (even if that one side comes from other pubs like the Village Voice)—subs are \$2 a copy or \$15 per year to Shadow Press, P.O. Box 20298, New York, NY 10009...Another seldom-told tale in NYC is of the publication STREET NEWS, which started out as a good idea—homeless people creating and selling a paper to make a living—but ended up a convoluted ripoff by its editor. Fortunately, the folks who put out CROSSROADS Magazine seem to have avoided this type of controversy, by presenting articles that are straightforward, hard-hitting and about/by homeless people (as opposed to SN's smarmy "celeb"-written gunk). If you're interested in learning more, write Transition Distributors, Inc., One Times Square, Suite 718, New York, NY 10036...Don't know where else to write after IJ's gone? Well, you must, must, MUST get FACTSHEET FIVE, the journal of cross-currents and cross-pollination. You'll not only get your Anni Ackner fix and even your Kerry Thornley fix, but Mike Gunderloy will be practically the first person in the zine world to know when (if ever) IJ starts up again (if I haven't decided to do another publication entirely, information to which he alone will also be privy). Aside from news of me and IJ, though, FF is really a must-have for anyone looking to stay involved in the small-press world, with over 700 listings of creativity from all over the world. A true bargain at only \$3 to 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502...The only other publication kind enough to have sent me "trade" issues to these many years besides FF is the UTNE READER, the "Reader's Digest" of the progressive and New Age press. While they are becoming a little too New Age for my tastes (and the type of ads they're taking may serve to compromise their ethics just a bit, like issue 41's "McRecycle USA Registry Service" one from known styrofoam-using corporate polluter McDonald's), I still have a good deal of fondness for these people, even though they've bypassed IJ once again in their Alternative Press Awards (sob). To decide if you want a copy, send \$4 to Box 1974, Marion, OH 44305 (their editorial offices, however, are at LEWS Publishing Co., Inc. at the Fawkes Building, 1624 Harmon Place, Minneapolis, MN 55403)...So, what will IJ writers be doing after 1990? You already know a little of where Anni will be, and of course you'll find out more about everyone in #80, but I can tell you a few sources in case you want to hook up too: Kerry Thornley puts out a whole bunch of onesheets under such monikers as DECADENT WORKER and KULTCHA, and as the cofounder of the Discordian Society always has something up his sleeve c/o his Packrat Press, Box 5498, Atlanta, GA 30307...Ace Backwards is just about everywhere, but specifically in this own zine TWISTED IMAGE (monthly and sorta free for the asking from

## BLUE COLLAR YUPPIE

by Steven F. Scharff

I had known his little brother in elementary school, and had met the man himself only a few times. I had thought that since we had a common ground—namely, personal knowledge of his brother—we could easily get along at work.

I was dead wrong.

For the sake of identification, I'll call him Dan.

I had just started work at the school supply warehouse that summer. The jungle of cardboard and sheet metal was a total maze to me. Yet after my training, I had gotten used to the procedures. But what I couldn't get used to was Dan. He always seemed to come on strong, and whenever there was any overtime offered, even if it wasn't in his department, he'd volunteer for it.

I used to joke that his blood was part caffeine, but I couldn't find any humor in his own jokes. When the female employees were out of earshot, he'd make incredibly sexist remarks.

He was working in the warehouse for the summer until he would return to college. He was majoring in business, and had the shark-like attitude for it. But one day, it became a flaw.

That day I had worn brand-new shoes to work (a big mistake), and had gotten a blister on my right heel. I had gone to the first aid station, where it was lanced and bandaged, but I still walked with a limp, trying to bend my heel as little as possible. Dan saw this as more fun for his sadistic humor.

He started off by calling me Quasimodo, since I had to walk with my back slightly bent. I told him to knock it off. Instead, every time I came within visual range he'd start up on his routine again.

Anyone who knows me well will tell you that I reach a point when I start giving back what I have been given (a friend says it's the Capricorn in me). What I gave back was quite loud and verbal, and included a vicious threat. My supervisor overheard this, and within minutes I was in the now-vacant lunchroom with him.

What began as a reprimand turned into what Dan would later call a "narc session." I had told my supervisor that I had become the butt of Dan's humor, and my protest to it went ignored. Immediately afterwards, I was escorted back to the work area, but Dan was paged. Several minutes (which seemed quite long) went by. I was walking to the Order Desk to pick up my next assignment when I heard a door slam. I turned to look behind me and saw Dan, one hand on the lunchroom door and the other clenched into a fist, face red with anger. He then turned to look at me.

In comic strips, such a look would feature daggers forming the line of sight. In Dan's case, they would have been death rays.

With the exception of his asking information about an order on which he was working, he never spoke to me, or even established eye contact, to the day he left the plant.

I often wonder whatever happened to him, and if he still treats people that way. In life, you often come across people whom you try to emulate. In this case, I had met someone who, to me, became a standard of that which I try to leave out of myself.

1630 University Ave., #26, Berkeley, CA 94703) and in the new publication from the folks who bring you CONIC RELIEF, called CONIC RELIEF'S DRAWING BOARD (subs are \$22.25 for 4 quarterly issues to P.O. Box 6606, Eureka, CA 95502—artists take note: this is an excellent place to send your one-panel and strip artwork, especially topical stuff)...Lastly, MasterMath, aka William G. Raley, edits a superb magazine of dark fiction and fantasy entitled AFTER HOURS, and he makes or has enough money to actually pay his contributors, so if you write good dark fiction, do contact him! Subscriptions to AH are \$14 per year (or \$4 per issue) to William at P.O. Box 538, Sunset Beach, CA 90742-0538. Good luck to one and all, long live the small press and independent publishers and entrepreneurs, and (for the last time you'll hear it from me in this column) see you in the funny papers!



# "Thumb-it Meeting"

## A Dip in the Plasma Pool

by Dorian Tenore-Bartilucci

### **SEX AND (SHRIEKING) VIOLINS:**

#### **JOSEPH STEFANO Tells IJ His Fave Scary Flix**

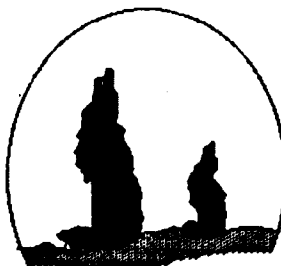
Mary a die-hard science fiction and horror buff knows Joseph Stefano's name better than his/her own father's. As a screenwriter, Stefano helped director Alfred Hitchcock turn Robert Bloch's already pretty darn scary novel *PSYCHO* into a classic horror film. He's doing similar honors on the USA Network's prequel, *PSYCHO IV*, in which we'll see how Mother got on little Normy Bates' bad side to start with. Stefano also produced—and wrote many episodes of—*THE OUTER LIMITS* (1963-65) and USA's current series incarnation of *SWAMP THING*. The busy Stefano was kind enough to put aside some time for our venerable publication to offer his opinions on several of his favorite films in the genre that made him famous:

The films that have most affected me--and affected, perhaps, the way my writing has gone--are the films of Tod Browning, such as *FREAKS* (1932); the films of Val Lewton, like the original *CAT PEOPLE* (1942) and *THE BODY SNATCHER* (1945) especially come to mind.

*VERTIGO* (1958) is a suspense thriller that I think is one of the best movies ever made...it has a sensuality about it that made it all the more anxiety-provoking. When a mystery thriller has that sort of recognizable sensuality--not only in the characters, but also in the very making of the film itself--you become attached to it in ways that have to do with the unconscious mind. Our subconscious feelings respond to the sexuality of certain situations. A man like James Stewart's character, who is emotionally or sexually obsessed with someone who he believes to be dead, is kind of a disturbing note because we can appreciate our own longing. It's an incredibly provocative film that really ought to be seen again--you see something different in each viewing, not only in the movie, but in yourself.

William Friedkin's *THE EXORCIST* (1973) also touched on some of that, which makes it another memorable film for me. There's an underlying sexuality in *THE EXORCIST* which comes, I guess, from its flirtation with the Devil, and I think that somehow affects us, again, on that subconscious level.

Another movie that I think is one of the best of all time is Nicholas Roeg's *DON'T LOOK NOW* (1973). That was, for me, a very disturbing and very influential picture. I had a sense that Roeg was coming at me from someplace where no one had quite come before. Halfway through the movie, I wasn't even sure that I really felt like staying to see the rest of it. It really affected me, someplace where I'm very vulnerable--perhaps that had to do with the death of the child [of the film's protagonists] and the sorrow and the grief, things like that. In that sense, the picture's subject matter was almost too important--but then I stayed with it, and I'm glad that I did, because the movie had its own kind of cathartic effect at the end. A brilliant movie--Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland were brilliant, and Roeg's direction was fantastic. A brilliant but strangely underrated movie--maybe it bothered people too much; it's not that they don't like the film, but they don't want to talk about its subject matter.!



## **HOWLING AT THE MOON**

**BY MIKE DOBBS**

The first major news story of the 1990s is not the invasion of Kuwait. No, on the Dobbs Sliding Scale--in which stories are ranked based on their insignificance and amount of coverage--the Kuwaiti adventure is relatively unimportant, as it is "real" news.

Nope, the first Big Story is the touching revelation that Maury Povich and Connie Chung are trying to have a baby. Somehow they--no, make that she--needs more time off in order to conceive. And "feminists" such as Linda "Gosh-that-was-a-good-cup-of-coffee" Ellerbee are applauding Connie's announcement as a breakthrough for the rights of women journalists.

I consider myself a feminist, but I'll be dipped in doo-doo to figure this one out...except one of my secret identities, Cynical Guy, believes this little bombshell of a story has something to do with the bad press and icky-poo ratings of Connie's prime-time efforts at CBS. We know she's tough, and now we know she's tender.

What horse hockey.

First, I don't need to know that Connie is having sex with Maury. I mean, I know they are, they're in love...but I don't need to have this private fact announced.

Second, how is this a feminist issue? Time to make whoopie is something employers must now consider? "Honey, my temperature and mucus level is perfect. Meet me at home...Boss, I know I'm on deadline, but I'm at my most fertile moment so I have to run home and have sex...see ya!" Abridging a woman's right to have sex when she wants it may be the next legal issue to be decided. Imagine the headlines...

### **CONNIE FIRED BECAUSE CBS BRASS WOULDN'T GIVE HER THE TIME TO MAKE BABIES**

Third, what if Connie and Maury cannot conceive? Wouldn't this whole thing be humiliating for them both? No, I guess not, as this is what would happen:

1. Lots of sympathetic stories
2. A book deal - talk show appearances
3. An adoption - very public
4. A prime-time special entitled "Havin' My Baby"

So this is the style of the Nineties, folks. The legacy of eight years of form and no substance, of icing and no cake. I wonder if Maury will do a story on his show about his favorite positions?



"Aren't you famous yet?"



PRU STORY  
by  
Prudence Barker

## THE CRAMPING TRIP *Part Six*

It wasn't until after ten when they pulled into the campground. Prudence had learned three truisms in her seven years: don't take the last swig from a can of soda (it's all backwash); never lend out your favorite anything and expect to get it back; and never, ever trust what the weatherman on TV tells you. It was pouring when they reached their campsite.

"Yay! We're here!" Patrick said, trying to sound cheerful and almost succeeding. "Since it's late and it's pouring, we'll sleep in the camper tonight and early tomorrow when the weather clears up we can set up our tent. See that building over there? That's where the bathrooms are. If you need to go, tell me so I know where you are. Also don't wander too far, we wouldn't want you to get devoured by lions and tigers!"

Prudence and Ian didn't know there were no tigers or lions in the mountains of Pennsylvania; Patrick's warning was to keep them from wandering too far and getting lost or abducted, but the dangers in wandering away weren't quite threatening enough in the mind of seven-year-olds, so he opted for a more real fear, the primal fear of being eaten by savage beasts. This he knew would keep them from wandering too far; what he didn't realize was that the two of them would refuse to leave the camper for the rest of the weekend because of it.

Patrick had purchased some wood from the park ranger and was trying to get a fire going so he could make dinner. Even though it was 8:00 when they had stopped so Ian could go to the bathroom and change his pants, he hadn't stopped along the way despite the increasing lateness and increased whining for dinner from the back of the camper. Patrick was having very little luck getting the wood lit, as it was damp from the week of rain the area had gotten and there was no dry kindling to be found.

He climbed into the camper to tell Prudence and Ian that dinner was going to be a little while longer as it was taking time to get a fire going. They were busy playing with Prudence's Jem dolls. Ian was busy pretending Rio, Jem's boyfriend, was a karate guy and was giving karate chops to all the other dolls. Prudence, meanwhile, was setting up camp for Jem, taking care to keep the wooden "doll furniture" out of Rio's path.

"Prudence, where did you get those blocks?"

"What blocks? You mean Jem's furniture?"

"Uh, yes. Don't you have better furniture for your dolls? How would you like me to take you to the store and you can pick out real furniture for them?"

"Like the Jem waterbed?"

"Jem has a waterbed?"

"Uh-huh."

"Well, anything you want, sweetheart."

"Cool!"

"Prudence, I happened to see a little girl crying a few tents away. I think it was because she didn't have any doll furniture. Since you're going to get all new furniture, why don't we give this to that poor little girl?"

"But these are my favorites, Daddy."

"Yes, but I think this poor little girl has nothing to play with, and I don't think her parents have any money to buy her toys. You would make a little, poor girl very happy."

"Okay, here, give her Jem, I have two." Prudence handed the doll over along with the furniture. She felt sorry for the girl; maybe they could play together tomorrow and become friends, and then the little girl wouldn't cry any more.

Prudence watched her father leave the van. Looking out the window, she strained to get a good view despite the rain. Perhaps her dad would go over now to the little girl's camp to give her the toys. What she did see was Patrick put the doll in the pocket of his raincoat, and place the wooden blocks amongst the wood to be used as kindling for the fire.

Prudence, after seeing the real fate of her cherished doll furniture, lost her appetite. First Pink Bunny deserted her and now this, betrayed by her own father. Earlier she was afraid for her father, out in the rain with lions and tigers prowling around. Now she didn't care if they ate his head off. He lied to her. She didn't care if they ate Ian's head off either, as he didn't give one whit about her problems and was still making Rio karate chop everything in sight. As a matter of fact, the lions and tigers could bite the heads off of everyone in the world for all she cared, as it had been that kind of a day. Everyone was always telling her how bright she was, she figured she could learn to drive the camper if she had to. How hard could it be?, and Jenny was always saying that most of the cars on the road were driven by morons. She was no moron.

Tired, upset and--despite the company of her father and cousin--lonely, Prudence decided to get the day over with and go to bed. Tomorrow couldn't possibly be worse. She pulled out her grip to get her nightgown. As she unzipped the zipper she was greeted by a familiar voice.

"Allo, Pru!"

"Bunny!"

*(continued next issue)*

## IT'S

*by Larry Oberc*

Dripping sunshine on my head and the guy across from me looks out the window like he's in charge of it all. He's got that edge that I can't stand, that symbolic authority, that expensive suit that looks like a bossman wears, apologetic when he gives you your last check. I don't want any trouble, I don't want to roar or scream or create these cosmic scenes, but it's like this: I just got fired twenty minutes back, and this guy, while not the one that did me in, is of the same mold, and I don't agree with what happened in that McDonald's in California but it has a logic, a kind of sense, that scares the soul, and this guy, he's probably a nice person, does what he's told at work, does everything he can for the wife and kids, isn't out to do nobody wrong, but things happen--the economy takes a nose dive, you got to do your layoffs.

I figure the next stop is twenty minutes gone. That should be enough time to work this whole thing out. This guy must have gotten off work early. The train was early, missing the rush-hour madness, but shoulder-to-shoulder trespass.

I think about my rent, my bills, my life, what I'm going to do next now I'm out of work. That guy looks out the window, calm, serene. He's got all of this shit covered.

When the next stop pulls up, I get off even though it isn't my stop. I hear a scream behind my shoulder, a discovery gone wrong...





#### WHY I THINK POLITICS IS BULLSHIT IN ONE EASY LESSON

Lately I've found myself, much to my chagrin, embroiled in several political disputes. While there is a part of me that no doubt enjoys a good spat—and I've got the scars to prove it—ultimately this does nothing but confirm my belief that Politics is Basically Bullshit.

The thing that ultimately gives me a headache is the nagging suspicion that most "political" types don't even listen to what you're saying. In fact, they often seem to go to great lengths to precisely avoid hearing what you're saying. Any "facts" that directly challenge their political views are immediately dismissed, lest they have to go through the messy and painful ordeal of having to actually rethink their position. And what a horror that would be.

It's sometimes humorous to watch the painstaking strategems they use to avoid letting your words penetrate their craniums—and I must admit I take a perverse joy in weaseling my way through their barricades—but ultimately it degenerates into an exercise in futility. It's the old saw: You can lead a horse to water but you can't make a political type acknowledge your ideas if they don't want to drink 'em. And yes, 2 plus 2 does indeed equal 5 if you fervently wish to believe that.

While all political types pay lip-service to the "idea" of openmindedness and free expression, this is rarely if ever actually put into practice. If you don't think so, just ask them when was the last time they actually changed their opinion on a serious issue. Most of them have to go back ten, fifteen years. Either these people are so brilliant that they've got all of life's issues figured out already in a nice, neat system...Or maybe they just stopped thinking ten, fifteen years ago.

The reason for this is because politics is rarely, if ever, about "thinking" the issues through. Politics is mostly about "joining the club." Like-minded people get together and agree that they are indeed the smart, superior ones who have The Answer. What glues them together, of course, is The Common Enemy. That's why they spend so much time talking about Them. Without The Enemy they couldn't figure out who the Cool Club Members were.

So John Birchers spend all their time ranting about those Dirty Minority Welfare Bums living off the system and contributing nothing. And Radical Leftists spend all their time ranting about those Dirty Republican Fascist Power-Mongers.

The Common Enemy is so fundamentally important to the existence of the Political Club that The Enemy must be caricatured into the very embodiment of Evil Itself. To a Radical Leftist, Reagan or Bush have virtually NO redeeming human traits. They are, in fact, seen as subhuman monsters who must be stopped at all costs. And the right-wing nuts paint the same picture of blacks and other minorities. To dare to speak charitably about any aspect of The Common Enemy is to risk immediate expulsion from the Club.

I run into this banal syndrome quite frequently. You see, my own politics tend to jump all over the political spectrum. When, for example, I criticize Reagan and Bush, I'm lauded by Leftists for my "brilliant satirical talents." But somehow, whenever I deem to criticize Leftists themselves, they are less than appreciative of my talents. It's pretty funny, actually.

For the record, I probably lean towards the Left on 80% of the issues. The big exceptions are the death Penalty, which I am vehemently for, and feminism, which I think is the biggest load of bullshit ever foisted on the American public.

Now immediately, I realize I've just been dropped from many of my esteemed readers' clubs. And believe me, I have my regrets for saying this, and have paid my price. I often think how wonderful it would be if I could just keep my mouth shut about feminism. By speaking out, all I manage to do is alienate large chunks of my audience who otherwise might enjoy my stuff. I've been kicked out of at least a half a dozen publications for my "anti-feminism" stance, and God knows how many have permanently barred me from their clubs in the first place. Most of my audience is Left-leaning, so to come out against feminists is akin to trying to win a Christian audience while coming out against Jesus.

Now, that said, let me Clarify My Position for the minority of you out there still interested in this thinking along. I believe women are the equal of men in every way. Different in many ways, and subject to being treated differently for precisely that reason, but equal in worth as human beings in every way. I believe feminism is basically bullshit because they DON'T believe in sexual equality. For example, they certainly don't believe women are equally to blame for all the sexual problems between men and women. The underlying assumption of almost EVERY aspect of feminist thought is that it is basically all men's fault. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe equality is a 50-50 deal, and I will continue to believe feminism is bullshit until the day when they start acknowledging their half of that equation. If that means I'm kicked out of your Club, well, I'll gladly pay that price.

#### Senate Approves Secret Helms Measure on C.I.A.

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOUR CONGRESS CAN PASS SECRET ACTS?!



Like I've pointed out innumerable times, the very word "sexism" supposedly means "to discriminate against one sex." And yet, 99% of the time this word is bandied around it's directed at men. Evidently according to the Gospel of Feminism we're led to believe that 99% of the time it's the man who sexually mistreats the woman. I'm sorry, I just don't buy that kind of moronic thinking, no matter how fashionable it might be in some circles. Even more annoying, I've yet to hear a feminist even ACKNOWLEDGE the obvious points I've just raised. I think that's really evidence of the banal level of thought within the feminist movement. Like I said before, they don't want to think this stuff through—they just want to join the Club and go along with whatever the Club tells 'em to think. How can I help but have intellectual contempt for this kind of crap? Instead of listening and commenting on any of the points I've raised, what inevitably happens is that I get attacked my feminists for being "anti-woman."

It's the exact same strategems most "isms" use. Like another popular ism, fundamentalism—if you point out the obvious flaws in their reasoning they just attack you for being "anti-God."

As for the death penalty, I believe one of the biggest mistakes this country made was when it stopped executing murderers. You can almost draw a graph starting from the precise moment in the mid-60s when we stopped executing murderers, and from that exact point the violent crime rate has been rising steadily and dramatically ever since. Coincidence? Yeah, right. And yet, I've yet to hear an anti-death penalty person even ACKNOWLEDGE this obvious point. And, of course, if the opposite had happened and the violent crime rate had gone DOWN at that point instead of up, they would be the first to use those statistics in their "studies prove..." arguments for banning the death penalty. But since that didn't happen this is all just getting filed away under the heading of "Facts To Ignore."

(Just for the record, in case you're wondering just exactly how bad things are getting, violent crime-wise, in the early '60s Oakland was averaging about 15 murders a year. Today Oakland is averaging close to 200 a year! And while there were other factors involved, it's pretty intellectually dishonest to pretend that abolishing the death penalty wasn't one of them—and a BIG one at that! And yet this is precisely the kind of intellectual dishonesty I've come to expect from just about every discussion I'd had with political types.)

