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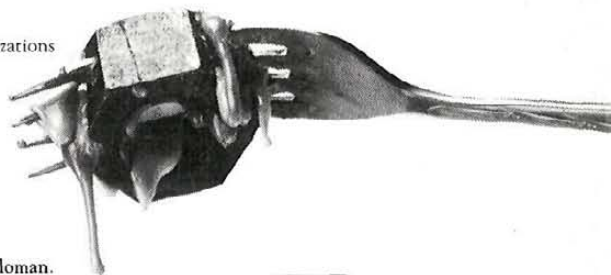
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Just because I was very nice and wrote his column once, now suddenly it's my job. But this is typical of life with an editor of *National Lampoon*. Anything he can dump on me, he will. I'm beginning to think he's insidiously intent on keeping me overworked and stressed out, because the more stressed out I am, the harder it is for me to conceive. Let me correct that: stress is not the enemy of good health in a type A personality (that's me); it is the *hostility* that accompanies stress, or so says Dr. Redford Williams, author of *The Hostile Heart*, a fave from my self-help collection. When I first heard it, I thought, this is a theory I can buy—stress just wouldn't be the prerogative of the upwardly mobile set if it weren't somehow materially beneficial. So I had no problem blaming it all on hostility. However, when I learned that the good doctor's remedy was to ask yourself if your cynical thoughts were compatible with a "trusting heart," I thought, what kind of sucker does this guy take me for? Has the talk-show circuit made this guy crazy, or what? If some buck wants to sell you a TV out of the back of a truck beneath a highway exit but he won't take it out of the box to show it to you, are you really going to trust him and fork over two hundred dollars? I say, Dr. Williams, trust my ass.



Fred Winkowski

EDITOR'S GIRLFRIEND

by Eugenia Bone

I admit I harbor an ugly alter ego. But tell me, am I wrong? If I pay for a class—like this film course I recently demanded a refund for—I think the teacher should be there for *every* period, the *entire* period. No hot-tub johnny with a Spenser: *For Hire* credit is going to take my money without delivering some knowledge I can cash in on. None of this showing me a boring forties film for two hours, then waltzing in to "discuss the art of seeing." The art of *seeing*? I want to know how to write a screenplay that will sell for a million dollars. I want an agent whose phone calls get returned. I want to know what it **FUCKING** takes to write a buddy comedy. *Is that so diffi-*

cult? This is the reason I miss Ronald Reagan so much. The Gipper understood the price of rights.

And yet, I try to tolerate the existence of all living creatures, even those that barely qualify, such as liberals, pagans, and my boyfriend, who's both. I try to remain clean, neat, cheerful, hip, successful, organized, detail-oriented, and easy to live with. Although I admit that I *did* want to kill him when he wrapped my Christmas gift last year (two T-shirts from the Gap) in a box from Tiffany. As I see it, I've paid my dues in this relationship. I've weathered a million miniature storms of irritation. Now it's time for him to stand up and deliver. Because I WANT A TODDLER!

He says the reason I haven't conceived yet is because I'm a hostile environment and babies don't like hostile environments any more than bacteria or herds of deer do. But no, boy, I'm *not* barren. The *real* reason I haven't conceived is because—and I'm ashamed *for him* to have to admit this—I'm not getting enough sex. To which my boyfriend's excuse is that he's too busy writing for *National Lampoon*. Uh-huh. At this moment I am ovulating *and* writing his column—double jeopardy. It's the inevitable result of a trusting heart. ■



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Jessie Hartland

LETTERS

Sirs:

You know, I'd rather have a bottle in front of me than poor posture.

Guy Cavanaugh
Blarney Stone, Ont.

Sirs:

Chomp chomp chomp chomp
chomp.

The Third Panel of Cathy

Sirs:

My name is Dionysus, and I'm an alcoholic.

Temple Basement
Mount Olympus

Sirs:

Doesn't anybody else find it kind of strange that I caught the same disease with my name?

Lou Gehrig
The Ironic Horse

Sirs:

Just found a box of brightly colored sound effects under my desk that are all a little too big to splash across our lurid pages. Since you guys use a bigger format, I thought I'd send them your way. If you don't use 'em, just throw 'em out, okay? Let's see, here's a pretty good BAAAH-RRR-ROOOOMMM! Oh, look, an old BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA! Couldn't have done all those Sgt. Fury's without these babies. Here's a zzzmmmmPOW!, and a THAWOM!, a RRAAAAACCKKKK!, and a couple of little ZZZTINNG!'s and SPANNG!'s. Oh, lemme keep these THWIPP!'s. Got a big Spidey annual coming up.

Stan Lee
Marvel Comics

Sirs:

In response to persistent complaints by various religious groups, the motto on New Hampshire's license plates is being changed from LIVE FREE OR DIE to DRESS IN LAYERS.

Governor Judd Gregg
Concord, N.H.

Sirs:

I enjoyed your "Humor Issue" very much, and I think I can guess the direction you're taking with the magazine. I have a suggestion for your next issue: crauchos. Crauchos, if you aren't aware, are the Paraguayan cowboys who roamed the great champas (or plains) of Paraguay in the last century. You could do a whole section of articles and related art pieces on the crauchos. It's kind of offbeat and a little loopy—very unpredictable, which I think you're aiming for, and possibly hilarious. A fully decked-out craucho could make for a very eye-catching cover, too. All I would ask for is a \$10,000 idea fee. Let me know what you think.

Charlotte Pimpernel
Norfolk, Va.

Sirs:

Sure, invoke my spirit. They all do—the Diceman, everyone. Just last week James Baker invoked "the caustic, questioning attitude of Lenny Bruce." To the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, no less. About this I have only one word to say. Not "bullshit." *Royalties.*

Lenny Bruce
Meeting Abbie for coffee in a few

Sirs:

A Colorful and Gentle Garden of
Reds and Whites
(A Haiku)

One, two, three, four, five,
one, two, three, four, five, six,
sev,
one, two, three, four, five.

Issa
Eighteenth century

Sirs:

My cravat is lime.
I walk the line.

Tom Wolfe
New York, N.Y.

Sirs:

There is no way the Jets should play in Giants Stadium. The tradition of Weeb Ewbank and Joe Namath is

back in Shea. They were named the Jets because of the planes flying over that stadium. If they stay in the Meadowlands, they should rename them the Toxic Waste Barrels. Besides, twenty games in this place are way too many.

Jimmy Hoffa
Sec 348, Row B
Giants Stadium

Sirs:

Recently I went to the doctor and said, "Doctor, every time I drink hot chocolate I get a pain in my eyes." The doctor said, "Next time, take the spoon out of the glass." I didn't listen. I lost my eye and have to wear an eyepatch all the time.

Some Schmuck
In the Land of the Bland

Sirs:

You know what I think, I think you need a punch in the snoot. Just a sharp jab right in the puss would do you a lot of good, if you ask me, or even a swift kick to the rear. A smart little rabbit punch to the back of your neck would set things right posthaste, and while we're at it, you ought to have your heads knocked together, too. That could only help. Other than that, love the magazine, love what you're doing with it. Keep it up.

Larry Mercer
Pierre, S. Dak.

Sirs:

I was looking out the window of an airplane recently when I remarked to the fellow sitting next to me that the people below us looked like ants. The man smiled and said, "Those *are* ants, you fucking retard; we haven't taken off yet." That man was Robin Williams. I knew I was in for a memorable trip! Five minutes later, Robin threw up in the aisle. "Anyone hungry?" he shouted as the stewardesses, convulsed with laughter, cleaned up the mess. Grabbing one from behind, he mimed having sex with her and said, "Lookie, lookie, lookie, got me some nookie!" The passengers screamed with awe and delight at the comic's free-form improvisation. All I could do was wonder how this man, so like us in every way, could be so different—does his brain somehow work faster than ours? Do his synapses fire all the time, all at once? How can anyone see so many opportunities for comic digression in such ordinary

events? It's as though the rest of us are forced to live in slow motion while he moves freely about. But even before the rancid smell of his vomit had left the cabin, Williams was prancing naked up and down the length of the plane, commanding women to "shake hands with Mr. Tallywhacker." Had he not soiled himself and passed out, I am convinced there were some passengers who might have had heart attacks, such was the force of their laughter. It was a most marvelous trip that I am sure none of us will soon forget.

Oliver Sacks
Ossining, N.Y.

Sirs:

Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish and he eats for a lifetime. Put a man to sleep with the fishes and it ain't your problem no longer.

Sal "The Hook" Misericordia
Flushing Meadows, N.Y.

Sirs:

Let me tell you a story. It's about a little immigrant boy whose parents came to this country to find a new way, to enjoy the privileges that this great nation guarantees as every citizen's right. His parents insisted on speaking English in the home, and even though they both held two jobs, they always had time to help their son with his schoolwork, as they knew that with an education, anything is possible in the United States. There was much to overcome for that little boy—the taunts of his classmates, even the prejudices of his neighbors, who would have nothing to do with his family. Almost humorously, those "fellow Americans" called them kikes and spics and niggers, never caring enough about who they were even to learn the appropriate racial slur. But the family ignored the jeers of their neighbors and remained, believing in hard work and the righteousness of the American way. Last spring, that little boy graduated first in his class with a full scholarship to Stanford. If you haven't guessed by now, that little immigrant boy was my next-door neighbor, and over Christmas break me and some of my buddies got together and killed him in this Satan-worshiping ritual we made up in a cornfield. It was in the papers. It's not really a funny story, but I think I could make it funny—like talk about

the crappy car this kid's family used to drive, and how the mom had to cut this kid's hair at home but she must've been cross-eyed or something since it always looked like shit. How much could I get for something like that?

Dave Woznicki
Ward C, Juvenile Hall

Sirs:

It looks to me like you guys are running out of ideas for your Letters column, so I thought I'd pass along some of my own for your bright boys to develop. I might have written a letter myself, but I'm pretty busy, and I know you'd never bother to print it. Anyway, here they are:

1) An angry letter from a Klingon, written completely in Klingonese. This would be easy for you guys, since all you'd have to do is hit random keys on a typewriter. Besides, printed gibberish is always good for a titter.

2) A letter from an embittered lug nut. It could write about how people will be sorry they took lug nuts for granted when it finally works its way loose and somebody's brains get

spilled onto a highway. (Lots of room for gory descriptions here.)

3) Print any letter from *Family Circle* or *Penthouse* that "accidentally" got sent to you. The goofy incongruity of it will have your fans in stitches.

4) How about a letter from Zoroaster complaining about how Christ and Buddha get to be in all the jokes?

5) A letter from any vagina, anywhere. Content won't matter—your readers will lap it up. (You can even use the bad pun, if you like.)

John Cardinal O'Connor
New York, N.Y.

Sirs:

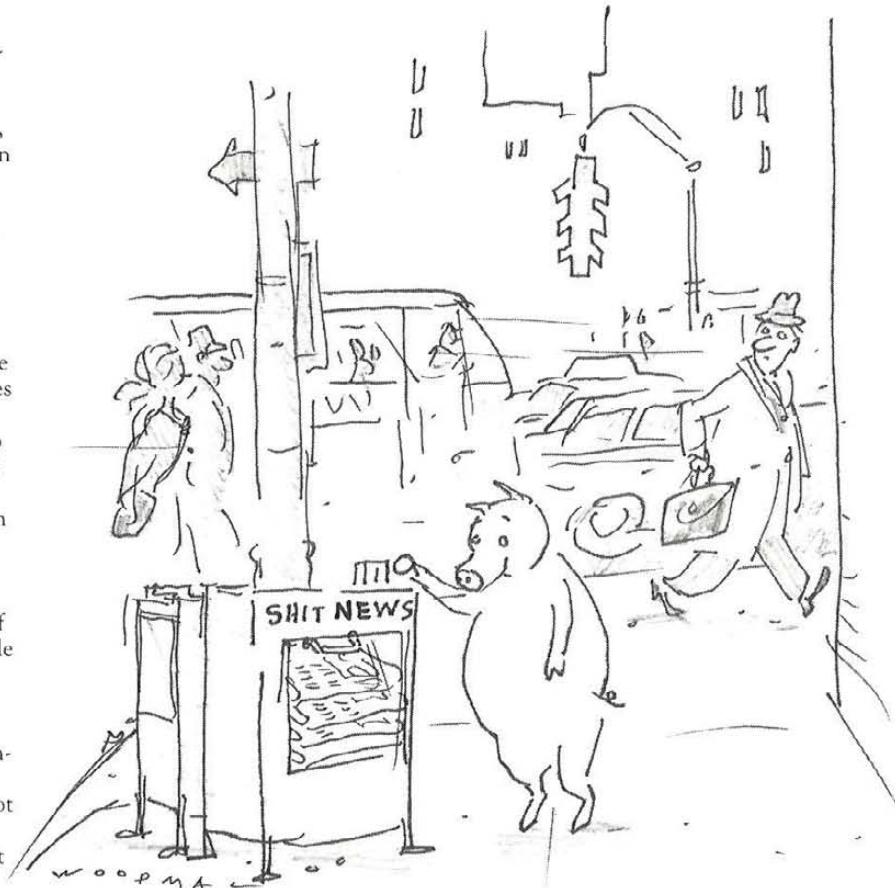
They can put a man on the moon but they can't make a pussy that tastes good. Go figure.

Carl
The Bronx

Sirs:

Smokey Konigsberg.
Smokey the Bear.
Smokey Bear.

The Incredible Shrinking Smokey
c/o U.S. Forest Service



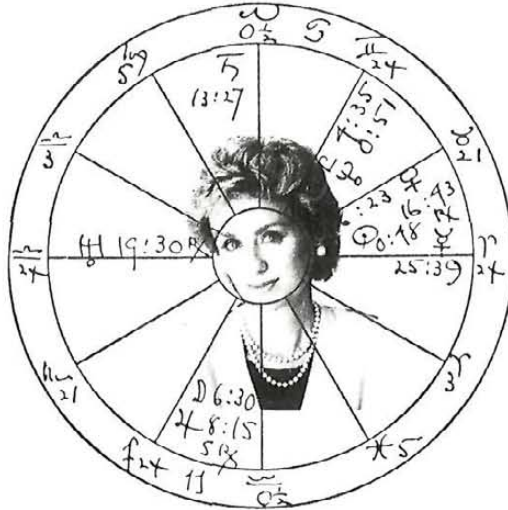
Tinaology

Prognostications based on "Germany's Mystery Man" in the December 1990 issue.

March 1991

No one questions that divining the future from Tina Brown's "Editor's Letter" in *Vanity Fair* is a task only the adept should handle, for this art is difficult, and false practitioners cause disaster for their foolish followers and bring discredit on those of us who have undergone the mysteries. Furthermore, as it is said, "It is better not to know than to know"—and awareness of the deeper truths Tina Brown's columns contain is, more often than not, a painful gift.

So it is this month. Though a full understanding of Tina Brown's column is not, of course, expressible in language, the initi-



ate may discover certain signs that point to bad times. This month's egregious cliché, for example, betrays a certain weakness and lack of invention—"[correspondent T. D. Allman] traveled east and west, *catching the echoes of history*" (our italics)—that seem to speak of exhaustion and dearth. Worse still is the phrase that Germany was "mis-

led by its Great Man theory of history." Such pontifications are more sweeping in ruddy times. From this we may conclude that ventures of great risk should be postponed; those already embarked on may suffer ill fortune.

But if indeed *chaos* is at hand, Tina Brown has yet to reveal it. Observe the phrase "the age of the sound-bite candidate." Seemingly pejorative—unless one has the understanding to know that her use of clichés with the words "age" or "era" portends stability. Even more significantly, her effort to pass Helmut Kohl off as fascinating, profound, and "in the pantheon of German heroes" should be interpreted as a comforting note of continuity. "Though times are dark," Tina Brown is saying to us, "the world is essentially the same. Things are under control."

FEUILLETON



A PROGRAM OF THE ARTIST ON A 1 MBHD30 MAC

Once upon a time

[STYLE: Overused phrase. "Clichés—avoid them like the plague." (UPI stylebook) Would you like to delete? Y/N]

N

Once upon a time and

[GRAMMAR: Introductory clauses should be set off

grammatically. Insert comma after "time"? Y/N]

N

Once upon a time and a very good

[STYLE: "Very. Use this word sparingly. Where emphasis is necessary, use words strong in themselves." (Strunk and White) Suggest replacing "very good" with "perfect." Replace? Y/N]

N

Once upon a time and a very good time

[STYLE: "time" is used previously in this sentence. "Variety's the very spice of life." (Cowper) Change second "time" to "day" or "interval"? Y/N]

N

Once upon a time and a very good time it was

[STYLE: Awkward or archaic verb constructions confuse readers. Recast as

The more you drive...



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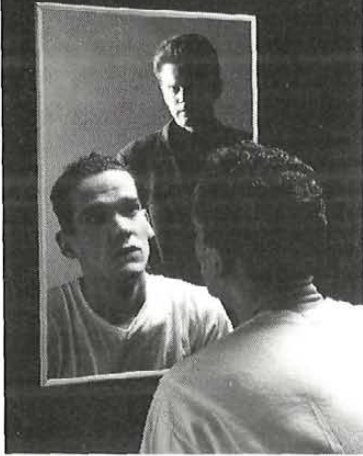
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BECKETT AT SIXTEEN

STRAIGHT TALK TO TEENS FROM SAMUEL BECKETT



MICHAEL CRAN

ACNE. The pathogenesis is complex. Let me try to explain. I cannot explain. Let me try to shave. I cannot shave. Inflamed nodules, superficial cysts, purulent sacs. Tomorrow is my birthday. A man will come to drain my lesions. Happy birthday. *Given the existence of a personal God quaquaquaquaqu with a white beard quaquaquaquaqu who with certain exceptions loves us dearly and determines the course of this misfortune an oily face should be washed several times a day with plain soap if for nothing else than so as to relieve the boredom alas even in one so encrusted alas so scarred so pitted so eaten away and rotting the boredom and ignominious retention of sebaceous secretions. Treatment with antibiotics is useless I remember.*

Fish in a Barrel

Roseanne Barr—wow, she's fat and gross, and then there was that whole national anthem thing. What a loser. There's already a lot of really good fat jokes; you could just stick her name into them.



You know, half those homeless guys could probably get a job if they wanted, but they're just too darn lazy. I'd love to really let them have it with a real good joke. It'd probably be pretty easy, too, since everybody can relate to hating their guts.



Jesse Helms is so conservative, man. I mean, he's, like, too much. You could probably do a pretty funny story about that. Or, like, you could pair him up with Jesse Jackson. What if they took a long car trip together? I'd bust a gut just thinking about it.

THIS MONTH IN MYTHOLOGY

March 7. Plagued with nightmares after completion of his labors, Heracles checks into a Swiss spa for relaxation and counseling. He stays only three days.

March 18. Sign-up sheets appear in every Greek court calling for volunteers to sail with Jason on the *Argo*.

March 30. As a means of distracting his restive troops, cunning Odysseus invents the Frisbee on the shores of Ilium.

March 31. Hera disinvents it.

FROM: COOKING WITH WATER

by Estelle Freilinghaus

FLAVORED SOUP

4 cups whole water, fresh or bottled vegetable or meat flavoring salt and pepper
3 additional tablespoons water (for thinning)



● In a large kettle place 2 cups of the water, heat to boiling, and then let cool. Add a small amount of the flavoring, bringing the water up to a simmer. Continue cooking for ten minutes, then add the remaining two cups of water. Heat until almost boiling, then season with salt and pepper. Correct seasoning if required. (If soup texture needs to be corrected also, add the three additional tablespoons of water.) Serve immediately.

SEA SALAD

3 cups lightly salted water, chilled
1 egg white
1 or 2 small lettuce leaves



● In a bowl place the chilled salt water. (This part of the dish can be prepared beforehand. Place salted water in a bowl and cover with plastic wrap, then leave in the refrigerator for several hours. Remove plastic wrap.) Into the salt water add the lettuce leaf, chopped fine. Let stand for 45 minutes or until the water has absorbed the flavor of the lettuce; discard lettuce. In another bowl beat the egg white until not quite stiff. Place small dollops of egg white on the water surface to suggest sea foam. This refreshing salad looks best when served in bowls which have a crusted salt rim.

"It was a perfect day"? Y/N]

N

[GRAMMAR: Run-on sentences reveal an unskilled writer. **Activating default mode:** adding parentheses, correcting previous.]

Once upon a time (and it was a perfect day),

N

[ILLEGAL COMMAND]

NNN

[Do you wish to override GRAMSCAN? Y/N]

Y

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow

[SPELLING: "moocow" is not in my dictionary. Possible misspellings:

Moscow mooch
mocha moolah
moccasin coockow

Are any of these the word you intended? Y/N]

N

[Adding "moocow" to my dictionary. Please wait.]

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow (sic)

N I said

[Override SPELL-RIGHTER? Y/N]

Y

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road

[STYLE: This sentence is becoming long and repetitive. Removing redundancies, correcting style throughout.]

One perfect day, a "moocow" came down the road and

NNNN I said
NNNNNN I

BAZOOKA JOE
BY JANE ALISTEN

and his NOBLE MEN, but MOST FORBIDDING COUNTENANCE

WHY DOES A GENTLEMAN WEAR FINE, HAND-TOOLED SILVER BUTTONS FROM MCCORMACK AND WYNN BUTTONERS?

I AM AT A LOSS, MADAM. WHY, PRAY TELL?

TO KEEP HIS FLORAL WAISTCOAT IN CORDED AND STUFFED QUILTED-SILK TAFFETA FASTENED.

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TO COMICS
HUNSFORD, NEAR
WESTERHAM, KENT.

I'm with superstitious

I'm with addlepated

FORTUNE. IT IS A TRUTH UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED, THAT A SINGLE MAN IN POSSESSION OF A GOOD FORTUNE MUST BE IN WANT OF A WIFE.

Good for the Jews?

- Negotiations with the PLO
 - Return of the Golan Heights to Syria
 - A common European currency
 - Solar power and other alternative fuels
 - Independence for Quebec
 - High-definition television
 - New Go-Go's album
 - Cigarette vending machine ban
- Wigwag

AUNT EMMA'S DESSERT FLUID

- 5 or 6 cups of cold desalinated water, preferably bottled
- 1 cup carbonated water (domestic or imported)
- 1 tablespoon raspberry syrup
- 1 tablespoon Karo syrup
- 1 cup Evian water
- 3 raspberries (halved) for garnish



● In a shallow dish mix the cold water, stirring slowly, with the carbonated water. (If using Perrier you may want to use slightly more than a cup.) Add, with a medicine dropper, the raspberry syrup and then, very quickly, the Karo syrup. Chill for several hours. Just before serving add the cup of Evian, whisking it into the dish. Serve in clear crystal bowls, surrounded by shaved ice and garnished with the halved raspberries. For an added touch, pass a tray of minted ice chips when serving.

Longshot Fats's Historical Point Spreads

(Home Team in CAPS)

FAVORITE		UNDERDOG
Heat	2½	Humidity
Both sides on the rise in current climate. Anticipate sweating either way, but it ain't the heat—5 units on humidity.		
THE BEATLES	Battle of the Bands 19	The Dave Clark Five
Will it be the Fab Four or the Fab Five? Fats doesn't really care—he just likes getting points. 5 units.		
ARGENTINA	Falklands Face-off pick 'em	Britain
Don't cry for Fats; he's learning to say "Malvinas." 10 units on the Argentines.		
Steam Drill	5	JOHN HENRY
It's time for J. H., once a driven legend, to face up to the heartbreaking truths of the machine age, as well as Fats's 10 units against him.		
Heart	7½	Head
Fats is taking the 'dog here. Hard-hearted? Perhaps. Richer by 15 units? Almost certainly.		
LAST MONTH: Germans' disappointing showing in World War I leaves Fats 640 machiavellis in the hole.		

[Override MACSTYLIST? Y/N]

Y

[Are you sure you want to override style-enhancing program MACSTYLIST? Y/N]

Y

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy

named baby tuckoo....

[INQUIRY: Is this the entire paragraph? Y/N]

Y

[Evaluating...]

[COMPUTORIAL: Your **FIRST** paragraph contains 38 words (3.87 char. avg.) & **ZERO** complete sentences. Vocabulary and sentence structure indicate a **FIRST** grade reading level. In this

paragraph, you have made **FIVE** grammatical errors, **FOUR** spelling mistakes, and **ELEVEN** lapses in style (one error every 1.9 words). Your writing is also not terribly interesting and borders on the infantile. Would you like me to re-write? Y/N]

N

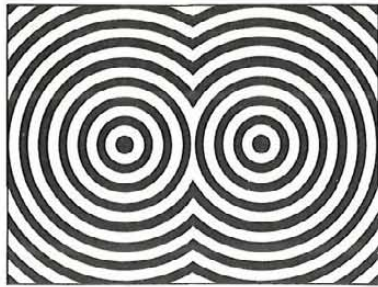
[Original paragraph will remain accessible in memory.]

[Rewriting...]

It was a dark and stormy night, and a perfect day for it. Lumbering down the narrow dirt road that ran by Ol' Doc Brown's place, a shadowy behemoth was slowly making its way toward the sleepy town of Springfield when, all of a sudden, it stood face-to-face with Baby Tuckoo, the licensed little boy. "Moocow!" Baby screamed.

[Much better? Y/N]

N



A NOTE TO OUR READERS

Some readers have called or written expressing concern that they may have been hypnotized by the long and rambling editorial in last month's issue. The National Lampoon would like to assure those readers that they should not be alarmed and should simply go about their normal business until they receive further instructions.

On Funny Guppies and Wolves

Funny guppies. Little teeny funny guppies. Eentsy-weeny guppy cuties. Ha-ha, so sweet and lovely, funny guppies. Tiny baby guppy clowns, oh so fine and funny.