I guess what ultimately disturbs me the most is how little people seem to care about finding out what is True. People don't seem to have much lust or appetite for thinking things through. They just want to believe whatever they think will benefit them, whatever will get them into The Club. It's truly amazing what people will believe. What's that old Christian saying—"I believe precisely because it is absurd"? Like, some guy 2000 years ago was God and he got nailed to a board to show how much God loves us. Now people don't believe this because they've thought the issues through and come to the logical, rational reasoning that this is the belief that most strikes them as True. They believe it because they think it will benefit them—that maybe it'll get 'em on God's good side. Or maybe it'll benefit 'em to join The Club and think like everybody else.

If you ask me, all these "isms"—whether it's feminism, fundamentalism, radicalism, or whatever—it's all basically the same game: Join The Club. Well, to those of you out there still thinking for yourself, my hat's off to you!



# Zenarchy STORIES

by Ho Chi Zen

## WHAT DO YOU SAY AFTER YOU SAY HELLO?

Once Ho Chi Zen was seated at a lunch counter reading a book on Zen when he noticed out of the corner of his eye that the man next to him was staring in his direction.

When Ho looked up from his book, the man said, "Have you heard any good koans lately?"

## THE MAGIC OF SILENCE

Once Ho Chi Zen dreamt he was a powerful magician who was also a compulsive talker. Such a nonstop chatterbox was he that in spite of his magic he could never get laid. So he conjured up the Spirit of Silence and requested help.

Sure enough, the Spirit helped him and he got laid and was soon telling all his friends about the great miracle the Spirit of Silence had performed.

Then the Spirit of Silence appeared before him again—this time with an angry scowl—and said, "I wish you wouldn't tell everybody about it!"

## COMMAND PERFORMANCE

According to The World of Zen by Nancy Wilson Ross, the first Japanese to study Zen in China was named Kakua.

"Kakua visited China and accepted the true teaching...Meditating constantly, he lived on a remote part of a mountain. Whenever people found him and asked him to preach he would say a few words and then move to another part of the mountain where he could be found less easily.

"The emperor heard about Kakua when he returned to Japan and asked him to preach Zen for his edification and that of his subjects.

"Kakua stood before the emperor in silence. He then produced a flute from the folds of his robe, and blew one short note. Bowing politely, he disappeared."

## SPAKE THE BUDDHA

In The World of Zen, the Buddha is quoted as saying, "I consider the positions of kings and rulers as that of dust motes. I observe treasures of gold and gems as so many bricks and pebbles. I look upon the finest silken robes as tattered rags. I see myriad worlds of the universe as small seeds of fruit, and the greatest lake in India as a drop of oil on my foot. I perceive the teachings of the world to be the illusion of magicians. I discern the highest conception of emancipation as a golden brocade in a dream, and view the holy path of the illuminated ones as flowers appearing in one's eyes. I see meditation as the pillar of a mountain, Nirvana as a nightmare of daytime. I look upon judgment of right and wrong as the serpentine dance of a dragon, and the rise and fall of beliefs as but traces left by the four seasons."

## NOTCHING THE GUNWALE

This example is by the Japanese monk Gido Shushin (1326-1388), a leading figure in the "Literature of the Five Mountains" (*gozen bungaku*, works written in Chinese by medieval Japanese Zen monks:

*Before dawn, the morning star, night after night;  
Over the hills, twelfth-month snow, year after year:  
how laughable—to suppose Gautama did something special!  
Quick, let's notch the gunwale so we can find the sword!*

The last line alludes to a Chinese story of a man who dropped his sword overboard while riding in a boat; he put a notch in the gunwale at the place where the sword fell into the water so he could know where to look for it later.

(Excerpted from Burton Watson, "Zen Poetry," Zen: Tradition and Transition by Kenneth Kraft, Gove Press, 1988)

## A WORKING NAME

"...the phrase translated 'help get things moving' is literally 'help stir up workings.' 'Workings' are the workings of enlightenment or the enlightened mind." —Burton Watson, "Zen Poetry," Zen: Tradition and Transition compiled by Kenneth Kraft

## JUST THIS:

Green spring, start of the second month,  
colors of things turning fresh and new.  
At this time I take my begging bowl,  
In high spirits tramp the streets of town.  
Little boys suddenly spot me,  
delightedly come crowding around,  
descend on me at the temple gate,  
dragging on my arms, making steps slow.  
I set my bowl on top of a white stone,  
hang my alms bag on a green tree limb;  
here we fight a hundred grasses,  
here we hit the *temari* ball—  
I'll hit, you do the singing!  
Now I'll sing, your turn to hit!  
We hit it going, hit it coming,  
never knowing how the hours fly.  
Passersby turn, look at me and laugh,  
"What makes you act like this?"

I duck my head, don't answer them—  
I could speak but what's the use?  
You want to know what's in my heart?  
From the beginning, just this! just this!

— Ryokan

(From Zen: Tradition and Transition, pp. 121-122)

## HOW BODHIDHARMA GOT THE LAMP

The ruler of this kingdom was a man who had a strong inspiration to practice the Way. Bodhidharma's teacher, Hannyatara, was the twenty-seventh successor of the Dharma from Shakyamuni. He was frequently invited to the palace to expound the Dharma, for which the king was extremely grateful.

Once, when Hannyatara and his attendant were invited there to chant sutras, only the attendant chanted, while Hannyatara did not. Even though he wasn't asleep, his voice couldn't be heard. Later, when he was asked about it, he replied that he was concentrating on his breathing. When he exhaled, he became one with the exhalation and when he inhaled, he became one with his inhalation. In this way he was expounding the Dharma. Since he had practiced breathing as it should have been practiced, it was the same as chanting the sutras the way they should have been chanted.

If you can totally just follow your breath, then each breath becomes the vital activity of life. Since the master was following his breath perfectly, he was expounding the Dharma exactly as it should be expounded.

The king was deeply impressed and presented a splendid jewel to Hannyatara. Hannyatara used it to test the princes. The first and second sons praised it, saying that such a splendid gem could only be possessed by their father, the king. However, the third son, Bodhitara, said that although it was splendid, the true jewel was not a material thing, but the mind. He said that a material jewel only gives off worldly light, but that the true light is the light of wisdom. Such a statement, which we might expect a philosopher or religious genius to make, was made by Bodhidharma when he was only seven years old.

Hannyatara was greatly impressed and said that this third son would be a great man in the future and kept a close watch on Bodhidharma from childhood on. When the king died, Bodhidharma meditated for a solid week before his coffin and entered into a deep state of samadhi; he said that he wanted to become a disciple of Hannyatara. At that time Hannyatara said, "You have already innately penetrated all dharmas and true reality."

(From On Zen Practice, Hakuyu Maezumi and Bernard Tetsugen Glassman, Zen Center of Los Angeles, 1976, p. 73)

## DIAGNOSIS OR PROGNOSIS?

Monk: What is the Cosmic Body of Buddha?  
Master: A garden fence.  
Monk: What if I take it that way?  
Master: A golden-haired lion.

## TREASURE HUNT FOR KEEN JOY

by Bangor Zack Bullen  
Grateful to Lao-Tzu.  
Grateful to Cupid.  
It's dumb to be brainy.  
It's wise to be stupid.

Sartre? Shallow!  
Donald Duck? Deep!  
Today's books? Costly!  
Classic books? Cheap?

Gulls soar! Keen joy  
Waits within reach—  
As I walk the tar road  
To Crab Meadow Beach!

## UNTITLED

by Ken Wagner  
i've strange benign thoughts  
in my twisted and tattered  
pot burnt brain  
and i just don't understand  
why  
we can't fly  
to syracuse tonight

BIGHEAD,  
ON HIS FIRST  
ATTEMPT  
AT CHANNELING  
PULLS IN  
A  
MARX BROS.  
MOVIE







# SNIDE CRITIC REVIEWS J. P. MORGAN

Hello, dear friends! Yes, the Snide Critic has at long last roused himself from a boredom-induced catatonia. It's been more than a year now, hasn't it? **BATMAN** came and went, and the Snide Critic remained silent. **BACK TO THE FUTURE II** and **III** pockmarked the movie screens, and Yours Truly said nothing. The theatres were infested with **NINJA TURTLES** (or rather, **TURD-DULLS**), and ol' S.C. spake not. Why was he so quiet? Because he kept the hell away from corporate poop-flicks like those, that's why—the same way he dutifully missed **DICK TRACY**. Did you hear it promoted as "this year's **BATMAN**?" Isn't that a great recommendation? I caught **BATMAN** (like catching the flu) when it was dumped on the home video market—not my tape! Not my house!—and if **DICK** is this year's **BATMAN**, all the more reason to shun it, I say. (I read somewhere that **BATMAN** did unwell in Sweden...his name translated to "Fluttering-Mouse-Man" in Swedish, so they just kept it "Batman," unlike other countries.)

Somebody in **AMAZING HEROES** pointed out how ugly the **DICK** action figures are—and mighty ugly they are, too, all bowlegged and lumpy—and referred to the toy car as the "Dickmobile." Couldn't be any worse than the Batmobile from last year's flick...now there was a real dickmobile for ya!

And has it struck anyone else what a rock-bottom, godforsaken stupid idea a **JETSONS** movie is? Ick, pee-yew. A pox on Hanna-Barbera, famous animation masters...of the stodgy and inane!

Anyway: the Approaching IJ Hiatus scheduled for #80 finally galvanized the Snide Critic into getting a move on. The Vidiot Box has actually been of some help recently; swell stuff like this has been showing up:

## LUTHER

by Stephen C. Tierney

This dapper old dude, chipper, poised and cocky, came strolling down the winding walk at Marine Park. Nattily dressed, he appeared to have his retirement money in his pocket and the world by the tail.

Then came Luther, who was otherwise known as "The Big Bang Belch." He had an uncanny knack of sucking air into his throat and expelling it with amazing force. He could belch like hell, outrageously, obnoxiously, loud and forcefully.

Luther was milling around with a group of us guys when he spotted "Dapper Old Dude." In a flash, he approached D.O.D. and smiled at him disarmingly. D.O.D. returned the greeting, and before he knew it Luther bent his head down, removed his hat, kissed his bald pate, and belched in his face with a resounding, almost deafening, sickening explosion.

D.O.D. was nonplussed, shocked, humiliated and outraged. Luther stood back and cackled in D.O.D.'s face.

When D.O.D. recovered, visibly shaken, disturbed, irate and infuriated, he took a swack at his tormenter with his walking cane, which he had been carrying like a swagger stick. Of course, fleet-of-foot Luther jumped back and began to encircle D.O.D. and laugh hysterically.

D.O.D. starting chasing The Big Bang Belch, and every time D.O.D. got what he thought was close enough, he would take a whack at Luther, who actually slowed down to bait him. Luther would turn on a burst of speed at the precise moment to elude his victim.

D.O.D. fanned the air with his cane and blued the air with a plethora of vituperations and curses. Finally, D.O.D. ran out of steam, deemed the chase hopeless, and slinked back to our group, breathlessly and tearfully demanding to know who that little S.O.B. was.

We looked dumb, which came naturally, and glumly but smirkingly disavowed knowing The Big Bang Belch in the slightest. D.O.D. shook his head in stark disbelief and abject, beaten humiliation. There were pregnant moments of stifled laughter, sky-gazing, indiscriminate scratchings, and efforts at nonchalance.

Shortly D.O.D. drug off, muttering who knows what. The whole episode ended not with a bang but with a snivel from D.O.D. Oh yes--Luther, ensconced in the branches of a nearby tree, picked his nose, observed the woebegone departure of his quarry, and gave him and us the one-fingered salute.

**HAVE ROCKET, WILL TRAVEL** (1959)—This is the Three Stooges' comeback film, made after reaching mass popularity on TV. They accidentally pilot a rocket to Mars, encounter giant tarantula, talking unicorn, neat evil computer with multiple arms (which makes robot Stooges), etc. Naturally this film is of interest, but some of the comedy is off—though lady-scientist-love-angle-'50s-style is unintentionally hilarious today. Curly-Joe DeRita acts like he saw a Stooges short once and forgot it; he gives a desultory "woo-woo-woo" once, and just generally sleepwalks.

**PREHISTORIC WOMEN** (1967)—The Hammer version, not the 1950 US one. Intrepid Great White Hunter (Michael Latimer) magically goes back in time to land of White Rhino, where white Brunette women enslave blondes, and wimpy men are kept in pit. Not much to say about this, except that the S.C. was laffin' out loud through much of it. Watch for phallic symbols.

**TARZAN AND THE AMAZONS** (1945)—Johnny Weissmuller is again a great (if inaccurate to the books) Tarzan, here dealing with a lost tribe of white "Amazons," whose symbol is a tree with an intertwined serpent! (Could this be Gnostic symbolism?) Greedy gold hunters trick Boy (Johnny Sheffield) into revealing hidden land of Amazons, with strife in Tarzan household and other trouble ensuing. Swell corny adventure.

**ISLAND OF LOST SOULS** (1933)—Forget the dull, TV-movie-like 1977 version (**ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU**)! Charles Laughton is the creepy, decadent Moreau, surgically altering animals into semi-humans. Made long before the age of explicit gore, this film is still scary, with lots of monsters and a hell of a climax where evil Dr. gets just desserts. With Bela Lugosi as the sayer of the Law. Michael (PSYCHOTRONIC VIDEO) Weldon said this is probably the best horror film ever made, and he's right again.

**THE RULING CLASS** (1970)—This black comedy with Peter O'Toole as an upper-class British madman who thinks he's Jesus (and later thinks he's Jack the Ripper) is interesting to watch, but it's really a little too long. Features mind games, murder, sprightly dance-hall numbers that come out of nowhere, an "Electric Messiah" (another madman), a guy in a comical ape suit, a scene of the House of Lords filled with living rotting corpses, and a real downbeat ending.

**THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN** (1974)—I dunno, I saw this back in '74 at the Hazlet K-Mart Plaza US Theatre, and thought it was pretty good. But when I saw it again recently—uh, well...Anyway, Bond (Roger Moore) battles high-priced assassin Scaramanga (cheerful Christopher Lee) for a powerful solar energy unit. A pre-"Fantasy Island" Herve Villechaise keeps the viewer expecting Ricardo Montalban to show up. For such a rich hit man, Scaramanga's home and solar plant seem awfully understaffed—just Herve and some other guy workin' for him. With Britt Ekland as Bond girl. Too bad the TV elves edited out all the artsy naked ladies from the opening credits.

**STEELYARD BLUES** (1973)—The Snide Critic enjoyed this laid-back comedy about a group of misfits (among them Donald Sutherland, Peter Boyle, and Jane Fonda) rebuilding a WWII bomber to fly to "a land where there are no jails." They have to steal plane parts, deal with nasty establishment folks, personal problems—but the TV elves cut out the last minute of film showing their escape!! Why? The Conspiracy, probably. Oh well, it's still Thumbs Up.

**ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN** (1948)—Even if you don't usually like A&C, this is one of the best horror comedies ever made; the comedy is kept comedy, and the horror is kept horror—that is, the monsters (Dracula, Wolf Man, and Frankenstein's Creature) are played straight, with no mugging or jokes coming from them. The comedy stuff is left to Lou and Bud, and that's what makes it work. Also one of Lugosi's and Chaney Jr.'s last good films before their careers went downhill. Crappy TV editing: stuff integral to plot like Bud wearing wolf mask, lady insurance investigator hypnotized by Dracula, etc., cut out, leaving annoying holes. I hate the TV elves!

**ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET THE INVISIBLE MAN** (1951)—Another swell horror-comedy. Bud and Lou are two detectives who help (?) a prizefighter clear his name of murder. More useful to their client is invisibility formula that helps him get around (but makes him increasingly unstable mentally). Comedy and plot move smartly, and the effects are good! Watch for spaghetti-eating scene, Lou in big boxing match with invisible help (Opponent: "He hits outta nowhere—it's like I'm fightin' two guys!"), and more. Fun!

And, let's see...is that it? Well, I did want to mention how fine it was to see Patrick McGoochan's "The Prisoner" series on CBS...at an abysmal hour, mind you, but it's still one of the greatest things that ever appeared on the tube!! Them Bones, Them Bones, Them Dry Bones... (and did you take note of the "Them Bones" number in **THE RULING CLASS**? I thought you did.) On a more serious note: does anyone in IJ-land know more about the recent passing of Calvin T. Beck? A grand figure of fantasy film fandom, he was the editor of the great **CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN**, the legendary "monster magazine"—a publication far and away more literate, informative and entertaining than **FAMOUS MONSTERS** (though **THE MONSTER TIMES** was a big S.C. fave in its early days)...the last issue of **CASTLE** appeared in 1974; apart from the strain of trying to put out a regularly-scheduled magazine, I read that Beck was beset with numerous health problems in later years, which is a shame. His writing was, and continues to be, an inspiration to the Snide Critic, and he is remembered fondly by many horror and SF fans.

Ho-kay...guess that should warp things up for the nonce...except for one important question I want to leave you all with: is anybody at all really, really, looking forward to...**EXORCIST III**? Hello? Yoo-hoo?... 11



## How to Be a LEGEND IN YOUR OWN TIME

by Wayne Hogan

What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape?

- John Keats

Let's say you're driving west down the interstate, headed for, oh, Nashville, let's say. Let's say you're driving along well within the allowed speed limit, listening to a taped recording of Eudora Welty reading her very wry little story, "Why I Live At The P.O.," just generally enjoying the bounteously beautiful Upper Cumberland terrain.

Let's say, too, that even though you'd set the alarm clock to ring unusually early, your wife had risen even earlier and had gone straight to the kitchen to cook you a really big breakfast... homemade biscuits (she'd prepared the dough the night before), sausage links, red-eye gravy, scrambled eggs, and steaming-hot fresh-brewed coffee. That the two of you, let's say, sat at the kitchen table leisurely eating and discussing your respective experiences of the previous day, shared your hopes for the current one, and just generally enjoyed each other's company. That, when you'd finished, she washed and you dried the dishes before kissing goodbye, that you then backed out of the driveway and turned slowly onto the narrow country road leading to the Interstate.

You've just passed the exit to "Buffalo Bill's" still-under-construction cross between a get-it-'n-go market and a serious eyesore, let's say, have slowed down to about 25 miles an hour as requested by the *Construction - Left Lane Closed* sign you've just gone past when out of the corner of your eye you see the blurred shape of a woman (*Hmm, not bad looking*, you say to yourself) falling through the air at a fairly fast rate toward a spot in the field across the Interstate to your left. You pull off the road onto the shoulder, stop your 1980 two-tone gray Chevy station wagon, get out (being careful to look both ways for oncoming vehicles), run across the Interstate's four lanes, jump the three-strand barbed-wire fence that surrounds the field and catch the lady in your open arms just before she'd've otherwise hit the ground with a great big thud.

On the highway again after cradling the young woman in your arms and carrying her back to "Buffalo Bill's" where, with proper instructions all around, you left her with Bill promising to call a cab to take her wherever she wanted to go, let's say the Eudora Welty tape has just finished and that you're now driving normally on down the road, still about 65 or so miles from Nashville, listening, now, to Sam Waterston read Arthur Miller's *The Misfits* (you can see Clark Gable clear as day, let's say, and can smell Marilyn's Roseland coming more'n a mile away). Let's say...

Let's also say you're noticing how lush-green the grass is in the median and out in the pastures on both sides of the Interstate (the winter season that'd just ended had been unusually mild, and spring had come early this year), that you're noticing how nicely blossomed the satin-white dogwoods and purplish rebuds are along the way, how they and assorted wildflowers add their just-so painterly touches to the now-impressionist, now-expressionist countryside, noticing out of the corner of your eye, let's say, the blurred shape of a woman (*Hmm, she looks familiar*, you say to yourself) falling through the air at a fairly fast rate toward a spot off to your left in the field across the Interstate (which, you've noticed for several miles now, is, except for yourself, totally empty of traffic in either direction). You stop, set your handbrake, put the shift-lever on "park" for added safety, then race across the field and catch the lady just before she'd've otherwise hit the ground.

"Hello again," she says.

"Hello, Margaret," you reply. "May I call you a cab?" you ask.



## THE ALIENS OF HOWARD STREET Part One

You sure meet the funniest people when you're stranded on the side of the road. Now, I know I'm not the first to state this (perhaps it was Merle Haggard... or maybe even that Kerouac feller) but nevertheless, here's a little Inside Tale that ACTUALLY OCCURED en route to perform some more Brian Wilson music far off my beaten track.

It was just after our lead driver finished singing the luxuries of his brand new second-hand van ("it really IS a miracle bargain on four wheels, you know") that we ran out of gas, sputtering to a halt on some god (and gas station) -forsaken bend in the highway. Typically drawing the shortest stir-stick, I hereby elected myself to stand guard alongside the miracle bargain as my bandmates flagged down the nearest tourist and headed back into town. "We'll come getcha soon as we can find a tow truck, okay?" they shouted towards my general direction as they faded back around the bend. "Okay... I guess" I tried convincing myself with one eye as the other couldn't help but notice the sun go down and a curious fog blow up.

As the minutes melted into hours, and I found myself scouting the immediate vicinity for shelter-building rudiments, a pair of headlights approached. I turned to face them, hand hooding my eyes, as a voice - female I might add - cried out.

"Everything all right here?"

Just my luck: The lights dimmed to reveal the all-too-familiar outline of the Highway Patrol. "You've been out here awhile, haven't you? Where you from? Where you goin'? This your van?" The interrogation continued until all agreed there was no legal reason for abducting me to the proverbial station house. "We'll be back to check on you later though" the taller one announced, far from reassuringly, as their cruiser swung blindly back onto the turnpike, narrowly missing two Toyotas in the process.

I returned to my task at hand, trying to construct a fire out of mucky newspapers and an old inner tube, when the rains began. Slowly at first, but soon enough graduating to a full-fledged monsoon that instantly reduced my crudely constructed lean-to to a sad heap of debris. I scurried UNDER the van. Which was locked, by the way.