And wolves
And wolves.

Stories We're Working On

Coming next month—
more take-no-prisoners
National Lampoon humor:

Agronomy Update

From toxic pesticides to mortgage foreclosures, there's a lot that's funny down on the farm. Charles McBride pokes fun at some of the hardest-hit.



Teen Prostitution

S. B. Bolton goes undercover for a goof with waiflike runaways forced to sell their bodies to survive. Funny and informative.



The Underclass

Ravaged lives of despair, poverty, and hopelessness. It brings tears to our eyes—tears of laughter, that is! Sandra Whitney skewers the have-nots. With lush, full-color illustrations by *The Far Side's* Gary Larson.



Plus

All-new funniest Alzheimer's stories; three pages of front-lines humor from the Gulf; and special True Facts presentation: True Idiots—Our Kids!

All in the April *National Lampoon*,
on sale March 14.

THE MOXIE ORIGINALS!

(A NATIONAL LAMPOON JOINT VENTURE
WITH THE COMICS CONSORTIUM)
This month's Original:

THE TREND

POWERS:

Faster, funnier, and smarter than you are; able to persuade people against their better judgment.



PAUL CORIO

WEAKNESSES: Costume always draws attention; on-again, off-again smoker.

REAL IDENTITY: Olga Jones, nightclub and restaurant consultant.

ORIGIN STORY: Olga Jones is the child of mutant jazz saxophone player Willy Jones and beautiful Stockholm MENSAs chapter president Inga Jaarl, now divorced. Educated at the International School for Genius Children in France, Olga came to America speaking five languages and wearing high-water bell-bottoms. Alone, scared, and laughed out of the airport for her "floods," she underwent rigorous mind, body, and fashion training in Tibet, Machu Picchu, and Milan.

HIGH ADVENTURES: Negotiates Moxie licensing agreement (M.O. #2) • Force-fed ecstasy by League of Derision (M.O. #8-10) • Duel with archenemy, Wisconsin Man (M.O. #30-33)

Quote: "Not anymore it isn't!"

READ THE NEW MOXIE ORIGINALS
(ISSUE 38)—ON SALE AT YOUR LOCAL
SPECIALTY SHOP TODAY!

[Would you rather revert to original version, which contains **FIVE** grammatical errors, **FOUR** spelling mistakes, and **ELEVEN** lapses in style? Y/N]

Y

[Reverting...]

[Unknown Disk Error (-753) Item lost]

Kyrie eleison

[I will attempt to re-create original text

from other sources in memory. Please wait.]

[Re-creating...]

In the beginning and a very good beginning it was in the very beginning there was a Moscow moocow there and a very mocha moocow it was that was coming down along the road moccasing down along the very road that was coming down along this very nicely little baby tuckoo cockow mooching moolah...

[Would you like to

write the second paragraph now? Y/N]

Y: His father told him that

[INQUIRY: Is this your first novel? Y/N]

Y

[GENRE: Is it a semi-autobiographical account of your coming of age as a writer? Y/N]

Y

[SUBTEXT: Is the protagonist's

mother already dead as the novel opens/ would you like her death in later chapters foreshadowed? Y/N]

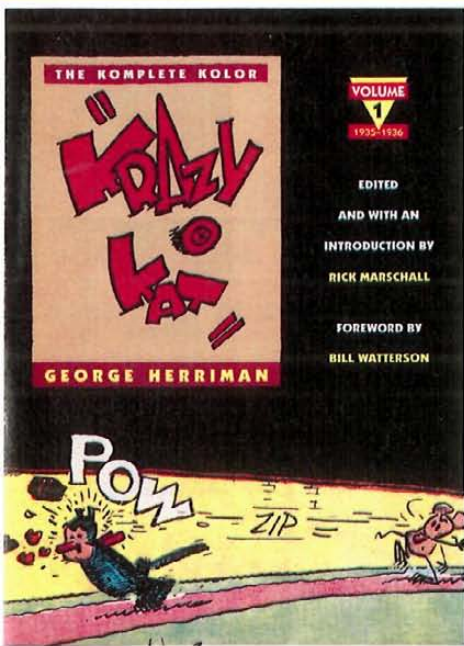
N

[I'm sorry. Please wait.]

[VOICE: A first novelist must display a distinctive narrative voice. How would you like to proceed?]

So that the personality of the artist, at first a cry or a ca-

The greatest comics of all time!



Complete Kolor **KRAZY KAT**
 Acclaimed as a premier example
 of the comic strip, **KRAZY KAT**
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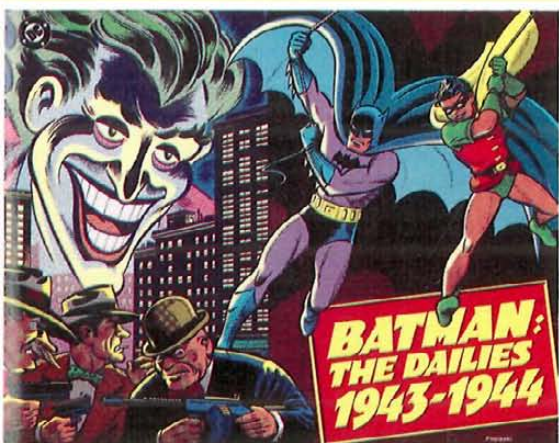
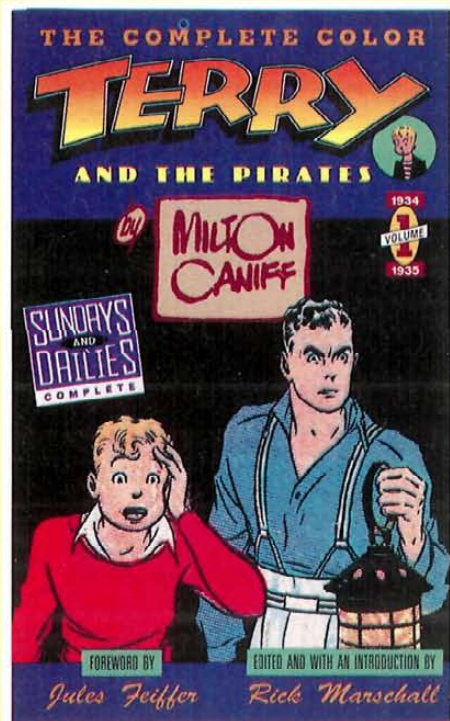
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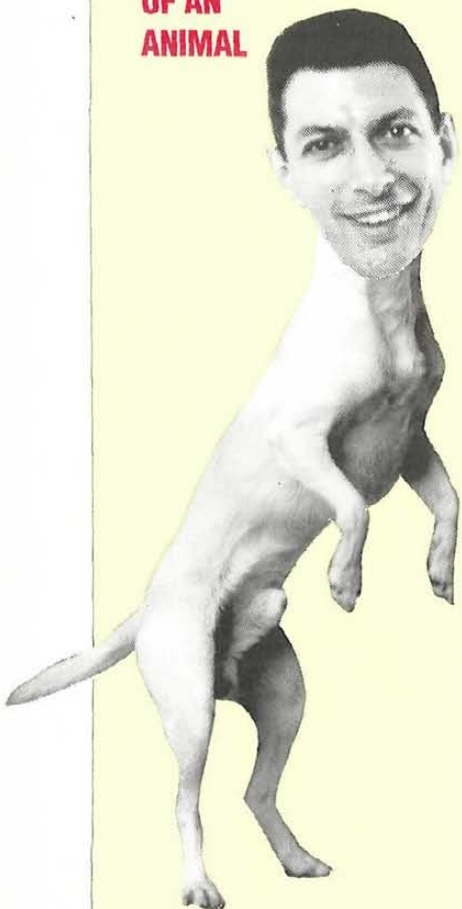
Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

**CELEBRITY
HEAD ON
THE BODY
OF AN
ANIMAL**



ARE THEY DEAD YET?

- Of the following involved in the movie *Citizen Kane*, which one is not dead yet?
 - Orson Welles
 - Joseph Cotten
 - Everett Sloane
- Of the following wives of famous military heroes, which one is not dead yet?
 - Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower
 - Mrs. George S. Patton
 - Mrs. Douglas MacArthur
- Of the following famous Hollywood superagents, which one is not dead yet?
 - Abe Lastfogel
 - Charles Feldman
 - Irving Lazar



AP/WIDE WORLD

The Decline of Humor: Sad Evidence

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National Lampoon as it looked fifteen years ago.

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National Lampoon as it looks today.

"Frontage" Contributors: Larry Doyle, Jack Huberman, Richard Lavenstein, Dave Wielgus, Eric Yost, and The Editors

dence or a mood and then a fluid and lambent narrative, finally refines itself into existence, personalizes itself.

[ILLEGAL COMMAND: Please choose first (0), second (1), or third (2) person.]

2,0

[I'm sorry. Multiple narrative voices require at least 2 Mb of RAM. Please contact your dealer about an upgrade. **Activating default mode:** second person contem-

porary]

[Writing second paragraph...]

You are listening to your old man spew some crap about a cow and he's staring back at you through the most pathetic spectacles you've ever been seen through in your entire infant life. And you're thinking: you hope you never grow a mustache like that.

[Would you like to complete the novel now? Y/N]

N I said N I meant N

[Please wait.]

[Initializing PLOT-MASTER]

[Loading FICTOOLS]

[Writing...]

[Writing...]

[Writing...]

[Temporarily blocked. Please wait.]

[Writing...]

[Writing...]

[Novelization completed. Would you like to write another? Y/N]

Larry Doyle

THE CONVERSATIONS OF LEONARD MALTIN
(as recounted by John Tesh)

On the Occasion of Tesh's Meeting with Maltin

It was first suggested that Leonard Maltin join the staff of *Entertainment Tonight* in 1981, not long after the

MIDDLE EAST HOCKEY NEWS

Volume 1, Number 3

March 1991



TOM ROWAL

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On the cover: "For Abdul Aziz al-Tariq, it was good news and bad news. The twenty-year-old left-winger hadn't been with the Bahrain Bombers a week when he was sent down to the Muscat Musketeers, the Bombers' Arabian Junior-A farm club. But that meant that, with Ramadan approaching, al-Tariq could spend more time with his wives and children in Riyadh."



AP/WIDE WORLD

nightly entertainment-news program premiered. I was an enthusiastic supporter of such action—as, indeed, was not this Maltin the self-same Maltin who had penned *Of Mice and Magic: A History of Animated American Cartoons and The Whole Film Sourcebook*? Indeed, so infatuated with the thought of Leonard Maltin joining us on-camera was I that I endeavored to meet the man, that I might better acquaint him with the art of television commentary and thus give him an advantage over other critics we were considering at that time. My introduction was

made by our mutual friend Tammy Wells, the famous secretary to Dick Clark. Wells mentioned my name and respectfully introduced me to him, but I was most agitated, as I knew of Maltin's distaste for New Age music, which is my avocation. In no small panic, it was I who made the first move.

Tesh: "Have you ever been on television before?"

Maltin: "Before what, sir? Before now? Yes. Before I was three? No. And what does it matter if a man is on television before or after anything? Is not the medium without past or future but

entirely of the present, disincluding VCRs? The televised moment does not revise itself, sir, but exists on its own, without regard to what was before or what will come."

Tesh: "Pray, sir, I only meant to ask if you were comfortable in front of the camera."

Maltin: "Then perhaps that is how you should have formed your question."

That such a long and fond acquaintance as ours could have emerged from such an ill-omened meeting as that seems unlikely. If my determination to be his friend were not so uncommonly resolute, we might be stran-

gers still.

At the Table of the Actress Michelle Pfeiffer

Leonard Maltin and I were both invited to a dinner party hosted by Michelle Pfeiffer and attended by numerous luminaries of the day, including the actor Burt Reynolds; Gordon Lish, the editor; director Robert Zemeckis; and country-western singer Reba McEntire.

On the recent film by Kevin Costner, *Dances with Wolves*, the following exchange took place:

McEntire: "Surely, whatever you think of Costner as an actor, his decision to produce a movie wherein the Lakota tongue is the language by which the essential themes are conveyed can only be considered daring."

Reynolds: "Daring, indeed, madam, given the climate of today's Hollywood." Maltin: "And which climate is that? Can it be, sir, that you and I breathe different airs? There is nothing new in *Dances with Wolves* but an ancient language probably spoken only by those who appeared in the film. We haven't learned anything; we have only seen old ideas in a new film."

Lish: "But, sir, you discount the story itself, which cannot be construed as anything less than inventive." Maltin: "I do not discount invention, sir, but there is the matter of who is doing the inventing. Perhaps you are unfamiliar with Silverstein's *A Man Called Horse*, not to mention its sequels, *The Return of a Man Called Horse* and *Triumphs of a Man Called Horse*. And if I recollect rightly, there is also your [he nods toward Reynolds] *The Man Who Loved Cat Dancing*."

Zemeckis: "But *The Man Who Loved Cat Dancing* was hardly the same as *Dances with Wolves*, sir." To which Maltin replied: "Hardly the same, hardly different, hardly better, and hardly worse. This celebrated Hollywood climate is as thick and malodorous today as it ever was." ■

COMING IN APRIL...
SOMETHING
FREE!

LOOK FOR THIS!



HALF OF ?

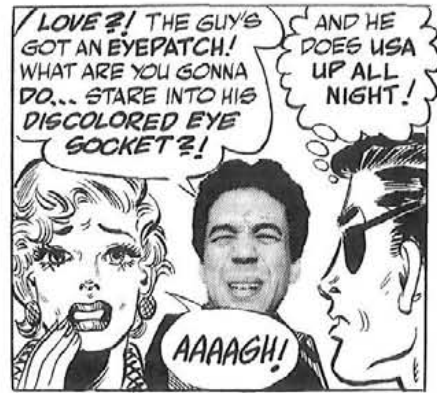
NEXT ISSUE!

**If you buy the magazine and save something and then
buy the magazine the next month and save something else
and then combine the two—you get something free!**

**NATIONAL
LAMPOON**

GILBERT GOTTFRIED'S PAGE

THIS ISSUE: SEE YOU IN THE FUNNY PAGES!



ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK SPRINGER



SHOW TRIAL



THIS MONTH'S DEFENDANT: Kurt Loder, MTV News anchorman

THIS MONTH'S CHARGES: False gravitas; base, spaniel fawning at the feet of famous nonentities; dissemination of gossip under the mantle of "news," thus insidiously undermining the critical capacities of young minds to judge truth from dross and importance from trivia.

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THOSE WHO ARE INNOCENT HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR. BUT FOR THE GUILTY, THERE IS ONLY FEAR, AS ONE SCURRILIOUS MISCREANT SOON SHALL FIND.

MOMENTS LATER AT THE OPULENTLY APPOINTED MTV STUDIOS, THE ADMINISTRATORS CORNER THEIR SLIPPERY QUARRY...



THE EVIDENCE IN, PROSCRIPTION SEEMS ASSURED, BUT 'POON JUSTICE MAY BE METED OUT IN UNEXPECTED WAYS.



WITH A GRIM RESOLVE, THE POLTROON CARRIES OUT HIS RIGHTEOUS TASK.



ILLUSTRATED BY JONATHAN ROSEN

FLOR
PLAN

by Richard Lavenstein

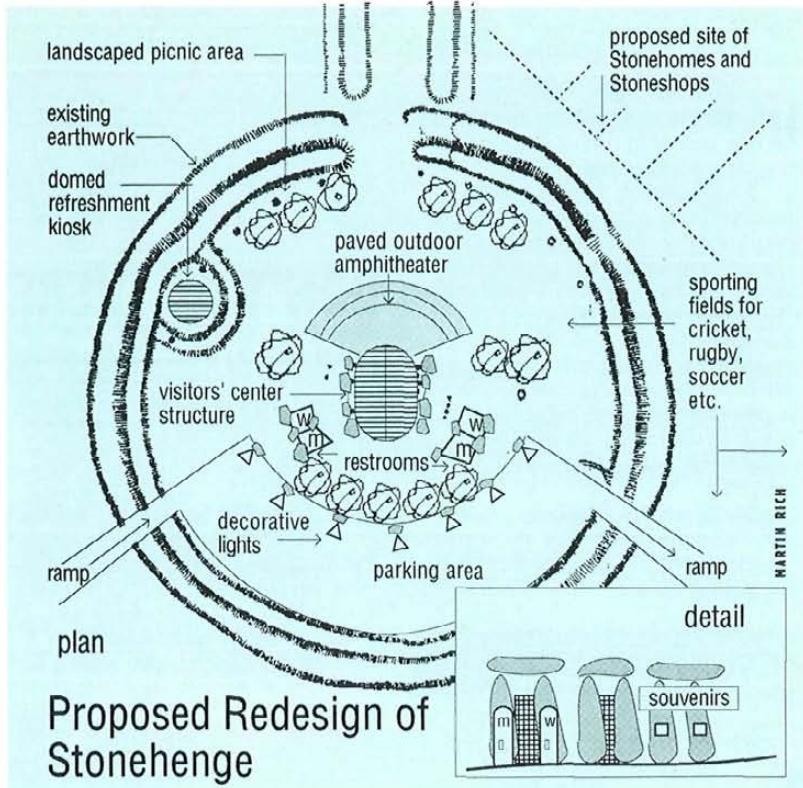
PROBLEMS

With Europe now exhibiting the tumultuous excitement of unification and revitalization, one can only look with dismay at England. If ever there was a time when Britain needed to focus on a major architectural renovation to symbolize its legendary resolve of strength and recovery, it is now. With this in mind I offer the challenge of England's most decayed historical site, Stonehenge. Few, I think, would disagree that the place is a mess.

1. Confusing circular layout, complicated by redundancy of two rings of stones, one placed within the other. What may have started as a simple quarry kickback scheme is now a meandering arrangement with no sense of a clear arrival point. To this fundamental problem have been added years of scholarly squabbling over equinoxes and solstices, none of which has yielded a satisfactory theory about the designer's intent at Stonehenge. Regardless of its origin, today the scheme no longer works.

2. Location is poor; the site itself sits atop a forbidding, forlorn plateau. Wind currents caused by the position of the stones (combined with a lack of trees and shrubs) make many recreational activities hazardous, including the most benign, like picnicking and kite flying, both of which have resulted in fatalities. Renovation and development have been nonexistent. England's boldest entrepreneurs have so far shrugged off the challenge of Stonehenge with a curt "too big, too run-down."

3. Basic sanitary facilities are completely lacking. Despite the structure's evolution over a period of five hundred years, no one considered the convenience of plumbing. Though exploratory excavation may unearth remnants of septic systems or leaching



Proposed Redesign of Stonehenge

fields, restoring them to working condition seems unlikely. Ventilation, while adequate, has little control option. (See 2 above.) And heating is a daunting dilemma for even the most experienced engineer.

4. The condition of the stones is appalling. They had previously been dragged over 135 miles (from the Prescelly Mountains in Dyfed county) to their present location, and the trip no doubt caused considerable wear and tear. In subsequent years the stones have collapsed or fallen over; little effort has been made to rehabilitate them. Chips taken away by visitors have greatly reduced the total stone volume. Consequently, some have suggested clearing the site altogether. This plan, however, is economically prohibitive, complicated by burial restrictions concerning "toxic rock."

SOLUTIONS

Without becoming too wrapped up in design specifics, we can suggest the following. First, remove the outer ring of sarsen stones and reuse by slicing several into paving slabs (useful for interior flooring and exterior paths), while reserving the largest stones (hollowed out) for service functions. These might include bathrooms, coat-check stations, food and drink booths, and an information kiosk.

Next, add a parking lot on the site, marking it with stones fitted out with

decorative lights. The inner circle of bluestone megaliths should now be sandblasted, polished, and roofed over with a steel deck to become a visitors' center (loading conditions on the stones should be assessed, and appropriate shoring carried out as required). Infill between the stones should be glass panels, secured by metal frames, exposing the outline of the original structure.

On the surrounding grounds there should be landscaping, including mature trees and flower beds leading to an expanse of playing/recreational fields. This area should be clearly marked by the three-part slabs that resemble goalposts, but could be jocularly called "goalstones." Imagining the completed renovation, one can see an entire community springing up around the revitalized site, perhaps renamed Stonepark and boasting housing (Stonehomes) and stores (Stoneshops).

The redesign of Stonehenge would set an important precedent for all of England, encouraging the country to take pride in its history, while pointing a new direction for the future. Should this new spirit prevail, it might happily extend west to Cornwall to the sorely neglected Tintagel, the now ravaged birthplace of King Arthur. But that is another story.

Next month in this column: We move to the Continent and consider the Eiffel Tower—too high or not high enough?

UNLESS you want a blast furnace in your basement, living in Centralia may seem a little outré.

Its population is less than one hundred. No food, lodgings, theaters, gas stations, schools, or industries. The sights make you feel poorly rested. The local pastime is watching the steam moving away on cold mornings.

Don't go there for the water. It's yellow and stains rocks orange. Don't go there for the air. It's a ruthless assault to the nose, somewhere between rotten eggs and heavy artillery.

Yards beneath your feet, a Plutonian nightmare rages. Plus it's on fire. The locals call it "The Mine Fire." They call themselves "Coal Crackers."



Don't go downtown: it stinks like eggs.

The underground fire is out of control. Subterranean acres of burning coal span out in all directions. A fiery mountain of high-sulfur anthracite coal flares up and scorches the surface.

In Centralia, trees have a lot to conceal. Valleys that are wastelands. Abandoned railroad tracks. Dead bridges. Massive furrows left by open-pit strip mining. And stripping pits. Stripping pits fill with questionable green water, where cars and bodies have been discovered. Stripping pits fill with sulfuric orange water. They often fill with garbage: broken stoves, old mattresses, waste lumber, bald tires, headless dolls, plaster lath, hollow televisions, broken china, kitchen chairs, busted birdcages, magazines, old clothes, dead pets, beer bottles,



Fred Winkowski

DON'T GO THERE

Centralia, Pennsylvania

by Eric Yost

and a bent NO DUMPING sign splattered with bullet holes.

On Centralia's southern slope, the fire is wide and close to the surface. On cold mornings, the St. Ignatius Church cemetery is foggy with sulfuric steam. Nearby Route 54 is constantly falling in upon itself. The



Don't go to the woods: you'll fall in a hole.

median strip is punctuated with holes pouring out smoke. Each time the road bellies down, new layers of macadam are poured into the gap and smoothed over.

What's it like to live in Centralia?

Most of the houses are gone, but the mine fire remains. Only the elderly or the stubborn or those who savor decay and collapse stay on with the mine fire.

Perched on her porch swing was an old woman too slow to escape being interviewed. She was frail, eighty-something, her vacant eyes focused on another time.

"You know," she said, "it's impossible to fold a piece of paper in half more than eight times without ripping it."

She's right. Either the paper tears or you can't fold it. Try it yourself. Wisdom remains wisdom, although it's hard to absorb a moral when your eyes are stinging from sulfur dioxide. It must have something to do with paper thickness, though.

Meanwhile the mine fire continues to burn. As the coal burns, it settles, and the ground shifts suddenly. From the air, this arm of the mine fire looks like a trail of seared trees thrown back in a blackened scar.

"I saw a rainbow the other day," said the old woman, spitting a plug of Union Leader on the crumpled newspapers.

In the rust-colored grass, smokestacks grow, perpetually bloom with plumes. Shadows of steam clouds play



Don't go to church: the ground is burning beneath it.

upon the coal-slag hills. It's an area that lends itself to black-and-white photography.

"I love rainbows," she said.

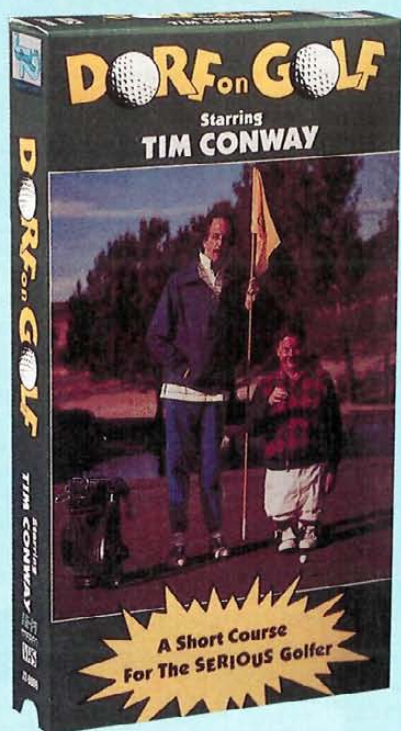
Centralia is separated from Ashland by a barren valley that has already been excavated for coal. Many hope this will stop the mine fire from spreading to Ashland, where it could link up to another vein of coal.

But the mine fire is on the move. "It's there," she said. "You smell it. You see the smoke. Worse some days, other days not. You get used to it. You forget about it. See? Only seven folds."

Children have fallen into sinkholes as the earth suddenly opened around them. But they climbed out again, so it didn't make the national news. ■

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WE'RE living in an "Information Age," if you haven't heard, so you'd think that all those nooks and crannies so often "overlooked" by the media would finally see the light of day. Right? Wrong! Seems like the more light there is, the more shadows, too. That's where the many-eyed Potato comes in. And this month, as every month, the Potato is peel-deep in dirt.