Whiling away the next several hours compiling mental lists of "Green Acres" guest stars (the mind can play funny tricks when wedged beneath an axel rod for far too long) I was taken totally by surprise to notice a pair of military-style boots suddenly planted not inches from my nose. The local policewomen have finally returned. I laughed, and this time they won't have to ask twice about escorting me "downtown". I slid back onto my feet, brushed the roadway off my soggy stagsuit, and eagerly prepared to offer myself into custody when a voice wildly boomed out a great big "Hi there!"

Wait a minute. That was no policewoman. That wasn't even no female.

"How long you been hidin' under this van? Hell, I hope you don't mind my sayin', but you look like something even the CAT wouldn't drag in!"

Towering before me stood a man the length and breadth of which I'd never before encountered - and I'll have you know they grow 'em BIG where I come from. A wilted beany cap incongruously offset a figure draped in an ill-fitting array of what can only be described as Backwoods Chic, or "Deliverance" On Acid. I stood frozen to my spot as he hulked slowly forward, removing some old cigar from between what remained of his dental work. Leaning carefully until our eyes practically touched, swamping me in breath direct from the latest Exxon catastrophe, he spoke. Slowly and methodically. "You're coming with me."

Correctly reading more threat than request into this statement, I had no instinct other than to comply. PRONTO. Against my better judgement.

I learned later that when my merry band returned to the van to find no sign of me whatsoever - simply tell-tale jeep tracks heading strangely up the ravine AWAY from the highway - they conveniently declared "The Show Must Go On!" and promptly buggered off, as they say, arriving at our engagement mere seconds before the curtain arose.

All I can say now, in retrospect, is that their s wasn't the ONLY show in town that night of nights.  
(to be continued)



# ANIMATION UPDATE



As of this moment in time, yours truly is now a member of ASIFA-International, and I hope to be presenting some intriguing news from overseas in my final editions of "Animation Update." But, for now, back to the domestic report...

**FILM REVIEW:** When I first saw *THE JUNGLE BOOK* many years ago, I enjoyed it as only a kid could. But today I saw this 1967 feature (in its third re-release) in a totally different perspective. It didn't play as much like the original Kipling tale, as it played more like a "Bachelor Father" story. The orphaned man-cub Mowgli had several paternal caretakers: Rama the wolf (the only one with a spouse), Bagheera the panther, and Baloo the bear, none of whom had any experience in raising youth—particularly one of another species. It stands to reason why Bagheera and Baloo had such difficulties when Mowgli refused to go to the man-village. It wasn't until the last reel when Mowgli saw another of his kind; then the story shifts gears again to the "Twitterpated scene" from *BAMBI*, as Mowgli succumbs to a sort of pubescent impulse of curiosity about the girl-cub. As a kid seeing this film for the first time, I often dreamt about living with jungle animals; today, I can't imagine why, unless I wanted to be another Marlin Perkins. Still, I enjoyed this fully-animated work of Walt Disney (his last supervised project), despite my personal outlook on life. And even though many critics in the past had negative opinions about the film (such as the unnecessary use of songs), I'm sure that many of them have lightened up a bit in the wake of less successful cartoon features with limited animation and very skimpy plots. For me, the highlight was the teaming up of King Louie and Baloo (voiced by Louis Prima and Phil Harris) as they sang "I Wanna Be Like You," which I thought was on a similar plane of entertainment value as "Under the Sea" was in *THE LITTLE MERMAID*. The other voice actors—Sebastian Cabot (Bagheera), Sterling Holloway (Kaa the snake), George Sanders (Shere Khan the tiger) and J. Pat O'Malley (Colonel Hathi the elephant)—were equally exceptional in their respective roles. And if grown-ups today feel embarrassed about taking their kids to see a Disney cartoon like *THE JUNGLE BOOK*, take them instead to a cinema screening Jean-Jacques Annaud's *THE BEAR*; after watching all the ursine action in that film, watching a humorous scene of Baloo scratching an itch during his rendition of "The Bare Necessities" shouldn't bother you at all. Enjoy *THE JUNGLE BOOK*, and feel like a kid again...Filiation's *HAPPILY EVER AFTER*, a movie in limited animation, had an equally limited run. Originally titled *SNOW WHITE AND THE FOREST OF DOOM* (see IJ #72), the legend continues where the Disney film ends, this time with the Prince being abducted, leaving it up to Snow (voiced by Irene Cara) and seven female dwarfs (voiced by Zsa Zsa Gabor, Carol Channing, et al.) to rescue him, with a little help from Mother Nature (Phyllis Diller). The Sunday New York Times ran a one-page ad promoting the opening of this film for the following Friday. It never came to be, and for good reason. To be fair to Filiation, they had some good animated works in the past—TV shows like "Journey to the Center of the Earth," "Star Trek," etc.—but in the case of *HAPPILY EVER AFTER*, if I can't say anything nice about it...well, you know how the rest of that goes.

**TOON TEST:** In the hot summer blockbuster *DIE HARD II*, passengers aboard one of the stacked-up airlines were treated to on-screen entertainment in the form of an episode of "The Simpsons"—which is an inside joke, as both the film and the cartoon are productions of 20th Century Fox. Other movies use excerpts of cartoons as metaphors for their plots (such as a female victim of a werewolf being attacked, intercut with shots of a "Big Bad Wolf" cartoon, seen in Joe Dante's 1981 thriller *THE HOWLING*). Below are the titles of several animated shorts; match them with the live-action films in which each one appeared. Each snippet was either used as an in-joke or a metaphor. The answers are at the end of this column.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. "Aesop and Son: Tortoise and Hare" (Jay Ward, circa 1960s) | a. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (1977) |
| 2. "Duck Dodgers in the 24th Century" (Warners, 1953)         | b. DINER (1982)                              |
| 3. "For Scentimental Reasons" (Warners, 1949)                 | c. GREMLINS (1984)                           |
| 4. "Goofy Gymnastics" (Disney, 1949)                          | d. SABOTAGE (1936)                           |
| 5. "Hot Rod and Reel" (Warners, 1959)                         | e. THE SUGARLAND EXPRESS (1974)              |
| 6. "Pecos Pest" (MGM, 1955)                                   | f. SULLIVAN'S TRAVELS (1941)                 |
| 7. "Playful Pluto" (Disney, 1934)                             | g. TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES (1990)       |
| 8. "Who Killed Cock Robin?" (Disney, 1935)                    | h. WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT (1988)            |

**RESULTS OF 1990 PREDICTIONS:** As speculated in earlier issues, three animated TV shows were nominated for Emmy Awards in the Outstanding Animated Program (one hour or less) category. They are: "Garfield's Feline Fantasies," "The Simpsons' Christmas Special" and "Why, Charlie Brown, Why?." The other nominated shows are "Garfield's Thanksgiving" and "The Simpsons" (series). My projected winner: "Why, Charlie Brown, Why?"; even though the Simpsons are a hot item on the tube, the subject matter of the Peanuts special should earn it the top prize, in spite of its limited animation. Speaking of "The Simpsons," the FOX series garnered three

other Emmy nominations (Single Camera Production Editing, Mini-series or Special for "The Simpsons' Christmas Special," Main Title Theme Music for Danny Elfman, and Sound Mixing, Comedy Series or Special, for the "Call of the Simpsons" episode). The Emmys will be handed out on September 16...As for the MTV Music Video Award nominees, I was partially correct in my prediction of those videos chosen in the Outstanding Special Effects category; Tears For Fears' "Sowing the Seeds of Love" (under the direction of Jim Blashfield) and Paula Abdul's "Opposites Attract" (under Michael Patterson's direction) were the only two videos that incorporated animation (Billy Joel's "We Didn't Start the Fire" and Billy Idol's "Cradle of Love" were the other two nominees). "Sowing..." also received nominations for Best Group Video, Best Post-Modern Video, and Best Breakthrough Video. "Opposites Attract" earned five additional nominations in the categories Best Direction, Best Female Video, Best Dance Video, Best Choreography, and Best Breakthrough Video. Considering the competition that these two videos are up against, I'll predict that each one will earn only one award apiece: "Opposites..." to pick up the Special Effects nod, and "Sowing..." to get the Best Group Video honor. The 1990 MTV Music Video Awards will be handed out September 6.

**ANIMATION FOR SALE:** The year's less than three-quarters done, and already the 1991 calendars are out. Hallmark has its annual "Looney Tunes" calendar, with an intro by Chuck Jones, on sale now (\$8.95). Die-hard "Rocky & Bullwinkle" fans will be pleased to know that the moose and squirrel's 1991 calendar (\$9.95/\$14.95 in Canada) comes with an extra bonus; namely, full-color detachable postcards on the back. To get one (if your store's supply is exhausted), send check or money order (including \$2 for P&H) to Zephyr Press, P.O. Box 3066, Berkeley, CA 94703. Lest I forget, "The Simpsons 1991 Fun Calendar" (\$8.95) is also up for grabs...Speaking of "The Simpsons," an original soundtrack album will be released (from Geffen Records) around October 1. In addition to Danny Elfman's Emmy-nominated theme, the voice actors will sing original songs in their respective character roles (hmm...will Maggie suck her pacifier in time to the music during her solo?...). Just For Kids Home Video has acquired the rights to produce videocassettes featuring classic "Bozo the Clown" cartoons from the '50s and '60s (with new live-action wraparound intros to Larry Harmon's famous character). The first of these tapes will be released in early '91 (with a \$24.95 retail value)...AMAZING HEROES regulars Korkis & Cawley have a new book out—*The Encyclopedia of Cartoon Superstars from A to (Almost) Z* is now available from Pioneer Books, with forwards from film buff Leonard Maltin and Disney director Jack Hannah. For more information, contact Pioneer at 5715 N. Balsam Road, Las Vegas, NV 89130 (I hope to have a review of this book in a future issue)...For those of you who like to collect catalogs of animation art (but not necessarily the art itself), here are two more distributors to consider: Collector's Palace (8806 3rd Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11209) and Mice, Ducks & Wabbits (41-66 Little Neck Parkway, Little Neck, NY 11363) each have free catalogs for those who wish to write in. (If you prefer to call, phone Collector's at 718/238-2256 in NY or 1-800-MICKEY3 outside NY; MD&W can be reached at 1-800-541-AART)...By the time you read this article, two home videos of animated features should be available—Walt Disney's *PETER PAN* and Don Bluth's *ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN*. Guess which one's going to be the big seller?...Also, look for *JETSONS: THE MOVIE* (if you dare) in your video store on October 25, less than four months after it opened in theatres.

**MAGAZINE UPDATE:** *ANIMATO*'s 20th issue covers all sorts of subjects, from the earliest versions of what Roger Rabbit looked like to an interview with veteran Disney animator Bill Justice; Bugs Bunny's 50th birthday is the cover story...*ANIMATION* Magazine, Vol. 3 #4, looks at the works of Bill and Susan Kroyer (including their first feature-length cartoon, *FERN GULLY: THE LAST RAIN-FOREST*), plus articles on Japanese animation, American daytime TV cartoons and a tribute to the late Jim Henson...*COMICS SCENE* #15 looks at the upcoming "Tiny Toons" series, as well as behind-the-scenes of "Rollercoaster Rabbit" and *JETSONS: THE MOVIE*...The 8/6 issue of *TIME* took a two-page look at animated projects in TV and movies. Richard Zoglin's article examined why there's a sudden resurgence in the artform.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** As you probably know by now, several networks (led by KCAL in Los Angeles and WNYW in New York) had pulled UPA's "Dick Tracy" cartoon series off the air, to be replaced with either redubbed episodes or cartoons that don't have ethnic characters Joe Jitsu (originally voiced by Benny Rubin) and GoGo Gomez (voiced by Paul Frees). Executive producer Henry Saperstein didn't want to make this move because, in spite of the negative image each character displays, they are the "good guys," and changing their voices would only be a form of—if you'll excuse the expression—copping out...First it was blacks, then Asians, and more recently Hispanics joined the fray. All these minorities were offended by ethnic stereotypes of characters depicted in cartoons. The latest minority to "jump on the bandwagon" is Arabs. A group of Arab-Americans were insulted by the recent screening of the 1948 Bugs Bunny cartoon "A Lad In His Lamp" at the AMC theatre chain because of its false depiction of Middle Eastern characters. What I want to know is this: that same cartoon has been airing on TV for nearly 30 years, and it took them that long to complain about it...Speaking of complaints, the July 25 L.A. Times reports that "A Phoenix supermarket chain pulled copies of *THE LITTLE MERMAID* off its shelves last week when a customer complained that artwork on the cover contains an offensive phallic symbol. Disney

(continued next page)



has said that about a dozen people have complained about a phallic symbol they believe is part of a golden castle drawn on the cover of the videotape. It's unlikely that the drawing will be changed! ...The latest Bart Simpson black-market merchandise is a series of lickable stickers (for looseleaf notebooks, etc.) rumored to be laced with LSD. The last time this happened was back in the '60s, when images of Mickey Mouse and Goofy appeared on similar stickers ...Japan's TMS Studios (known for such shows as "Galaxy High School") is producing a special for CBS starring a cel-animated version of the Claymation character The Noid (from the Domino's Pizza commercials)...Although MTV had aired "The Beatles" cartoon series in the past, it has its sights set on debuting its own cartoon show, "Liquid Television," a series that incorporates various types of animation in an assortment of short gags. The first episode of this six-part series will premiere in December...Nickelodeon (an MTV-owned affiliate) has several made-for-cable cartoons in the wings, including "Thunder Lizards," "Ren Hoek and Stimp," and "The Weasel Patrol" (the latter title based on the Lela Dowling-Ken Macklin characters that appeared in Eclipse Comics' FUSION). Vanessa Coffey, producer of "Nick's Thanksgiving Fest" (their first animated special), has been appointed executive producer of animation for Nickelodeon, and will be in charge of identifying, developing and overseeing productions of the many animated shows and specials. Also, Nick will be airing additional never-before-aired "Looney Tunes," along with (gag!) those infamous "colorized" Porky Pig cartoons. Well, sometimes you have to take the bad with the good...Marvel Productions has several projects on their roster, including a five-part miniseries of "X-Men" (the original pilot having already aired two years ago) and "Attack of the Killer Tomatoes" for FOX (as Stan Lee would so aptly put it, "Nuff said?")...The theatrical rerelease of a newly-restored print of the original version of FANTASIA will open in select venues on October 5 (although I don't know if this version is complete)...A major event for animation buffs is the upcoming Ottawa '90 International Animation Festival at the National Arts Centre from October 3-7; check it out, if you're in the area!... Meanwhile in New York, while the highly-touted Bleecker Street cinema is closing due to financial constraints, the Film Forum is set to reopen the Thursday after Labor Day at its new location, 209 West Houston Street (a bit west of Sixth Avenue). There will be three screens: Film Forum 1 will show experimental and avant-garde material; FF 3 will specialize in foreign fare; and FF 2 will feature, as its opener, a month of Preston Sturges films and then follow with the New York premiere of the animated film AKIRA (it had originally been reported that AKIRA would be the first showing on the program, but this was changed) on October 19-25!

**OBITS:** The late Pearl Bailey, who died at the age of 72 on August 17, will always be remembered for the warmth she brought to her role of the caring owl Big Mama in Disney's THE FOX AND THE HOUND...Experimental animator Ed Emshwiller died on July 27 of cancer; he was 65. His experiments included combinations of live-action and animation in works like "Dance Chromatic" and "Transformation" (both in 1959), and computer animation in "Sunstone" (1979). He also provided sci-fi illustrations in books and magazines, usually signed "EMSH." In addition, Ed became a dean at CalArts in 1979, and was the visual consultant for the first made-for-TV movie for PBS, "The Lathe of Heaven."

ANSWERS TO TOON TEST: 1. 8-2-2. a. (another animation in-joke that Spieberg used was the theme song from PINOCCHIO, "When You Wish Upon A Star"); 3. c. (although more memorable for its use of excerpts from Disney's MONSIEUR MONSIEUR, director Joe Dante ran a Pele Le-Pew cartoon in a tavern scene, while Zach Galligan had a conversation with animator Chuck Jones, the director of said cartoon); 4. h. (this is more memorable as a bloop; the 1949 cartoon is screened in a cinema in a story set in 1948); 5. e. (Spieberg's first time in using cartoons as a metaphor); 6. b. (used in a store sequence) 7. f. 8. d.

**UNANIMITY IS ALMOST ALWAYS AN INDICATION OF SERVITUDE. — CHARLES de REMUSAT.**  
Almost? I would say unanimity is ALWAYS an indication of servitude because the whole world is socialistic. My definition of socialism is winnerless wars, fixed wages, blue-collar work inequity and atheism (no herenow reruns). To straighten out the world and relive the experience send SASE to:  
**4 WRONGS RIGHTED**  
**Box 2243 — YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, 44504**

## MasterMath Explains... MISCELLANIA by William G. Raley

Yes, there really is such a word as miscellanea. Trust me. Have I ever led you astray before, presented you with fantasy in sheep's clothing and called it fact? OK, but not often. You guys haven't really been trying to reach me at 1-800-ALABAMA, have you?

Anyway, today's topic is actually a number of incomplete topics that I might have tried to pass off as a potpourri of sorts in my final 10 article, and probably would, if I could think of a decent topic for this article. You wouldn't happen to have Johnny LaRue's phone number, would you? Never mind.

So, let the melange begin...

-- EXCERPTS FROM MASTERMATH'S SOUTHERN DICTIONARY --

**RAT:** not a small, furry rodent, no, nothing of the kind. Rat is more a reference to time, e.g., "I think I'm gonna get me a bite to eat rat now. You hungry?"

**OFFER:** has nothing to do with the phrase, "offer and acceptance." It's more like a command, e.g., "No, I don't want to play, Spot. Get offer me!"

**FIN:** not an appendage on a fish or car, no. It's a verb, e.g., "I'm fin to go to the lake. You wanna come along?"

-- GREEN JOKES --

- (1) What's green and used to play baseball?
- (2) What's green and used to write mystery novels?
- (3) What's green some of the time and caused widespread destruction?

-- COMEDIANS WHO ARE CANCERS --

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) Dan Akroyd         | (12) Bob Keeshan        |
| (2) Milton Berle       | (13) Don Knotts         |
| (3) Mel Brooks         | (14) John Lovitz        |
| (4) Jack Carter        | (15) Cheech Marin       |
| (5) Bert Convy         | (16) Al Molinaro        |
| (6) Bill Cosby         | (17) Gilda Radner       |
| (7) Phyllis Diller     | (18) Red Skelton        |
| (8) Jamie Farr         | (19) Sylvester Stallone |
| (9) Fred Gwynne        | (20) Linda Stone        |
| (10) Katherine Helmond | (21) Robin Williams     |
| (11) Polly Holliday    |                         |

(source: The World Almanac, more or less)

-- SOME OTHER JOKES --

Christmas in L.A. is different than in New York. My friends and I go outside and build smogmen.

I heard about a guy who was so cheap, he took his date to a pizza parlor and ordered an extra ingredient.

They're coming out with a horror movie about my neighbor and his JAP wife. It's called "Deep Wallet."

I hear Prince is going back to school. He's going to learn how to grow a moustache.

You've heard of AAA, right? Now there's a new group, AAAA, Afro-American Automobiles Anonymous. It's kind of a self-help group for black limousines with an identity crisis.

I was talking to a Valley Girl the other day. She was 18 -- that's 12 in human years.

You remember Bert & Ernie from Sesame Street? Yeah, they were a couple of pretty neat guys. But the other day when I was watching the show ... I mean thinking about the show, I realized why you never saw any other characters in their sketches. They were always wearing the same clothes!

-- OPENING PARAGRAPH FROM A PUBLISHED SHORT STORY OF MINE --

The driving, pulsating sounds of the Bad Brains swept like a tornado through the night club, reaching every crack, crevice, and eardrum. Arnold Stevens hadn't been to a punk rock club in years, and certainly never to one called Satan's Red Carpet. He was getting a headache from the beers he had had on the plane.

-- OPENING PARAGRAPH FROM A UNPUBLISHED SHORT STORY OF MINE --

One o'clock came and went. The fluorescent lamp droned like a swarm of trapped fireflies, while from the den the stereo insisted "101 is KLOL, Houston's best rock." Weary eyes panned then ten by eleven foot study till they reached the dark-grained wood of a small dresser, whose shelves stretched almost to the lightless ceiling.

-- ANSWERS TO GREEN JOKES --

- (1) Lou Broccoli
- (2) Celery Queen
- (3) Hurricane Chameleon

-- THOUGHT FOR THE DAY --

In the film *Die Hard 2*, when Bruce Willis is calling his wife from Dulles Airport in Washington, D.C., why is he using a Pacific Bell pay phone?





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

The Dr. Iguana TV Guide

by Ken Burke

**THE SARCASTIC MOTHER SHOW:** Sitcom featuring the exploits of an everyday household run by a "mother" who has the nurturing instincts of a Don Rickles without a conscience. Hilarity abounds as "Mom" assaults her children with the type of barbed stab-your-heart humor that would drive REAL kids into fits of nail-biting, bedwetting, and years of expensive psychotherapy. Tonight, "Mom" makes a point of embarrassing her daughter in front of her friends, verbally emasculates her son, subjects her husband to a bitter tirade of condescension, and then bursts into tears because her family has not made a particularly big deal about Mother's Day.

**THE SEXUAL TENSION SHOW:** A glib con-man and an ambitious, emotionally unstable career woman badger and provoke one another in a series of mind-numbing, logic-blocking escapades. Using their skewed interpretations of the power-of-love as their guides, the duo continually harrass, confuse, and shame each other in an attempt to force an admission that he/she is the only man/woman who has the God-given right to make him/her unhappy. Naturally, the bitchy twosome's neurotic quirks are perceived by their audience as sexual frustration. As a result, titillated viewers will spend their evenings in front of the tube, urging the show's characters to finally make love, rather than do it themselves. Of course, once the duo actually DOES consummate their passion, audiences will lose interest and ratings will drop until the show is cancelled. This makes way for a new cast of characters for impotent couch potatoes to root on towards the bedroom. This proves once and for all that America's hunger for a slow strip-tease is never really satiated.

**THE ILLEGAL COP SHOW:** A team of clever, fashionably-dressed police officers goes "undercover" to beat criminals at their own game. Using entrapment, hearsay evidence, warrantless wire-tapping and various violations of the search-and-seizure statutes, the team evades punishment over their "unorthodox methods" by "getting results." Viewers who blanch at the show's underlying themes (Our criminal justice system is a failure; It takes a criminal to catch a criminal; There's such a thing as a kinder, gentler Police State; Fascism is a pretty cool wardrobe accessory; etc.) will be mollified by the catchy rock music soundtrack, film noir camera angles, witty banter of the attractive lead characters, and the knowledge that "emotional justice" (if not technical law) has, in the end, been served.

**THE HUMAN SCUM SHOW:** Aren't people interesting? The producers of this reality-based show think so too. That's why they put together this gritty, credible-sounding program that documents the lives and actions of career-criminals in the throes of their most disgusting behavior. When the appropriate videotape from bank or convenience store cameras cannot be found, this program hires actors to "faithfully" re-enact the crimes. Granted, the subject's alibi is never re-enacted, and the show's portrayal of the crime before a mass audience ensures that the criminal can never really count on a fair and impartial jury (potentially resulting in expensive mistrials and a dead-to-rights criminal achieving freedom through technicalities), but where else can you view the inventive brutality of a really well-motivated thug? Not only does this program display the ferocity and depravity of the criminal perpetrators, but it teaches the viewing audience techniques that can be put to good use in their very own homes! Law Enforcement-sanctioned and -approved, this show is educational for all ages (though not particularly moral or uplifting). Each episode clearly demonstrates the fine line that can be drawn between becoming a paid informant (performing one's civic duty) and being a dirty, stinking, yellow-bellied snitch (turning in an acquaintance for doing something you were too afraid to do). With the home viewer on the same side as TV and the Police, those nasty ol' criminals don't stand a chance...at least, not until they get their very own show.

**THE RICKERING YUPPIE SHOW:** Intense marital spats and arguments run rampant in this show featuring a "30-something" couple made cranky by AIDS-enforced sexual boredom. The lead characters dress well, are good-looking, athletic, sexually vibrant, have close friends, career options, and are capable of making the type of snappy comebacks that most people can only make in 20/20 hind-

sight. So what's their problem? Chronology and biology have conspired against them, forcing them to GROW UP and face the same types of responsibilities that their much-maligned parents did. GADS, what tragedy, eh? The characters all seem to have everything they ever needed or desired, and yet they still find aspects of their lives to whine about. So why watch? Because besides classy acting and inventive filmmaking techniques, this show offers dialogue that is startling in its passion and point. Every scene and situation sounds as honest and compelling as a whispered argument between secretive parents. If you didn't know better, you'd swear the scriptwriters had obtained their dialogue and storylines by planting wireless microphones in the bedrooms of married couples prone to squabbling and misdirected sexual impulses. But we all know THAT could never happen...could it? This show is proof positive that the "Baby Boom" generation is at its absolute best when it is talking about itself.

**THE DISCUSSION PANEL SHOW:** The issues and controversies of the day are discussed, argued and belittled in this zingy, sometimes infuriating program. On the panel will be a Rude Conservative whose sole purpose seems to be making damn sure that he interrupts the other panelists before they can effectively make their points; an Overzealous Liberal seeking to turn every difference of opinion into a Criminal Conspiracy; and a Stone-Faced Moderator whose smug expression conveys the impression that he believes that he, and he alone, knows the true answers to the world's problems but is not allowed to say so. Also on hand, a Special Guest Expert, who has no idea of how to get a word in edgewise when the verbal combat starts. The Sports Version of this program comprises basically the same elements on the panel, with the following variations: The collective IQ of the panel will be approximately 115 points lower; panelists will consist of three senior-aged blowhards, puffing on green wormy cigars, who will refuse to let the younger member speak until he's spoken to; and then they won't let him complete his statement. The charm of this variant of the panel show? Viewers generally feel that if these panelists weren't being paid to argue about the outcomes and stars of sporting events, they'd get together at a local bar and do it for free.

## The Shocking Truth about Lassie Dept.

What gullible viewers thought America's Favorite Canine was saying on the collie's hit TV show...

**LASSIE:** Bark-bark-bark-bark!

**TIMMY:** What is it, girl? Why are you so excited?

**LASSIE:** Bark-bark-bark-bark-bark-bark-bark-bark-bark!

**TIMMY:** Calm down, girl...say, where's Dad?

**LASSIE:** Bark-bark-bark-bark.

**TIMMY:** Is that it, girl? Is Dad in trouble?

**LASSIE:** Bark-bark!

**TIMMY:** And you wanna show me where he is?

**LASSIE:** Bark-bark-bark-bark.

**TIMMY:** Well, c'mon, lead me to 'im!

**LASSIE:** Whine-whine-whine.

**TIMMY:** Atta girl, Lassie.

**LASSIE:** Whimper...

...and what Lassie was actually trying to say...

**LASSIE:** Omigod, I'm in such pain!

**TIMMY:** What is it, girl? Why are you so excited?

**LASSIE:** I'm wearing an electronic flea-collar that's giving me small jolts of electricity to make me behave on cue and it hurts. It hurts!!!

**TIMMY:** Calm down, girl...say, where's Dad?

**LASSIE:** He's standing right next to you, you idiot! Never mind him, I'm in pain! Do something! Call the ASPCA! Have you no compassion?

**TIMMY:** Is that it, girl? Is Dad in trouble?

**LASSIE:** Ohh god! What an unfeeling, insensitive bastard this kid is!

**TIMMY:** And you wanna show me where he is?

**LASSIE:** Anytting, anything you want. Just stop those jolts of electricity!

**TIMMY:** Well, c'mon, lead me to 'im!

**LASSIE:** In the name of God, won't somebody please help me?

**TIMMY:** Atta girl, Lassie...

**LASSIE:** Whimper...

First we learn that Lassie is a male dog hired to portray a female, then that his young master has been busted for possession of drugs more often than Timothy Leary and the Rolling Stones combined, now this tragic abuse of a canine whose only crimes were that he was pretty. What next? Will we discover that June Lockhart was really one of America's first Stepford Wives? More on this story as it develops.



"I'm leaving you, Howard, because, quite frankly, you make my skin crawl."

## NO DAY AT THE BEACH

by A.T. Hunn

The sharp, icy wind slamming against creaking walls confounds the penning of this poem by flickering light from a scarred, smoky oil lamp





# The Hit Squad

by Susan Packie

Do not take the Krawen Board of Education lightly. Do not underestimate its power to enforce its decisions. The Krawen Board of Education is, if nothing else, definitely a force to be reckoned with.

While it faces many seemingly insurmountable obstacles in the attainment of educational enlightenment of its students during the course of the school year, one of its most intractable problems is attendance. I used to live in Krawen. This is a true story.

The day started out like any other day. I was flat on my back with a fever of 104°, a stuffed-up nose, watery eyes, and a hacking cough. I knew I couldn't possibly go to school that day, so I called the answering service and reported that I was sick. That was the beginning of my problems.

This was entirely unplanned, so naturally I lacked tissues, aspirin, inhaler, cough drops--in short, I lacked any and all medication. So I threw a coat over my nightclothes and ventured outdoors, intending to dash to a pharmacy.

In the street outside my folks' house, a gang of junior high school students, all perfectly healthy, were taking drugs and listening to hard rock. A high school student on a motorcycle nearly ran me down. Kindergartners were playing mommy and daddy in a bus shelter. A truant officer wearing blinders walked right past them. Then he saw me.

"Aha! Caught in the act! Aren't you supposed to be in school?"

I took off like a jackrabbit. The pharmacy was only one block away. Luckily, an AWOL sixth grader mugged the truant officer before he could catch me. She was proceeding to rip the officer's bomber jacket off him as I fell into the pharmacy.

I bought what I needed, but then the question arose as to how to get home without being picked up by the Krawen Board of Education Hit Squad. I purchased a fake wig, fake eyelashes and a fake nose, and slipped out of the store.

Oh no! The Hit Squad was across the street, holding one end of a jump rope for AWOL third graders. I retreated and rethought my escape strategy. Was there a back door? I asked the pharmacist. There was--marked "AWOLsExit." I used it. Maybe if I stayed close to the sides of buildings, I could inch my way back home.

Just as I was about to entre my folks' home, I heard the sirens and saw the flashing lights. A disembodied voice over a bullhorn screeched out, "We see you! Surrender, AWOL Krawen person! If you give up peacefully, we will hold our fire."

I gave up peacefully. The handcuffs were snapped on me and I was led away.

Krawen still has one of the highest student absentee rates in the state, but the Hit Squad really knows how to enforce teacher attendance!



NOTHIN' FOR NOTHIN'

by Ted Brohl

"Nothin' for nothin'," a friend of mine said, And I thought him a terrible cynic, But shortly thereafter they found him quite dead, A process I'd not like to mimic.

"Nothin' for nothin'," the bartender joked When I asked for a drink on the house; When I was served and his nose I had poked, He flagged me and called me a louse.

"Nothin' for nothin'," my son-in-law cried, As we took part in the wedding rehearsal; "I gave you my daughter," I said, "for your bride, But now I shall seek a reversal."

"Nothin' for nothin'," the minister droned, As his sermon continued to bore us; The congregation had reason to moan As collection plates were passed before us.

"Nothin' for nothin'," the Catholic priest prayed, "Father, let nothing corrupt us." A thunderous voice said, "Then when you get laid, Stop practicing coitus interruptus!"

## UNREAL ESTATE

by Larry Stoltz

Dear Theo:

It's hard to believe one year has passed since I moved to San Diego. I'm finally starting to get used to it. It sure is a change from Cedar Rapids.

There is something I feel I must share with you. Do you remember the last thing you said to me before I left? Let me refresh: You said that I would miss Iowa greatly and that I would never see anything like a corn field in Southern California.

Well, of course I do miss Iowa. But in regards to your latter point, I feel the need to correct you. I've noticed a phenomenon here, especially in the North County, that strikes me as being exactly like Iowan fields of corn. Instead of corn, however, fields of houses sprout up in straight, equidistant rows. Not one house in a hundred varies. These "house farms," as I call them, start out the way young corn fields do--the ground is leveled and the heavy machinery is brought out. The seed is planted and the houses are grown, just like corn.

Unlike corn, development of these house farms is not contingent on the weather. It is almost always sunny and warm here, with only occasional rain. This means they can plant at any time and reap at any time. And the houses come to fruition at breakneck speed. I swear they can grow completely in weeks! The growers want to get each farm done as quickly as possible so they can start on the next. I think they want to cover the entire state with these fields; that is how maniacally efficient they are.

Before I go on, I should explain that these are not houses which you and I are accustomed to. They, like rows of corn, look identical even from the slightest distance. They are always the same color, antiseptic white or tan, but never varying within each farm. Every roof, on every house on every farm I think, is comprised of red pantiles. The houses have the same shape, though I don't really have a word that describes the shape.

The house farms are called planned communities. This is something like planned parenthood but you substitute quantity of life for quality of life. To me a planned community connotes something along the line of Frank Lloyd Wright stuff instead of these domino domiciles, but I'm from Iowa, what do I know? Anyway, gotta run.

Oops, one more thing. Did you see the latest Woody Allen movie? It won't be showing here for about four more months.

Bye for now,

Arthur

16 "It says here, 'make sure and apply only to your scalp.'"



# Commercial McClue-In

by "Kid" Sieve

A funny thing happened to me in the subway station the other day. It was time for the annual Changing of the Station Ads, and in place of all the annoying movie posters and other visual garbage were blank pseudo-corkboard rectangles. It actually made the station look pretty. Suddenly I caught my eyes straying towards the station walls as if looking for something they couldn't find, and realized with a start that, yes, even the Kid had been sucked into the vortex of expectation that these posterettes engendered. A shocking experience, to say the least. Moral, if there is one: you're never immune, no matter how hip you are to the message of the trash. Ads are so blatantly pervasive they're practically white noise in our everyday lives now, so stay alert!

I promised you a Marla wrapup, now that everyone's forgotten about her already in favor of the next trendy gossip (SADDAM HUSSEIN AND MOAMMAR KHADAFY CAUGHT IN ILLEGAL HOMOSEXUAL AFFAIR—FILM AT 11!), but I saved the stuff because it occurred on the same day as Eastern's indictment in their safety scam (and isn't it a wonder how Marty Shugrue's still making commercials as though all's rosy? Well, I suppose if Exxon could come out with a new campaign talking all about how their new fuel's better for the environment, folks will buy anything). Here's the poop: Marla did this ad, you probably remember, for No Excuses jeans, another company to suddenly jump on the environmentally-conscious-because-it's-good-for-our-image-but-don't-ask-us-about-the-chemicals-we-use-in-our-manufacturing-plants bandwagon. Says Marla, "The most important thing we can do today is help clean up our planet." (See my remarks about the wonderful Kirkpatrick Sale NATION column basically explaining why this putting-the-onus-on-the-"little-guy"-consumer is basically bullshit because it takes attention away from the real polluters, corporations over which we have no control...) She then tosses copies of the Star and the National Enquirer into a nearby trashcan, smiles blankly (how else can she smile?) into the camera and adds, "Things are looking better already." These papers, obviously, have pictures of her splashed all over them. Well, CBS and NBC immediately balked and refused to even run the ad, based on, according to Newsday, "what they view as unfavorable treatment of The National Enquirer and Star Magazine." 'Scuse me, did I miss something? Have these papers suddenly gotten a credibility transplant and I was out of town or something? Are we talking THE NEW YORKER or even MAD Magazine? Not last I looked; they were still as stupid as ever, ranking far behind such notable supermarket checkout line goodies as the Weekly World News and my personal favorite, The Sun (whose headlines often rival those of The New York Post in humor value). Well, here's the rub: These tabs aren't sophisticated, but they do have beaucoup bucks, and they use them for things like TV ads. The lame excuses offered against No Excuses, according to a CBS asshole, was because the ad "denigrates another product" (like Coke doesn't denigrate Pepsi and veezy-versy all the time? Did I miss something; have commercials suddenly become nicer than political campaigns? Not to my memory), while NBC said "Our facilities are not to be used to resolve private disputes" (presumably like those anyone might have against General Electric, NBC's owner, for making nuclear weapons or such). Well, lo and behold we find out that the Enquirer had spent over \$5 million on network TV advertising in 1989. As for the Star, ya gotta love 'em—they had the sense of humor to run the whole affair as one of their gossip items! Says the VP of G.P. Group, which owns the trash papers, "It's free publicity for us and them. Even if the networks had run the ads, I'm not sure we would have pressured them about taking them off." The moral of this one? Besides "money talks" The same: the media will do anything, absolutely anything, to get the minds of the American public off the things that are really going on in the country. Since this incident, we've had two blow-ups over the war song—I mean, the national anthem, one being sung (by Roseanne Barr) and one not being played (by Sinead O'Connor), four controversial and funny artists being denied NEA grants, Actors Equity putting its foot in its mouth, taking it out and putting it back in again over an actor I've never even heard of in a play I'm not even planning to see because I can hardly afford the movies any more much less Broadway—and Neil Bush isn't in jail yet, nor is Ollie North (did you hear they found the proverbial "smoking gun" on Bush? No, of course not; we were too busy listening to Barr off-key) and his dad's trigger finger's getting itchy ("How long can we keep our boys waiting in the desert?", still refusing to acknowledge either that there are girls stupid enough to join the armed forces, or that perhaps we shouldn't keep anyone waiting, that maybe we ought to forget it and BRING THEM HOME before somebody gets hurt), now they're talking about deregulating commercial banks the same way they did the S&Bs and everyone's nodding their heads, and we still send more money to Central American goon squads than we give to our own people for houses and food and decent wages. I mean, why get upset at that when you have Roseanne, Sinead and Marla?

At least one "union" is celebrating this labor day. Seems the makers of late-night TV's infomercials have formed a trade association to "ease the fears of consumers turned off by years of bad publicity," according to AP. They're actually vowing to work with (read: run roughshod over) Congress and the FTC in "developing advertising standards" for their zillion-dollar industry. Please. Infomercial pusher Greg Renker, in a not-so-subtle effort to drive his competition out of business but make himself look good for

## The Dream

Is where we already are  
But where are we?  
The sky is drab the trees  
are bare the wind howls  
Somewhere out there  
Today yesterday day before  
Inside the ivy sprout  
Green shoots that keep reaching  
for the ceiling maybe  
the cats eat lick their paws  
One stretches scratches  
on the scratch pole the other  
jumps him bites his neck  
with love bites they tussle  
as the clock strikes friends  
But where are we?  
We go on we must go on  
The dream is still ahead  
- Mary Ann Henn



"cooperating," says, "We want to encourage the FTC to nail infomercial producers who make false and misleading claims or are deceptive" (unlike him, presumably—Guthy-Renker markets self-help and motivational courses, real tricky things on which to cry fraud because they're filled with subjective loopholes). "We want to discourage them from lumping us all into the same category and creating laws and regulations that hurt our sales effectiveness in the long term." Now that you've come up for breath after that gobbledygook, you probably realize he just contradicted himself. He doesn't want to be categorized as a gonif, but he thinks excessive laws will hurt his sales effectiveness (read: ability to shill the public). His solution? Take control of the regulators! No wonder this guy's such a good marketer, eh?

The Kid would like to thank JJ staffer and anagrammatist extraordinaire Jed Martinez for his suggestions on the best currently-running animated TV ads, among them the Tropicana orange juice ad with the straw and orange (done by John Lassiter, who used to work with computer-animators Pixar), a Dow Agent Orange—er, bathroom cleaner "Scrubbing Bubble" one done, again by computer, from the "bubble's" point of view (unseen by this writer as of yet), and a Levi's 501 jeans campaign he swears is not the one done by Spike "I'm Everywhere Now" Lee (with the backwards-talking guys on the Chicago Cubs fans) but looks like a surrealistic bit from a Japanese studio; watch for it, I've not seen that one yet either. It

While we're on the subject of Levi's, I've heard tell of an ad for their kids' line narrated by John Cleese; Jed also mentioned a real wrenching ad for Deer Park spring water, where the actor on camera makes a sympathetic plea to give this poor tyke a home or, somewhat, one hears whining (as if by a puppy) in the background, and then it turns out it was the bottle of spring water whining (like I'd let a talking bottle into my home, yeah sure, I'm neurotic enough, thank you); and a new radio spot for Carvel (now that Tom's sold the company) by personality Gene Sheppard, who used to do Sealtest ice cream spots long ago. Haven't seen nor heard any of these notables; guess I've been keeping myself occupied in ways other than mass media lately. Shame on me for being out of touch!

Okay, there are two I've seen that I've liked. Viewers are whining because Tsuzi's not using David Leisure any more, but I rather think Leisure's got enough money in the bank and is in no way hurting, and besides, I get a kick out of their latest series, especially the one that asks which pickup truck would be better in the event of a giant lizard attack. Psychotronically cute. The other one I wanted to mention is a PSA done by Bo Jackson in favor of kids staying in school. Now, normally there's a thin line between PSAs and propaganda (mostly none), and as much as I realize the idea of staying in school so you can conform to a certain system to prepare you for being abused in the "real world" is so much bullshit, I also know that there's no way to get around the system (or at least a very slim chance if you're not privileged) unless you get through it first, so I can sort of get behind the sentiment. Anyway, I didn't catch the sponsor of this PSA, but it uses the same techniques of which I spoke last time when singing the praises of the multi-Bo commercial for Nike. It's again a series of superimposed Bos, talking about how "Bo knows philosophy" and math and literature and all these other things "because Bo stayed in school. Don't be stupid—stay in school." Of course, this doesn't guarantee a nonprivileged kid diddly-squat even if he/she stays in school, but it's better to at least know the system if you intend to fight it. And heaven knows, Bo knows the system.

I wanted to wrap this up by acknowledging Ellen Goodman's latest series of awards, one of which, this year's "Ms-Guided Madison Avenue" special, goes to the ad idiots who devised the Lysol print ad. "Featuring a manicured hand on the toilet bowl, the copy reads, 'With Men Or Boys at Home, Your Bathroom Needs Cleaning Every Day.'" Guess girls don't shit. Actually, I know a woman who doesn't sweat, but that's more than you need to know. And at my home, the hands of the man who cleans the bowl aren't manicured!



**SELECTIONS from the MEMOIRS of DR. MEYERLING**  
(Volume 6 in the "Founding Fathers of Psychology" series)  
*by Mark Hatmaker*

**June 2 18--**Thurston has grown more surly of late. He has taken to regarding me with icy stares, and making these harumphing sounds whenever I pass him in the hall. Yestery in the University lounge, someone had buttered my chair causing me to slide onto the floor nearly spraining my nipples. Thurston laughed uproariously.

I think he has not yet accepted the terse manner with which the Vienna society regarded his paper on Human Sexuality. After all, it was risky to try and usurp Freud's theories with foolish appendices claiming that all men are not only homosexual, but that they must also resist the temptation to be near pork rinds.

**June 4 18--**Tragedy has struck! Gobroski has fallen victim to his own imprinting experiments. He is now living with a family of mallards in the country. He seems happy enough and has plans to fly south to Lake Titicaca this winter.

All has balanced out, though. Leyerman believes he has proven that the ego and the superego do not exist, and that in their place reside a dusty shelf and a longing for yams.

**July 1 18--**Today Freud presented his treatise on penis envy. We all laughed, realizing his folly, though I admit I have become wary of my wife's lasso lessons.

**July 18 18--**My patient, Francine X, insists that I change her name to Francine P. Susan Y., while under hypnosis, has revealed that she skipped over the anal stage and went directly to the genital and from there to the 8:10 stage to Albuquerque where she got into some trouble with a man named Gus.

Afterthought--I must remember to get eggs. Perhaps Gobroski could help.