BUSH WHACKED

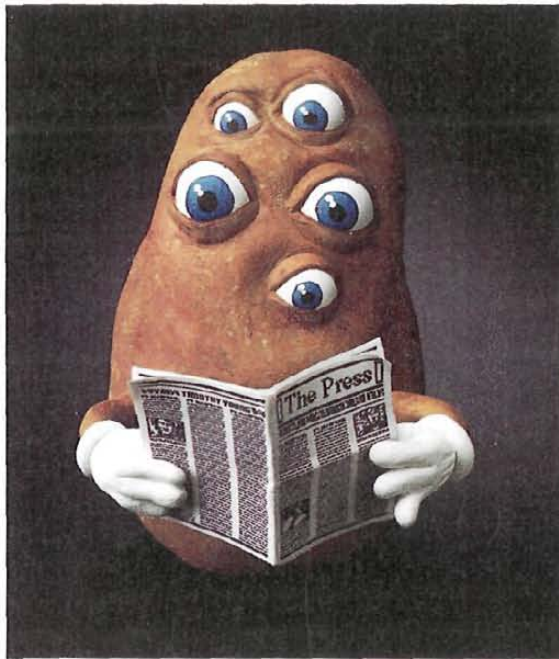
First things first: was the Potato the only one appalled that the president killed a guy hunting last week? The Big Boys of the press seemed to take it all in stride, building up an Ivy League defense for one of their own. *Newsweek's* Tom Gurney went so far as to suggest that had Joseph Larks, the man who was killed, paid more attention to Maine's hunting laws, "he never would have gotten in the way of that bullet." What Gurney failed to mention, however, was that Larks was in a boat setting lobster traps when he was shot (which I understand is still perfectly legal) and that Bush was shooting sea gulls from his back porch, illegal under any state's laws. And *nobody* mentioned the six or seven Tanqueray-and-tonics Bush is reported to have drunk before shooting, or the fact that immediately after hitting Larks, he thrust the gun into Secretary of State James Baker's hands with the admonishing words "Jesus, you killed the guy, Jimmy."

Perhaps even more odious was *Time's* coverage, which said little about the actual event, but focused rather on Barbara Bush's somewhat graceless attempt to make it up to the dead man's pregnant wife with a visit to her home, bearing a Bundt cake and \$750. *Time's* oozy, confiding article, "Barbara's Agony," read more like a Harlequin romance than news reporting, hard-hitting or otherwise: "[Barbara Bush], looking tall and strong, even regal, in a deep-blue Adele Simpson dress, clasped the hands of this fisherman's wife and said a soft prayer. Barbara then proffered the envelope and left, decorously choosing to ignore Janet Larks's watery gaze. Larks, huge with child and not blessed with natural beauty, looked dissatisfied somehow, as though the First Lady's cake, prayers, and money just weren't good enough for her."

Meanwhile, the networks all ran virtually the same story: that prior to shooting Larks, Bush had managed to

THE POTATO

A CANDID REVIEW OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE PRESS



hit some fifty-seven gulls. Only CBS's Garrick Utley pointed out that that was fifty-seven birds in three hundred rounds. But his comments went unnoticed, as they were made on the early-morning Sunday news.

Within a week, it was business as usual. The president's command to "put this tragedy behind us" had done its work. It helped, too, that the ranks of Joseph Larks's mourners were conveniently lessened when Mrs. Larks, her family, and many of her close friends were killed in a mysterious house fire five days later. Maybe the Potato *isn't* the only one who felt a little burned.

THE EMPEROR'S NEW PAPER

But coverage of the powerful by the powerful is always suspect, for aren't they the ones whose meaty paws turn the spigots in this Age of Disinformation? True enough, but the little guys

could stand a dose of Potato-eyed scrutiny, too.

Take, for instance, the *Wichita Eagle-Beacon's* March 12 morning-edition front-page story "Japs Invade Nebraska: Forces Build at the Border." Reporter Nancy Turner's breathy you-are-there account read like a call to arms, detailing a textbook invasion of Beatrice, Nebraska, and a massive Japanese buildup at the Kansas border, replete with ruined farm girls and the bodies of resisters strung up on telephone poles. Strong stuff. And none of it true.

That afternoon, the *Eagle-Beacon's* lead story was a wire-service report on new farm-machinery tariff legislation—not a single mention of the previously reported invasion anywhere in the paper, no disclaimer, no nothing. When reached for comment about the blunder, managing editor Tony Livingstone said, "What invasion? I didn't read anything about an invasion. What, are you on crack or something?" Even more astounding was footage from a local TV station during which a reporter actually held the invasion edition of the paper up to Livingstone's face and demanded an explanation. Livingstone, cool under fire, said, "I don't see any paper. Get your hand out of my face. Are you on crack or something?"

POTATO CHIPS

Can't believe that, in an era when every two-bit paper has its own TV critic, *no one*

noticed that Dan Rather wore nipple clips for two nights in an effort to boost sagging ratings. For us, anyway, it was the perkier Dan has been since the old "Courage" days. . . . Rutabaga, rutabaga—raise your hand if you thought it just a little disconcerting that *American Health's* cover story was "Rutabagas: Eat Them and You'll Die," while just across the rack *Longevity* magazine shouted "Live Forever with Rutabagas!" . . . Fox said to be preparing a big-time national news program just like the other nets; typically, the network is said to be wooing Bobcat Goldthwait as anchor. . . . Wish *The McLaughlin Group's* Morton Kondracke would stop referring to women as "slags." Show in general is a little too boys' club for this writer's taste, as a matter of fact—and now comes news that they'll be taping episodes in a sauna. Too hot indeed. . . . ■

Moyers and Campbell

by Gabriel Byrne

Campbell and Moyers, in the halcyon days of the Greenwich Village beat scene, were frequent, if unnoticed, habitués of the many hostelrys catering to that now sadly defunct movement.

One evening the pair were imbibing that elusive nectar known as "free drink," bestowed on them by a foolish person possessed of more money than sense.

Some hours later, their benefactor, overcome with the effects of advanced intoxication, was removed from the premises. "What shall we do now," slurred Moyers. "For we haven't a *recherché* bean between us."

"O ye of little faith," replied his companion as his darting black eyes surveyed the room.

At that moment, who should enter but the famous Irish playwright Brendan Behan.

"Good even to all here," he said, addressing the bar. "And God bless your honor." He waved to Campbell.

"Not only a gregarious fellow, but an unbiased dispenser of spondulicks to boot," whispered Campbell to Moyers with a wolfish grin.

"Not from what I hear," belched Moyers. "He has the reputation of being notoriously tight-fisted with his coin."

"Just do as I say," replied Campbell in a thick conspiratorial whisper.

Moyers did as commanded and staggered over to the playwright. Some minutes later he returned, crestfallen.

"Well," prodded Campbell, "what did he say?"

"What an unbearable fellow!" replied Moyers. "Told me to fuck off, and said he wouldn't give me a red cent."

"There you have it," sighed Campbell, draining the dregs of his companion's glass.

"The unbearable tightness of Behan."

Campbell had invited Moyers to join him on a motoring holiday. For several days the two partook of the pleasures of the countryside, halting here and there as the humor took them.

One particularly gloomy evening, as Campbell drove not knowing whither or where, darkness overtook them. As Moyers beheld the wilderness without, he ventured to suggest that perhaps they might be lost.

"How right you are, my little friend," Campbell replied. "Life is a futile business, and without myth to sustain us we are indeed, as you so well put it, lost, not to mention that we're out of gas. Ah yes! Myth, wonderful myth, glorious myth, fabulous—" With an abrupt shove Moyers displaced his esteemed companion from the car, and they both set off toward a light of some sort a distance away among the trees.

Presently they came to a great pair of gates, and moonlight glinted off a mailbox with the name "Hill" painted in elaborate Old English characters.

Suddenly, the old mythologist grasped his disciple's arm.

"By the bagpipes of the devil himself, if this isn't the abode of an auld butty of mine, one Hamish Hill, as fine a



Scotsman as ever drew breath. Me and

Hamish go back to the trenches. Well deedle-deedle, but it's a queer world to be sure, to be sure." And whistling merrily, he set off along the driveway, with Moyers following behind.

Finally, they came upon a grand house. Campbell smote upon the huge door, and a muffled sound echoed deep within. At last, the door creaked inward, and standing before them stood a bent and emaciated old retainer in a stained swallow-tailed coat.

"Is this the house of my followers and friends, Mr. & Mrs. Hamish Hill, Esquire?" boomed Campbell. The aged servant reluctantly bowed his white head in the affirmative.

"I was right, as I always am," crowed Campbell triumphantly, forcing entry into the hallway and in the process crushing old Trotter (for such was his name) against the wall behind.

"Now, my good fellow. Pray tell your master that we are here; that we are in need of vittles and the comfort of a warm bed on this most inhospitable of nights."

Trotter groaned, wringing his gnarled hands. "That is not possible, sir."

"Why ever not?" demanded Campbell, as tears welled in the eyes of the aged workus.

"My master and mistress, why, they passed away this very evening." And here he related a sorry tale of ill-prepared haggis and untimely death.

"Fear not, old friend," said Campbell in a tone of soothing calm, "all will yet be well." With that he turned to Moyers. "Fetch the fiddle," he said in a commanding voice, "and be quick about it. We haven't much time."

Presently the three found themselves in the room of death. Candlelight flickered, throwing strange and eerie shadows onto the faded William Morris wallpaper.

A cold sweat of fear broke out on Moyers's face as he beheld the corpses of Mr. and

Mrs. Hill, Esquire, stretched before him in the musty room.

In the silence they heard each other's breathing, as Moyers's trembling hands passed the violin to Campbell.

With great care, Campbell gingerly tapped the strings with the bow. He began to play, slowly at first, tunelessly, it seemed, but then Moyers began to recognize the familiar notes of "Night and Day."

As Moyers gazed in awe at his friend, he suddenly became aware of movement on the bed before him. Horror and incredulity gripped him as he realized that both corpses were beginning to come to life.

Immobilized by terror, he watched as the dead ones rose and smiled and began to hum along with Campbell, sitting bolt upright in their matching Masonic shrouds, feet tapping, heads moving from side to side in happy reverie.

With a virtuoso flourish, Campbell ceased playing.

"What blasphemy is this?" cried Moyers in terror.

Laying down his fiddle, Campbell moved forward and embraced the newly resurrected couple. From between the pair he addressed his friend. "Fear not, Moyers," he smiled. "The Hills are alive with the sound of music."

Among Campbell's many accomplishments unknown to the general public was an extensive knowledge of cocktails, in particular the frozen daiquiri.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 70)

ILLUSTRATED BY ADAM KUBERT

**His hope is his courage,
his defense is his caution,
his horse is his salvation,
and he spends the sleepless
night
with no more protection than
the sky
and no other friend than his
blade.**

FROM "THE GAUCHO MARTÍN FIERRO" BY JOSÉ HERNÁNDEZ



PHOTOGRAPHED BY DENNIS KITCHEN

THE gaucho's world is small. The plains of Argentina are all the space he needs or wants. Yet his vision moves all peoples, from all nations. What man or woman's imagination would not be inspired by the boundless skies above, by the pounding hooves below, or by the yearning fire within? No man's, no woman's. For the gauchos' world is one of flashing knives and flash-fire tempers, of a poverty of things but a richness of spirit, of racing horses, stampeding steers, whirling *bolas*, and strong-brewed *mate*, of beautiful songs and difficult poetry, of speaking engagements, monographs, symposiums, tawny coeds from the Seven Sisters colleges, more singing and *mate*, more coeds, beef at every meal—morning, noon, and night—typewriter ribbons, untuned guitars, loud parties, complicated card

games, hand-rolled cigarettes, deep thoughts, Wite-Out, subscriptions to *Granta* and *Sewanee Review*, the legend of Martín Fierro, a disdain for authority, a love of syllogisms and diagramless crossword puzzles, hangovers, comfortable earth-colored raiment, boots without toes, daring games on horseback, an improvisational song seminar for adults at Mankato State University in Minnesota, a strong distrust of city dwellers, shatterproof glasses when vision grows weak, kinship with the South American Indians, butcher-like knowledge of the various cuts of beef, sunburnt skin and windblown hair, a chair at Cal Tech, bowlegs, strong teeth, and *mate*. In short, though it is a small world, it is a full and active world.

And now, after reading two books about gauchos, we bring that world to you.

Of all the forms of literary composition practiced on the vast pampa, none is more beloved of the gauchos themselves than the legendary anecdote, or tale. Why is this so? Because it is through these tales that the gaucho explains his world to himself. Hear him proclaim: "In the morning we drink our mate full of hope, in the evening we drink our mate full of despair. Each day follows another, how tedious." Within each anecdote something of the meaning of gaucho life—indeed, of all life—is conveyed.

The following tales were selected with the aim of presenting the rich life of the gaucho in all its infinite variety. Interspersed with the tales are facts about the gauchos, which we hope you will enjoy and remember.

TALES OF THE GAUCHOS

"El Frío"

Pacheco was known as "El Frío" because of his love of the cold weather. When even other gauchos would complain about the freezing pampa, El Frío prospered. Indeed, he preferred to break in horses in the cold, saying, "However hard it is on me, it is harder on the horse." Such was his reputation that other gauchos would greet him with whistles, symbolic of the high winds he loved.

So perhaps there was none sadder than El Frío at the coming of the large ranches and their barbed-wire fences. "Does not the wind belong to all? The wide sky?" he cried once. He had every right to be sad, as things turned out, as he was thrown by a horse who shied before a newly erected barbed-wire fence.

Seriously injured, the gaucho was brought in to the nearby *estancia*—the first time he had been inside in many months. "Open the window," El Frío called weakly. Although it was a bitterly cold day, his wish was complied with. No sooner had the wind touched his face than El Frío died.

***People's desire for knowledge about the proud men of the pampa:**

- Strong desire—26%
- Moderate desire—36%
- Some desire—21%
- No desire—17%

Translating Verse

Having spent the morning breaking a string of wild horses, a certain gaucho was resting on his *pingo*, absorbed in translating Homer into supple gaucho verse, when one of Rosas's men galloped up. "Fool!" he shouted. "Why do you not translate the *Iliad* into prose, in the manner of the Penguin Classics?"

"Narrative prose has always constrained my genius," said the gaucho, and he silently continued his work.

***All gauchos carry a sheathed knife, or *facón*, ranging up to twenty-seven inches in length. Thrust through the back of the *tirador* (a broad leather belt that is worn around the waist), the *facón* is used for killing, skinning and castrating animals, repairing equipment, eating, and having knife fights.**

The Musician's Ear

One evening Conconvaccaro was reciting song and poetry at Oberlin College. He thrilled the crowd with his mastery of the *payador's* craft. Afterward, a professor from the music department approached the brave gaucho.

"Señor Conconvaccaro, you improvise wonderfully. But your guitar is constantly out of tune."

Conconvaccaro meditated for a moment. Then he reached into his *tirador*. The professor trembled, thinking that the gaucho would pull out his sharp *facón*.

Instead, Conconvaccaro found a piece of beef jerky and chewed on it. "Is the musician trained with keen ears," he asked, "or keen knives and cold nights?"

The professor hung his head in shame.

***A healthy, twenty-four-year-old gaucho male consumes an average of 6.13 pounds of beef daily, and over seven liters of *mate*.**

A New Recipe

The gaucho El Pseudo has said: "When a gaucho grows aware of a new way in which to prepare roast meat, he should carry it around with him secretly, without uttering it for nine months, as though he were pregnant with it, and let the other gauchos

know of it at the end of that time, as though it were a birth."

****Mate*, or unsweetened tea, is the gaucho's favorite beverage. It is poured into a gourd and sipped through a communal straw, or *bombilla*. According to tradition *mate* can convey a variety of messages:**

- Bitter *mate* shows indifference.
- Sweet *mate* shows friendship.
- Mate* with cinnamon, "Thinking of you."
- Mate* with brown sugar, congeniality.
- Mate* with orange peel, "I'm here for you."
- Mate* with bee balm, "Life is a cabaret."
- Mate* with twigs, "I don't like you."
- Mate* with milk, respect.
- Mate* with coffee, offense pardoned.
- Mate* with dirt, "Let's have a knife fight."

The *Facón*

My short father; my twenty-seven-inch friend; my sharp steely arm, enemy of hides and nuts; my *facón*.

***Until the late 1970s all gauchos wore *botas de potro*, which are made in the following fashion: a young colt is killed, and the skin of the hind legs, from the fetlock to the middle of the thigh, is taken off; the hair is removed, and while the skin is moist and flexible it is fitted to the leg and foot of the wearer. But concern from animal-rights advocates has produced dramatic changes on the pampa, and today *botas de potro* are seldom seen.**

A Needless Accident

It is told of a certain gaucho who insisted on wearing his *facón* tucked into the front of his pants: One day as he was riding at breakneck speed across the pampa, his horse suddenly stumbled in a *vizcacha* hole and dropped from beneath him. Instantly the gaucho released the reins, and thrusting his pelvis forward, he leaped headlong over the horse's head, landing safely on his feet. But looking down at his *bombachas*, he saw a fast-spreading stain of bright red covering his groin area. Smiling bitterly, he looked one last time into the clear blue sky, and then collapsed atop his beloved *pingo*.

*An Englishman once witnessed a gaucho's funeral procession where the well-dressed corpse was positioned upright on his horse. The dead gaucho then rode to his own grave.

On iThree Amigos!

During the shooting of the movie *iThree Amigos!*, the syndicated TV show *Entertainment Tonight* reached José Cristóbal, a self-styled spokesman "for all Gaucho-Americans." "It is not right," he said, "for Martin Short to wear the mantle of Martín Fierro."

Not long afterward, the story was related to Sancho Escobar, a gaucho who was reading at UCLA. "Far worse," nodded Escobar. "Short could have been funnier."

*Such is the hatred of the gauchos for Buenos Aires, the capital, that they derive a deep satisfaction from concocting derisive nicknames for it. Some of them are: The Sinkpit, Capital of the Living Dead, That Place Where They Sip Weak Mate, The Soft Place, Dingtown, and Green Acres.

The Horse Breakers

When the gaucho Martín Fierro visited his wife's cousin, Eduardo, in Buenos Aires, his host asked: "Are there many wild horses and poetry readings on the pampa?"

"Yes," he replied.

"And who," Eduardo continued, "is responsible for breaking these wild horses and reciting this poetry, gauchos or non-gauchos?"

"Gauchos," replied Martín Fierro.

"¡CHUPAAH!" exclaimed Eduardo. That same night found him playing *maroma* on the pampa.

***Most Popular Names Given to Gaucho Boys in the Year 1873**

1. Martín
2. Santos
3. Héctor
4. José, Juan (tie)
6. Virgilio
7. Esteban
8. Otelo, Ramón (tie)
10. Whitman

A Gift of Honor

An American writer was putting together a magazine article on gauchos. On his first day, he rode until his

body was sore, then looked on as the gauchos duelled musically far into the night. The next morning, after a few rounds of *mate*, the whole process began again.

The American was himself strong and tough and stayed with the gauchos, to their surprise and pleasure. After a few days, one of them, Hernández, offered to exchange favors with the writer. The grateful writer asked Hernández for his *bolas*.

Hernández complied gladly, saying, "Now it is time for my favor."

"And what is it, Señor Hernández?"

"I would like your notes."

Stricken but honor-bound, the writer surrendered his notes of his stay with the gauchos. He turned in a piece about Buenos Aires society instead.

***Breakdown of Literary Representation Among Gauchos:**

- William Morris Agency 5%
- Curtis Brown Ltd. 8%
- Janklow & Nesbit Associates 13%
- Writers House 4%
- Anita Diamant 2%
- Various others (fewer than 10 gauchos represented) 4%
- Argentinian representation 23%
- Self-representation 41%

Fierro's Heart

Once a gaucho was asked: "Have you ever known a gaucho whose heart was broken and crushed and yet sound and whole?" The gaucho replied: "Yes, I did know such a gaucho. His name was Martín Fierro."

*The *ombú* tree, which occupies a prominent place in gaucho folklore, is in actuality not a tree at all, but a humongous shrub which grows to girths of fifty feet.

Gauchos and Cowboys

Many tales are told to illustrate the difference between gauchos and cowboys, but this one should suffice:

Buffalo Bill Cody longed to show off the skills of the gaucho in his Wild West show. Finally, after his agents made many promises, de la Plata was chosen to represent the gauchos on Cody's tour of America.

When de la Plata arrived, he found that he was to match up against a cowboy, one-on-one, in a test of skills. But, while the cowboy had been given time to train with the

bolas, no one told the gaucho that he would be required to use Western equipment, very different from his own.

Cody feared de la Plata would draw the *facón* when he discovered this trick, but the gaucho stayed calm. Indeed, he vanquished the cowboy, even stripping him of his chaps when he foolishly accepted de la Plata's challenge to a knife fight.

Buffalo Bill was elated. "You are one tough rider, gaucho!" he yelled after the show. "Sorry about the fast one we pulled on ya."

The gaucho gazed steadily at Buffalo Bill. "And when is the poetry?" he answered.

De la Plata returned to Argentina the next day.

***Number of Days a Gaucho Could Survive on the Pampa:**

- On foot without a *facón*, *bolas*, or *pava* .5
- On foot with *facón* and *bolas* 1
- On foot with *facón*, *bolas*, and *pava* 1.5
- On horseback without gear 27
- On horseback with gear indefinite

At the Reading

Gauchos avoided the census takers, a tradition which persists today. When they read poetry, contribute magazine articles, or tutor, they must be paid cash, refusing to give a Social Security number even if they have one.

Once, in New England, a gaucho was introduced as "a man who will stand up and be counted." Taking the lectern, the gaucho smiled. "A man who stands up, he can be counted," he said, "which is why I prefer to stay in the saddle."

*The favorite pastime of the gauchos was the game called *pato* (duck). A large fowl was killed and sewn into a rawhide bag, twice as big as a football, and with four rawhide handles attached. Gauchos then fought each other on horseback for miles, contesting possession of the duck. Many men were killed and acres of property damaged. The game is still played, only now it is called soccer.

Death

It was the time of branding and castrating, and the gauchos had been working hard throughout the morning. Now they stopped to rest, and,

lighting a fire beneath a large *ombú* tree, they all gathered to sip the fresh-brewed *mate* and converse, all but Il Penseroso, who sat alone and off to the side. When the others asked what was ailing him, he reached deep into his poncho and withdrew a piece of paper. It was a letter from his publisher notifying him that the last of his novels would soon be out of print. A heavy silence descended upon the men. Finally old Putanesca spoke up: "Man, do not let this get to you, for there is still the pampa to ride and much else to do besides." Il Penseroso stood up, his face red with anger and shame. "Liar!" he cried. "Was it not you yourself who said, 'One who is not in print is dead!'" With that he threw himself on his *pingo* and galloped wildly back toward the *estancia*.

*The [dead] child dressed in fine clothing sat propped on a table, ringed by greasy, smoking candles. On the second night a gaucho played the guitar and everyone danced. Drinking, laughing, and kissing occupied the young, and the old men gathered in a corner to smoke and discuss horses." —Description of a wake in rural Azul—gaucho country.

Maxims

It was the custom of the gauchos to rework the maxims of La Rochefoucauld in such a manner as would render them applicable to life on the pampa. Here are some of them:

It takes greater courage to refrain from beef than to go hungry.

For the favorite of Fortune, the *mate* gourd is always filled.

The mind runs fast but the heart carries *bolas*.

Many gauchos would be silent except for boasting.

The gaucho who can no longer ride says instead that he tires of horses.

A *payador* who entertains many is forgiven much.

Only men who cannot ride all night make a virtue of proper sleep.

A self-inflicted wound can hurt worse than many *facones*.

Gaucha Glossary

aftosa—hoof-and-mouth disease, scourge of the wild pampean herds.

asado—the ubiquitous and delectable meat dish consisting of skewers of beef roasted by an open fire.

baqueano (or *baquiano*)—scout or guide.

boleada—the rousing, dramatic, and economically important gaucho ostrich hunt.



boleadoras (better known as *bolas*)—the weapon of choice of the horsemen of the pampas, used by both Indians and gauchos. The *bolas* consist of several rawhide thongs, each tipped with a metal ball or stone, which can be thrown with remarkable accuracy at the legs of a fleeing animal, entangling them and bringing the beast down. Particularly useful during the *boleadas*.

bombachas—baggy trousers that are narrow at the ankle to fit inside a boot.

bombilla—metal straw or tube used for sipping *mate*. Wealthy gauchos sometimes carried silver *bombillas*.

botas de potro—handmade boots fashioned from the skin of a colt's leg, designed to leave the wearer's toes exposed for better purchase on the stirrups.

carne con cuero—a gaucho delicacy: rawhide-wrapped meat cooked slowly in a pit fire.

china—native women of the pampa.

chiripá—a loose, diaper-like cloth, worn by gauchos as a riding garment before the introduction of *bombachas*.

cimarrón—a) wild and untamed, like the fierce pampa winds; b) unsweetened, as tea.

curandero—native healer; medicine man or woman.

dulce de leche—a sweet, milky gaucho dessert.

empanada—a meat pie, still popular today.

facón—the long (up to twenty-seven inches) sword-like knife used by gauchos for everything from skinning cattle to fighting, and carried in the gaucho's *tirador* at the back.

gauchesco—gaucho poetry, known throughout the world for its evocative images of life on the pampas, and written in the unmistakable gaucho dialect.

hierra—branding season.

liberto—slave-born child who, according to law, was to be freed upon marriage or coming of age. Many gauchos were *libertos*.

madrina—a) mare or heifer used to lead and herd other animals; b) godmother.

maroma—dangerous, spectacularly exciting gaucho game in which a man hangs from a bar and drops onto the back of a racing steer or horse and, holding on only with his legs,

tames or even kills the animal beneath him. *matambre*—the prized, delicious-tasting beef found between the ribs and hide.

monte—the coarse-grassed region of the dry pampa.

ombú (genus *Phytolacca*)—the giant twisted shrub of the pampa, useless for fuel because of its spongy constitution.

paisano—back-country native.

pampa—the gaucho territory, consisting of some 119,000 square miles of Argentinian plains.

pampero—powerful, sometimes deadly, windstorm of the pampas.

pato—favorite days-long game of the gauchos in which a killed duck was sewn into a rawhide ball, possession of which was contested by hundreds of galloping horsemen. Restrictions on *pato* were enforced after many gauchos were killed and injured.

pava—small kettle used to heat water for brewing *mate*.



payada—singing competition between *payadores*.

payador—singer of improvised, often boastful yet hauntingly poetic songs.

pechando ("breasting")—another great gaucho game. In this one, riders race their horses full-speed into one another.

pingo—native Creole horse, smaller and stockier than most North American horses, and customarily ridden half-tamed.

puchero—delectable stew of mutton or beef.

rancho—a simple thatched adobe house, in which gauchos sleep during those infrequent times they sleep indoors.

recado—the gaucho saddle, soft and multi-layered.

tirador—the broad leather belt worn by gauchos, often adorned with coins.

vaquerías—the enormous wild cattle hunts of the colonial era.

velorio del angelito ("wake of the little angel")—wake / party held for the death of a small child. Some saloon keepers would rent the bodies of dead children and place them in their windows to advertise an impromptu party.

vizcacha—rabbit-like, tunneling rodent of the pampa whose burrows present a daily hazard to gauchos and their horses.



PAMPA FIRE

FROM the epic performance piece PAMPA FIRE by Susana María Gómez Santos. Translated by Héctor Villalobos. The characters are Martín Fierro, the mythic gaucho of song and legend; Santos Vega, the famed gaucho *payador*; Laureano Ramírez, Pedro Nolasco, and Pablo Rodríguez, three young gauchos; and their horses, Pie-Firme, Rastreador, Hoja Negra, Fuego de Muerte, and Pintura Viejo. All action takes place around a gaucho campfire. The time is late at night.

Martín Fierro: Pass me the *mate*, my brother, and sing us a song.

Santos Vega [*passing the mate gourd*]: So I will, so I will. Tell me, little pinto bean, have you tuned my guitar?

Pablo Rodríguez [*hands VEGA the guitar*]: Sí, yes, of course. Will you not sing us the song of the Lone-some Steer?

Pedro Nolasco: Yes, Santos, or of the Rotating Spit and the Hunchbacked Stranger?

Fierro [*impatently*]: Just sing, Santos. I cannot stand the sound of these boys clamoring for your attention like women after an ostrich hunt.

Vega: Patience, old friend, we have not yet heard from one of the women. What is your request, Laureano?

Laureano Ramírez: I wish... I wish to hear a song about home.

The other young gauchos hoot with derisive laughter.

Nolasco: Home? We are at home now, little girl. The wide and unforgiving pampa is our home. If you wish a *rancho*, perhaps we should build one for you here, that we may keep you in it and call on you when our desires make us squirm in our *chiripás*.

Rodríguez: Ha-ha. Gauchos from leagues away would come to you with flowers and meat for just a glimpse of your underthings!

FIERRO slaps RODRÍGUEZ in the head with his *facón*, sending Rodríguez to the dirt.

Fierro: You will learn soon enough, impetuous vandel, that there is no sweeter place than home. And that the

sight of a woman's underthings, a *real* woman's underthings, is worth all the strips of beef your horse will bear, and all the flowers you can carry.

The gauchos sit quietly for a moment, staring into the flames. RODRÍGUEZ rubs his head, while NOLASCO adjusts his bombachas. They sit quietly for a long time. FIERRO begins to prepare the pava and gourd for fresh mate.

Fierro: Come, compadres, we must not dwell on thoughts of women, for we shall surely lose our way. Vega! Where is that song I ordered last year, it seems?

Vega: Coming up, Martín. But you are no musical slouch yourself. Join me in a *payada*—unless you fear it!

Fierro: A musical duel? Nothing would delight me more. But I seek greater sport than with the likes of you. It will be over before you have even strummed your first chord.

Vega: Ha-ha! Then I shall go first and thus assure myself of at least a single verse. But if I were you, I would not be so confident of myself. Your skill at the games is well known, but you put your hand up a steer's ass when you sing with me.

Fierro: You talk too much, Vega. If I did not know you so well, I might think you were afraid.

VEGA takes his guitar and stands before the others. He sings.

Vega: Flying down the pampas,
Pingo 'neath his ass,
Martín Fierro snoozes,
And drops onto the grass.

The young gauchos roar with laughter, and FUEGO DE MUERTE whinnies. FIERRO looks uncomfortable and irritated. VEGA continues.

Vega: All around our hero,
El Ganado Vacuno cats,
Stripping off his *botas*,
Exposing his bare feet.
The cattle are still hungry,
Eat his poncho and his pants,
But Fierro never wakes up,
In his head *ensueños* dance.

Again the young gauchos laugh loud and hard. All the horses



From the 1947 off-Broadway revival of *Pampa Fire*: Milton Worth (Santos Vega) takes direction from Rupert Wilke, while Susan Ahlstrom (Carmela Fierro) and Jerry Landis (Martín Fierro) look on. The production ran for two years at the Minetta Lane Theater before moving to Los Angeles's Teatro Hispánico, where it ran for almost twenty years and closed after the 3,854th performance in 1968.

whinny, and FIERRO looks furious. VEGA finishes his song:

Vega: When at last the gaucho woke up,
He found himself stark nude
With nothing but his *tirador*
To hide his tiny dude.
When Martín met his *pingo*
It was thirteen days or more
Of humping 'cross the pampas
And boy, were his feet sore.

VEGA bows deeply. The young gauchos stand and cheer, the horses snort and paw the ground. FIERRO is seething, and strains to keep his temper under control.

Fierro: A bit jejune, old friend. But we are far away from people out here on the plains. Perhaps you are less concerned with standards, if you were ever concerned with them.

Vega: There is a tone in your voice that I find whiny, Martín. Perhaps we should discontinue this *payada* before our friendship falters.

Fierro: Aha! You are more afraid of my words than of my *facón*, it seems. And well you should be. Hand me the guitar.

VEGA gives FIERRO the guitar, then takes his place with the other gauchos. He throws wood on the fire and drinks deeply from the mate gourd. FIERRO begins by recklessly strumming on the guitar.

Fierro: Vega. Self-styled singer from Azul,
No substance, no class, just dazzle,
Panders to patrons,
Children, and matrons—
The kind who like their songs facile.
Santos Vega, Santos Vega,
Hope I'm never mistaken for
Santos Vega,
Santos Vega, Santos Vega,
Hope I'm never mistaken for
Santos Vega!
Vega. Eater of fresh vegetables and
sweet fruits,
Drinks tea made from tea bags and
peat roots.
Got a sieve for a brain,
So he writes his refrains
On parchment he keeps in his
cheap boots.
Santos Vega, Santos Vega,
Hope I'm never mistaken for
Santos Vega.
Santos Vega, Santos Vega,
Hope I'm never mistaken for
Santos Vega!

FIERRO finishes with a guitar flourish. He bows deeply and looks at the gauchos. There is weak applause, and the horses do not react.

Rodríguez: What is tea from peat roots, Señor Fierro?

FIERRO slaps RODRÍGUEZ with his *facón* again. RODRÍGUEZ sprawls.

Fierro: Why don't you try the *payada*, little campsite rug? It is not so easy to make up lines as you go along. Some *payadores* I know make up their songs long before they sing them, I am told.

FIERRO gives VEGA a meaningful glance. VEGA is outraged.

Vega: If you mean to imply that I did not make up my

song as I was singing it, that I did not improvise, that I am not a true gaucho *payador*, then why don't you just say it? But perhaps these are not your true feelings, eh, Martín? Perhaps you are only mad that you were bested in our little competition.

Fierro: I wish it were true, old friend, but I know for a fact that you write down your words on paper sometimes hours before you sing them.

Vega: You lie!

Fierro: You die!

RODRÍGUEZ, NOLASCO, RAMÍREZ: Knife fight!

FIERRO and VEGA jump to their feet and simultaneously draw their long *facones* and wrap their ponchos around their left arms. They circle each other in a way congruent for two such brave gauchos. The horses are nervous.

Fierro: Now we shall settle everything as we should have a long time ago.

Vega: Oh, does the knife make you feel more like a man?

Fierro: I don't feel like a man ever. Perhaps you are confusing me with you, little *becerrillo*. I feel like a woman always!

Vega: Funny, you don't look like one!

The two lunge at each other. LAUREANO RAMÍREZ leaps between them.

Ramírez: No, no! You must stop this. Great men such as you must never fight. You will kill each other!

But the scuffle continues, with RAMÍREZ caught between them. Suddenly, RAMÍREZ yells in pain, then slumps to the ground, FIERRO'S *facón* in his side. FIERRO and VEGA stop fighting. RODRÍGUEZ and NOLASCO stand stunned, then RODRÍGUEZ stoops to take a closer look.

Rodríguez: You have killed him. You killed Laureano.

Fierro: No, it cannot be so. Aaah! God in heaven, I would sooner kill myself than this young gaucho, still with so much life ahead of him.

Vega [putting an arm on FIERRO'S shoulder]: You cannot blame yourself, old friend. We are all at fault. Our way is proud and merciless. Those that choose it must live with the consequences.

Rodríguez: He was a better man than any of us.

Vega: And what does it matter? He is no better than dirt now.

Nolasco [crying]: Oh, Laureano! All he wanted was to see his home once more.

Fierro: But you said it yourself, young Pedro, the pampa is his home.

Vega: Move him away from the fire, Pablo, and forget him. Tomorrow we will say goodbye. But drink now. The mate is strong and hot.

Fierro: Yes, drink now.

PABLO and PEDRO drag LAUREANO'S body away. The horses snort and stomp. SANTOS and MARTÍN are silent and stare at the fire. SANTOS prepares the mate gourd again. PABLO and PEDRO return and sit sadly by the fire, looking into the flames. At length, MARTÍN turns to SANTOS.

Fierro: Santos, sing us a song.

Vega: Yes, a song. I shall sing the story of the Lonesome Steer.

THE END

"GOODBYE, MANUEL": A TRANSATLANTIC AFFAIR



ILLUSTRATED BY KYE CARBONE

Dear Manuel:

Father made a perfectly horrible remark about you at dinner tonight, so I left the table (without excusing myself!) and found solace here in my room, among my letters and photographs and memories of you. Oh, Manuel, you seem so far away, and our summer together seems like something I read in a novel, not something I lived through. Will it really be three years before we are wed? It seems so long to wait. But Mrs. Bingley says the time will pass before I know it.

How are Héctor and Juan? Did Héctor ever get an introduction to that young woman he was so taken with? How are Juan's knife wounds? Make sure he continues to soak them in salts to reduce the scarring. How is Cochina? Do you think she still remembers me? I have been riding a lot lately, but none of our horses is as swift and smooth as Cochina. Oh dear, I'm crying again. See how the tears spot the page. But they are tears of joy, dear heart. I think of you and know that I am the luckiest girl alive. Then I think of Father and I am not so sure.

With all my deepest feelings,
Jane

Dear Jane:

One day, I will kill your father. A man who fills his own daughter's eyes with so much sadness does not deserve life. Yet

what is his life but a walking death anyway—spending his days behind his desk counting his money.

I wrote a song:

*Jane of England, so far away,
Bearer of my offspring in future times,
Return to me, come back to Manuel
That you may do things for me
around my home.*

It is not much as songs go, but I hope you like it, Jane. I made it up for you.

Goodbye,
Manuel

Dear Manuel:

I shall die. Your song was so beautiful, and you wrote it for me. I shall die. Goodness, I'm crying. Oh, Manuel, see what you do to me.

Father is still an ogre, but I think he really means well. He is just much too old to know what it's like to be in love, and to feel things so passionately as we do. So I don't think you should kill him, Manuel, even though I know you were probably joking.

I had tea with Charlotte Crimmons three times this week and each time she made me show her my locket picture of you. She was positively green. Naturally, I radiated pride, but even these moments are just islands in a vast ocean of boredom, Manuel. My life is but a dreary old

charade being acted out for the benefit of "convention." How I despise it. How I long to be with you, riding Cochina full out across the plain, with no cares for anything but us. Now look at me, I'm crying again.

All my love,
Jane

Dear Jane:

Bad news about the horse. She is dead. For to make the *botas de potro*, the gaucho must cut the skin of the horse along its leg above the joint and then shape it to the gaucho's leg. So now your horse is with me always, even though it is killed.

I wrote a new song:

*Jane of England across the ocean,
What do you look like, your face is so
far away?
What do I care for your father whom
I despise
So long as you are still pretty.*

I made it up just now and if you were here, I would sing it aloud with my guitar, in the *payador* style, and you would lift up your skirts and dance. I am burning for you now, and must put down my pen.

Goodbye,
Manuel

Dearest Manuel:

I burn for you, too, darling, but I cried

for hours about poor, poor Cochina. Don't you find wearing boots made from her legs terribly morbid? I understand you trying to memorialize her and all, but isn't it morbid? Mrs. Bingley pointed out that we wear lots of things made from animals and that it was no different. But I said we don't wear our friends and pets. Oh dear, I fear I shall cry again.

Charlotte Crimmons said to make sure I said hello to my heavenly gaucho for her, and that he should write her a song. Isn't that funny? You're so popular here. If only you were here now, we'd be the most talked-about couple in London. Heavens, here come the tears!

Do write soon, dear Manuel.

All my deepest thoughts,
Jane

P.S. For our wedding, I've chosen silk tails for you and morning coats for J. and H. Divine!

Dear Jane:

Bad news about Juan and Héctor. Juan died from wounds and Héctor has gotten syphilis and will die soon. They would not like to have worn the morning coats for the wedding anyway.

I wrote a song for your friend, Charlotte Crimmons:

*Fair English lady across the ocean,
Who are you and why do you call
for Manuel?*

*Do you feel the pampa wind?
Do you taste the sweet mate?
Who are you, woman of mystery?*

Yesterday, little vizcacha, we played the game of maroma, and five men were killed. But your Manuel was not. I hung from a bar and leaped to the back of an enraged steer. Then I plunged my *facón* into his neck and killed him, just as I would kill your father. We drank until dawn.

I grow tired of waiting, Jane. Three years is a long time.

Goodbye,
Manuel

Dear Manuel:

I'm mad at you. You wrote Charlotte a song, but you didn't write one for me. I showed her your song and she nearly died she was so taken by it—personally, I thought she played the scene a little hard. She has left for a trip to the Americas and I must say I'm a little glad.

I was shocked to hear about Héctor and Juan. They seemed so filled with life last summer. Although I thought Héctor put his face too close to a person when he was speaking to them. I am so sorry—you must be so lonely. I canceled the order for their morning coats, so don't worry about that.

Remember during the summer how you

carved our initials in the hide of that *cimarrón* steer? You said he would return to us on our wedding day. It was the most romantic thing I've ever heard. Oh, I shall die. Three years is too long. Oh, Manuel, I can barely hold my pen, I'm shaking so hard.

Miserably in love,
Jane

Dear Jane:

Your letter came the same day Charlotte Crimmons arrived. I did not know that all English ladies are so beautiful! We chose a little *pingo* pony for her yesterday, and guess what, it is named Cochina just like yours. Charlotte seems very nice, though the message she brought of your mortal illness is sad. I am sorry. But I have no time to write as I must go teach her the art of the *bolas* now.

Goodbye, and feel better
Manuel

Dearest Manuel:

I am not dying! Though I practically am. That witch has stabbed me in the back and poisoned you with her lies. I implore you, dearest one, to forget her and remember me, remember us—our times together, our future, our children. Oh, I am lost in a salt sea of my own dolorous liquid. And Father forbids me to come to you. Good riddance, he says.

Oh, Manuel, do you still love me? I shall not sleep until I know, and I shall not live if you... Please!

Despondently,
Jane

Dear Jane:

I have fallen in love with Charlotte. I tried to stop it. I went to the *curandero* to exorcise this love sickness, but it did not help. She is so small and pasty in this vast country that I must protect her as I would protect a calf. But I know it is wrong. I cannot love both you and her. So I must leave you both, to ride far from here into the empty pampa, where my destiny lies. It is the only way.



I wrote a song about it:

*Goodbye, Jane and goodbye,
Charlotte,
I loved you both and yet could love
neither,
But now I will go before sorrow
knocks me down,
A flashing *facón* between my ribs
will probably kill me in the end.*


It isn't much of a song, but it is what I feel. I will always remember our summer together, Jane, but I am glad, in the end, not to have to wear silk tails for our wedding. But now the point is moot.

Goodbye forever,
Manuel

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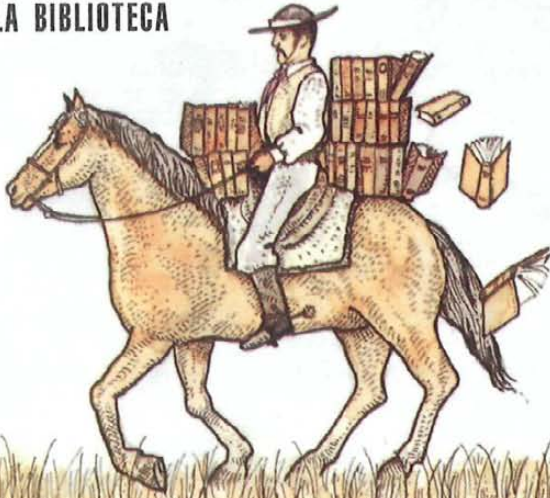
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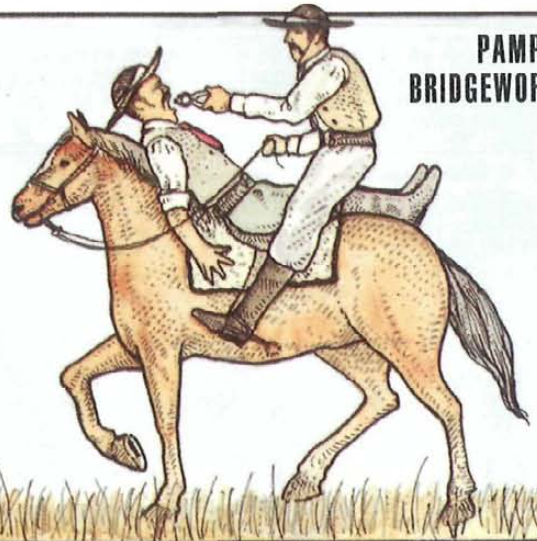
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RIDING STYLES OF THE GAUCHO

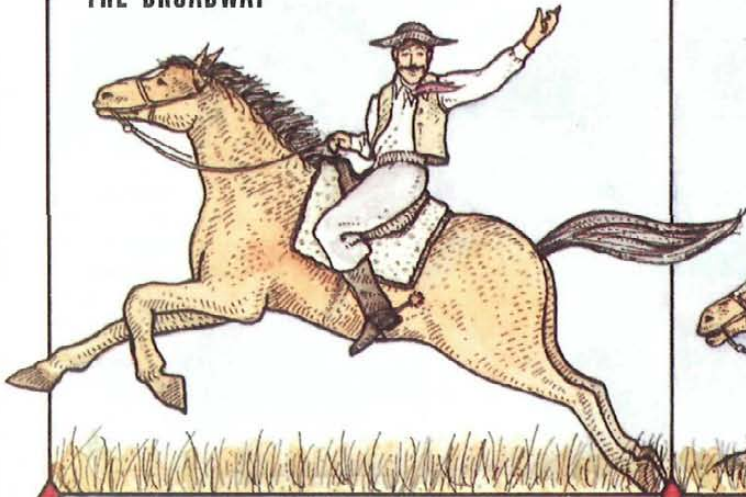
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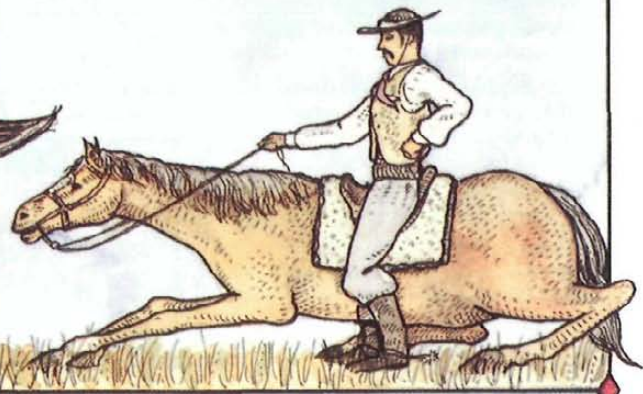
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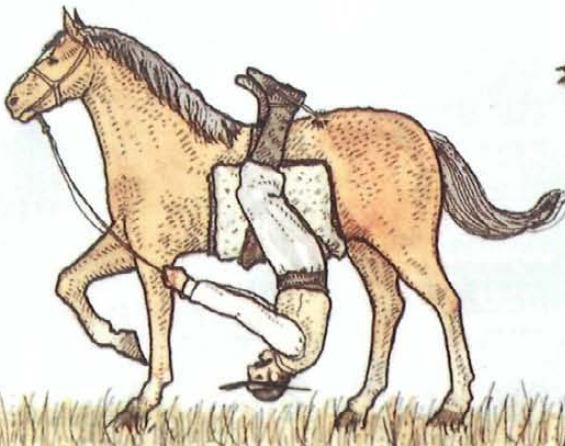
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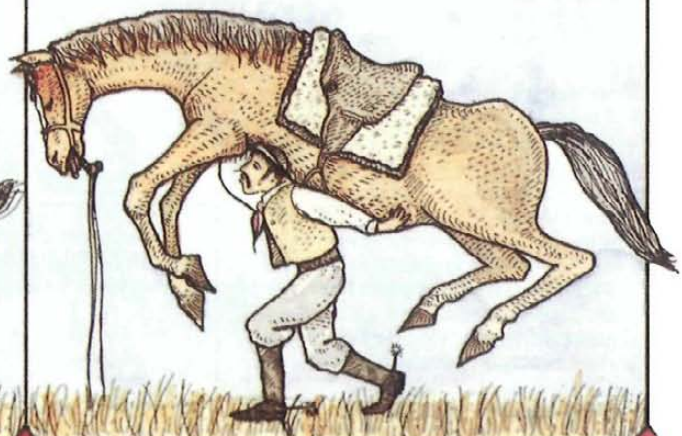
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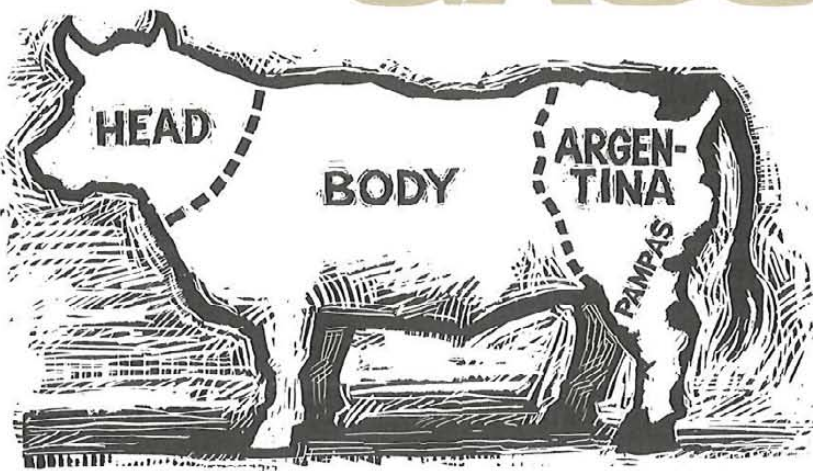


EL CABALLO ENFERMO



ILLUSTRATED BY GLENN WOLFF

BEEF, FOOD OF THE GAUCHOS



BEEF Gauchos. Once it was impossible to think of one without the other. Beef was there for the taking, and savory cookfires dotted the pampa, coming to life with the sizzle and pop of cooking meat. But the great herds, and the horsemen themselves, have been dismantled by progress, replaced with wheat and alfalfa fields, barbed wire and tractors. Beef and gauchos have taken separate trails.

Still, the delicious legacy of their long and fast association lives on. Even in the most modern kitchens of Buenos Aires one can find the remnants of an honorable gaucho past: the sharp sticks used to prepare *asado*, the long *facones* still unmatched for cutting rawhide, and the sturdy ceiling hook required for the *sopa de enfermedad*. It seems the gauchos' love of beef has never been lost, but absorbed into the mainstream, like an orphaned calf brought into the herd.

But gaucho cooking is not reserved for Argentinian palates only. Rather, just as gaucho song and verse have sated the literary appetites of students and lovers of poetry around the world, so too should the singular cuisine of the gauchos be brought forth for those who crave nourishment of a more earthy kind. The few simple recipes that follow are but a brief introduction to the endless volume of gaucho food.

First, however, a word or two on preparation:

► **Keep it simple.** Gaucho cooking is as simple and unmistakable as the *pampero* that rains hail across the plain. Just as serving a complex French meal on the pampa is a patronizing act, so "dressing up" a gaucho meal with pretentious settings or conversation does no one honor.

Although an open fire is the preferred source of heat for most gaucho chefs, any stove or microwave oven will suffice. Actual temperatures are a matter of taste, for, as the gauchos sing in their cooking song "*Carne de mi mente*," "Over the coals, cook it slow/ Into the fire, cook it fast/ Get the beef cooked, get it done." Likewise, cuts of meat are unimportant distinctions to the gaucho chef, and more often than not only serve to

hinder the modern gaucho cook. For special meals, however, the *matambre* — the succulent meat found between the animal's ribs and hide — is often the most important dish.

APPETIZERS

The appetizer is an art of the gaucho table. Because of the lengthy cooking times of some beef courses, the main meal cannot always be served until well into the early morning. Thus, having something to nibble on is not only important but necessary in preserving harmony among the *compañeros*. If the main course is the soul of the meal, these dishes are the conscience, and embody gaucho simplicity and directness.