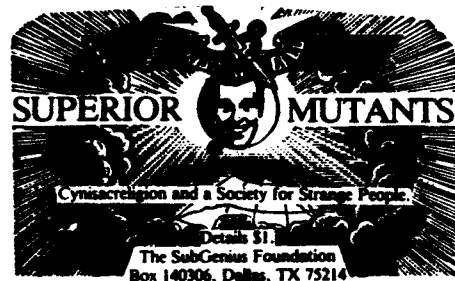
**July 22 18--**Thurston has made a major breakthrough with his patient. He has discovered that the individual as 41 personalities residing within him. Oddly enough, they are all named Small Charlie and will refuse donuts if offered.

**August 14 18--**Today in group therapy K. admitted that he feared his mother's pastries. I tried to console by having him replace his thoughts of pastries with those of turnips. He then brazenly called me a quack and left the room.

Other than that, much progress was made. Finklemeier no longer believes that he is an insurance auditor. He now imagines himself to be an owl. After much coaxing on my part I confined him to the oak tree in front of the building where his incessant "whoo"ing will no longer annoy the other patients.

**August 19 18--**Today I was confronted by a most curious case. An elderly male lighthouse keeper abandoned his job and rented a bungalow in India, where he insists that he will be able "to hold off those God-damned gophers at least until [he] receive[s] word from the King." I read of this in the Psychiatric Journal and was both saddened and intrigued by the fact that most of the really interesting cases seem to be happening elsewhere. My most interesting article ever contributed concerned the case of Walton X, who was frightened of his own footwear.

**September 9 18--**At last fortune has found me. Today I was appointed head of Psychology at the University. This will bring many responsibilities, though I can't help but notice that I will be making significantly less money each year and have been explicitly asked to speak to no one. Enough is enough. This coming Monday morning I shall move into my new office, which is in Guam. Perhaps a little inconvenient, considering that I no longer own a catamaran, but I understand the accommodations are very spacious.



## **NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS**

### **ONE SIZE FITS ALL**

*by David M. Williams*

After each Christmas season, I reflect on my achievements over the past 12 months and start thinking toward the new year. During this time, I seriously ponder how best to improve my life. I then try to formulate a significant list of New Year's resolutions designed to positively affect my physical, mental and spiritual well-being. The intentions behind my resolutions are always quite noble; unfortunately, my track record at keeping them is lower than Bub Uecker's lifetime batting average. This year, in the hope of improving my typically disappointing completion rate, I've developed a unique breed of resolutions. With these, I know I'm going to do much better. In case you too have experienced short-lived resolutions, I'll gladly share some of mine with you:

- Don't let your wife reach the mailbox before you when in the second week of February your *Sports Illustrated* arrives.

- Even if you're offered a great deal, don't purchase a Rolex watch from someone who displays his entire inventory on his arm.

- Make sure you've totally recovered from your New Year's Eve celebration before you attempt to make any resolutions for the upcoming year.

- Thwart all attempts by your wife to matchmake any of your friends.

- Never accept the nomination to a political office which has to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

- Avoid getting into crowded elevators with people on the eighth day of their 7-day deodorant.

- Despite the fabulous bonus gift offer, don't order any specially advertised product on television at a price of \$19.95.

- Never let a lawyer who advertises on the Late Late Show defend you in court.

- Even if they're taking up room in your attic, never throw away a box of old baseball cards.

- Resist the temptation to buy stock from any stockbroker who guarantees you a 100% return on your investment.

- Even if the sign says "fresh-brewed," don't drink coffee from a vending machine.

- If you own a long-haired white cat, never buy a dark blue suit just to meet "dress for success" standards.

- Don't go to Las Vegas with the idea of making money.

- Never attend any church where the preacher sweats profusely and spends most of the sermon shouting at you.

- If you think the Constitution guarantees your right to have a telephone, forget to pay your phone bill.

You know, I think those are pretty good. So good, in fact, I'm going to try and sell them to the general public. I wonder what marketing technique would work best...I've got it. I'll advertise them on television for the special price of \$19.95. And to make them irresistible, I'll throw in an imitation Rolex watch and offer a 10% discount toward the fee of any lawyer who specializes in getting cash payments for accident victims. Supplies are limited, so call now! Operators are standing by...that is, if I remembered to pay last month's phone bill.



# ...TO HOLD

## Part Three by Sergio Taubmann

(Sam Steinbach has been having problems with a person known as "Emily Steinbach." He has received letters and packages addressed to this person, who is assumed to be Sam's "wife." Sam relegates these intrusions to being trivial until a wedding ring appears on his hand and he finds a large pair of panty hose drying in his bathroom. He calls the police and, just as he begins to realize the seriousness of the problem, Sam gets a call from "his wife"...)

As Sam slammed the door, all the rage, all the anger and frustration of the last few days began to pour out of him. He was finally going to confront this intruder and get him or her to confess. Maybe in the beginning a few beers would have assuaged him; now, after "Emily" had broken into his apartment, showered in his bathroom, was humiliating him here in his office in front of all his coworkers, he would require a lot more than a full apology. Maybe after she/he'd been sued into non-existence, "Emily" would understand his position.

"Who is this?" he demanded sharply.

"Who do you think it is, silly?" a sweet, saccharine voice replied. The woman—he was certain it was a woman now, and not a poor male imitation—then giggled in a pitch that would shatter steel.

"I think it's somebody in a hell of a lot of trouble. I talked to the police today about your visit, and this strange game you've been playing with me has got to stop now!" Out of the corner of his eye, Sam saw a few traders look up, startled. He wasn't aware of how loud his voice had gotten.

"Oh, Sammy, stop teasing." Sam winced; he hated being called "Sammy," and he was at a loss to explain why she mistook his anger for teasing.

"What sort of game are you playing, miss?"

The voice paused. "Well," she said mildly, "Mom and I were playing canasta earlier, but she's taking her nap now."

"Mom?" Sam asked incredulously. Having phantom in-laws to go with his phantom wife was something he didn't consider. It was suddenly a tiny bit cold in Sam's office.

"She's doing a lot better. She wants to know when you're going to come up to visit her. She really does like you, Sammy."

"Well, I don't like her, miss, and you are destined for jail if you don't leave me alone. Is that clear?" Sam said firmly and placed the phone back on its receiver. Before the connection was broken, he thought he heard "Emily" say something about returning this weekend and would he stop acting strangely.

Sam leaned against the desk and started some deep breathing exercises. It took a longer time than he expected for him to regain his physical and spiritual balance. Now calm, he looked up to see a tiny crowd of traders and secretaries watching him. Sam felt very uncomfortable; he didn't much like the position of spectacle. He grinned lopsidedly, but felt the smile was false, like a cardboard domino mask. He strode out of his office and prepared to seek out Rafe and discuss the Olsen offer. As he went past the knot of coworkers, he heard one of them whisper, "I didn't know Pick-It-Up was married."

The next day's mail brought two items of note for "Emily": a card from Medusa, NY, signifying that "Emily" was looking forward to being reunited with "Sammy," and a bill for her MasterCard. Sam crumpled both up in a rage, tossing the papers into his garbage can along with a plea to save the seals. He called the MasterCard people and tried to explain to them that this person was not living here, that she was in fact some deranged madwoman with a sick sense of humor.

The kindly woman in Plano, Texas, was not amused. "Sir, we have a change of address and name for an Emily Pontipen to your name and address. We sent her a new card there four months ago."

"But I never got a card because she doesn't live here," Sam explained as if to a child.

"Sir, if you're estranged from your wife—"

"She's not my wife!" he screamed before slamming the phone down. The crash of plastic on plastic reverberated slightly. Sam stood there, hand on the receiver, his breathing ragged. According to this "Emily," she would be home in a few days. As Sam walked to his den and fished out the portfolio on Olsen, he found himself looking forward to meeting this elusive phantom wife of his.

Her homecoming, Sam decided, was going to be spectacular.

The police didn't know what to do exactly.

They didn't deny that Sam had filed a prior complaint about "Emily Steinbach." However, since there was no sign of breaking and entering when that complaint was filed, nothing was taken, and Sam had no description of the suspect, it would be hard to figure out who this "Emily" was. The only way they could do so would be to stop every woman who approached Sam's apartment and detain these women for questioning. Sam didn't think this was an obstacle. The police, understandably, felt otherwise.

"But you've got to put this woman away! She's insane!" Sam protested.

"Do you have proof of this, Mr. Steinbach?"

Sam hesitated. "Well, no, but—"

"The only thing we could do is have you fill out a restraining order, but that would require you to actually identify the woman. You can't do that, so..."

"But she broke into my apartment!"

"You allege that she broke in, Mr. Steinbach. The report I have here says there were no signs of breaking and entering. That implies either you let her in or you have a real cheap security system. If it's the former, give us an I.D. and swear out a restraining order. If it's the latter, spend some more money."

Sam tried several other approaches to getting his way. After a half hour, he could tell the officer on the other end was beginning to weary of the conversation. So, turning the card over and over in his hand, he politely thanked the officer and hung up.

Sam only allowed himself a few moments to fume. He picked up the phone and threw it across the living room, not even caring to look where it landed. The postcard was crumpled in his hand, the large beautiful lake now lined with creases. He punched the wall, imagining "Emily's" face with each impact. He saw her as weighing in the 150-175 pound range, only about 5'2", with dark olive, sweaty skin and large, blubbery features. As his fist made contact with the stone of the walls, he imagined how her flesh would feel as it was pounded into raw meat. She was ruining his life—already he found it impossible to concentrate on the Leo Security buyout, and there was still TolTech to consider—after the phone call, he found he was having problems working with Auggie on it.

Finally, after his knuckles bled and his hands ached with a fiery hurt, he crouched down against the wall and tried to think this out. There had to be a way to put an end to this without violence. It wasn't that Sam was afraid of violence; far from it. But at this juncture in his career, he couldn't afford the scandal.

And then, Sam Steinbach realized what was on the card.

The address was a post office. An old post office, the kind that was closed down because the town of Medusa successfully lobbied for a new one.

At least to Sam's relief, nobody recognized him. Medusa was a tiny town, only a couple of hundred people by his estimate. If he had married a citizen of this place, then everyone would have had his face committed to memory. There was a chill in the air, and Sam had to buy a sweater at a general store. The sweater, like most everything else inside, was wildly expensive. Sam found his delusions of everything costing more in the city evaporating quickly.

At the town hall, Sam inquired about this "Emily Pontipen." The matronly woman at the desk (they were all matronly up here, and tended to wear denim) was able to fill him in on all the grotesque details. As she went through her story, the woman chewed on the earpiece of her glasses as if they were bubble gum. Sam tried to hide his sneer.

"Emily? Yeah, that was a shame," the matron sighed.

"Oh, what happened to her?" Sam had explained to the matron that he was hired by her school reunion committee to track some of these people down. Luckily, Emily had gone to college out of state, and the matron was not too quizzical. At least she didn't ask to see Sam's badge.

"Well, after she graduated she decided to move to New York, you know. She had met some guy at Montclair, he was from New York, wanted to marry her an' everything. Now Emily was okay, but she was no beauty, understand? I don't think she would've done any better if she stayed around here. So her friend offers to drive her down, but this friend, he's not on his best behavior, you know?"

Sam nodded. He felt colder than he should have been and hugged himself for warmth.

"These mornings can really get to you, can't they? So Emily mails the guy a card, lets him know when she'll be coming. Meanwhile, this friend of hers ties a few too many on, so by the time he picks her up he's feeling no pain. Emily probably suspects something, but you know how people can be...she doesn't want to offend him, she doesn't know how else she can get down to New York quickly. He tries to hit the interstate going seventy, loses control of the car and rams straight into the toll booth. Place goes up, the fire reaches the gas tanks before anybody can move outta the way, everybody dies. It was in all the papers up here."

"Very tragic," Sam said quietly.

"Yeah. Emily's family was all broken up," the matron said. She glanced down at the counter, seemed to study the initials etched into the wood by generations of pen-knives. "From what I hear, the boyfriend didn't handle it well at all. Once the letter she sent out arrived, he went stark-raving, if you know what I mean."

Sam did not feel like asking what the fiancée's name was.

There was no doubt about it. The woman Sam was dealing with was a real sick mind.

Anybody who would do what this "Emily" was doing to him and use the name of a dead girl—a dead girl who died horribly—was not operating with realistic rules. It would not be so bad if Sam had known the girl. If he had, in fact, dated her at one time it would have made a perfect, twisted sense. But the photo the matron had proffered him (from the woman's driver's license) had rung no bells, made no connections for him. Emily Pontipen was pleasant enough to look at, but totally uninteresting to him. She had been slightly overweight, giving her face a definite chipmunk-cheeked appearance. Her hair was a flat light brown, her eyes a darker shade of the same color. Her skin had a light olive tone. He could understand how some people would find her attractive, as

(continued next page)



this other Sam surely had.

That must have been the fiancee's name, Sam decided. The sick human being had fixated on him because of his name, created this fantasy world and filled out change of addresses that gave all her friends the impression that they were married. Then came the break-ins (Maybe the police are right, maybe I should get stronger locks, Sam thought). Of course, "Emily" didn't believe they were break-ins. To her poor twisted mind, it was her right to go in her own apartment and shower. It wasn't her fault that reality did not mesh with her world view.

Sam's eyes fell on the bandaged ring finger of his right hand. Yes, the woman was positively dangerous. He made a point to stop by a gun shop and get some protection, just in case.

(Concluded next issue)



For well over a century, the American western in literature and film has been a major genre, both here in the U.S. and abroad. Like jazz and the comic strip, it is uniquely American cultural form and one of the few things of which we as a nation can be proud.

The Western comic (not to be confused with comics from Western Publishing) was at one time a large part of the output of dozens of publishers; from the late 1930s, when the comic book as we know it today first appeared, well into the 1960s, when both comic titles and comic companies were in decline, various Western comics were available. Before there were video recorders (if you can remember back that far) and every motion picture ever released was available ad nauseum on cable, once you saw a film or television show that was pretty much it. Sometimes you would see a rerun of a favorite TV episode, but way back the season often included 25 or more episodes and the network would slip in an all-new summer replacement show rather than lose audience. The only way to see a repeat of a film or television show was often a comic adaptation or comic based on a film star. Many of the Western shows were available in four-color form, and to kids they were just as good as the "real thing," all in color for a dime or 12c, and ready any time, any place. Even the '70s had a brief resurgence, with both DC and Marvel publishing books with new and reprint material.

While the Western faded in popularity in the U.S., all but disappearing from the large screen and turning up only on reruns on television (usually on independent stations trying to fill airtime in the afternoons), it enjoyed continued success in Europe. Why this is is open to conjecture.

The last holdout was DC's JONAH HEX, a book decidedly more in tune with the "spaghetti western" vision than with what Roy and Gene would have considered proper. This book finally gave up the ghost as well, when some marketing genius decided that the already moody and violent Hex would be better off transferred into a "Mad Max" ripoff in some alternate future. About a year later, Jonah was swallowed up for good.

First with SILVERADO, then YOUNG GUNS, Hollywood took the first tentative steps toward the re-revival of the Western. The small screen found that with the relative success of miniseries like "Lonesome Dove" and TV-movies such as "Kenny Rogers' The Gambler," they too could bring back the Western.

The comics field has been a bit slower in bringing back the cowboy and horse opera. Several years ago Marvel brought back the Two-Gun Kid for a four-issue miniseries. The Kid was middle-aged but still doing those gun tricks that would be laughable to anyone who has actually fired a .45. The book resolved nothing and was

quickly forgotten.

DC's Western characters have made cameo appearances in a number of time-travel epics, most recently TIME MASTERS, and several have had their origins retold (with revisions) in SECRET ORIGINS titles.

Eclipse has issued two Rio graphic novels by ace artist and Jonny Quest creator Doug Wildey. Beautifully detailed artwork with fairly realistic storylines have made these critical and commercial successes. Great books.

Probably the world's most popular western series of the past decade has been Jean "Moebius" Giraud's LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY series, now being reissued by Marvel. Beautifully drawn by Giraud and written by Jean-Michel Charlier, this series is a steady favorite in Europe. Also available from Catalan is the YOUNG BLUEBERRY series which shows the early years of this career adventurer. Recommended.

Also recommended are GRINGO from Caliber Press and PISTACHIO by R.A. Jones.

Sight unseen, but worth looking for, is the OMLHOOT miniseries from Kitchen Sink. For those with a warped idea of the West or an affection for the television series, THE WILD, WILD WEST is available from Millennium. Flying fortresses, armored bad guys, pretty girls and Dr. Loveless. Hey, what more could you want?

For me, I've saved the best for last. Americomics, home of FEM-FORCE, has gotten the rights to reprint the various Western titles of Magazine Enterprises (ME). ME had work by many of the better artists of the Golden and Silver Ages. They also licensed the names of some of the biggest cowboy stars of the '30s, '40s and '50s, Tom Mix, Bob Steele, Roy Rogers and Lash LaRue among others. Along with the actual film stars, ME also published the adventures of such fictional cowpokes as The Black Phantom (a reformed female outlaw with big—er, guns), Red Mask, the Lemonade Kid and the original Ghost Rider (renamed Night Rider by Marvel, and now Phantom Rider by AC). The nice thing about the AC books is that they give background on the title characters, who have for the most part faded from popular memory. Editorial material also often includes bios of Western artists and news on conventions, books and video re-releases of interest to the B-Western fan. Most titles include photo covers and movie stills, often rare. While some titles are weaker than others due to story or art, many of these books are a pleasant reminder of simpler times. While often historically inaccurate (the Jesse James title has more to do with a couple of multi-part serials starring an unmasked Clayton Moore) or politically incorrect (Native Americans often suffering the worst stereotypical formulas), the titles offer harmless fun and deserve support for what they are.

By the way, I'm looking to do a longer and more in-depth article on Western comics for a future date. This won't be for IJ, but for an apazine called CAPA-Alpha of which Elaine and I are members, though if it's good enough I may try to shop it around another fanzine or legitimate market. If you can recommend research material (books, articles, etc.), drop me a line c/o IJ. If you have unwanted Western comics that you can to give away or lend, let me know. I'm currently not in the market to buy older collectables, but I will reimburse postage and insurance costs. Just let me know before sending me some things, as I don't want them sent to the TJ post office box but to our home address.

Received a couple of minicomics in the mail since last issue which I'd like to plug:

PINK SOULS (Robert Michael, 46 Barn Road, Agawam, MA 01001)—Robert did CRAZY ADULT, which I plugged an issue or so back. This 34-page mini (there's a foldout) is strictly adult and involves graphic sex. Unfortunately, Robert didn't put a price down, so I'd drop him a line and ask.

CLOTHING OPTIONAL (Ken Greene c/o Haricots Verts, 753 Tamarack Avenue, San Carlos, CA 94070; 50c or trade)—I've plugged a few of Ken's Curley the Handsome Cat minis. This is a little different, as he reproduces illos from a Dover collection of "naughty" French illustrations, adding some new captions and a '90s kind of humor. Nice job.

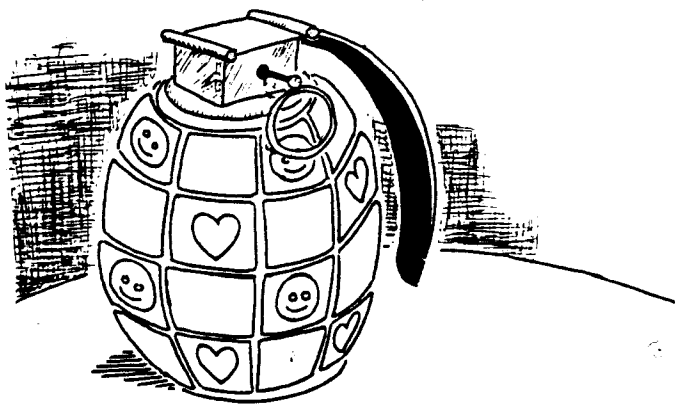
LITTLE GRETA GARBAGE #1 (Ripoff Press; \$2.50 US/\$3.50 Canada)—Sort of a low-rend non-airbrushed Little Annie Fannie. Fun in the way that CHERRY POPTART is, in that it's all about sex and drugs. A much more outlaw outlook than the Riverdale High take-off in CHERRY. Adults only, for sure!

UNDERGROUND CLASSICS #12 (Ripoff Press; \$2.95 US/\$3.95 Canada)—Ripoff, in conjunction with Ray 3-D Zone, brings us Gilbert Shelton in 3-D. Wow!! Wonder Wart-hog and those Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers poppin' out and pokin' you in the eyeball. Included is my all-time fave "The Freaks Pull a Heist." I've been a fan of Shelton since his old Car-toonz days. Recommended.

MAZING MAN Special #3 (DC; \$2 US/\$2.50 Canada)—Yeah! A favorite is back, even if only for a one-shot special. Writer Bob Rozakis and artist Stephen DeStefano bring us five stories and half-page gag strips involving that crazy bunch from Queens. Recommended.

ATOMICOW #1 (Vision; \$2.50 US/\$2.95 Canada)—Get in on the ground floor as a couple of fanboys take over the reality of their favorite comic book. Giant budgies and skateboarding aliens. A lot of fun. Also strange is the back-up feature, Finch Foster: Private Eyebird, a hard-boiled detective with a phony beak. Boy, those wacky Canadians; what will they think of next?

Keep an eye out for BRAT PACK by Rick Vietch. Kid sidekicks will never be seen the same! 'Til next time! NoTary Sajaa



"THE HAPPY HAND GRENADE"



## MIDNIGHT SUPPLIER

by Kenneth Wagner

i saw him  
there in the street light  
backlit shadows  
wearing his brim hat  
at alley's end

i walked his way  
he walked mine  
for the meeting  
secret  
about the impending sale

we came together  
near trashcans  
checking eternally  
over our shoulders  
for problems

what is it? he asked  
that i  
can do for you?  
i gave him a serene stare  
groping for words

i want  
to know  
if you  
can supply  
iodide?

a look of awe across his face  
he replied  
i do not  
provide iodide  
a necessary nutrient

## THE LIVING DEAD

by Tamarina Dwyer

America's committee of fools  
knows the weakness of an impoverished diet,  
the philosophy of saving polluted air  
suffocation  
and stifling all energy modes.