Beef Strips

40 pounds of beef

Cut the beef into thin strips 2 inches by 6 inches long. Serve raw, or cook to taste. Makes approximately 500 strips.



Beef Cubes

40 pounds of beef

Cut the beef into cubes. Serve raw, or cook to taste. Makes approximately 500 cubes.



Beef Circles

40 pounds of beef

Cut the beef into thin circles, 3 inches in diameter. Serve raw, or cook to taste. Makes approximately 500 circles.



Carne Ensalada

This special meat salad is usually reserved for festive occasions. As it also provides a rare source of roughage for gauchos, it can make any occasion festive.

70 pounds of beef

6 pounds of monte or Johnson grass

Shred beef. In heated skillet, sear shredded beef. Remove the roots from the monte or Johnson grass. Toss with beef.

Sopa de Minga (Harvest Soup)

Served during the meat harvest period, *sopa de minga* is best when prepared a day in advance and served chilled from cowhide flasks.

- 1 steer
- 60 gallons of water
- pepper (to taste)

Slaughter steer, making sure to preserve blood and entrails. Bring water to boil. Stir in blood and entrails. When second boil is reached, cover and let simmer for 2 hours. Add rest of steer and remove from heat. Pepper to taste. Serves 4.



Sopa de Liberto (Soup of the Slave Child)

Though some chefs contend this soup is traditionally made with the meat of a slave child, most agree it is rather the soup most often eaten by slave children. It brings back powerful memories to the sentimental gauchos, many of whom were themselves born into slavery. One batch can often be made to nourish many dozen slaves over the course of several years.

- 16 pounds of bones
- 5 cups of water

Bring water to boil. Add bones. Stir. Let simmer for an hour.

Sopa de Enfermedad (Soup of Sickness)

One of the most complex dishes in the otherwise simple gaucho cuisine, the "soup of sickness" is not, as some would have, a curative. Rather, it was created to make good use of sick livestock that might have fallen prey to *aftosa* (hoof-and-mouth disease) or cancer.

- 1 sick steer
- 5 gallons of water
- bay leaf

Using strong rawhide, lash the steer's four hooves together. From a tripod, or sturdy ceiling hook in your kitchen, hang the steer by its hooves over the campfire or stove, so that its back is about 2 inches from the flame. With your *facón*, make a 24-inch cut the length of the steer's abdomen. Reach into the cut and, again using your *facón*, dice the steer's entrails into small pieces, making sure to keep them inside the abdominal cavity. Pour in the water. Kill the steer. This



hanging steer now becomes its own soup pot! When the water boils in 3 to 4 hours, add the bay leaf. Stir. Let simmer for another 2 hours—to kill any remaining sickness. To get the most out of their steer, some gauchos remove the head and tail and throw them into the abdominal cavity as well, but this is not necessary, and may mean cooking for an additional 2 hours if the steer's sickness is in its head. Serves 3.

THE MAIN COURSE

Custom dictates that the main course follow the appetizers immediately so that the gaucho never has time to grow hungry again. As in the deadly gaucho game *maroma*, timing is everything. But with a little practice, anyone can cook, if not ride, like a gaucho.

Simple Dinner of Asado and Mate

- 1 steer, cut up

Cut up steer and cook on skewers over an open fire to taste (*asado*). Serve with hot *mate*.

Festival Dinner: Carne con Cuero

A favorite of trail-weary gauchos, *carne con cuero* is also a traditional favorite at the *minga*.

- 1 steer

Kill the steer and skin it. While the hide is still moist, cut it into pieces measuring 10 inches by 10 inches. Take strips of meat from the carcass and wrap them tightly in the cowhide squares—24 ounces of beef per square. Make sure each packet includes at least one piece of *matambre*, the tasty

meat from between the ribs and hide. Bury these packets in hot coals and let roast for 2 hours, turning periodically. Remove from coals and serve in their own rawhide shells.

A SIDE DISH: LOCRO

A nineteenth-century visitor to the pampa noted, "The gauchos view [vegetables] with eyes of ridicule, and consider a man who would eat them as little superior to the beasts of the field." *Locro*, however, is an authentic compromise between the demands of our table and the equally demanding gauchos. In fact, their traditional verse describes it best:

To eat locro
I need:
Corn, beans, and meat
And fried chili.

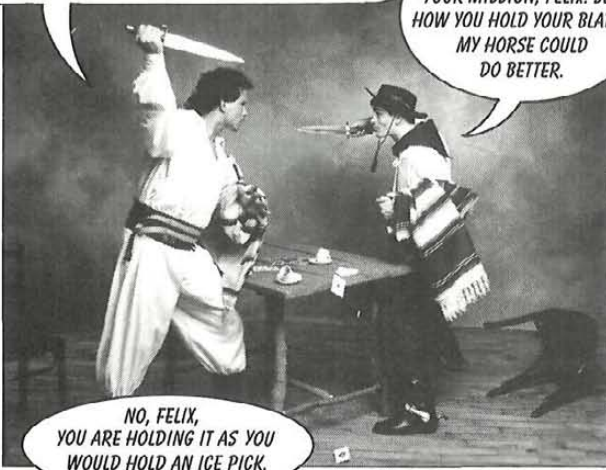
DESSERT

Sweet *mate*, the drink of friendship, should be all the dessert you need. However, if you are doing business entertaining and feel sweet *mate* implies a commitment you cannot honor, serve bitter *mate* with *dulce de leche*, a milk-based caramel dessert. Don't overdo it, though: a heavy dessert will assuredly weigh on you throughout a long evening's dancing.



KNIFE FIGHT!

SO, YOU CHEAT ME AT TRUJO, EH, CARLOS, JUST AS YOU CHEATED JUAN AND MIGUEL. WELL, NOW SEE IF YOU CAN CHEAT THE STEEL OF MY FACÓN!



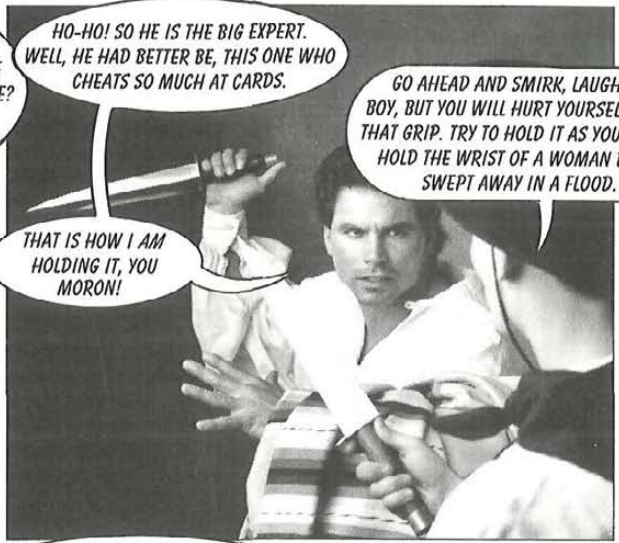
YOUR ANGER ERODES YOUR MISSION, FELIX. SEE HOW YOU HOLD YOUR BLADE? MY HORSE COULD DO BETTER.

NO, FELIX, YOU ARE HOLDING IT AS YOU WOULD HOLD AN ICE PICK.

HO-HO! SO HE IS THE BIG EXPERT. WELL, HE HAD BETTER BE, THIS ONE WHO CHEATS SO MUCH AT CARDS.

THAT IS HOW I AM HOLDING IT, YOU MORON!

GO AHEAD AND SMIRK, LAUGHING BOY, BUT YOU WILL HURT YOURSELF WITH THAT GRIP. TRY TO HOLD IT AS YOU WOULD HOLD THE WRIST OF A WOMAN BEING SWEEPED AWAY IN A FLOOD.



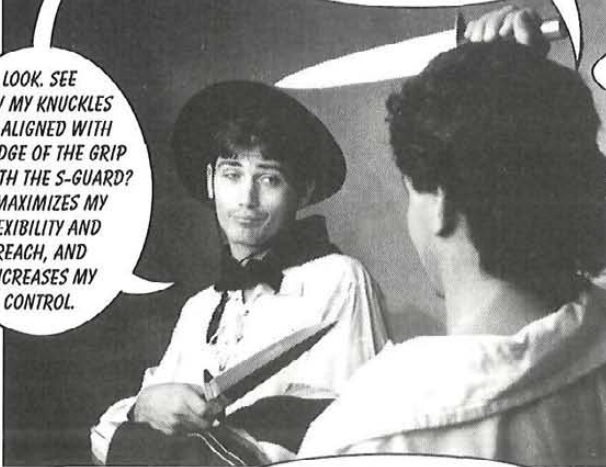
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? I DON'T GET IT.

HEY! FEATURE THAT! YOU MAY BE RIGHT, CARLOS—I LIKE THE FEEL OF THIS.

I'M SURPRISED YOU'RE NOT FAMILIAR WITH IT. I THOUGHT IT WAS UNIVERSALLY KNOWN. IT'S KIND OF AN ERGONOMIC APPROACH.

LOOK. SEE HOW MY KNUCKLES ARE ALIGNED WITH THE EDGE OF THE GRIP BENEATH THE S-GUARD? IT MAXIMIZES MY FLEXIBILITY AND REACH, AND INCREASES MY CONTROL.

RIGHT, RIGHT. I LIKE THAT YOU CAN STAB AND SLASH SO EFFECTIVELY.



YEAH, ACTUALLY. MY SISTER MADE IT FOR MY BIRTHDAY.

EXACTLY. SAY, NICE PONCHO. NEW?

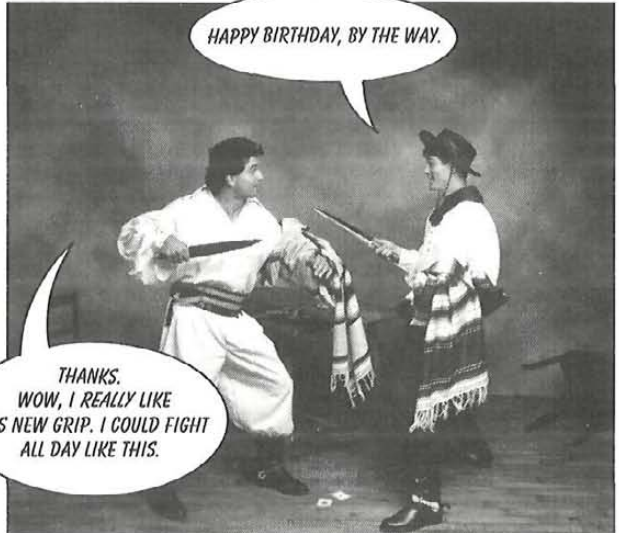
LOVELY. DO YOU THINK I COULD HAVE IT IF I KILL YOU?

OF COURSE. NO PROBLEM.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BY THE WAY.



THANKS. WOW, I REALLY LIKE THIS NEW GRIP. I COULD FIGHT ALL DAY LIKE THIS.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOE PEOPLES

(We're Living Life) THE GAUCHO WAY

Traditional Argentinian Folk Song
Arranged by Alan Murchie

1. Fly - ing up and down the pam - pa And we
 2. Ev - 'ry gau - cho has been pub - lished Ev - 'ry
 3. Ci - ty life has got its plea - sures But we

got our bo - las bla - read zing Playing pa - to and pe -
 gau - cho is well - And our verse - is fill'd with
 have our gau - cho pride We be - long - out on the

chan-do It is real-ly quite a-maz - ing.
 sweet-ness As our blades are filled with dread.
 pam-pa On our pingos we must ride.

Feed my pin-go in the morn - ing
 From Berk-eley up to Bryn Mawr
 Pay - a - dor-es by the fire

Ride her hard all af - ter - noon Won't get off
 We pro - claim our gau - cho verse And the grin -
 Sing - ing far in - to the night Eat - ing roast

till af - ter mid - night And ev - en then it's much too
 gos come to list - en And to fill our gau - cho
 meat wrapp'd in raw - hide Some - thing 'bout it just feels

soon. 1,3 We're liv - ing life is THE GAU - CHO WAY
 purse. 2 And that too is THE GAU - CHO WAY
 right. B7

We fight with knives we sip ma - te
 We read at Yale For mu - cho pay

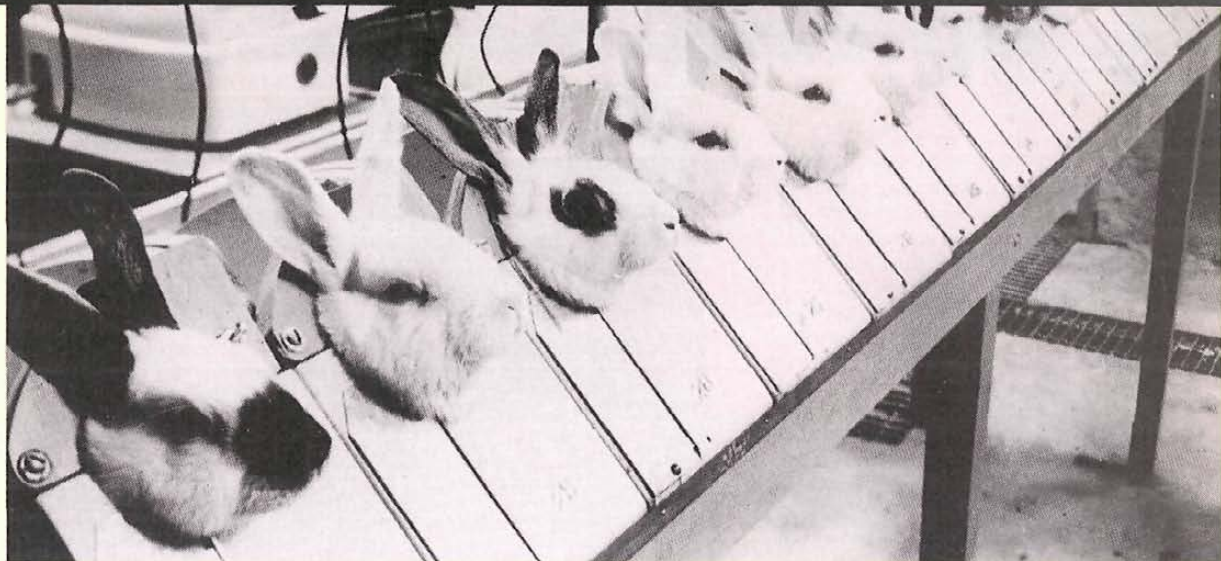
We're liv - ing life THE GAU - CHO WAY
 Yes, that too is THE GAU - CHO WAY And it's O - - K

It's just O - K. E Da Capo al Fine

(B7)
 (spoken) It's just O K It's O K

STOP THE MADNESS!!!

SUBSCRIBE TO THE NATIONAL LAMPOON



AP/Wide World

ITEM: A leading women's magazine implanted electrodes into the craniums of forty-five baby rhesus monkeys to measure their responses to the magazine's new style section. Twelve of the monkeys died, six developed permanent motor disabilities, and one lost control of its salivary glands. The proposed style section was ultimately scrapped by a new design director.

ITEM: The leading celebrity magazine shaved the fur off fifty-one baby otters and attached sensors that measured galvanic skin responses to a series of photos of such stars as Roseanne Barr, Madonna, and Danny Aiello. The magazine had planned its next six months of covers, but the hapless otters began exhibiting severe stress syndromes and abnormal feeding patterns.

EVERY YEAR, THOUSANDS of innocent animals are subjected to the most brutal torture imaginable by the heartless moguls of the publishing world.

In fact, virtually *all* the leading consumer magazines have begun sophisticated survey research projects using laboratory animals as subjects. Data are generated, grants are allocated, a huge research bureaucratic infrastructure has been created—all *built on the immense suffering and painful degradation of our friends from the animal kingdom.*

NATIONAL LAMPOON MAGAZINE STANDS ALONE IN CONDEMNING THIS MADNESS. When you subscribe to the *National Lampoon*, you may rest assured that *not one cent* of your subscription fee will ever go toward the wanton exploitation of animals.

So subscribe to the *National Lampoon* today and help us as we forge new links toward interspecies cooperation and respect.

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JEANNETTE ADAMS

MARINE POLICE BLOTTER

A Moorestown farmer and military buff, Horace Gribble, sixty-eight, became the focus of an investigation by marine police and the Department of the Navy when an Aegis-class cruiser was discovered in his cornfield February 13. The vessel was described by the farmer as “a scarecrow.” “It’s the microwaves that get them,” he added. Gribble, who described himself to investigators as “a hobbyist,” asserted his innocence when questioned about his procurement of certain classified parts, stating that some were well-carved replicas of pictures he had seen in *Newsweek*, while others were obtained with the help of “a friend in the mail-order business.” No charges have been filed against Gribble as yet.



PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARK LINN



Charges of operating a vessel while intoxicated and recklessness were filed against the boat’s captain, Stefan Rodchenko, sixty-three, of Newark, New Jersey, after marine police observed him weaving from bank to bank of the Passaic River. Police pursued Rodchenko at chase speeds of twenty miles per hour until Rodchenko ran his vessel aground. Rodchenko failed a field sobriety test and was taken to St. Michael’s Hospital for treatment of minor injuries. Rodchenko denied he was drunk and claimed that he ran aground when he took his eyes “off the river for an instant to admire the scenery.” He was released after posting 10 percent of \$5,000 bail. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for March 20.



Exotic teak paneling valued at \$97,000, which had been reported stolen January 30 from the exclusive Cafe Metropole in New York City, was found on tugboats in Camden by marine police acting on a tip. The tugboats’ owners, Piraeus Credenza, fifty-eight, of Pennsauken, New Jersey, and Frank Spinolio, forty-nine, of Cinnaminson, New Jersey, were charged with burglary, theft, conspiracy, and possession of stolen property. Police speculate that the two men stole the paneling to make their vessels “look nicer,” although the possibility of their opening a dockside restaurant called “Tug’s Place” has not been ruled out. A marine police spokesman refused to say whether Spinolio’s name on the prow of his vessel had helped authorities in their investigation.



A ship-propeller fencing operation based in Hoboken, New Jersey, was broken up by marine police after a month-long investigation led to the arrest of Manuel Torres, thirty-six, of Jersey City; Leo Dimpler, forty-five, of Weehawken; and Ignacio and Renaldo Guzman, both thirty-seven, of Hoboken, described as the ring-leaders. The men were caught in a sting operation when investigators posed as shipping magnates. All were charged with numerous counts of theft, criminal conspiracy, racketeering, and receiving stolen property. The huge size of the buildings necessary for a successful nautical “chop shop” operation was believed to be an aid in the investigation. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for March 15.

by Mark Linn

Take the Finley Challenge

Karen Finley, America's leading performance artist/controversialist, whose work has been praised as "relentless," "courageous," and "charismatic," poured out her viscera to write "The Black Sheep." Can *National Lampoon* editors equal it while still finding the time for gossip and returning phone calls?

Rules of the challenge: One of these poems is an excerpt from Karen Finley's "The Black Sheep," available in *Shock Treatment*, City Lights Books, \$6.95. The other was written by a National Lampoon editor to sound like it. You have to choose which is the critic-certified work of art. (Turn to page 70 for the answer.)



FRED W. MCDARRAH



FRED W. MCDARRAH

Black Sheep folk look different from their families—
It's the way we look at the world.
We are born to go astray
We are born to find the hard paths
And hope somehow they lead to heights.
Black Sheep folk were born with work to do
We have to write
 to dance
 to paint
 to tell our vision of the truth.
We do what we do
Only because we are answering to truth
And our vision of it.
For this work we are called Black Sheep.
What did our mothers say
What did our fathers say when we were small—
"Be honest
And tell the truth."
For this work we are called Black Sheep
Left out alone on our stony path
It isn't always easy living with the truth
It isn't always easy living with the truth.

Black Sheep folk look different from their families—
It's the way we look at the world.
We're a quirk of nature—
We're a quirk of fate.
Usually our family, our city,
our country never understands us—
We knew this from when we were very young
that we weren't meant to be understood.
That's right, that's our job.
Usually we're not appreciated until the next generation.
That's our life, that's our story.
Usually we're outcasts, outsiders in our own family.
Don't worry—get used to it.
My sister says—I don't understand you!
But I have many sisters with me tonight.
My brother says—I don't want you!
But I have many brothers with me here tonight!
My mother says—I don't know how to love
someone like you!
You're so different from the rest!
But I have many mamas with me here tonight!
My father says—I don't know how to hold you!
But I have many many daddies with me here tonight!

SIGNS

& PORTENTS IN THE

MODERN OFFICE



THE MEANING OF PAPER CUTS

CUTS IN THIS REGION ARE LIKELY TO BECOME GANGRENOUS. AMPUTATION OF ARM WILL FOLLOW.

YOU WILL BE LESS QUICK TO POINT OUT THE FAULTS OF OTHERS.

PUT OFF PURCHASE OF THAT PINKIE RING.

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE. YOU LOVE MODERN PACKAGING.

AVOID DUELING MEMORANDA.

EXPECT HIGHWAY ACCIDENT IN EASTERN OHIO.

FOOL. DO NOT ATTEMPT SUICIDE WITH A POST-IT NOTE.



THE READING OF COFFEE RINGS



SIGN: FLUORESCENT TUBE BURNS OUT ABOVE YOUR HEAD.

PORTENT: MARRIAGE (RING) OR BAGEL IN YOUR FUTURE.



PORTENT: EXPECT TO DO WELL AT THE NEXT OLYMPIAD.

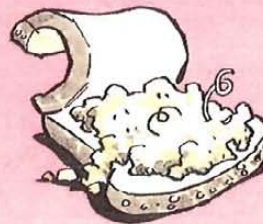


PORTENT: LOOK FOR POTENTIALLY UNLIMITED CELL GROWTH AND METASTASIS—E.G., CANCER. MAY ALSO MEAN EXCESSIVE FIDGETINESS.



PORTENT: TIDAL WAVES, PLAGUES, THE TURNING OF THE MOON TO BLOOD, AND EYESTRAIN.

THE INTERPRETATION OF LUNCH



SIGNS: DARK HAIR ON SANDWICH. FUNNY TASTE IN CHICKEN SALAD.

PORTENT: A DARK-HAIRED STRANGER WILL BRING YOU ILLNESS.



SIGN: CROSSED PICKLES.

PORTENT: PRESIDENT BUSH NOMINATES YOU TO FILL VACANCY ON SUPREME COURT BENCH AFTER

JUSTICE SOUTER DIES IN A BOTCHED HERNIA OPERATION. IN A NARROW VOTE, CONGRESS WILL FAIL TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION.

CH ON THE NATIONAL LAMPOON



THE READING OF RUBBER BANDS

PORTENT:
ROMANCE IN
THE AIR.



PORTENT:
PREGNANCY.



SIGN: ANGEL OF DEATH
IN RECEPTION AREA.

PORTENT: EXPECT DOWNSCALING
OF BUSINESS.

WATER COOLER GAZING

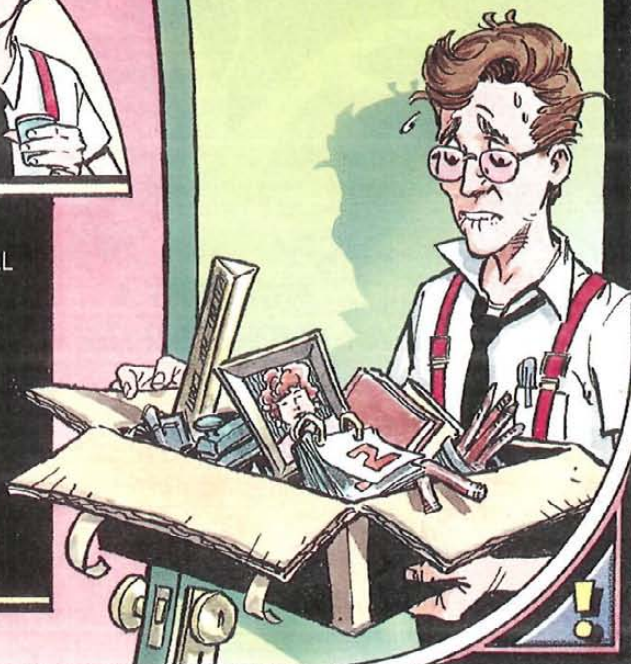
SIGN: APPEARANCE OF ANGRY FACE OF
AUTHORITY FIGURE.
PORTENT: EXPECT YOUR SOCIAL LIFE
TO BE CURTAILED.



SIGN: TOILET BRUSH ON YOUR DESK.
PORTENT: NEW RESPONSIBILITIES WILL
INCREASE YOUR VALUE TO
YOUR COMPANY.



SIGN: CONTENTS OF YOUR
DESK ARE DELIVERED TO
YOUR HOME.
PORTENT: SEEK NEW
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.



ADAM KUBERT



**BY SPECIAL AGENT JIMMY KISSINGER
AS TOLD TO MARK STEVEN LONG**

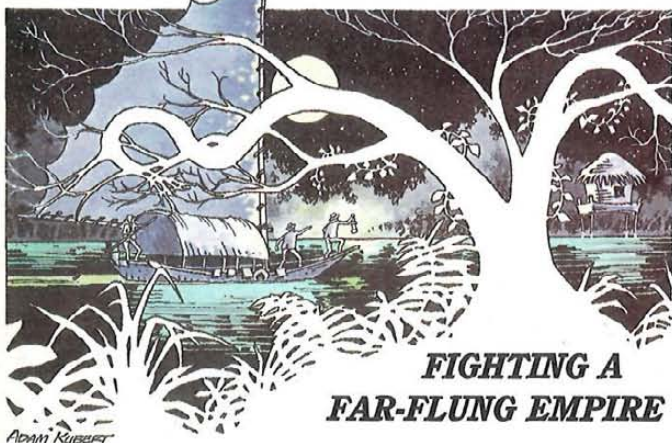
IN these desperate times, trademark law is one of the few things that stand between civilization and anarchy. Ownership of property helps bring about an ordered society in which each individual is able to respect the rights of his superiors. Primitive people couldn't comprehend such things, which was why we were able to wipe them out.