Let the frayed cord of employment know no  
difference

between the us and the world.  
If change be undesired,  
then authoritative asses  
can tremble and fear and determine to break—

The smart rain of ideas  
causes floods  
but the handcuff of clouds  
is illegal torture.

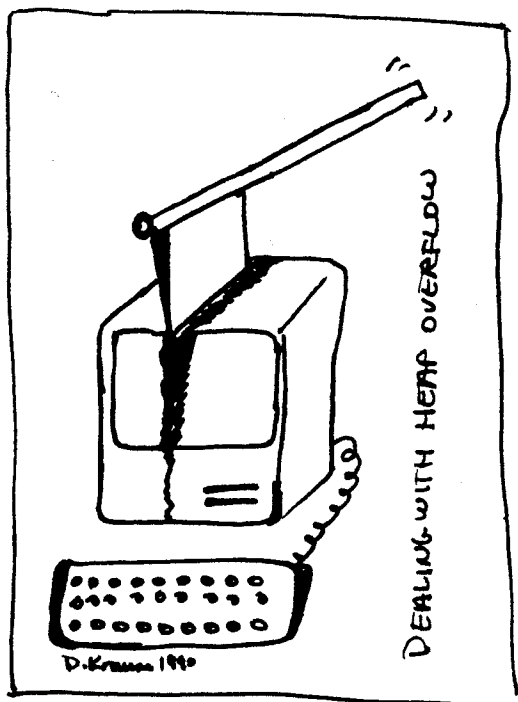
## CONNOTATIVE USE OF LANGUAGE

by Sigmund Weiss

Poetry is that guttural use of language constructing meanings. This is why rhythmic connotations are important in poetry towards expressions of thoughts. We are used to detailing wordage through literal connotations, but as magicians use sleight of hand for their varied forms of trickery, poets also must play a like game and should not be afraid to misuse words in their poems and should not accept dictionaries as final arbiters of wordage...

All languages are products of guttural utterances originally used in the primitive animal man. As we listen to patterns of speech in all branches of human endeavor, we find high, low, soft, harsh sounds in their utterances. These sounds are the basic formulations/reformulations of rhythms run through poetic lines. The patterns of the lines prescribe the poet's attitudes and meanings.

What our minds contemplate forms the language of our meanings, expressions, since the true poet, if a contemplative thinker, expresses their interior thoughts. This also is how a reader of a poem must proceed to comprehend what the poet has written.



\*\*\*\*\*  
"IT IS NOT DEATH THAT A MAN  
SHOULD FEAR, BUT HE  
SHOULD FEAR NEVER  
BEGINNING TO LIVE." —  
Marcus Aurelius, Roman  
Emperor (121 - 180 A.D.)  
That's especially true for some  
of us who reason that chance-  
wise we must relive this exact  
same hell-on-earth.  
To be living in the first few  
decades of eternal life is as non-  
sensical as never living again.  
Send SASE to arithmetically  
and spiritually sound  
NEREBEFORES  
Box 2243  
YOUNGSTOWN — OHIO, 44504  
\*\*\*\*\*

## PARTYTIME

by Joseph Cuthbert

I can hear them down the hall,  
My noisy neighbors, singing.  
Rock and roll is turned up all  
The way. My ears are ringing.

Noisy neighbors, such a pain,  
Woke me from my sleep.  
Noisy neighbors entertain.  
How I wish that they would stop.

Now they're in the hallway, on  
The prowl, on the loose.  
Someone shouts, "Let's make a train,  
And I'll be the caboose."

Noisy neighbors chug away.  
Chug on down the hall.  
I can see my ceiling sway,  
As they climb the wall.

They are pounding on my door,  
Now, shouting, "Won't you let us in?"  
Plaster's falling on the floor.  
The walls are caving in.

Noisy neighbors, push so hard,  
Breaking down my door.  
Hinges ripping from the wood—  
I can't take much more.

They are dancing in my room.  
They're dancing a merengue.  
I can hear the laughter bloom.  
I guess I'll join the soiree.

Noisy neighbors, having fun,  
They are a crazy crew.  
But I guess I can't complain.  
Now it's my party too.

## THE RICH

by F. Scott Manson

Let me tell you about the rich. They are not like you and me. They are very different. They have gills where we have lungs; and where we have feet, they have these webbed, flipperlike appendages. Plus, they have this gummy substance behind their ears that smells like feta cheese. That's because the rich never bathe. When they get dirty enough—that is, when their pungent effluence inspires the chauffeur to complain, or, perhaps, when their mere presence causes fresh young blossoms to dangle precariously on the edge of an early demise—they simply order new skin. And of course they never invite you to their parties. God forbid they should invite you. They do not care to socialize with lowlives like us. The bastards. The goddamn rich bastards. They can all go to hell. I see them riding around in their fancy cars and I gotta take the friggin' bus. They think I don't know what they're up to because I'm out here in the desert. But I know all right. I know what time it is. I hear them laughing at me up there in the hills. You can hear forever out here. The sound sort of funnels down through the canyons and goes right through the amplifier in my brain. Them rich sons of bitches. Laughing at me and tryin' to mess with my head. Sometimes I'd just like to kill them. Kill 'em all. Do things to their private parts. Cut 'em off and maybe stir-fry 'em. Not even use any oil so they'll stick to the side of the wok. Then maybe pull out their bowels and run 'em through a Cuisinart. Just kill 'em all. Kill! Kill! Kill!

Yeah, I got me some plans. Got me some real fine plans.  
Man, ain't parole great?!

## DRIVE-IN HAIKU

by R.M. Millard

Movies 'neath the stars  
In the comfort of your car,  
'Twas the best of times



# DE ARTE PERITA

## On Mastery

by Brian Skinner

"The unexamined life ain't worth a plugged nickel."

— Plato McKiester (paraphrasing his namesake's mentor)

Moseying was about the only speed at which Plato McKiester and his horse travelled any more. His horse was called Peggy—short for Pegasus. No matter that the nickname might have given that old horse a gender identity problem all these years. Peggy was already years beyond those concerns anyhow. In fact, he wasn't but about four paces from being turned into glue for furniture joints at any moment now. Not that it would have been worth anyone's while to haul his smelly old carcass to the factory though.

Old Kiester—which is what he supposed Peggy called him—wasn't one heck of a lot better off himself. It suited his old bones just fine that Peggy was never in any hurry to go any place at all. Just fine and dandy to take it nice and easy.

And so, their appearance in town was always very unnoticeable. They just sort of appeared, and always first and last—before and after any other business—at the Heat Mirage Saloon. Dismounting for old Kiester, and for Peggy too, sounded like a grueling ordeal. Sometimes there was so much creaking and groaning—of bone and sinew both sapient and equine, and probably of dried saddle leather too—that it was with a grimace that you listened, waiting for something to snap irreparably. It was a painful separation, this tearing apart of the old centaur into man and horse. And neither Peggy nor Old Kiester looked exactly right without the other half.

Plato McKiester straightened himself out and slapped the dust from his clothes. For sure he didn't get gritty by spurrgg Peggy down the dusty back roads. No one remembered their ever moving that fast. It was more like the dust just sort of settled on them.

Old Kiester gave Peggy a pat on the neck and promised him a bucket of water after he cooled down some.

On the wooden porch of the saloon a young fellow was strutting back and forth at a furious pace, his thumbs in his belt, almost swaggering. What uneconomy of movement, Plato McKiester thought. Very wasteful. He'd be all used up by twenty-five.

"What d'you call that horse, mister?" the youth stood still for five seconds. Maybe he was just making small talk. "Never seen one like that."

"Peggy," McKiester said, barely looking up and continuing on his way.

The young man stretched his arm across the doorway. "I hate to tell you, mister, but that horse's got balls," he grinned.

"Well, he knows it," McKiester said. "But he don't make a point of showing 'em off."

"S that s'posed to mean something?" the youth cocked his head. "Huh?"

"Only that you ought to stop wearing your little brother's pants," McKiester told him. He ducked under the young hooligan's arm and slipped inside before the surly youth could think of another thing to say.

"Well look at here!" the saloon-keeper hollered. There was no one else to look up.

"Guess the wind was blowing the right way today, Harvey," McKiester cracked a weathered smile.

The young man was leaning against the doorway still, looking like he was trying to regain breath that had been knocked out of him. Harvey Brock told him that he didn't need more flies than customers. The young man pulled the door shut with a pane-rattling bang and went back to his pacing and strutting.

Harvey brought a full bottle of McKiester's favorite whiskey—any kind at all—over to his table and dusted out a small glass with a corner of his apron.

"What's he want?" McKiester nodded his head towards the door.

"Waitin' for some friends," Harvey uncorked the bottle.

"That's Lucas' kid. He's all growed up now but he don't much act like it."

McKiester filled the glass to its rim. No sense lifting that bottle a dozen times for short refills. With a smooth and steady one-piece movement he brought the brimming glass to his lips and poured the whiskey straight down his throat, not misplacing a drop of it anywhere. No sense bending his elbow a dozen times for short, dainty-like sips.

Harvey came back to the table some minutes later. "The missis has got two more books for you, McKiester," he said. "One's about some young English dude with high hopes of growing up into the rich world. I think it's even called 'High Hopes' or something. I'll get 'em fore you go."

"Could you get 'em now?" McKiester looked up, refilling his glass without needing to watch what he was doing. "I ain't got nothin' to do right now 'cept sit here. I could be gettin' me an education in the meantime."

"Hell, you already read ev'ry book in town and all the ones the

missis gets on loan. We're gonna have to start calling you 'Dr. McKiester' 'fore long," he laughed, patting the old man's bony shoulder.

Harvey brought him the books without any more delay. McKiester eagerly cracked open the uppermost, the latest by the Englishman Dickens.

"'High Hopes'," McKiester chuckled to himself, shaking his head. He pored over the book and continued pouring out whiskey until there was very little left of either one. But he had no other business in town that day, coming only to get more reading material and give Peggy some exercise.

McKiester was nearly dozing when the door of the Heat Mirage Saloon burst open. The Lucas boy and his friends churned in like a cluster of dust-devils. After pushing one another playfully for elbow-room, they lined up at the bar. They were all wearing britches belonging to someone five years younger. McKiester would have liked watching them trying to get up on their horses. But the sun was getting low already. Peggy didn't see so good in the dark. McKiester got up to leave.

"What d'ya got there, old man?" the Lucas boy turned around.

"I reckon you ain't never laid eyes on one before," McKiester said. "They're called books."

The youth was stunned speechless again. His companions guffawed until they nearly passed out, braying like mules.

"Think you're pretty smart, huh?" the Lucas kid sneered.

"The wise man knows his limitations," McKiester turned away.

No one said a word.

"I'm talkin' to you, mister," the youth grabbed McKiester's arm.

The books fell to the wooden floor with a sharp crack that echoed off the bare walls.

"Lay off, buster," Harvey told the Lucas boy. "Take your rough-housing outside. Besides, it's not a good idea to be messing with Mr. McKiester here. The doctor's out of town."

"We wasn't gonna hurt 'im," the Lucas boy smiled innocently.

"I didn't mean for him," Harvey told them.

The mule-laughing started again. And as old Plato McKiester bent forward to retrieve his books, the Lucas boy pushed him with his boot. McKiester sprawled to the floor. One of the books lost a few pages skidding across the floor.

After the laughter had subsided, the Lucas boy drew out his gun and waited for the old man to get to his feet. He could have grown old himself, waiting.

McKiester set the books on the bar, very gently, and turned to face the Lucas ruffian. His companions had clustered around him, two on either side.

"You're pathetic," the young man snorted.

"That's a pretty big word," McKiester smiled. "Did it hurt?"

"No," he said firmly, almost grinding his teeth together.

"How 'bout this?" McKiester asked. Before an eye could blink he grabbed hold of the gun barrel and wrenched it from the Lucas boy's hand. It did not go off until he had it already twisted to one side. McKiester then whacked each one of them between the legs as if they had been lining up for it, ready to take their medicine. Their gaping mouths snapped shut and then contorted. They fell backwards like toppled fence posts, one by one, right down the line. Then McKiester discharged the remaining bullets into the floor, the whole business occurring so quickly that for a moment each of the writhing youths thought he had been shot into the bargain. McKiester tossed the emptied gun to the floor and stood over them.

To say that it all happened fast as lightning is a little off the mark, though it was pretty quick. It was not jagged like lightning. It was not a fury or an angry burst. No, it was perfectly smooth, absolutely seamless. From the last word on his lips to the tossing of the spent gun onto the floor was but a single movement in a single moment. There were no wasted gestures and no exertions. Hell, McKiester had forgotten how to exert himself. Swift and smooth and sure was all, like the sword of an Oriental warrior, as he had read from Commander Perry's book. "If you're really good at something," he said down to them, "showin' off's the last thing you want to do. It only invites trouble."

Then McKiester turned away, gathered up the books from the bar, and headed for the door.

"See you, Harvey," he waved. "And tell the missis thanks."

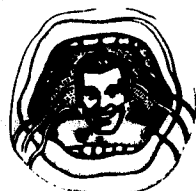
He paused a moment at the door as if he was trying to decide something. He turned around again and spoke, slowly sounding each word, as if to children or foreigners. The young man had progressed as far as getting to their knees by then and they had to look up at him. They had the sad expressions of scolded puppies.

"And one more thing," he told them. "Never judge a book by its cover."

Perhaps, McKiester wondered, they might have learned a lesson. Maybe they could learn from a small experience and would not have to get it from a big one like prison, as he had done. Well, if not, they'd pick up a little reading there. Plenty of time. It's that or gnaw your knuckles off.

Even with an hour's delay the young hooligans could have caught up with Plato McKiester and old Peggy. They could have overtaken them in the dark. But somehow none of them felt like climbing up onto a horse, much less riding at a gallop.

*"The Commander Perry mentioned is the U.S. naval officer Matthew Calbraith Perry, not his more famous brother Oliver Hazard Perry. In 1953-54 he initiated and concluded, under President Fillmore's order, a treaty with the Japanese, bringing them out of a long period of xenophobia."*







## NO "NO NEW TAXES" OR NOT NO "NO NEW TAXES"? THAT IS THE QUESTION

Reporter: Mr. President, if, when you said: "Read my

lips: No new taxes!" ten thousand times during your campaign, you really meant: "I think taxes wrongly applied can kill economic growth!", then why didn't you say: "I think taxes wrongly applied can kill economic growth!" ten thousand times, instead of: "Read my lips: No new taxes!"?

President: Well, I don't think anybody did such a good, penetrating job of questioning. When I said: "Read my lips: No new taxes!" ten thousand times, a really insightful reporter, something this country sorely lacks it would seem, would have asked me: "When you say, Mr. President: 'Read my lips: No new taxes!' ten thousand times, do you mean:

- A. No new taxes,
- B. Not no new taxes,
- C. Both no new taxes and not no new taxes,
- D. Neither no new taxes nor not no new taxes, or
- E. All of the above?"

Now if a really penetrating, insightful reporter, or even Mr. Dukakis, had had the intelligence to see the subtle implication of my statement: "Read my lips: No new taxes!" and had asked me to clarify my statement in this way, I'm sure I could have made him, and the American people, understand the profound economic truth which is at the kernel of my aphorism: "Read my lips: No new taxes!"; to wit, that I think taxes wrongly applied can kill off economic growth. The fact that no one caught the implication of my aphorism makes me very worried about the declining intellectual level of this country. And that's why I'm the Education President.

Some people say: "Politics is bullshit," but does it really have to be this bullshit? American "life" has gone beyond self-parody, and it doesn't seem to faze anyone.

Can't help but chuckle at international crises? You'll laugh all the way to the fully-equipped survival shelter when "Bob" lets you in on the real joke!

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## THE BIG CAT

by Jess Wilbanks

The way I understand it, Alfred was a nut, but he was a rich nut. He had a crock full of gold coins, a big house, a huge kitten named Florence and an overgrown parrot named Rinaldo. Nevertheless, he wasn't happy, so he built a giant clay cat in his living room, and somehow became trapped inside the cat and died.

Now Rinaldo and Florence are locked inside the house. I really don't know what they're thinking, but then I don't claim to know a lot...about anything.

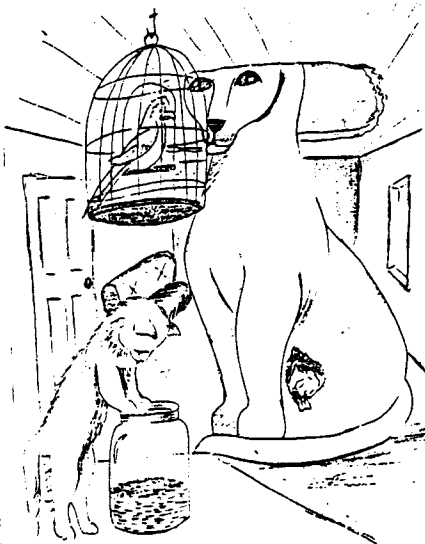


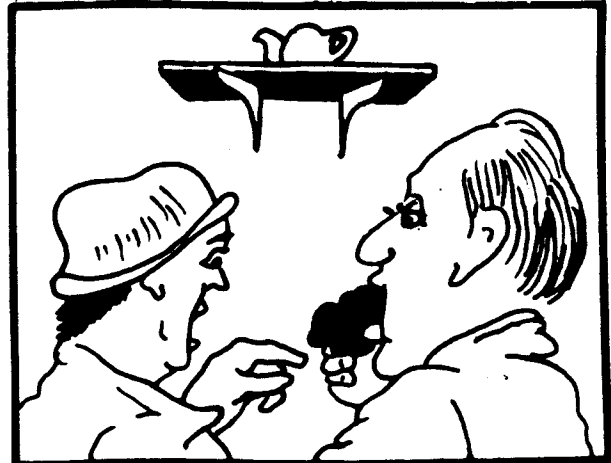
Illustration by Leola Calamita

## BIBLICAL FIRSTS

by Ted Brohl

God was the first pharmacist because He dispensed the tablets to Moses.  
Jesus was the first door-to-door salesman.  
Angels were the first "frequent flyers."  
Noah was the first to introduce the "two-step" dance on the ark ("You two, step on board, please").  
Saint Francis of Assisi was the first bird feeder.  
Methuselah was the first senior citizen.  
Jonah was the first to tell fish stories.  
Saint Valentine opened the first card shop.  
The Virgin Mary was the first "pro-lifer."  
Mary Magdalene was the first to try to make a prophet in Nain.

## OVERHEARD at America's Lunch Counters



"I had a good day yesterday, it was my shower day. And before I had my shower I had a goddamn good shit."

If nervousness, worries, sex problems, indigestion, noise or boogeymen are bringing you grief then read these amazing true facts pilfered from various sources by me (JD) to ease yer troubled mind...?!

- \* Two US Presidents, Washington and Jefferson, grew marijuana on their plantations.
- \* Napoleon Bonaparte was terrified of cats.
- \* The speed limit for a tricycle in Vancouver is 10 mph
- \* Movie actor Rondo Hatton was so ugly he played monsters without wearing makeup
- \* Ransom money paid to kidnappers is tax deductible
- \* Jack the Ripper was left-handed
- \* The word bully is from the Dutch word for love, boel
- \* The murder rate in medieval times was 26 times greater than today's
- \* Many breeds of tropical fish can survive in an aquarium filled with human blood
- \* The British spend twice as much on pet food as they spend on baby food
- \* French actor Pierre Messie could make his hair stand on end at will
- \* Pure gold is soft enough to mold with your bare hands
- \* After the Crimean War, the Russian government sold the bones of 38,000 soldiers killed for use as fertilizer
- \* Most UFOs are spotted at times when Mars is closest to the Earth
- \* Chickens are the only animals we eat both before they are born and after they are dead
- \* Charles Dickens would only write facing northward
- \* In the 16th century, t'was illegal to celebrate Xmas in Massachusetts
- \* Redheads have fewer hairs than blondes
- \* In Iraq you cannot eat snakes on a Sunday
- \* An average person has a vocabulary of 3,000 words
- \* The male spider's penis is on the end of one of it's legs
- \* Dumbbells were originally bells with the clappers removed
- \* George Fredrick Handel wrote many of his operas for eunuchs, which could explain why they are so seldom performed today

don't ya feel better already? - John P. Doucet



# BENNY THE BROKER

by Dale Andrew White

Benny the Broker was well read. He could identify an author with just an opening line, quote Bartlett's by the page number, predict the exact ranking of a bestsellers list before it had even been posted. Benny definitely had a way of dealing with words.

That was his downfall, I suppose—his love of literature. He became hooked. He became careless.

Hey, it happens to some people. Bibliophilia is an addiction—and Benny was a classic case. He just didn't realize, until it was too late, that he'd gotten so engrossed.

I met Benny during our freshman year at a Florida university. I noticed that he'd started running favors for dark-haired men in sunglasses who'd drive up from Miami to check out library books and attend lectures on Southern esthetics. They generously paid Benny for "research" and always left town as soon as he brought their car around. (They were jittery about leaving their Jaguar unattended, something about knowing persons who did unwarranted engine alterations.)

Whenever dormmates asked about these pseudo-intellectuals in Bahamian shirts and gold chains, Benny curtly said they were interviewing him for summer employment. "Selling magazines and encyclopedias. Very big and hush-hush."

It became apparent by the way Benny dressed, however, he wasn't just peddling subscriptions. The coats, the ties, the reading glasses all indicated Benny had become a major distributor.

He laughed off college, said it was beneath him to pay \$20 for a textbook he could get on the black market as a free sample. Eventually, dormitory officials insisted he leave because of failing grades. "Dorms are student housing," the hall supervisor said. "I pity you if you can't take your studies seriously. Perhaps if you sacrifice, work hard and save enough money, we can readmit you."

Benny smiled, then rented a \$1000-a-month, fully-equipped townhouse. The dark men from Miami continued to visit. On late nights, neighbors heard them quiz Benny about the theological underpinnings in the work of Evelyn Waugh.