But even today, there are those who refuse to regard property as sacred. It takes a unique breed of man, and also woman, to stand against those who would appropriate creative properties without permission, and thus undermine the

very foundations of our society. The men and women of the Disney Squad are one such breed.

The Disney Squad is a paramilitary strike force owned and operated by the Walt Disney Company. It consists of specially trained men, and also women, who roam the globe to seek out and destroy those who would make a mockery of the circled "R." I am proud to be a part of this unique and special army, and I'm sure you'll be proud of me, too, after you read the following case histories.

The "Bangkok Duck" Affair:



**FIGHTING A
FAR-FLUNG EMPIRE**

OUR man in Thailand warned us that the local market was being flooded with a new comic book titled "Bangkok Duck," a copy of which he forwarded to our Buena Vista HQ via diplomatic courier. The book, crudely printed on cheap pulp paper (just like American comic books), featured a cartoonish duck with slits for eyes and a flattened bill barely containing sparkling white teeth. He wore a bangkok hat and a tiny leather vest, and had three-fingered gloves.

I further noted that, in the stories, Bangkok Duck espoused Buddhist principles—specifically Hinayana, or Early Buddhism—and eschewed wholesome family values.

This character, I thought, obviously posed a very serious threat to Disney's hold on the Asian market, especially since Asians have trouble distinguishing between cartoon fowl.

Forty-eight hours later, I was riding in a sampan up the Chao Phraya River under cover of darkness, accompanied by Agents Connor and Crane. Connor was a solid, well-built man who could stand his ground with the best of them. Crane was smaller and thinner, but much more excitable.

On the outskirts of Bangkok, we came upon the house of Jugular Phelm,* the president of Thai-Dai Publishing Ltd., which produced "Bangkok Duck." The house was actually a wooden boxlike structure set on four long poles to keep it above the tides. A small hole in the floor was the house's only entrance, and a single rope hanging down from the hole provided access.

We tied the sampan to one of the poles. Crane hoisted himself up the rope, followed by Connor and me.

The inside of the house was spartan. A single candle revealed a small table and chair, a hot plate, a shelf of figurines and books, and a cot in which lay Phelm's sleeping body. At a nod from me, Connor and Crane raised the cot, tipped it, and rolled Phelm onto the floor, which splintered beneath his weight. In less time than it took to write this sentence, I had him tied up and blindfolded.

We took turns questioning Phelm for several hours. At first, he insisted he was a simple businessman providing family entertainment—yet he couldn't identify any of the writers and artists who created the "Bangkok Duck" stories!

Finally, after several injections of sodium pentothal, Phelm admitted that the stories and art were being provided

*NOTE: Some of the names of people mentioned in this article have been changed in order to avoid litigation.



by a Taiwanese firm called Taiwan-Ahn Inc. Connor, Crane, and I took turns looking at each other. We already knew that Taiwan-Ahn Inc. was a deeply buried subsidiary of Time Warner, one of the most insidious multinational corporations known to man.

The connection between Taiwan-Ahn and Time Warner was a long, slippery snake of a paper trail that slithered across the Free World. Taiwan-Ahn belonged to a Hong Kong trading company that was two-fifths owned by a small

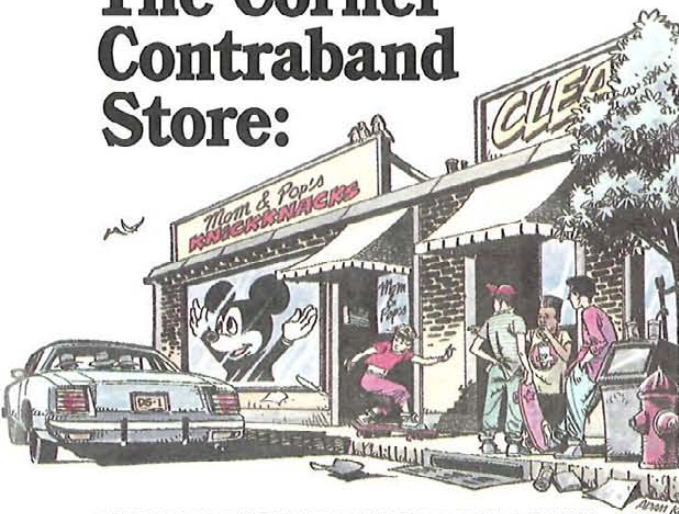
Tokyo bank. The other three-fifths was held in trust by a pan-European investment consortium for a fictional Japanese-American multibillionaire. The trust was administered by a British-based brokerage firm supposedly owned by the bastard son of a certain member of the House of Lords—but in fact, the son had assigned power of attorney to an American law firm in New York City. Three of the law firm's four senior partners sat on Time Warner's board of directors.

Phelm's information quickly found its way to Disney Legal HQ in Buena Vista, and Phelm himself requested corporate asylum. Knowing how ruthless Time Warner could be in dealing with traitors, we immediately granted it. I used my connections to get Phelm a position as assistant batter boy at a corn-dog stand in Disney World.

Disney threatened Time Warner with a major lawsuit—something Time Warner couldn't even afford to fight, let alone lose, not after their recent debt-inducing merger. As an alternative, we suggested that they change Bangkok Duck's appearance to avoid confusion with Donald Duck. We told them to give their duck circular eyes (not ovoid), a triangular-shaped bill, five-fingered gloves—and above all else, dress him in a regular shirt, pants, and shoes, and give him a briefcase. Time Warner, citing "artistic integrity," elected to discontinue publication of their ersatz duck.

They'd known that if we hadn't noticed—and fought—a trademark infringement being committed in some obscure Far Eastern backwater, we could have lost our Donald Duck trademark. Trademarks are invariably associated with high-quality products—and when those trademarks are irrevocably lost, inferior merchandise will flood the market, crushing the hopes of the people who buy them and generally lessening the quality of life and the gross national product in one fell swoop. This, of course, helps weaken America even further.

The Corner Contraband Store:



PROMOTION BECOME PIRACY

AN anonymous tip from a neighborhood child led us to a small souvenir store in Toledo called MOM & POP'S KNICKKNACKS. A giant picture of Mickey Mouse had been painstakingly painted on the store's front window—with no copyright or trademark notices attached. This was so blatant as to be almost taunting.

I led Connor and Crane into the store, where we saw a kindly old couple standing behind a glass counter along a side wall. Crane frantically pounded me in the solar plexus

from behind, his way of telling me that these people were probably Mom and Pop. An elbow to his groin signaled my concurrence.

We approached the counter and exchanged pleasantries with them. Pop admitted painting Mickey Mouse on the window to bring more children into the store. Then I casually asked if either he or Mom had filed a request with the Walt Disney Company's Ancillary Rights Comptroller before using Mickey to promote their goods. The elderly couple's blank looks were all the excuse I needed to brandish the search warrant obtained earlier from Disney Legal.

Crane and I cleared the store's shelves of toys, board games, stuffed animals, and porcelain figures. Crane, always thorough, upended each of the shelves in order to check the bottoms of them. We soon found that the Mickey Mouse window appeared to be their only violation. As we waded through the rubble toward the door, I served Mom and Pop with a bill for punitive damages resulting from the trademark violation. The old woman wailed and said they couldn't pay so much money. Pop asked us how they could stay in business with all their merchandise destroyed.

Fortunately, Disney has an official policy that covers such matters. Within the week, the Disney Company had assumed full ownership of the store, with plans to turn it into an outlet for Disney movie tie-ins. Mom and Pop were too old to be kept on as salaried employees, but the company graciously pensioned them off at \$10,000 per year, each.

Small-time operations may seem inconsequential to some people (and we know who they are), but such stores are really holes in the dike of trademark law. Left unattended, these holes will become larger and larger until the whole countryside is awash in a sea of infringement.

On the Home Front:

THE CASE OF JEANNIE STEPKE

BEFORE the Communist conspiracy was utterly destroyed by American might, it had its tendrils everywhere, from the secret smoke- and spy-filled back rooms to the seemingly innocent shop on the corner. But today's international menace of trademark piracy is just as extensive, just as dangerous, and we must rely heavily on informants alerting us to these treacherous picaroons.

Over the years, Disney has managed to build an information network that is truly extensive. Ordinary people, friendly to our enterprise, are positioned in every level of government, in every civic organization, in every trade union and civil-rights group there is. I'm happy to state that no one in this country can even utter the name of a Disney character without our knowing about it.

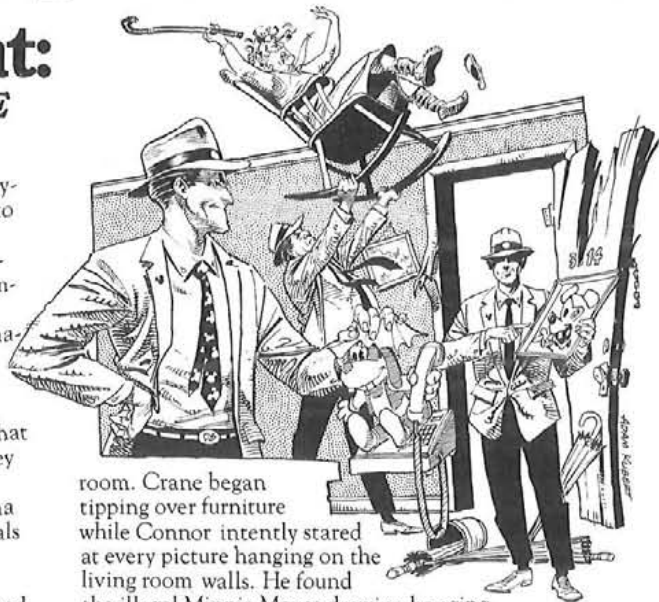
For example, a kindergarten teacher right here at Buena Vista Elementary had her students draw pictures of animals as a class assignment. One of the children, whom I will call Jeannie, had drawn a picture of Minnie Mouse. The teacher, afraid the girl would be caught and prosecuted, had hastily scrawled a false copyright notice along the bottom of the picture before returning it to her. Fortunately for us, one of the school board's student spies had seen the teacher doing it, and the board had immediately notified Disney Legal after being informed of this.

After we had gotten the little thief's home address, we sent the teacher to the local school board for disciplinary action, following an established arrangement we had previously made. We then prepared for action of our own. Timing, as always, was critical. In less time than it took me to find "picaroon" in the dictionary, we were battering our way into the little girl's home.

We quickly found the child's grandmother. While I questioned her, Connor and Crane went up to the second floor and began searching the rooms. In between the crashes that sounded through the ceiling, Mrs. Stepke happily reported that little Jeannie had learned to count to twelve on her toes.

And when did the little toe-counter learn to *draw*? I sternly asked the old woman, putting my face to hers.

Just then, Connor and Crane rumbled into the living



room. Crane began tipping over furniture while Connor intently stared at every picture hanging on the living room walls. He found the illegal Minnie Mouse drawing hanging over the fireplace at the same time Crane discovered the Goofy phone on a side table. Although Mrs. Stepke insisted the phone had been legally purchased, she was unable to provide a bill of sale.

But she did identify the pirated drawing as her granddaughter's. I searched the rest of the house myself, and found little Jeannie hiding beneath the basement stairs, sticking pins in little dolls. She smiled at me and said she was playing "Sorcerer's Apprentice"—but I knew that no amount of magic could get her out of this.

We took the woman, the girl, and the drawing into Disney Legal HQ. Crane confiscated the Goofy phone as additional evidence. The court subsequently awarded custody of Jeannie to the Disney Company, and she is now attending Disneyland Preparatory.

These are just three typical examples of the Disney Squad's commitment to wiping out trademark infringement wherever it is. After reading these cases, I think you'll agree that property rights and human rights go hand in hand. ■

ILLUSTRATED BY ADAM KUBERT

CONTRABAND SEIZED BY THE DISNEY SQUAD





CAPTAIN OF OUR SOUL

Bruce Crunch, Yesterday and Today

Among the books considered in this essay:

Ward Heller, **O Cap'n! My Cap'n!**

365 pp. Hedgerow & Benton, \$24.95.

Daniel Mahoney, **Bruce Crunch's**

Naval Theory. 226 pp. Phalanx, \$19.95.

Vicki Patrick, **Crunch, LaFoot, and**

the Soul of America. 475 pp.

Sears University Press, \$21.95.

Vicki Patrick, ed. **Bruce Crunch:**

Selected Journals. 609 pp.

Salada Press, \$39.95.

August 12, 1923—Beirut. *We sailed from Haifa this morning and saw the shining domes of Beirut by early evening. She is a jewel in this desert land, Beirut, a city of temples and churches and towering minarets. There is culture and beauty here, and I would go so far as to claim Beirut—not Alexan-*

dria, not Bombay—the soul, if not the heart, of the Orient. Even the hot Persian breezes from the east are somehow softened by this sweet-scented port, which I am delighted to find unspoiled by the war. But mark my words, there will be trouble in these Eastern states, and the capricious vivisection of the Ottoman Empire will someday return to haunt the world.

From Journals: 1918–1940

THOUGH Bruce Crunch died three years ago, he seems to be with us more than ever. He is a poster boy to conservatives who hold up his triumph over discrimination as an example of why affirmative action is needless, while liberals point out the enormous success of his “rainbow crew” in response. His prescient geopolitical

observations, as the above passage shows, are today the sine qua non of international affairs. And most notably, discussion of his enigmatic career—from Brahmin to pirate to diplomat to writer to huckster—rages like a nor'easter among academics. Is he a quintessential American, a captain of manifold accomplishments, or a tragic figure—a gifted writer and military strategist who gave it all up to become a breakfast cereal?

In the popular mind, of course, Crunch isn't a tragic figure, just a lucrative one. He is the “Cap'n,” the subject of morning cartoons, dolls, a Nintendo game, a clothing line from Sears, and, of course, the famous breakfast cereals whose sales have never been healthier (thanks in part to the notorious “Write the Cap'n's Epitaph” contest). Simply put, Bruce Crunch is a pop-culture growth industry.

To most of the people who have written about Crunch, the height of

by Sam Johnson and Chris Marcil

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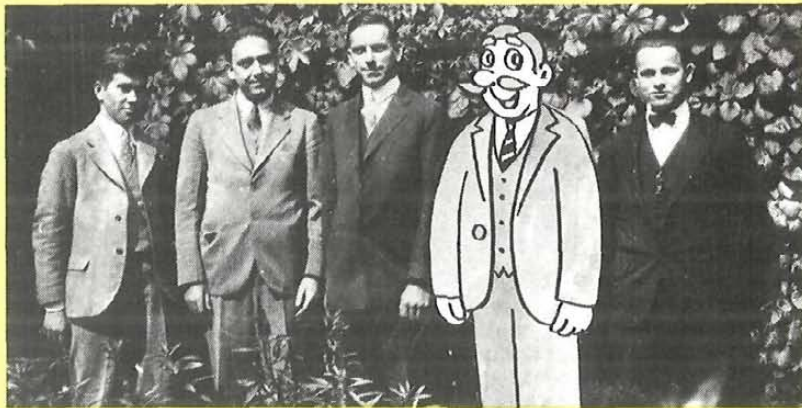
his popularity only deepens the tragedy. For these writers, academics mostly, Bruce Crunch was capable of producing more than a pillow-shaped cereal, yet that is the legacy he leaves us with. Their sense of betrayal could be summed up in the formula: *Bruce Crunch belongs to us—Cap'n Crunch is someone who defected to them.* And what makes the defection worse is that it didn't have to happen. "We can only wonder what we have lost," Heller begins the epilogue of his big Crunch book, and similar wails resound at symposia around the country.

But this simple storyline of promise unfulfilled doesn't cover the complexities of this enigmatic man's life. And now that Salada Press has published the *Selected Journals*, we can consider the case of Bruce Crunch with the defendant here to speak for himself. What I think we will find is that Bruce Crunch was hardly a man who fell from grace. He was a man who denied that grace existed in the first place.

CRUNCH was born with the century in 1900 and liked to make much of that fact. "In my lifetime, this country seems to have bustled double-quick through adolescence and on into its dotage," he said in an interview late in life, "while I went backwards to the nation's boyhood. I suppose history will tell who got the better of it." Crunch only mentioned his boyhood for promotional purposes, however, and even then he lied about it. Apparently it was more appealing to come from humble New England fishing stock than from upper-crust Boston Brahmins, but Crunch's origins in this vanishing tribe (his father's family had made its fortune in the slave trade; his mother was rumored to be Emerson's illegitimate daughter) seem more authentically romantic than any prefab log cabin. In any case, Crunch was reticent about his childhood, though we can assume that, like many boys, he enjoyed the sea and hated his oatmeal.

Insulated by his wealth and class, the young Crunch seems not to have been affected by the prejudices of the times. "Sure, we all knew he was a cartoon," one Groton classmate remarked, "but he had such force of personality, he'd make you forget it." Still, evidence that the sense of being "different" shaped his perpetual rebelliousness leaks out here and there:

November 5, 1925. *The wire services report that Father has ceded the firm to brother Henry. I suppose I shall have to send a congratulatory wire,*



Young bucko: Crunch poses with fellow Sesquipedalian Club members for the 1916 Groton yearbook. The Sesquipedalians' creed of "seizing the inner beauty of things" greatly influenced the young Crunch.

but condolence might be more fit. I would go quite mad to sit in an office in Boston and be near the sea yet not of it. Where else but on the sea [are there] riches for the taking, and no one looks at you as though you were a drawing of a man and not the very thing itself. Good luck, Henry, and good riddance, too.

At Harvard, Crunch was a figure of nautical, martial, and literary promise, explaining to a visiting Dwight Eisenhower during halftime of the Harvard-Army game how Churchill's flawed naval strategy led to the Allies' defeat at Gallipoli. But even here he showed the discomfort with the ruling class characteristic of his later years, provoking one of the most celebrated expulsions in Harvard's history. Using his father's Washington connections, Crunch "borrowed" a war-surplus submarine and sank the Yale boat at a crew regatta. His reaction to this event is one of the first entries in the *Journals*:

May 17, 1919. *Father's letter begged pardon on the grounds of "youthful high spirits"; but he is wrong. "Depraved indifference" would describe it better—when the Eli boat capsized, my own blood surged so powerfully that I had no concern for anyone else's. I only wish I could have surfaced, so that I could have had my fill and more of the sound of screaming, agonized Yalies.*

No surprise, then, that Crunch would spurn his father's offer of employment in the family shipping firm: when you have a pirate's instincts, running charitable trusts is a poor sublimation. Besides, it was 1921—the Roaring Twenties were just starting to growl. It was a time of

stunts and daring, and Bruce Crunch was more than equal to it. If nobodies could sit on a flagpole and become famous, then he would take to the sea in an eighteenth-century man-of-war and circumnavigate the globe. Even then he had a taste for fame:

April 16, 1921. *The Guppy set sail today from New York with a fair wind in its sails and fair spirits in its crew. Salt air and sweet hopes! I imagine when we return to these dizzying towers we will have ticker tape and loud cheers, and not just the coverage we received: the Times, the Herald Tribune, and someone from the Boston papers.*

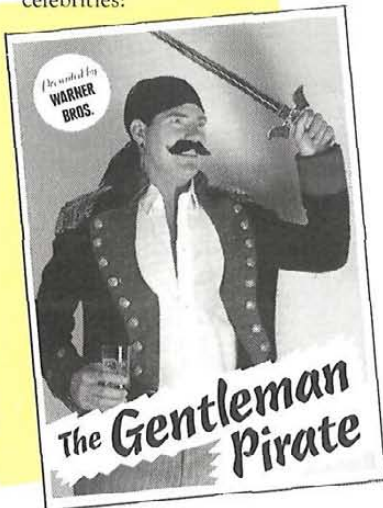
While the voyage was not the publicity triumph Crunch had hoped for, it was important anyway. Becalmed and underprovisioned off Newport, Rhode Island, Crunch and his crew (mostly prep-school friends) boarded and pillaged a tourist boat that had slowed to gawk at the old-fashioned sailing ship, then quickly eluded pursuit thanks to Crunch's nautical genius. It was a critical career move, a watery trial by fire, and Crunch never looked back, setting a course for pillage and plunder (with time out for prison sentences) that would continue for the next fifteen years.

The *Journals* are particularly vivid in the thirties—clearly, nothing made Bruce Crunch feel more alive (and his prose more purple) than a bout of piracy:

May 5, 1931. *We feasted greatly tonight following a sortie on the Viscount Smallbeer, whose crew ill-resisted our bloody play; the most rugged survivors are now our galley slaves, while those not so strong will be tutored by the harsh sea, into whose*

care we consigned them. The plentiful booty includes fine wine, which we drank from the shoes of matron passengers.

Crunch's old-fashioned marauding, and the chilling note of barbarism it represented, both appalled and fascinated the public of the "progressive" twenties and thirties. Patrick's book thoroughly documents the Crunch craze, which included the popular song "The Bruce Crunch Rag" ("Tonight I'll be the man untamed/ And sail along the bounding main") and even a movie serial. (Crunch offered to play himself; Warner Bros. said no.) Such was the power of his image, in fact, that it seduced those who might otherwise have had his hide: "Leniency for a man who harms only himself and inspires the rest of us!" as a Rhode Island legislator once proclaimed. And, then as now, the power of celebrity attracted other celebrities:



Serial hero: Hollywood heartthrob Lance Harding as Crunch in an undated publicity still.

August 2, 1931. Hemingway is on board for a while, strutting like the cock of the walk. In a perverse way, his posturing is admirable. It takes courage to appear great when nine-year-old Kim is a far more accomplished sailor than you. I'm not so sure about his writing now, either; he gave me a copy of *A Farewell to Arms* and, frankly, I could do that.

For Crunch's part, he took care to be the picture of a raffish romantic. Far from dressing as the staid commodore we are so familiar with, Crunch in those days favored black bandannas and gold hoop earrings.

It was in this period—the piratical thirties—that Crunch and Jean

LaFoot began their great rivalry, one that might well have been sparked as much by curdled romance as by competition, according to rumors neither was ever able to shake (LaFoot, a cartoon himself from Plouescat on the Brittany coast, had served on Crunch's crew for more than a decade). Their fights lit up the high seas, mixing the naval tactics of John Paul Jones with the weapons of Al Capone. But after one final violent duel in 1937, British authorities intervened for good, confiscating the *Guppy* and its weapons. Crunch was more than willing to go along, since the frequent frays had left him with a (later immortalized) crew of children and beasts. In addition, he seemed ready to get out of piracy:

September 13, 1937. To ensure the very survival of the *Guppy*, I have ceded it to the British. It was that or else see it go down in flames. I feel as though I have ceded my own leg. Yet, as seamen know, it is often the roughest justice that is most true, and I suppose I shall just have to find fallen fortune elsewhere.

So began yet another identity of Bruce Crunch: the man of affairs.

BRUCE Crunch was an outlaw but never an outsider. At the same time that he was a pirate and a wanted man, he was also an essayist for *The American Mercury* and a foreign correspondent for *The Atlantic*, where he was one of the first to warn against the rise of Germany ("They don't respect the pirate's art," he wrote, "and that is barbaric.") Nor had he ever been shy about taking advantage of his friends in high places. In 1931, for example, he and LaFoot were both dragged in by the Coast Guard. The same day that LaFoot was sentenced to five years' hard labor, Crunch was photographed at a massive Newport party; his lawyer had proved that Crunch had been detained in international waters and he was released.

When Britain ran Crunch aground for the last time in 1937 and it was clear his pirate days were at an end, his connections once again came to his rescue. Too notorious to be put on staff, yet too knowledgeable to shun, Crunch found a shadow position as an adviser to the British admiralty, which he was to keep throughout the war. As Mahoney notes, Crunch's intimate knowledge of the French coast may have made a crucial difference in both the evacuation at Dunkirk and the successful invasion of Normandy. One of his former crew remembers encour-

tering him in 1943:

They had gotten him to clean up his act some—he wore civilian dress, probably for the first time in twenty years. But he looked comfortable enough in it. Perhaps it was because they let him keep the earring. I bet he was pretty busy, but he still had time to share a bottle of rum (contraband, I remember) and some old memories. I worried about this kind of behavior, but he laughed and said, "What are they going to do to me? I'm the only man among all the Allies who knows how to draw and quarter."¹

For his services, Crunch was pardoned in 1947. Once again, though, he turned rebel. Instead of taking the positions offered him in Washington and London, he returned home to Boston, ostensibly to work in the family business (still run by Henry Crunch) and to write a novel. "I am nearly fifty," Crunch said at the time. "It's time to stop playing with boats." But the novel apparently floundered—"apparently," because Crunch destroyed the manuscript and no copies survive. Heller, for whom this failure is the crucial event in Crunch's life, has done much investigating and concludes that the book was to be titled *Winds of Change*, a series of defining sea voyages in the history of a Boston family. An interesting enough plan, but Crunch did not seem to be able to work it out fully. "I have been given pages of the Bruce Crunch work," wrote Edmund Wilson in his diary. "Certain passages are excellent, the more technical the better; others seem like *Treasure Island* crossed with a new below-decks reading torture." Crunch must have been despondent—there are few *Journal* entries from this period, and these show a blackness of spirit through a tough facade:

March 20, 1952. Today's chapter—Miranda's purling of Jonathan's steamboat stock—went well. However, it is indeed slow going. My heavy seas are all self-created—it is hard to tell whether or not that makes them easier to endure.

Then, much to Crunch's liking, fame came calling in the person of his wartime friend, General David Mills, heir to a cereal fortune. Crunch, who had not abandoned his taste for high living just because he had to use his own money to do it, took the job Mills offered in R&D; and together they conceived a cereal bearing his name. In fact, their often-quoted exchange might almost be a metaphor for post-war America:

¹The Reverend James McNall, *From Pirate to Prelate* (Harp Seal Press, 1964), p. 304.



The anarchist of the breakfast table: failed prototype of the later-famous cereal.

Crunch: I'm just an old seaman, David, I don't know anything about PR.

Mills: Bruce, you just keep it sweet and crunchy, we'll sell the damn stuff.

And once the money poured in, Bruce Crunch gave up his former life completely. The man who had rarely spent a day onshore now crisscrossed the country making promotional appearances. Those who had known him could not hide their feelings: "When I saw him put on that dreadful captain's outfit, so unlike him," wrote Mary McCarthy, "I thought that this country had become too successful."

His lifestyle had become typical: sailing with Walter Cronkite and William F. Buckley, exploring the wilds on secret hunting trips with General Mills and their mutual friend, Marlin Perkins, and, even worse, dabbling in reactionary politics. He whose crew had been a model of equality ("It does not matter what color anyone's skin is," he had gruffly said, "they all bleed red on your sword") opposed the civil rights movement. Toward the end of his life, in fact, Crunch went slightly batty, subsisting largely on a diet of the eponymous cereal and salt water, and pestering the Defense Department with his ideas for aircraft carriers crewed by galley oarsmen. He was generous with interviews, but outside of a few journal entries that read like expense vouchers, he never really wrote again. When he died in 1987, his ashes were scattered on all seven seas; as in life, Crunch went out cloaked in an anachronistic image of romance.

HOW seriously we have to take Bruce Crunch's fall hinges on how far it was he fell. For most of us, of course, his life can be reduced to a simple formula: writer and statesman—good; cereal pitchman—bad; pirate—well, interesting. But Crunch's own view of himself seems to have been entirely different. "After all," he

once told Elizabeth Hardwick, "what is a pirate but a greedy man with a taste for adventure? Only by coincidence, aided perhaps by my vanity, has my life managed to intersect with the life you bookish lubbers want me to lead." A renegade son of the elite, Crunch willfully boarded and pillaged our stately vessel of values, and only because it was fun (recall those screaming Yalies). And as a final twist of the knife, our children scream for him every morning.

So the academics' attempt to reclaim Bruce Crunch as one of their own—to elevate him to a noble warrior doomed by a tawdry America—betrays a total misunderstanding of who he was. His career path proves that Crunch preferred pleasure to correctness—a concept that most graduate students admittedly find hard to grasp. A pirate who could think, a statesman turned pitchman, Crunch had enough unconventional-ity for several lives—and too much for any easy categorization. Born a cartoon, he had more flesh and blood than almost all of us.

AS mentioned, there is no better time than the present for the student of Crunch. Mahoney's book on naval theory probes the impact of his professional life on the *Guppy* in depth; there will not be another such study anytime soon. The two biographies also have much to recommend them. Heller's is a more conventional approach; he seems to have interviewed everyone who could possibly have something to say, with the critical exception of Jean LaFoot, who would not talk to him.

He did talk to Patrick, and her book provides as much information on their rumored love affair as we are likely to have. It is all shadowy, and she admits that she can draw no conclusion. LaFoot, who after the failure of the "Cinnamon Crunch" cereal

became an extremely bitter man, will only talk about sea battles, denying the rumors but only asserting that their rivalry was based on "very deep personal problems we had with each other."

It is to the *Journals*, though, that the neophyte should turn first. Like the *Guppy* itself, the *Journals* embody a long-gone past, a time when people cared enough to write well for the benefit of future readers. No detail is too prosaic to be left out, yet few passages ever seem tedious; the *Journals*, in fact, read the way Crunch's novel should have read. They describe his life at sea quite vividly, bringing to life crew members whose voices have been almost forgotten:

July 2, 1932. *The wind has picked up, the gale is at hand. I hear the mournful wailing of the Crunchberry Beast far below. At these times, I wish the creature possessed a less erratic temperament and a fundamental grasp of normal human behavior. Yet I've grown fond of the Crunchberry Beast—his buffoonery does not cease to amuse, and his yellow coat with pink polka dots provides amusing scares to our drunken guests.*

May 30, 1933. *Skip lost his glasses this morning and got tangled in the mainsail rigging, much to the delight of the others. I've grown fond of Skip. The pattern of his acne-mottled skin has given me an idea for a tattoo.*

November 18, 1934. *Salty Dog entertained us with his own canine version of the spicy exchange between Beatrice and Benedick in Much Ado About Nothing. He played both parts. I've grown fond of Salty Dog. His glistening fur coat and upright gait vaguely remind me of my mother.*

What readers will respond to most in the *Journals* is their rich style. Though Bruce Crunch was hardly sentimental, it is not unfair to call him a romantic writer. He was not afraid to end on an ornate or wistful note:

July 24, 1933. *The moon is full and only a quarter into its nightly journey across the heavens. Its light dapples the waves in a straight line to the ship—they shimmer white, spreading to yellow, to green, to black. Where have the days gone, I think, the years? They stretch before me like these waves. And like the moon's passage, so my life: swift, and but a blink in the long cosmic night.*

A trumpet sounds. Is this meant for me? Death's knell at so tranquil a moment? No, this is no angel's call. I must walk Smedley. ■

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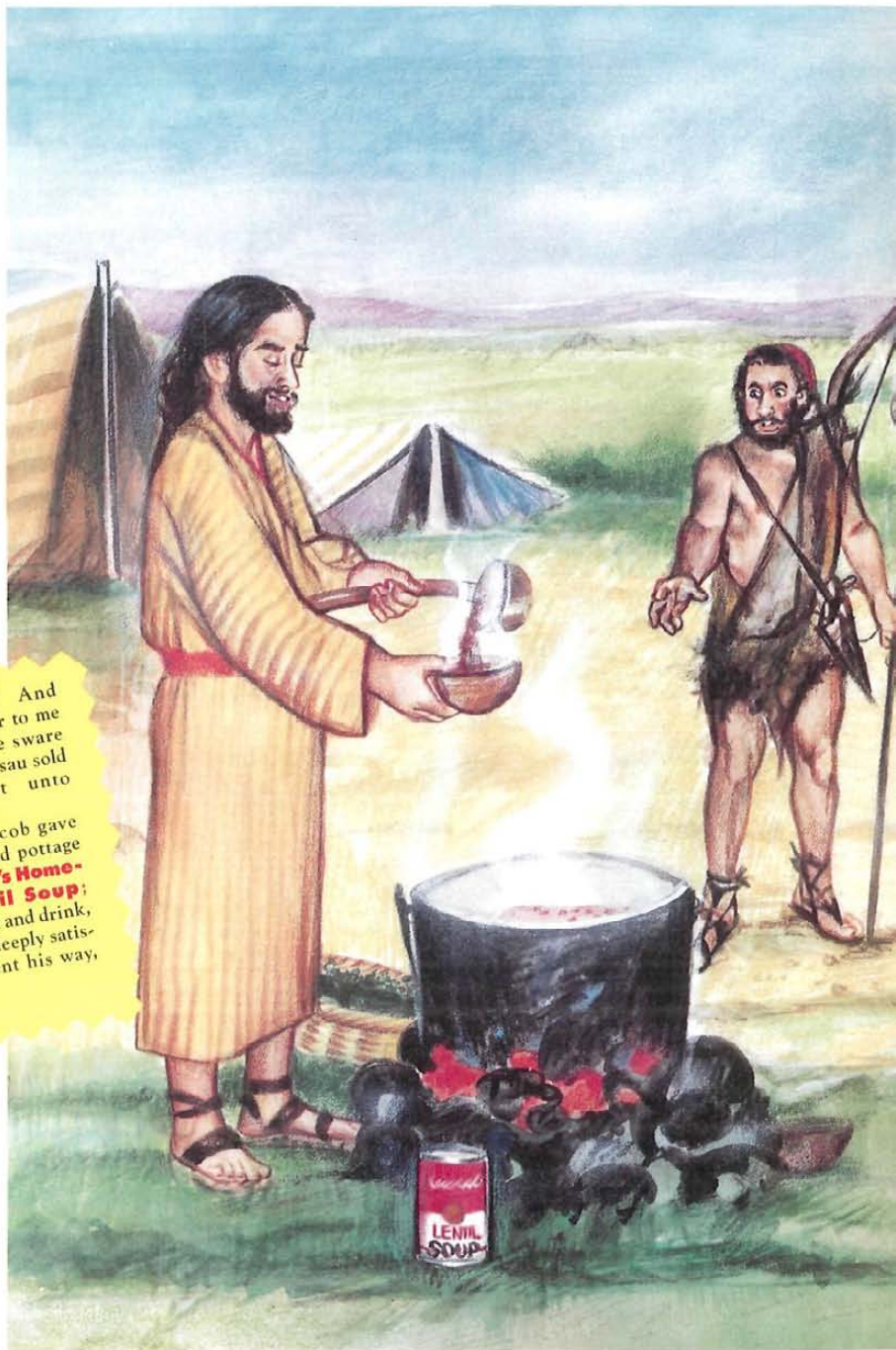
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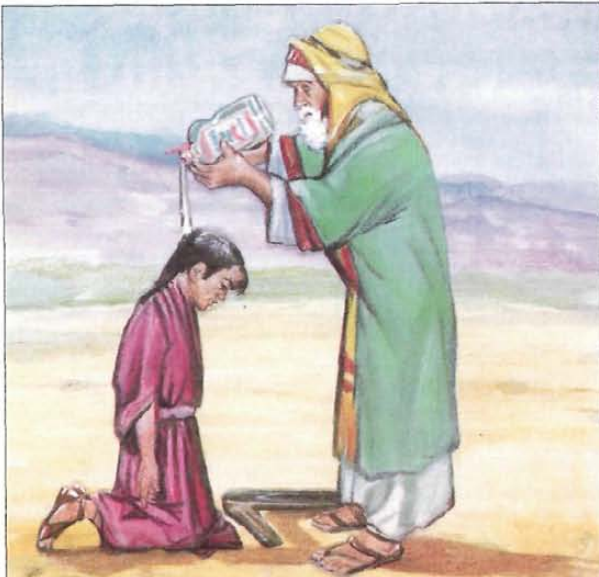


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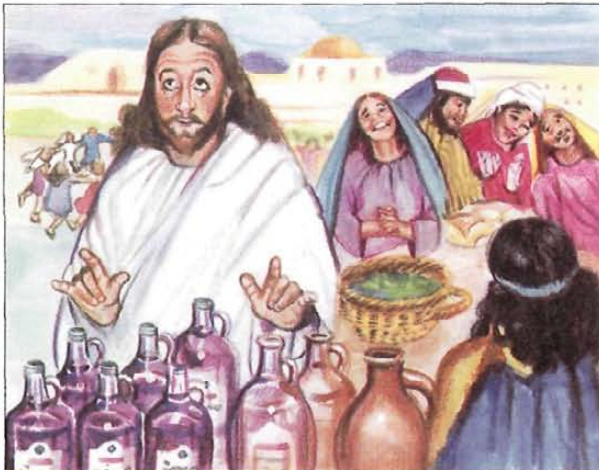


I Samuel 16:13 Then Samuel took the large, unbreakable bottle of **Johnson's Baby Oil**, and anointed him in the

midst of his brethren; and the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.

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John 2:10 The governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but

thou hast kept the good wine until now.

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LEVITICUS

11 AND the Lord spake unto Moses and to Aaron, saying unto them,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth.

3 Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.

4 Nevertheless these shall ye not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: as the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.

5 And the coney, because he cheweth the cud, but divi-

deeth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.

6 And the hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he is unclean unto you.

7 And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be clovenfooted, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you unless he cometh from the sanitary facilities of **Oscar Mayer**, where he may be enjoyed in the form of bacon or as a roast or, best of all, be prepared in the manner of spareribs from the land of China. But unless the swine beareth the name **Oscar Mayer**, then he shall be an abomination unto you.

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REVELATION

10 AND I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and it was **THE BEAST: FOUR TALES FROM THE DARK SIDE IN THEIR ORIGINAL, UNCUT, UNPROOFREAD VERSION** by Stephen King (Viking, \$37.95), and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth.

3 And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal

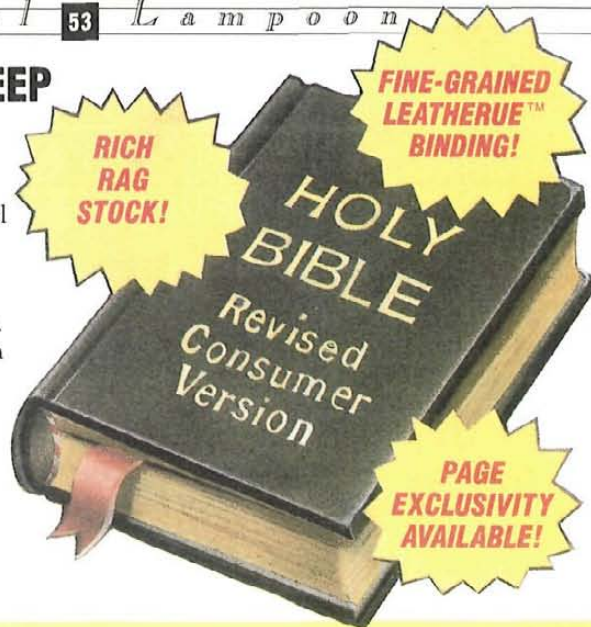
up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. For none can capture the divine mysteries like your novelist Stephen King.

5 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

6 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book, **THE BEAST: FOUR TALES FROM THE DARK SIDE IN THEIR ORIGINAL, UNCUT, UNPROOFREAD VERSION**. And he said unto me, \$37.95 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling, and I remitted it to him, and I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey.

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THE BOY WHO ATE NEW YORK

by
Henry
H.
Gross

"New York?" Mr. Balsam had said with a patronizing chuckle when his boy Charles announced his intention to ingest and, where indicated, imbibe the metropolis across the river. "Why not Hoboken or Newark or—ha-ha—East Orange!"

"I'm serious, Dad," Charles persisted, glancing at his mother's starchy face across the dinner table. "I really want to do this. I've already told all my friends."

"Well," said his mother, "you'll just have to go back and—"

"No, wait, dear," interrupted Mr. Balsam. "Let's hear him out. Charles?"

"Well, Dad, Mom . . . you see, today at school our guidance counselor told us it wasn't too early to start thinking about what we want to be when we grow up. And I want to be a trencherman."

Laura Balsam's fork hit the table with a thunk. "Absolutely not, young man. I am *not* raising my boy to be a ditch-digger. If you think—"

"It's not digging ditches, Mom. It's eating. Trenchermen are people with hearty appetites. They go around, you know, eating things . . . setting records. I want to be in the *Guinness Book*. Like the man in Missouri who ate a car—a whole car, Mom!"

"A car!" exclaimed his mother; and then archly, "May I suggest you begin with your peas?"

"They don't let you in for peas," Charles enlightened her gently.

"Why would a person eat a car?" asked Mrs. Balsam, with a worried glance at her husband.

"To set a record, Mom. He ate an entire Pontiac: tires, headlights, the steering wheel—"

"Ugh."

"Or Michel Lotito of France," continued Charles. "Ten bicycles, seven TV sets, six chandeliers—"

"Honey—"

"And a casket," added Charles.

"Oh God," said his mother.

"It's the world's only example where a coffin ended up inside a man. It took him seven months."

"And you want to eat New York City," said his father.

"Yes, Dad."

"I daresay that would take a tad longer."

"Well . . ."

"Honey," pleaded Mrs. Balsam, "you'll hurt yourself. New York City is no diet for a little boy."

"I'm not a little boy, Mom. I'm twelve. I need lots of iron."

"Iron, yes. But you don't need bricks, you don't need concrete, you don't need . . . Heaven knows what cities are made of these days."

"Besides," pointed out Mr. Balsam, "you can't just walk in and eat a city. It belongs to other people."

"The Brooklyn Bridge belongs to everybody," protested Charles. "I'd have as much right—"

Mr. Balsam peered closely at his son. "I do believe you're serious about this, aren't you, Charles?"

"I am, Dad."

"Well, then . . ." Mr. Balsam looked at his wife. "What do you say, dear? Perhaps the boy can learn something from this, in terms of a science project."



PHOTOGRAPHED BY NICK KOUDIS

Mrs. Balsam appraised her son sadly. "You really want to eat New York," she said with resignation.

"Yes, Mom," said Charles brightly. "I want to be the greatest trencherman who ever lived."

"Trencherperson," cautioned his mother. "We live in equal times today."

"Trencherperson," agreed Charles.

"All right, then," Laura Balsam relented. "But first finish your peas."

THE silver cobwebs of the Brooklyn Bridge sparkled appetizingly in the Sunday-morning sunshine as young Master Balsam set up his folding table beside one of the span's colossal concrete pilings on the Manhattan side and prepared to eat the structure. As the press, his somewhat uncomfortable parents, a representative from Guinness, and a modest crowd looked on, Charles billowed a tablecloth and secured it against the breeze with a hacksaw, pliers, a pitcher of lemonade, and a fork. Then he approached the bridge with his utensils and set about his repast.

Dislodging a chunk of concrete from the bridge, the

young trencherperson brought it to his table, placed his napkin in his lap, crushed the sample with his pliers, and proceeded to ingest it. When he had successfully done so, he belched discreetly, arose to cheers, and returned to the structure for a second helping.

"Better than peas," he quipped to NBC-TV, as his mother reddened. Then he filleted a somewhat rusty rivet, salted it, and popped it into his mouth, followed by a swig of beverage and another satisfied belch, while the man from Guinness dutifully tabulated his intake.

The man from Guinness was not alone. "Boy Sups on Span!" the *New York Post* would scream the next day. "Bon appétit," *Newsweek* would wish him slyly a week later. "How utterly right," *Gourmet's* wine expert would coo in due time, "for the lad to choose a light lemonade to go with the Brooklyn Bridge."

When he'd eaten his fill (several more servings of cement with a side of shavings from the cables), Charles napkined his lips and began to pack up his supplies. True, he'd swallowed but a fraction of the metropolis, but then, he was young yet. As he told the woman from the *Times*, "I don't want to wolf it down, you know."



At home that evening, Charles received a phone call from a young lady named Melinda. "I saw you on the news," she told him, "and I think it's super."

"Why, thank you," said Charles, liking her voice immediately.

"You're the coolest dude ever."

"Thanks," said Charles again.

"Do you want to go out?" Melinda asked him breathlessly.

"Sure," said Charles.

An exquisite silence.

"Charles," demanded his mother, "who is that?"

"Nobody, Mom." To Melinda, he said, "How about next Sunday?"

"Super," she said. "What do you want to do?"

Charles thought for a moment. "Dinner?" he suggested.

"MM, granite," murmured Melinda, whose pretty brown eyes, like his own, were gazing up at the Empire State Building from a roped-off area of Thirty-fourth Street. "I've never had granite before."

"You'll love it," Charles assured his chaperoned date, gallantly unnesting a Saarinen chair from the Mies van der Rohe table on which sat two Lenox place settings, a pair of goblets donated by Waterford, and a squeeze bottle of catsup by Heinz. Beside the table was an ice bucket containing a bottle of Dr. Brown's cream soda (to which *Gourmet* would in due course grant its oenological approval).

"Thank you," said Melinda, graciously raking her seat, as the cameras rolled and gossip columnists took notes on this most unorthodox of Big Apple romances.

"May I take your order, sir?" asked the black-tied waiter, courtesy of the Four Seasons.

Charles took his seat and pointed to the polished siding of New York's most famous building. "I'll have a slice of that, please," he selected. "Melinda?"

"The same," said the girl, daintily deploying her napkin on her periwinkle skirt.

"And some of that brass doorknob," continued Charles, "and... How is the glass today?"

"Excellent, sir," said the waiter.

"Fine, we'll have a couple of windowpanes—nothing above the eightieth floor, if you don't mind. And some wallboard, center cut, please. Is that all right with you, Melinda?"

"Perfect," she said.

As the waiter went off to fill the order, Charles helped himself to a high-speed-elevator button from a bowl and gazed across the table at Melinda. "It's very nice of you to join me," he said conversationally. "It gets lonely eating New York all by yourself."

"I can imagine," said the girl, masticating a square of tile from one of the skyscraper's upper corridors and blinking her eyes against the popping flashbulbs. "It was very nice of you to ask me."

The wine steward came over and poured a small amount of cream soda into Charles's goblet. Charles brought the rim of the glass to his nose, pricked approv-

ingly at the tonic's bouquet, and indicated to the server that he deemed the beverage suitable for his companion.

"Very well, sir," said the steward, but before he could pour Melinda's, a pair of New York City policemen pressed through the crowd and approached the table. One of them asked, "Are you Charles Balsam and Melinda Simmons?"

"Yes," answered the children.

"Pursuant to city ordinance 401-B, malicious destruction of property," said one of them, "you are both under arrest. Come along, please."

And, as cameras rolled and two sets of parents protested to no avail, the youngsters were handcuffed with their arms behind them, led to a police van, and locked inside. Melinda began to cry. In an act of bravado intended to cheer her, Charles asked the policewoman guarding them, "Is that uniform you're wearing provided by the city?"

"Yes, it is," replied the officer. "Why?"

Without answering, Charles tipped his body forward, bit off one of her buttons, and swallowed it.

"Hey!" she snapped, but it was too late.

Charles grinned. Eating New York was fun.

**CHARLES
SPURNED
THE
PARTHENON.
"I DON'T
EAT
LEFTOVERS."**

At home, in the custody of his parents, Charles was picking at his peas and trying to put it all into perspective. True, he now had an arrest record that would follow him the rest of his life. On the other hand, he'd received dozens of offers from organizations and individuals eager to have him "trench," as the media now called it, portions of their property for publicity purposes, including one from the Prudential Insurance Company to fly to Gibraltar to "eat a piece of the Rock."

"Honey," said his mother, "you just can't spend the next year doing commercials and making guest appearances no matter how much money they're offering you. You're in the eighth grade. You have studying to do."

"You said it was a science project,"

Charles appealed to his dad.

"This is no longer physics or chemistry," retorted Mr. Balsam.

"Nor nutrition," put in his mother.

"Certainly not nutrition."

"I kind of like it," said Charles.

"How does it feel to have a criminal record, son?" demanded his father.

"Great," said Charles, who'd become the envy of all the boys and the heartthrob of all the girls at his school.

"Great," echoed his mother hollowly. "And what about that... that *moll* of yours who's in this with you?"

"Melinda? She thinks I'm super. But her mother's bribing her with junk food and won't let her see me anymore. I don't care—I'm having lunch next week with a girl named Suzy, who says she needs more variety in her diet. We're trying Lincoln Center."

"What you need, young man," said his father sternly, "is a good dose of common sense."

Charles picked at his peas. What I really need, he thought, is a good agent.

WHAT he *didn't* need, to his mother's relief, was a good lawyer, as New York City's mayor, ever mindful of public opinion, intervened and saw

to it that the charges against Charles were dropped. Not only were they dropped but, by executive order, portions of Rockefeller Center, the BMT subway, and the boardwalk at Coney Island were made available for the young trencherman's dining pleasure. These he ate with gusto, becoming increasingly famous with every bite, feeling Gotham erode before his insatiable palate. Though offers poured in from around the globe, Charles remained loyal to his native cuisine, declining the opportunity to partake of the Pyramids, the Eiffel Tower, and, most notably, the Parthenon ("I don't eat leftovers," he quipped to the press).

Never was he in want of dining companions. He swept Amy off to Radio City Music Hall, where the two munched on buttered lobby sections and a frozen vinyl seat cushion provided by the management. He escorted Rosemary to Queens, where they roller-skated and ate a fire hydrant. He whisked Teri to Staten Island to dine on a post office, though they compromised both their appetites and fourteen hundred lives by gnawing holes in the ferry on the way over. He even got into a much-publicized spat with Irene at the Statue of Liberty by slipping under the statue's copper folds and trenching the insides of Miss Liberty's thighs.

Adolescence passed. Charles made money, consumed substantial amounts of the public sector, and obtained in the process rather more than his minimum daily requirements of minerals, including those, such as Portland cement, for which no MDR has been established. Inevitably, however, things began turning sour—even though foodstuffs such as the Flatiron Building have shelf lives that can be reckoned in centuries. After seven years, the novelty of his wild dietary adventure was itself wearing thin. Indifference snowballed. Johnny Carson stopped returning his calls. The swimming coach at Charles's high school barred him from the team on the grounds that one of the things you don't want in your stomach on a long-distance swim is the fender of a crosstown bus. And even Guinness dropped him from its current edition, informing him that when New York City had been conveyed in its entirety through his digestive system he should let them know.

Charles was hit hard. He suffered the trencherman's gravest nightmare: loss of appetite. The brownstone on which he'd been supping with such relish for several weeks now seemed coarse and tasteless. Aluminum turned to ashes in his mouth. And as for the Guggenheim Museum—well, he'd rather eat peas.

"Son," said his father, "it's time to think of the future. A man's work can sustain him for the rest of his life."

"That's right, dear," said Laura Balsam. "You've been accepted at NYU. You have a wonderful career ahead of you."

"Recommit yourself, son!" exhorted his father.

A look of determination came over Charles's face. "You're right!" he said. "I'll do it!"

His mother's eyes shone with happiness. "So you're going to become a lawyer after all!"

"No! I'm going to finish eating New York if it's the last thing I do!"