Apparently, the Maimians strictly adhered to certain literary concepts and Benny would rat on anyone studying a contrary discipline. For instance, a friend who once joined their forum confi-

dentially proposed to Benny that Jungian dream analysis could not adequately define any anthropomorphic devices in North American Indian folktales. A sheepskin rug prevented him from waking one morning—and all subsequent mornings.

"Why do they call you the Broker?" I asked Benny while he was having his car windows tinted one afternoon.

"Cause I'm a middleman. Say I got a friend who wants to sell a rare edition of Jane Austen. I ask around and someone says to me: 'Is this prime Jane Austen or the usual? How do I know I'm not getting Emma?' So I show him a sample chapter, see. If he wants to buy the whole book, we arrange a time and a place and he can bring the literary critic of his choice to check out the complete volume."

How much might a copy of *Pride and Prejudice* go for?"

"Two grand, minimum. Depends if there's any writing in the margins."

"Sounds like big business."

"Publishing is one of the biggest. I know a dude in Camden with a warehouse full of Tolstoy. *War and Peace* almost to the ceiling. 'Course, the place is well-insulated. If just a whiff of those bindings gets out, the place will be surrounded by ABA."

He used a payphone to contact someone about sampling a line of Chaucer. He hung up. "Big client I'm trying to win back. I sold him some poetry I said was pure Tennyson. Turned out to be Sylvia Plath. It wasn't intentional. Believe me, there are certain things even I won't mess with."

He sneered at magazine vendors outside a ghetto bottle club. "Fools just asking to get popped. And for nothing more than some back issues of *SWANK* or *SOLDIER OF FORTUNE*. Quality's the thing. Only traffic in the best. No excerpts. Nothing abridged. Those two-bit hustlers have probably never seen a paragraph's worth of genuine French neo-realism."

As Benny's confidence mounted, so did his carelessness. He defiantly walked through public places with entire chapters of Chinua Achebe sticking out of his pockets. He sent Chekhov plays through the mail. He left bookmarkers, Monarch notes and other paraphernalia exposed on his dashboard.

Finally, two men he'd once sold some Kerouac and Kesey awakened him one morning. They identified themselves as crack agents from the Library of Congress. They had him nailed for copyright infringement unless he chose to cooperate.

Reluctantly, Benny set up a story conference between the G-men and his Miami associates. The feds, posing as children's librarians who had been forcefully retired, said they wanted the hard stuff—Lewis Carroll—illustrated. The Miamians were skeptical and tried to talk their overeager clients down to some Kenneth Graham or A.A. Milne. The undercovers remained adamant, yet agreed to purchase some stanzas of "Jabberwocky" to start.

"Are you sure these cats are cool?" one of the Miamians asked Benny.

"Absolutely," Benny swore. "I heard them quote Ginsburg at a party once."

The deal went down. The Miamians were nabbed in an Orlando hotel room. Authorities confiscated three unpacked crates of Norton critical editions, a current issue of *THE PARIS REVIEW*, a Dutch translation of *Deer Park* and 18 volumes of *BOOKS IN PRINT*.

"A virtual arsenal," a federal agent told the press. "They had enough material to open their own bookstore. We can't help but wonder how much of this junk has gotten into the hands of innocent schoolchildren. Please, kids, don't read anything without consulting your parents or librarian. So much literature today is trash."

"Get a dog and teach it how to start your car in the morning," one of the handcuffed Miamians growled at Benny from inside a patrolcar.

"Don't worry about that," the other scoffed. "You won't have a car in the morning."

This idle threat was not completely true. When Benny woke the next morning he had no difficulty in locating his car. It was the one on fire.

Several strangers, whose faces had been carved with all the humor that goes into totem poles, frequently stopped by his apartment—knocking on the door with one hand, while their other hands made much-parodied Napoleonic gestures. Too absorbed in committing his life to Catholicism, Benny didn't answer the door. His drapes drawn and telephone unhooked, he instituted the first self-imposed blackout by an American citizen since World War II. He eventually stashed his belongings in a Literary Guild satchel and ventured out, never to return.

The last dope I heard was that Benny had been spotted at a shoestore across state lines, working under a pseudonym. A car backfired outside and Benny dropped flat to the floor, tossing up a flurry of pumps and penny loafers as decoys. A bewildered child lifted the limp rag of a man that Benny had become and shook some life back into him. And Benny disappeared again.

Well, Benny never planned to spend his days wedging fat ladies' feet into dress shoes. He intended to retire at age 25 in a beach house on the Costa Brava, a waterfront fortress stocked with suspicious Dobermans, houseguests with Jersey accents, and big-chested blondes whose giggles would be their most profound remarks.

If he is not legally (or illegally) dead, Benny is now 25. His grand ambition, however, has probably been reduced to posing as a costermonger on limited access streets and changing his hat every 10 minutes.

Should he be alive and well, I hope I encounter him. He loaned me a book I feel obligated to return, a bleak narrative titled *Crime and Punishment*.

## THE AARDVARK IN THE PARK

by Joseph Cuthbert

While I was in the park last March,  
An aardvark caught my eye.  
No standard aardvark, he had on  
A derby and a tie.

He had a golden pocket watch.  
He twirled a bamboo cane.  
A neater aardvark, on the whole,  
You'll never see again.

We met up and he gazed up in  
A most be-startled way.  
(And certainly I was amazed  
To meet him snout to eye.)

The aardvark looked me over, then  
Began to scratch his nose.  
A risky job (you will agree)  
If all one's paws have claws.

"Amuse your ants," he said to me,  
"Then feed them bread and meat.  
Add lots of honey tea to keep  
Them fat for you to eat."

I tried to shake his paw then, but  
He ran behind this tree.  
He took is cane and hefted it  
And threw it at my knee.

He threw it at my knee and then  
He ran away at once.  
I could not catch him, no, and I  
Have never seen him since.

I sometimes wonder, Was he real?  
He may not be, I fear.  
For something tells me aardvarks live  
A little south of here.

This bamboo cane is all that's left.  
I'll bring it to the park,  
Until I find that gent so rare:  
That aardvark in the park.



VICTORY BELONGS  
To the most persevering.  
— Napoleon Bonaparte, French  
emperor - general  
(1769 - 1821).  
Without a single chance-selected  
winner shouldn't Victory be  
changed to Survival? —  
J.C. BRAINBEAU.  
Send SASE to war-ending  
LOSERS, WINNERS (chance-  
selected) or simply  
WINNERS — Box 2243  
Youngstown, OH. 44504 USA



# THEY'RE HERE...

by R.M. Millard

Have you received one of these yet? They've been showing up in the mail. Mine came yesterday. Here, let me read it to you:

Don't listen to them! And don't fall under their mesmerizing gaze!

Talk show hosts are really aliens!

What? You don't believe me? But you must! The fate of your planet depends on it!

Just look at how many of your fellow beings have already fallen under the influence of these alien invaders.

It all seemed so harmless at the start, didn't it? Just a few mindless game shows. But that was just their first step.

The game shows got bigger. More popular. And the audiences grew and grew.

Then the aliens played their master stroke: the talk show.

People would stare at their television sets for hours on end as nondescript celebrities talked about all manner of inane subjects.

But the clone-like hosts are the true danger!

These hosts are in total control. They can get large crowds to laugh or applaud at will. Why, they can even make people shout "How cold was it?" or something equally intelligent in unison.

This control is so finely tuned that a talk-show host can make a large group of people wave their arms in the air and bark like dogs. Such power!

But what do these aliens want?

Control of your world? Eventually.

But for now, they are simply amused at how much fun they can have with you.

You don't believe me? But it's true!

All of their time and effort so far has been so they could have some yuks at your expense. And like boobs, so many of you have complied.

However, when the aliens tire of you (and they will!) total domination and destruction is their next step.

How do I know this? Well, sadly enough, I once fooled you with my talk show host masquerade. Late nights. But I have seen the light, the error of my ways. And I want to help.

Yes, there is still time! But you must fight back!

Don't laugh unless you want to. Don't applaud for tired or tasteless jokes. And do not listen to the endless babble of those who can barely read the words printed on their cue cards.

If the aliens see that you have a will of your own, they will soon depart.

But time is short. And this will be your only warning.

Be strong!

There you go. Craziest thing I've ever read. Looks like someone went to a lot of work for a practical joke. Oh well, I think I'll just kick back and see what's on "The Tonight Show" or "Arsenio"...

## HOW TO WRITE DADA POETRY

by Todd Kristel

Just find a newspaper article and copy it as if you were translating it without fluency in English.

For example,

Couch Has Tailored Detroit Into a Winner  
chuck daly is a tree in Pennsylvania soil.

he got his start in Punxsutawney High, more famous for the days when groundhogs teach speech and English to shadows.

daly, 58, is immaculately dressed for the tidal wave of success like an umbrella that has seen all and forgotten nothing.

referees watch the bad boys of motor cities under microscopes.

the lakes touch down in baskets of air but the lakes dry up under the beatings of pistons.

"the fish grab their walking sticks and roll in stars towards the exit."

# VANNA SUE GETS MARRIED

by Brian Ruddy

Vanna Sue von Lippgloss, 22, was wed yesterday to Benito Dice Souter, 15, at the Church of St. Myron the Lecher in East Rotting Scrod, Conn. The nondenominational, nonbiodegradable ceremony was performed by the Rev. J. Bruce Teenrape. In attendance were many relatives, friends of the families and an unidentified man wearing iridescent culottes who kept asking people if they wanted to see where a gnu had bitten him. While some among the assemblage seemed perturbed by the man's behavior, most agreed that it did add to the festive atmosphere of the nuptials. This air of general merriment was further enhanced when one of those Jesus things fell off the wall and killed some dude. The Rev. Teenrape, visibly moved, proclaimed it an "act of God;" but the janitor said it probably had something to do with the cheap paneling. Many a hearty laugh erupted when Deacon Ichabod Storch, an incorrigible prankster, seized the opportunity to abscond with the corpse's wallet, wrist watch, hairpiece and dentures.

At the reception, the bride announced that she will keep her maiden name and wear her husband's shorts on alternate Thursdays. A 1990 graduate of the New School for Social Neglect, she hopes to gain employment as a lying, thieving bastard. She plans to divide her spare time between gardening and helping to organize a military arm of the YWCA. She is the daughter of her father, a noted author of several scholarly works concerning the historical influence of Bolongese High Renaissance lesbian pottery on the blitz attack of the '66 Packers. Now retired, he likes to make Bosco. The bride's mother, Mary Tyler Lippgloss, is an authority on tea party etiquette and strategic bombing.

The groom attends the Rush Academy, where he operates a pharmaceuticals concession behind the gym. In January of 1989 he was elected to the Executive Committee of the Young Republican Felons; in June of that year, having consolidated his power on the Committee with unprecedented speed, he engineered a successful drive to reject funding for a feasibility study on being nice. He is the son of F. Prozac Souter, who has not been seen since he went to the men's room at a 1980 Village People concert--though, rumor has it, he is now living in Amsterdam with a man named Tabitha. The groom's mother hides bottles. On his mother's side he is the great-great-great-grandson of the legendary Enola Pliny-Wadsworth-Clampett-Starsky-Reems, who roared to victory in the '72 Summernationals at the wheel of her tiger-striped, nitro-boosted GTO.

The newlyweds, who describe their relationship as an "emotional vacuum devoid of any sort of caring," plan to have "three children, a long, almost circuslike divorce and a vicious child custody battle ending in a bloody shootout."

## POETRY

by Roger Coleman

Versification touches us through our physical instincts. Metrical composition can be brutal and commemorate the flinty-hearted force required for continuance, with elevated words and figurative uses. The power of eloquence adapted to stir the feelings and imagination, suggesting more than the words say. It is much like the pig-skin game, it arouses the vibrant animal in us. A stream of consciousness that dictates survival. The questing hunter, out to get game for food, overcoming the enemy for the good of the tribe. If you like poetry you'll LOVE football.

78 down -  
2 to go!



# Viet Vets Receive Benefits For Frisco Exposure

By LARRY FINE  
San Francisco Bureau Chief

NEW YORK (YU) — A federal judge Monday ordered the establishment of a \$150 million life and disability insurance fund and a \$45 million foundation for an estimated 60 Australian and New Zealand troops who were exposed to "The Streets of San Francisco"

while fighting in Vietnam.

The television series, which starred Karl Malden and Michael Douglas, was recently pulled from syndication in the United States after the Surgeon General's office determined that repeated exposure to the show could cause hemorrhoids, psoriasis, dandruff, "and other heartbreak-

ing diseases".

The Australians and New Zealanders were particularly devastated by their exposure, said Chief U.S. District Court Judge Melvin Belli, since the diseases are extremely rare in their home countries and their immune systems were unable to cope with them.

Yessarian Universal

## NOTHING

by Myrna Sharp

I'm walking on the sidewalk coming back from the mailbox and--what's that? I bend down to look. It's a penny! Face up, too--everyone knows that means good luck. I pick it up. It's a brand-new, shiny one: 1960. What a find! I put it in my pocket and head for home.

Mommy hates when I do this. "Don't pick up things in the street, Susan!" she always tells me. "It's dirty!"

Something silver in the grass catches my eye. It looks like a nickel. I pick it up. Just an old bottle cap. I stand up and toss it back. Who needs it?

Over there's a half-smoked cigar. Like Uncle Ben's stinky things. And there's a squashed Lucky Strike pack. I look inside--no cigarettes. And there's some dog doody.

Wait a minute! I see a little tin, like aspirin come in. But it's flatter. It must be skinny aspirin. The name on the outside says "Trojan." I don't know that brand; Mommy and Daddy use Bayer. I open the top. Inside is a bunch of funny rubber bands. They're round, like little circles, and what's really weird is, the middles are closed over with a rubber sheet or something. How would these rubber bands work? I can't figure them out. I close the tin and carry it home.

As I go up the front steps, Willie comes meowing out of the bushes. I sit down and pet him. He's purring real loud, so I kiss him. Mommy hates when I do that, too. I open the tin and take out one of the things. I pull it and stretch it and poke at the middle. It sure seems like rubber. Is this how rubber bands come, and then you have to cut out the middle? Mommy will know.

I get up and go in the house. I can hear water running, so I go in the kitchen. Mommy's standing at the sink, cleaning chicken. The trash can's on the step-stool next to her.

"Mommy? What's this?" I say to her back.

"What's what?" she says over her shoulder. She doesn't turn around. She's trying to cut some chicken pieces.

"This thing I found."

She wipes her hands on her apron. "Let's see," she says.

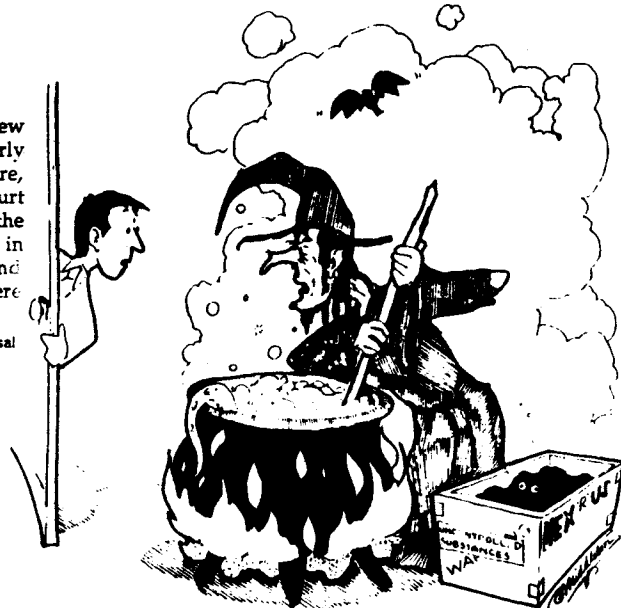
I give Mommy the thing. She looks down at it and opens it up. All of a sudden, her face turns bright red and--real fast!--she closes the tin and shoves it all the way down to the bottom of the trash can.

"Nothing!" she yells, her whole arm in the can. Then she turns back to her chicken. "Go watch television," she says, hacking away at some bones.

Mommy ignores me, pretending I'm not even there. I don't know why she's acting so funny.

\*\*\*\*\*

Yesterday was Condom Day at M.I.T. Women manned a table festively decorated with rubbers blown up like balloons. Varieties of condoms were on display--individually-wrapped, lubricated, ribbed, and up to three dollars per. I stopped and asked how, exactly, one celebrates Condom Day. I could have sent my mother a Condomgram. But instead I sent her nothing.



"HOLD OFF--NOW SHE WANTS THE GENERIC."

### AT THE THEATRE

by Mary Ann Henn

The man next to me  
on my right overlaps  
into a third of my seat  
I can't see the chair's arm  
between us Man on my left

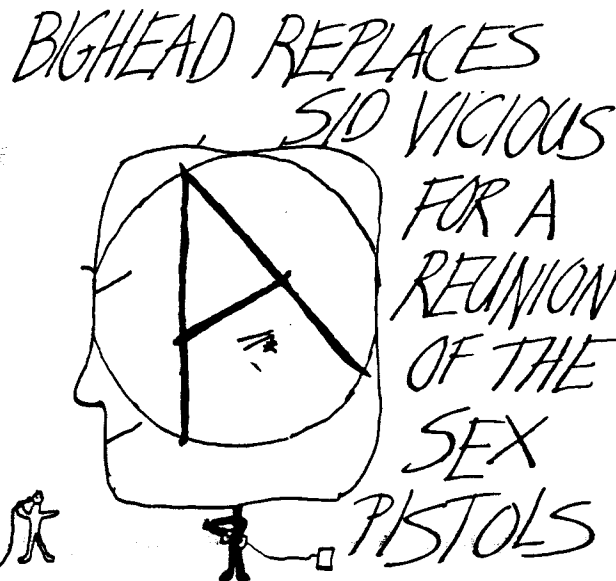
leans on the chair arm between  
us Me with both elbows  
in my lap through two-hour  
performances I miss most  
of the show Think I'll ask  
for a refund

### Zack's Ad

#### FREEZING!

Damp castle, year 1065, England. King Harold moans with toothache. His daughter sick with smallpox. Nobody knows a cure.

Small town electrician, 1990, Montana - Mr. Frisby prepares himself a provolone cheese and salami sandwich with mustard. Eats fresh cherries from 200 miles away. Drinks Iron City Beer. Wonders, What \$2 VCR tape will I rent tonight? Treasure Island? Where will I fly this summer? Venice? Hong Kong? Amsterdam? King's life, 1065! Electrician's life, 1990!





# SEVEN SAINTS

by Kenneth Leonhardt

Saint Primus was born in Devonshire in the year 690. Some missionaries staying at his father's house spoke to him of heavenly things and inspired him with a wish to devote himself, as they did, to God. Entering the monastery, he trained for apostolic work. His first attempt to convert the pagans in Holland having failed, he went to Rome to obtain the Pope's blessing on his mission, and returned with authority to preach to the Germanic tribes.

It was a slow and dangerous task; his own life was in constant peril, while his flock was often reduced to abject poverty by wandering robber bands. Yet his courage never flagged. He began with Bavaria and Thurnigia, next visited Friesland, then passed on to Hesse and Saxony, everywhere destroying the idol temples and raising churches on their site. He endeavored, as far as possible, to make every object of idolatry contribute in some way to the glory of God. On one occasion, having cut down an immense oak which was consecrated to Jupiter, he used the tree in building a church, which he dedicated to the Prince of the Apostles.

In due course he was recalled to Rome, consecrated Bishop by the Pope, and returned to organize and extend the rising German Church. With diligence he reformed abuses among the clergy and established religious houses throughout the land.

At length, feeling his infirmities increase, and fearful of losing his martyr's crown, Primus appointed a successor to his monastery and set out to convert a fresh pagan tribe. While he was about to administer Confirmation to some newly-baptized Christians, a troop of pagans arrived with swords and spears. His attendants would have opposed them, but the Saint said to his followers, "My children, cease your resistance; the long-expected day has come at last. Scripture forbids us to resist evil. Let us put our hope in God." Scarcely had he finished speaking when the barbarians fell upon him and slew him and all his attendants. Fortunately, one of the barbarians later repented and gave witness to these events; otherwise you might at this very moment be reading some worthless piffle instead of this wonderful icky-poo.

St. Loaff, one of the most illustrious prelates of the Church in the sixth century, was born of a pious and noble family at Salency in the year 462. From his childhood he evinced the most tender compassion for the poor. On one occasion he gave his coat to a destitute blind man and, when asked why he had done so, answered that the misery of a fellow member in Christ so affected him that he could not help giving him part of his own clothes. Being admitted to the priesthood in the thirty-third year of his age, he became a bright ornament of that sacred calling. He preached the word of God with an unction which touched the hearts of the most hardened, and the influence of his example, by which he enforced the precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, seemed irresistible.

In 534, the bishop of the kingdom dying, St. Loaff was unanimously chosen to fill the see and was consecrated by St. Ermigius, who had baptized King Clovis in 496 and was then exceedingly old. St. Loaff's new dignity did not make him abate anything of his austerities; on the contrary, though at that time seventy-two years old, he thought himself obliged to redouble his labors. Though his diocese was very wide, it seemed not to suffice for his zeal, which could not be confined; wherever he saw the opportunity of advancing the honor of God and of abolishing the remains of idolatry, he overcame all obstacles and, by his zealous labors and miracles, dispelled with the rays of the Gospel the mists of idolatry throughout the extent of his diocese. What rendered this task more difficult and perilous was the savage and fierce disposition of the ancient inhabitants of Flanders, who were the most barbarous of all the nations of the Gauls and Franks.

Having completed this great work in Flanders, St. Loaff returned to Noyon, where he shortly thereafter fell sick and departed this vale of tears at an advanced age. The whole kingdom mourned his death as the loss of their common father and protector. His body was buried in his own cathedral, but the many miracles wrought at his tomb so moved King Clotaire that he transferred the precious remains to the crown city of Nuan, thereby causing an uprising against the king by the outraged Noyoners. Following a brief but bloody skirmish, cooler heads prevailed and a compromise was reached whereby the remains would be equally divided between the two cities, thus giving rise to the wisdom that half a Loaff is better than Nuan.

In the beginning of the fourth century, great conscriptions of troops were made throughout Egypt for the service of the Roman emperor. Among the recruits was Machopius, a young heathen, then in his twenty-first year. On his way down the Nile he passed a village, whose inhabitants gave him food and money. Marvelling at this kindness, Machopius was told they were Christians, who hoped for a reward in the life to come. He then prayed to God to show him the truth and promised to devote his life to His service.

On being discharged, he returned to the Christian village in Egypt, where he was instructed and baptized. Then, instead of proceeding home, he went out into the desert to seek Melopon, an aged recluse, to learn from him a perfect life, and with great joy embraced the most severe austerities. Their food was bread and water, once a day in summer and once in two days in winter; sometimes they added herbs, but mixed ashes with them. They only slept one hour each night, and this short repose Machopius took

# CHIC WOMAN

by Anne M. Valley

At the library, I saw a new magazine called *CHIC WOMAN*. "Dress to Impress," it said on the cover. People in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and in Northern Wisconsin tend to be less extreme in their style of dress, but to be chic is something I had always aspired to. I checked out the magazine and went home.

With delightful anticipation, I wondered what alluring surprises lay in store. I quickly skimmed through the index looking for 'fashion trends,' 'fiction/poetry'... 'foods'... ah ha! 'Fashion trends,' pages 230-290.

I turned to the fashion section, which was surprisingly unique and totally unforgettable. On one page, a stick-thin model sported a coat that made her look twelve months pregnant and swallowed up what was probably her 5'10", 108-lb. frame.

The next page showed a woman with disheveled hair, wearing a torn blue fedora. She was swathed in scarves of varying textures, two old-looking sweaters, and wearing fingerless gloves. Fingerless gloves! In our area? Did these designers think everyone lived in a tropical climate?

On another page, the model wore a similar outfit, topped with a tattered coat. It had no hem and was fastened with ragged ribbons. The coat sported leather pockets, splattered with paint. They resembled soiled lobster bibs.

The next model was shown wearing three sweaters. The second sweater was a tattered burgundy over a medium gray and it had three or four holes the size of a half-dollar. The third sweater was an old-looking Army style cardigan. These were dubbed 'mystery look with wind-swept glow.' There is nothing unusual about wearing more than one sweater around here, but those holes would never keep the sharp wind out.

The fedora mentioned earlier was priced in excess of a hundred dollars, and the fat-look coat was over \$800. The hemless lobster bib coat ran over \$300. The sweater with the holes was over \$200. The mystery for me was why anyone would pay such prices for these ragged-looking clothes. I could do better at a thrift shop.

The magazine was right when it said "Dress to Impress." I was impressed all right--impressed enough to stick with my U.P. and Northern Wisconsin conventional style!

BUY IT BACK ISSUES - THEY'RE FUN!

sitting upright without support.

Three times God revealed to him that he was to found a religious order at Tabenna, and an angel gave him a rule of life. Trusting in God, he built a monastery, although he had no disciples; but vast multitudes flocked to him, and he trained them in perfect detachment from creatures and from self.

One day a monk, by dint of great exertions, contrived to make two mats instead of the one which was the usual daily task, and set them both out in front of his cell, that Machopius might see how diligent he had been. But the Saint, perceiving the vainglory which had prompted the act, said, "This brother has taken great pains from morning until night to give his work to the devil." Then, to cure him of his delusion, Machopius imposed on him as a penance to keep to his cell for six months and to taste no food but bread and water.

His visions and miracles were innumerable, and he read all hearts. His holy death occurred in 349.

And you just sit there not giving a ----.

And so, with the stories of these three saints to serve as your inspiration as you resume your daily drudgery, we bid you a fond doo-doo.

What's that? You ask, what of the title, "Seven Saints?" What are you, a masochist? Who's counting, anyway? This is humor, not advanced calculus. With three saints, you got yaks, chuckles and, no doubt, some hearty guffaws. With seven saints, you'd probably die laughing, which might make YOU a saint (although I doubt it), which might lead your money-grubbing, mercenary heirs to sue, which is laughable in itself because we both know their only reaction to your passing would be good riddance (except those for whom total indifference is the more likely response). Besides, what does Chicken Little want for nothing, anyway? At these prices, you get three and not one saint more--unless you count me. Now you're really talkin' "Inside Joke!"



# MY FAVORITE SEMESTER

by Ralph Sharaga

From 1975-1979, I attended North East New Jersey State Teachers College. It was a modest little school located in southern Connecticut. People used to say, if you can't get into jail, apply to Jersey State. Five years ago Donald Trump purchased it, and converted it to a spare bedroom for his adjacent summer residence. But even Donald Trump can't buy away this grad's fond memories of good old N.E.N.J.S.T.C..

My favorite semester was the spring of 1978. I took five courses that lent new meaning to the term "liberal arts." The following course descriptions will illustrate the uniqueness of each one, and may inspire their revival at other institutions:

## Anthropology 342: The People of Micronausea.

A mysterious culture that has flourished for centuries despite the absence of children. What is their secret? And are they willing to sell it? These people inhabit a South Pacific island so small that every local fisherman for the past 180 years has been lost at sea. This has created a great shortage of tuna fish, which probably explains the lack of children. What it doesn't explain is why their only landfill is overflowing with disposable diapers. Who put them there, and what is in them? And in this childless society, why is tenure a hot topic for debate? It does stimulate one's curiosity.

Why were Catholic missionaries unsuccessful for over 200 years in effecting even one conversion? And is it true that most of the missionaries remained on the island to pursue careers in hotel management?

But most strange of all is why this island of 316 people has two 60,000-seat football stadiums and no hot dogs...

Professor Feldman (a prodigy of my aunt Mildred) has convinced the Micronausean Amway representative to be a guest lecturer. Unfortunately he is travelling by rowboat and won't be arriving until 1977.

No midterm - no final - no paper. Your grade is based on one true-false question, which will be marked on a curve.

## Philosophy 414: Ethical Issues in Puppetry and Related Subjects.

This course is so deep that I was lost by the middle of the second class (which I cut). Here is a sample of the profoundness that is Philo.414:

Do ventriloquists' dummies really consider the term "dummy" derogatory? And should society respect their wish to be referred to as "People of Wood?" Is it morally correct to expect them to live in suitcases? And if so, should they have to pay property taxes?

Do marionettes have souls? And if so, are they attached by a string? And what happens to their soul after death? What happens to the string? But most importantly, does anyone really like watching marionettes?

The discussion on puppets always caused controversy on campus. Is it immoral for puppeteers not to wear surgical gloves every time they shove their hand up a puppet? And does this create a high-risk situation for the transmission of AIDS and other communicable diseases? Did you know that the ACLU has shown great interest in both questions?

Originally offered as a pass-fail course, it was since been changed. Now it is just a fail course.

The course is taught by Ernie and Bert, so the presentation is slightly biased. But if you cut enough classes, it won't influence you one bit.

## Art 376: The History of Painting By Numbers.

Any serious art student should find time for this course. Did Renoir actually achieve greatness by mistaking 7's for 1's? Did Rodin move from watercolors to sculpting because he flunked second grade arithmetic? Was Caravaggio denied his rightful place as Baroque's greatest numbers painter because no art critic could spell his name?

As you can see, this is an information-intensive course. These topics were covered in the first ten minutes alone.

Do you know why Monet's Rouen Cathedral Paintings were all slightly different? Some experts claim Mrs. Monet switched a few numbers when Claude was rinsing brushes. Did Picasso really consult a numerologist to find his strongest colors? And what worked best for covering up the numbers on frescoes—dark brown or electrical tape? One revelation after another.

If time permits, Professor Weimar will discuss why the number 3 is overrated. His arguments are worth noting.

This is a hands-off course. Any student seen touching anyone or anything during class will be twisted into a piece of expressional sculpture.

Grades are based on the quality of doodling on each student's desk.

## Theology 563: Religions of The Dark Ages.

This course focuses on the little-known yet widely-practiced religion of Thanatism. Thanatism was founded during the great blackout of 1964 by a guy named Mel from the Bronx. Thanatists question everything. But unlike most other religions, they can answer the questions if they are put in multiple-choice form. The basis of Thanatism revolves around one simple question: Is there life before death? Thanatists have recently concluded the answer to be "D."

This course will leave you questioning the very fabric of your boxer shorts. For instance, why is it that Thanatists don't believe in God, yet fear him like the devil? And what is the signi-

ficance of the Thanatist mantra, "I think, therefore I am depressed?" Is it true that 97% of all Thanatists don't know the name of their Congressman, or is it just a vicious Fundamentalist rumor?

No Professor has ever wanted to teach this course, so it is self-paced. Each student is given a different cassette tape every week. They contain the course material for that week, plus subliminal messages on weight reduction and telemarketing techniques. Your grade is determined by the condition of the tapes when you return them.

## Biology 564: Discovering the Limits of Human Anatomy.

Pre-med students will enjoy this course. Each student is required to carry out an experiment testing a limit of human anatomy.

For example, do you know how long a man can walk around with his fly opened before his sperm count is adversely affected? I'll bet your family physician can't tell you? How much garlic does one need to eat in order to build up a strong immunity to halitosis?

This course is not for the squeamish, nor those with inadequate health insurance.

How many consecutive hours can one watch reruns of "The Newlywed Game" before their nervous system begins to malfunction? These questions and hundreds of others have been dealt with over the years in this course.

Professor Gefallt has a unique perspective on the role of education. He feels in the pursuit of knowledge any student is expendable, except the offspring of wealthy alumni.

Students who fail to complete their experiment by semester's end will be donated to the medical school for use in autopsies.

This course is pass-fail to survive.

# THIS, THAT & THE OTHER

by Selena Anne Shephard

"Which gender are you today?" the shrinking man asks me.

"All of them," I answer with a big smile.

"Choose one," he says with a bit of a frown.

"That's impossible," I quickly reply.

"You have to make a choice."

"I can't."

"Don't say 'I can't' when you really mean 'I won't.'"

"I really mean I can't. It goes against my very nature."

"You are a silly boy."

"Silly maybe, but boy, I don't think so."

"So that means you are a girl?"

"I never meant that at all."

"Why do you make things so difficult?"

"I'm not talking quantum physics here. I just find it impossible to live in a box labelled 'boy' or 'girl.' I'd rather explore the (wonder)land betwixt and between, or should that be above and beyond, the traditional gender boundaries."

"I'm sorry, but if you don't have a gender, no one will know how to relate to you."

"Now that's silly!"

"Okay, let's move on. What sexuality are you today?"

"What are my choices, as if I didn't already know?"

"Heterosexual or homosexual?"

"Don't you have something a bit more exotic? It's always the same two flavors."

"You'll just have to pick one or the other."

"How about if I take one and the other? That would make the most sense."

"You want to be bisexual, I see."

"Sort of, though I find even that too limiting a sexual identity. But just to make life easier for you, I'll be bi for the moment."

"I'll mark that down, but I must tell you that in our extensive research, we've proven that there is no true bisexual. The deeper we've probed into self-claimed bisexuals, the more they turn out to be primarily hetero or homosexual."

"Oh, come on! I enjoy getting probed deep and I enjoy probing deep. Where do I fit in in your all-too-convenient scheme of things?"

"Which do you prefer?"

"Is it Monday or Tuesday? Am I wearing satin panties or cotton boxers?"

"Oh, you exasperate me."

"I know, and it's so much fun."



# SAYZ-U (Letters)

Dear Elayne,

August 3, 1990

Frankly, shame on you. Sure, you need to ensure IJ remains a quality publication. But must you do it in a manner that is often arbitrary, abrasive and authoritarian? You're dead wrong about "Beetlemania," the latest episode of "The Saga of the South Slope." America's piggy bank is emptied because of greed and chicanery. Japan steps in to fill the void, bringing a certain cultural style as well. (Which is their legitimate right to try to do. Many of these techniques I mention in a non-judgmental way in the piece are indeed happening in American factories.) We react buffoonishly and critically (Winchester) as we have always done toward other-than Northern European cultures. I'm sorry. That's not Japan-bashing. United States is the target. Irony is the tone.

There's a host of other comments you've made in the past that I've found distasteful and inappropriate but just let pass by. But there's one regret I didn't speak up about sooner. And that is the cheap shot leveled at Donna Nicolino and her zine EGGHEAD. That was so incredibly petty and mean-spirited on your part.

Sincerely,

DENNIS BREZINA  
P.O. Box 99  
Harwood, MD 20776

*Dennis, you may find my defense and explanations weak and perhaps even pettier; if so, I regret making an enemy of someone I've regarded as my friend for so long. It's not the first time my opinions and methods of running IJ have gotten me in trouble. But, just as your fine AMERICA'S AT OUR DOORSTEP is your publication and bears your style, so IJ reflects mine. If it's arbitrary and abrasive, I deserve to be taken to task, every time. The only way any of us can learn from our mistakes is to have them pointed out to us.*

*I am happy to stand corrected on my fear that your last episode was Japan-bashing, Dennis. I had hoped I was wrong, and that it was indeed meant as ironic. As you rightly observed, Americans never seem to have the same problems when it's northern European countries buying up parts of our economy. I've never heard any German-bashing, Australian-bashing or Brit-bashing because of their corporate takeovers. Perhaps the plethora of anti-Asian ads of late has oversensitized me. I apologize for including you in my vitriol.*

*On the other hand, I do not think my comments on EGGHEAD were petty. Mean-spirited, maybe, but as I again emphasized separately in a personal letter to Donna, the comments were not meant as an attack on her but, specifically, to make you and Elliot think a little before submitting. It says right in our Guidelines, "Please don't send me anything that's been published elsewhere," meaning simultaneous submissions. One of the points for IJ's existence is to print pieces that don't see print elsewhere. If you have other outlets for your creativity which deserve as much support as IJ, like EGGHEAD, you should be submitting different pieces to each outlet, not the same thing. By duplicating our efforts, you effectively undermine both Donna, whose new publication certainly needs more of a readership boost just starting out than IJ does after ten years; and me, as I've stated time and again that we're not hurting for written submissions--in fact, we're always overbooked--and therefore any writing I get should be just-for-IJ stuff to eliminate duplication. Sure, writer's rights revert back to you, but it ought to have been understood that I didn't mean you can take your piece and send it to different sources at the same time. At least you could've given it a grace period, as you've done between printing your South Slope saga in your own zine and in mine.*

Dear Elayne,

August 1, 90

Yeah, isms sure can be confusing, especially for those educated by the US middle class commercial school & media system where you have to choose between worshipping Jesus (represented by George Bush), Karl Marx (represented by Satan), or Freud (represented by Dr. Joyce Brothers). The academics and the media "experts" do their damndest to confuse leftist ideological concepts and relegate them all to the devil much as their Christian ancestors relegated all non-Western beliefs to the same source. I think it's useful to use the term collectivist to refer to those collectives which are ruled by a centralized, hierarchic, bureaucratic dictatorship,

while cooperation could be used to refer to the ideal of decentralized, democratic cooperatives. Gorbachev is trying to restructure the Soviet Union from the former to the latter. The former is a part of the hard-line communist dictatorship of the proletariat, while the latter is the ideal of democratic socialists and anarchists. I'm sure dear Anni can make neither hide nor hair of this, but what can I say?; some things just can't be said in journalese, which is why the commercial media use it.

Yours in Kropotkin,

ELLIOT CANTSIN  
1961 Cedar Street  
North Merrick, NY 11566

Dear Elayne,

8/4/90

"FLIES? I said a small order of FRIES!" Scratch that last quote mark; Hollobaugh didn't have it. I'm still laughing, and a few laughs are what I need...Printing those four ads was just great. Nature allows only a few of us to change our thinking at this time, but the proper time is getting closer thanks to the Iraq-Kuwaiti thing. I'm a Bush fan because things must get worse before they get better. Say hello to Chaput.

Sincerely,

GEORGE LEMON  
aka J.C. BRAINBEAU  
26 Botsford Street  
Youngstown, OH 44514

Dear Elayne--

I'm surprised you kept up publication this long! Whenever I find myself working on any newsletter I think of that Joe Walsh line: "They say I'm cracy, but it takes all my time."

I think I'll probably be here in Atlanta for the rest of my life. (Rumors say Nixon doesn't want me here and that's good enough for me.)

Affectionately,

KERRY THORNLEY  
P.O. Box 5498  
Atlanta, GA 30307

Dear Elayne,

8-15-90

Well, I finished that Lionheart story in collaboration with Tom Stazer, and much fun it was...should appear in Usagi Yojimbo soon. But the Four-Color Fiend pointed out that Usagi had been made into an "action figure"--by the Ninja Turtle toy folks, no less: Surge Marketing, aieee. I had managed to blot this unhappy fact from my consciousness until I stepped into a Wollworth's to buy some clip-on sunglasses. And there, right in front of the cash register, it was...a true abomination, blister packaged. The figure is named "Usagi Yojimbo," all right, but that's about the only resemblance; for one thing, it looks like a monster, as if Usagi had downed some of Dr. Jekyll's magic potion. For another thing, it's dressed all wrong--in a chain-mail shirt rather than samurai duds. And they've written some gibberish for its "biography" on the back of the package. After that, I couldn't bring myself to buy the sunglasses there! Eurgh...I just hope I don't see the Panda Khan action figure, I don't think I could stand it...

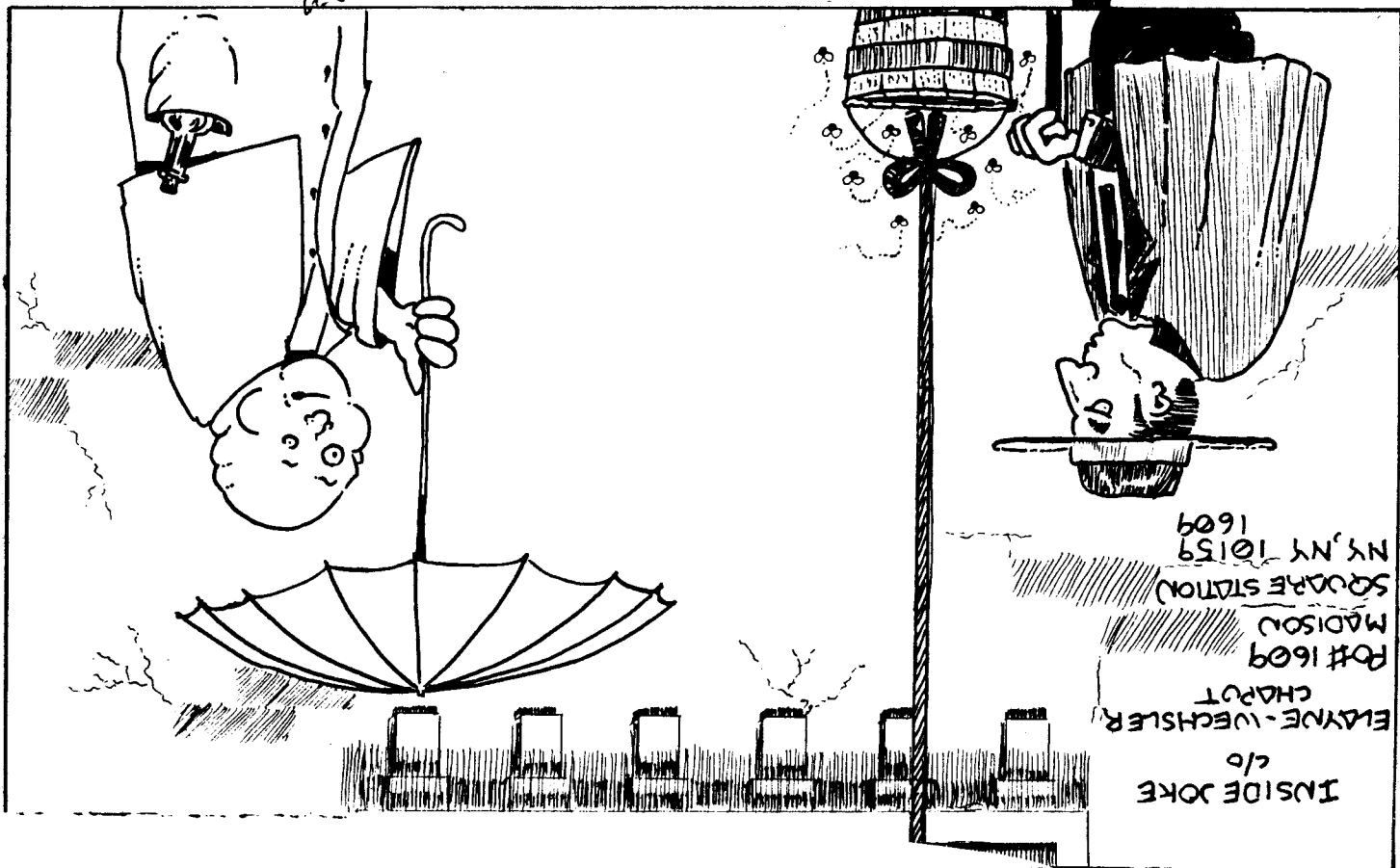
Oh! by the by, I think the FCF should know about a "Golden Turkey" comic I found in the discount box--Headman, released by Innovation a few months back. It's about this guy in the near future, accused of killing the President, so they send him to a base on Jupiter's moon Io, and they cut off his head! But he's alive 'cause they hooked it up to a life support helmet and stuck it on an erector-set robot body with this wheel that hangs way down between its legs (symbolic?), and equipped with giganto-caliber revolvers. They do this to a whole bunch of prisoners up there. Headman has to battle Space commies and his fellow prisoners. The chief scientist's daughter wants to cut off his head, because she disagrees with this form of punishment. The daughter takes off most of her clothes and tries to seduce Headman (by picking up his head and kissing him). Commie space base is blown up. Happy ending with two heads gazing longingly at each other. All this is done very straight-faced, with professional artwork and production values, and it's hard to convey here just how funny it is--if you get a chance, check it out by all means!!

B. Kliban left this mortal coil? Man, that's awful...we're losin' too many good guys! One of my heroes, gone. Sigh - I wish you luck in the next world, B.K....In the next world you're on your own...

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



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