UNDISCOURAGED, Charles dug in for the long haul. To his parents' dismay, he never pursued higher education. Instead, he bought a listing in

the Yellow Pages under "Trash Removal, Custom" and hung out his shingle as a professional, picking up eating gigs wherever he could, like a dedicated jazz artist refusing to compromise his talent. During the lean years when his fame was in eclipse, Trencherperson Balsam ate New York purely on principle, gnawing on fire escapes, grazing in Penn Station, binging on the Pan Am Building, and purchasing and then gobbling down an absolutely mouth-watering revolving door in the Port Authority Bus Terminal. He ate storefronts and sidewalks and traffic lights. He trenched the Bowery, pigged out on Wall Street, and satisfied his craving for ethnic food by nosing on synagogues and foraging in Cuban pool halls. And, should you ever have occasion to peer closely at the statue of Columbus at the Circle which bears his name, you will find that all the fingernails on the great explorer's hands have been nibbled to the stone.

Thus did his life pass, until, at the age of seventy, Charles was briefly rediscovered by the media. Long appreciated as a trencherperson's trencherperson, he was now reintroduced to a wider audience as a leading expert on the ingestion of metropolises, "The Burgher King," as *Time* called him, who apart from a few chipped teeth appeared to have flourished on his diet of nuts and bolts. He published a cookbook, which included preparation tips, menus, and the

usual cautions about asbestos, barbed wire, and the bars of lions' cages. "Stick to the basics" was Charles's acquired wisdom: the World Trade Towers, lampposts, newsstands, and the eastern half of the George Washington Bridge.

This brief reprise of notoriety, while satifying, was no longer central to Charles's happiness. His joy was trenching itself, and the Big Apple remained as scrumptious as ever—Macy's, Forty-second Street, curbstones, asphalt, the Chrysler Building—he savored it all, never marrying but often inviting women friends to join him at table. It was at one of these afternoon tête-à-têtes in the Bronx that the boy who ate New York, surrounded by 60,000 fans—though not of his—choked on a piece of Yankee Stadium and died.

He was laid to rest in Queens, belatedly honored in *Guinness* as the individual who'd eaten more of New York City than anyone else in history. And yet, while becoming one of the better-known of its eight million stories, what he actually ate did not even amount to a skyscraper. It was determined that, were New York City the size of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Charles's aggregate consumption would have been less than a corner pew.

LESS than a year after Charles's stomach rumblings ceased, the growlings of another great maw were heard—that of City Hall, which had decided to dig up the cemetery in which Charles was buried to make room for a housing development. Duly, the bulldozers arrived, along with a great derrick with a scoop the size of a cottage. It paused briefly over Charles's grave before plunging its teeth into the earth and demonstrating in one mighty bite that the utopian gluttonies of men are but feeble gestures before the voracious appetites of their civilizations.

In the end, New York City ate Charles Balsam. ■

ILLUSTRATED BY KNICKERBOCKER

**AND AS
FOR THE
GUGGENHEIM
MUSEUM—
WELL, HE'D
RATHER
EAT PEAS.**

*In an effort to encourage the exciting new art of novelization,
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Mrs. Michael Gibniss, Sr., novelizer

The sun shone brightly on the handsome, clean-shaven face of Marco Madison and reflected off his well-polished shoes. Clouds rushed by and a building slanted, and everything went black.

Marco walked. He had forgotten to wear a tie, but this did not mean that he didn't have any. In fact, he had fourteen very expensive ties at home. You could tell just by looking at him that he was a very nice boy, and a

thinking boy, too, because there was something on his mind.

As he slowly walked down the hallway toward Laura's apartment his thoughts were of the good times they had shared, and in his mind he visualized them. He saw Laura laughing beneath an umbrella. Just barely visible next to her was a young man's shoulder. It was his.

And then his mind went white and the sounds of the hallway turned to crackle. A footstep sounded once, and Marco's mind saw Laura again. She was running in Battery Park. A barking dog she did not know followed closely on her heels and nipped at her shoes. She kicked the dog, and a man in an overcoat ran toward her, shouting, but made no sounds. Marco's mind yelled, "Cut. Cut. Cut." Everything went black.

Marco's face was thinking again. He and Laura strolled down a quiet, tree-lined street, holding hands. When they got to the corner, he saw a newspaper stand. A truck roared by and a horn honked twice and a car alarm went off and continued wailing. Marco put his hand into his pants pocket and extracted a coin and held it out to the man in the newsstand. The man in the newsstand said, "Thank you," but he could not be heard because of the car alarm. Marco showed the newspaper to Laura. They both smiled and giggled. The newspaper headline read: COURT TO ACT ON OUSTER BAN. She kissed his



cheek and someone said, "I don't think these earphones are working."

Finally Marco reached the door of the apartment. Laura opened the door. She was dressed badly. She wore a black negligee and no slippers.

Inside the apartment Laura sat on the sofa and Marco sat next to her. Then, even though everything went white, Marco and Laura confronted the truth that was missing from their life: truth.

"Mwawawa," said Marco.

"Kzsrinii," she replied.

"Your grebin isno pop, pop." he mumbled as the refrigerator droned in the other room.

The room returned to normal and Laura crumpled to the floor. Marco sensitively put his hand on her shoulder and then stepped courteously over her supine body. However, his foot made a black mark on her negligee and tore it. Marco politely helped her to her feet, and as he did so his hand accidentally grabbed her right breast. Then he walked toward the door.

Laura screamed. "I refuse to be a part of this any longer. You are exploiting me for your own ego. You can go to hell, you chauvinist pig." She tore off the large ankh (an Egyptian T-shaped cross surmounted by a loop, used as a sacred emblem symbolizing life) she was wearing and threw it at Marco, but missed. Marco yelled, "Keep rolling, we'll use it." He waved his arms. The world spun around and made a clunking sound. As everything went black, a voice from somewhere said, "Oh, dammit."

In the park Marco leaped high in the air. A girl came toward him. It was Laura. She had gotten shorter and had dyed her hair red. She'd also had a nose job, but it was still the same Laura—she was wearing the ankh.

"Scruutch, scrutch," said Laura.

Marco took her in his arms and kissed her.

He was happy. He would be happier if Laura was not in his life. But that's a heartache only a mother would know.

WHAT THE PROPHET SAW



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DAVID TAHURA

WHAT THE PROPHET SAW

Novelization by the Deconstructive Collective of the Film Department of Pitts College of the Fine Arts of the Self-Deconstructing Anti-Film by the Deconstructive Collective of the Film Department of Pitts College of the Fine Arts.

Part One

The old Prophet: who looked very young, stood at the edge. Of a large reeking heap of the waste of civilization and saw it signified waste as truth: an endless panoply of rotting food, old sneakers, medical waste, discarded notes from soul-sucking lectures, and other items too far gone to comprehend. However, he obviously comprehended them fully. He coughed, and began to sweat a little. He recoiled. He looked dizzy, and the color left his face.

The sky: sea gulls cried and swooped around him, shrieking and screaming.

A stranger: wearing a black robe, a skull's face, and carrying a scythe, appeared.

"Who are you?" asked the Prophet.

"What?" said the Stranger, adjusting his skull's face.

"Never mind," said the Prophet, suppressing a mocking grin.

"I am Death," said the Stranger.

The Prophet gazed at the sky. It looked the same.

Part Two

Death challenged the old Prophet, who was really young, to a footrace. They ran. Death tripped and fell. The Prophet laughed. Death got up and left. The old Prophet called after him, "You can't go now. We haven't finished. You have something to say. . . ."

"Absence is presence," said Death very quickly, "so does it matter if I go?"

The Prophet grimaced. "Death is under the weather," he thought, walking away. "I think I must leave this place."

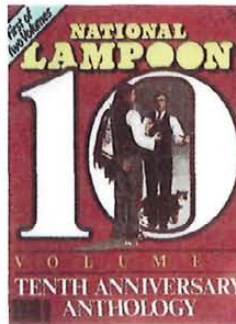
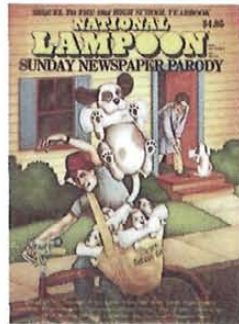
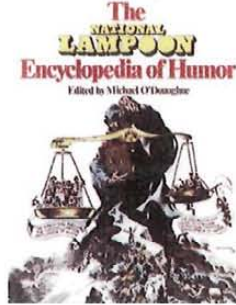
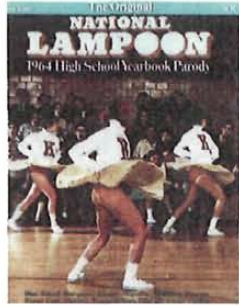
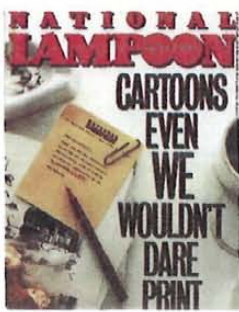
Then the Prophet left. His presence filled the emptiness.

Part Three

Far in the distance, down the road, next to a Volvo station wagon, Death danced with the Prophet to the strains of an alto recorder and a flute, and then they both got in the Volvo station wagon and drove away.

The "Pitts College of the Fine Arts" sticker in the rear window added a savage irony.





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A DANNY HELLMAN ACTION-ADVENTURE FILM

KILL HARDER

This is the film that led to Danny Hellman's Hollywood contract and a three-million-dollar deal.

Read it here.

It is not available in theaters.

Like Charles Bronson in *DEATH WISH*, I returned home from work to find my wife and my daughter lying on the floor brutally violated and murdered. Just before breathing her last, my daughter mentioned that the Swenson brothers had done it. I vowed to find them and bring them to justice. My justice. I called the undertaker, then I put a gun in a shopping bag, intending to go out and stalk them. I had begun the day an ordinary man, but now I had become *JAWS* in man's clothing—and I was on the trail of blood.

But, like Sean Connery in *THE UNTOUCHABLES*, I was stalked by a ruthless killer who was waiting for me in the living room. I hauled off and nearly patted him one on the kisser. He kept going and fell to the ground, possibly from the wind, or fear, or from stepping on his own foot. In any case, he was on the ground and unconscious, brown stuff pouring from his head, or from the floor beneath his head. I knew it was blood, even though it looked a lot

like soy sauce.

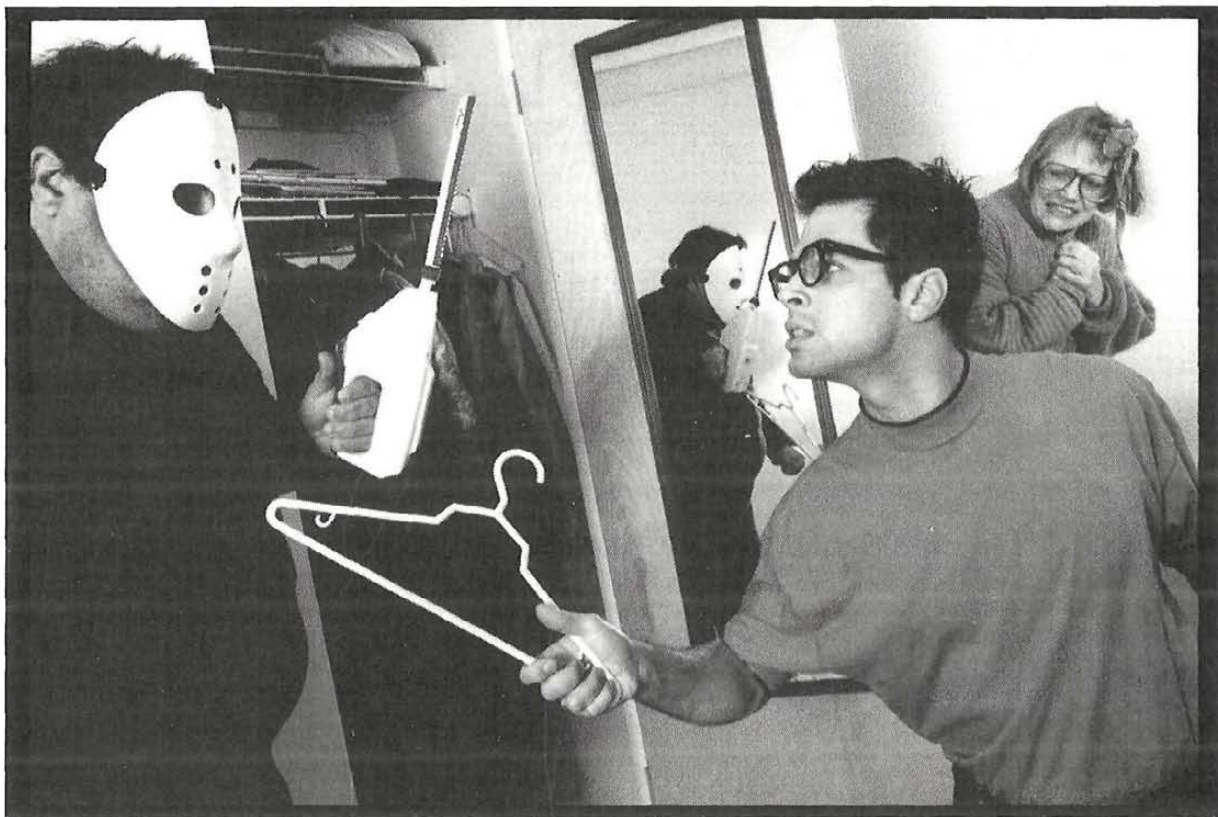
A table was knocked over, and a mysterious middle-aged woman with a worried face appeared in the doorway of the kitchen. Almost as quickly as she appeared she stepped back. I realized the woman symbolized death, which was everywhere around me, and that's because I'm a stone killer. I yelled after her, "It's okay. Nothing is broken." I believe in being reassuring—but ruthless to scum.

When I got to the hallway and opened the closet to get my coat, a guy wearing a hockey mask and carrying a cordless electric carving knife came running at me from the bathroom. I saw him in the closet mirror just in time and tripped him with a coat hanger, and he fell into the closet door and gashed it, and cut a sleeve off the mink coat that hung there. Death appeared again, and I told her I'd get everything fixed. "Don't worry," I called out. When you live on the edge, it's important to placate death.

I pulled a knife out of the guy in the hockey mask's chest. He was completely

dead, but I shot him in the head with a World War II Luger, because I liked doing it. He was a disease. I was the cure. Call me Doctor Destructo. Then I slipped the gun in my belt. That was a mistake, because a maniac was lurking in the kitchen and coshed my skull with a broom handle, which gave me a hell of a headache, but pain means less than nothing to me. I got excited, ripped down the drapes in the dining room, and challenged him with the drapery rod. We faced off against each other mano a mano, and he broke the mirror and cut himself. He really was a maniac. Death came running with a bath towel, but blood got on the rug anyway. Staring at it gave me pleasure, and I smiled with cool satisfaction. Then death slapped me across the face and I had to call it quits that day.

But tomorrow's another day and I'm going out into the subways to look for the Swenson brothers. And those rats better watch out, because I'm deadly—like *THE TERMINATOR*. ■



Humoring the Home Front: How the System Worked

by John Derevlany



Ground Zero: Commander Brice Tobin, *Comedic Premises and Situations attaché*, checks the Laugh Array—the “Hahameter”—at Ground Zero, twelve stories beneath the State Department’s intelligence center.

More than half a battle, it is said, is fought on the home front. For that reason, when Saddam Hussein’s tanks rolled into Kuwait, high-level operatives knew that deploying troops in the Persian Gulf was just one part of America’s strategic response. The other part: making fun of the enemy.

While private entrepreneurs immediately rushed to fill this need, the Bush administration shared the view of most Americans—that Persian Gulf humor was too important to be left to civilians. To that end, the Interagency Satiric Task Force was called into being almost immediately after news of the invasion reached Washington. Two months later, it emerged with the jokes America needed to mobilize morale.

The task force’s long struggle to lampoon Saddam is an instructive tale of bureaucratic wars as intense as any desert battle; and, although all parties concerned—especially the two major adversaries, M. Singer Fredericks of Defense and Jack Barrington of State—now present a unified front, there are enough sources and background material to finally piece together the behind-the-scenes story of the Interagency Satiric Task Force.

Day 1, August 3, 1990

The task force gathers deep in the State Department, well below the intelligence center, in a room known as “Ground Zero” (named after the popular *Beetle Bailey* character). The twelve members of the task force represent virtually every arm of the national-security world—from Defense to State to the intelligence agencies. Other than the telephones bearing extension numbers totally unrelated to the phone lines they are connected to, Ground Zero looks like any other government-issue conference room.

Joint Chiefs of Staff head Colin Powell gives the group its directive. Holding an eight-by-ten glossy of Hussein in front of his face, he proclaims, “That’s right. I’m not only the Hair Club for Men president. I’m also a psychotic Arab dictator.” The task force responds to Powell’s words with what a source would later describe as “a forcible projection of collateral discompensation.” In other words, they smile because he is the general.

Powell leaves and Defense offers its first proposal: “a discretionary phallusbased initiative (PBI), concurring with the subject’s gross deficiencies of magnitude.” Objections from these sea-

soned government infighters surface immediately. Chiefly, federal statute 72:A:195.3 prohibits “pecker-wrecker” humor without congressional oversight.

Nonetheless, Defense presses its case. As Fredericks, the senior satirist and a veteran of most government humor initiatives from Teheran to Panama City, comments, “I think that, in the final analysis, those who find humor in this sort of thing would likely be amused, while, conversely, those who do not find humor in it would defer their amusement to alternative topics.”

To Jack Barrington, however, Fredericks’s comments are fighting words.

Day 2, August 4, 1990

Jack Barrington, forty-two, is a twenty-year career man, the kind of dedicated civil servant who rarely uses the phrase “good enough for government work” unless he means it. It is his skill in the ways of Washington, in fact, that have commended him to State Department policy makers and brought him to Ground Zero. Now he finds himself leading one side of the interagency skirmish against PBI. In its stead, State and its allies (including,

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surprisingly, the intelligence agencies) advocate a "high-concept" approach centering for the moment around making fun of Saddam Hussein's mustache. The idea goes nowhere and, for the moment, the task force is stalemated.

Day 3, August 5, 1990

Even at this rarefied level, policy disputes can become personal, and Defense's line is hardened when the *Washington Post* quotes an unnamed source as saying that Fredericks "should neutralize his spiraling personality deficit and requisition a brain."

Unsurprisingly, then, the pace of satire-policy development is as sluggish as the lazy purple haze of cigarette smoke that hangs in the air of Ground Zero. Fredericks's team reworks some previously deployed material.

"See section C. 109 (e) and (f), that part about 'when she gets drunk, you can carry her home like a six-pack,'" Fredericks tells a colleague.

"Suitably appropriate humor vector in significant demographics," notes an aide in reply. Defense also wants to modify M.366.85a and/or b (a reference entitled "Erotogenic Intimacies with Daughters of Agricultural Workers") to include Bedouins.

The proposal does not fly. Barrington and State insist on broad-based, family-oriented material, the kind that could be deployed on *The Tonight Show*. Furthermore, they disparage Defense's reuse of prior strategies. But the Pentagon points out that manufacturing original material would require submitting to the demands of Form 33—the pejorative release application. A by-product of Vietnam-era fear of freelancers, the form puts a tight control on all new comedy produced by the government, and its near-lethal bureaucratic demands are said to account for the early retirement of more than a few public-sector employees each year.

At this point, according to one Ground Zero veteran, "we were like a Mira copier stuck on collate/copy/collate." The solution to the problem was obvious—hire outside consultants.

Day 11, August 13, 1990

By now, the extraordinary business of the Satirical Interagency Task Force has hardened into routine. The rancor between State and Defense does not improve, but meetings are now limited to five-minute periods, following which the entire task force make phone calls to their consultants. Then they break for lunch.

After lunch, they have a coffee break, throw out all the phone-message slips that have accrued in their

absence, and request that Congress triple their original appropriation for "miscellaneous expenses." This is followed by another coffee break, and another lunch period. At this point, protocol requires an early dismissal.

"Yes, I do like that initiative involving Hussein, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, and a camel," a National Security Council aide tells Fredericks as the two head for Happy Hour specials at a popular think tank on Fourteenth Street.

Meanwhile, as events in Kuwait and Iraq continue to escalate, both State and Defense recognize the real need to come to a quick solution while, as one staff member says, "the window of humor is open."

Day 18, August 20, 1990

Nearly three weeks of continuous meetings, coffee breaks, lunches, memos, unreturned phone calls, and more coffee breaks have not yet yielded a comprehensive satire strategy. The task force's shortcomings are vividly pointed out when Secretary of State James Baker pays them a visit. "We have some bad news and some good news," Barrington begins nervously. "The bad news is that Iraq is forming a 'human shield' out of one thousand U.S. hostages to deter air strikes. The good news is that most of the hostages are lawyers."

The joke is greeted with a hearty frown. "Sununu told me that one last week. Where are the jokes?" Baker snaps as he leaves. It's a major setback for all concerned. To make matters worse, the first "Iraq-nophobia" T-shirts are spotted in New York. When informed that the T-shirt was not task-force-generated, Bush is furious and sends a tersely worded dispatch from his Maine retreat: "Make me laugh. Stop. What about six-pack joke? Stop."

Day 20, August 22, 1990

Defense is ready to meet these high-level demands for immediate output and so carries the day. Powell concludes a briefing memo to the group with "I hope you will consider deploying the satiric initiative regarding the amatory event involving Saddam Hussein, King Fahd, and a camel." It's a clear signal that PBI has won; and, going further, Fredericks improvises material about Hussein's Harry Reems-like mustache—Saddam's similarity to the one-time porn star, Fredericks theorizes, must have something to do with Bush's repeated references to "naked aggression" in Kuwait.

For Jack Barrington, however, it's not over yet. In fact, as one source noted later, "I never saw a man so de-

termined to facilitate a retrograde reallocation of humor resources."

Day 50, September 21, 1990

Ideation is over, and PBI has won. But implementation, the second step, is even more important. Throughout September, Barrington and his supporters play the bureaucracy like a delicate instrument: burying genitalia jokes in federal black holes with names like Department of Compliance, Management, and Palindromes; reporting "Iraq-ing off" gags to Congress; and leaking planned "prenuptial insertion" anecdotes to the religious right wing of the Republican party.

Barrington also prevails upon Housing and Urban Development to locate a six-thousand-unit homeless shelter on property adjacent to the beachfront home of one Defense planner, while EPA plans to declare a two-block area surrounding Fredericks's home a long-tailed-rodent preserve.

Finally, a compromise is reached. PBI will be given the green light; however, to meet the demands of State, the material will all be newly composed. The press conference is planned for eleven days hence, October 2.

Day 60, October 1, 1990

The day before the official release of America's national satire policy, M. Singer Fredericks provides a background briefing to reporters. "You see, Saddam Hussein, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, and a camel are sitting in a bar," he tells his listeners. "Hussein says, 'Look, my camel is tame, it will not bite me.' And to prove his point, he puts his penis inside the animal's mouth. For fifteen minutes, the camel does not so much as touch Hussein. Finally, the Iraqi dictator says, 'See? Now you try it.' 'No, no, I don't think so,' King Fahd replies. 'I don't think I could keep my mouth open for that long.'"

But before the crowd can so much as chuckle, Barrington jumps up. "You can't tell that joke!" he shouts. "You never filed a 33."

The old Form 33, the pejorative release application. Fredericks laughs. "Nice try, Barrington, but I put it through more than a week ago."

"Of course you did," Barrington sneers. He pauses. Everyone in the room knows what's coming next. "Sorry, Fredericks, but they lost it."

Fredericks growls to himself, "I should've anticipated this," and races off to refile. It's already half past ten in the morning. The next five and a half hours will determine the fate of PBI.

Inside the Form 33 room, Fredericks confronts a fellow employee of the U.S.

government. As a professional courtesy, she commands him to wait his turn behind the red line. Upon recounsel with this paperwork facilitator several hours later, Fredericks is directed to fill out a Form 33a—required for any Form 33 refiling—and sent to another floor. By 2:30 P.M., a second paperwork facilitator accepts his Form 33a and proceeds to brief him on the required filing fee. “No, we don’t take personal checks,” she explains, directing him to the credit/voucher office in Virginia.

One high-speed appropriations mission later, Fredericks gets his 33a stamped. The application is now ready for approval by the Form 33a manager, who, as per regulations, is on the phone until 3:54 P.M.

Fredericks is getting tense. He returns to the first window. He needs a reissue of his initial Form 33. There is only one person in front of him—but this person is compelled to “dialogue.”

One minute. Two minutes. Three minutes. The dialogue continues. Fredericks begins to sweat. Four minutes. He nervously sways. Five minutes. Six minutes. . .

Fredericks pushes the person in front of him out of the way. There’s the clerk. Here’s his form. He shouts, “I’m

here! Approve this! National Security! Huh? Huh? Can you?”

“Yes, of course,” the clerk responds.

“Thank God,” sighs Fredericks.

“However,” the clerk interrupts, “it’s after four o’clock.”

Fredericks looks at his watch: 4:01.

Day 61, October 2, 1990

The day of the official press briefing breaks with a neon-blue clarity. The sun lights up the State Department’s long, dull sprawl on C Street as the members of the media file in with their camcorders and notebooks. “Did you hear the one about Hussein giving a speech on poison gas?” spokesperson Margaret Tutweiler begins, stiffly reading a prepared statement in her clumsy Southern drawl. “Hussein says, ‘I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is we used gas to suppress the rebellion in Kurdistan. The bad news is we only got fifteen Kurds per gallon.’”

Though Tutweiler’s briefing is carried live on CNN, the material she presents—as well as the humor contained in the pages of “supplemental material” that the State Department releases—will be shared again and again by patriotic Americans. Barrington, for example, has already held a breakfast briefing on the material with Baker, Art Buchwald, and Jay Leno.

There will be no phallus-based initiative; instead, the satire will focus on the Iraqi dictator’s greasy black hair, his mustache (now “minoxidil-enriched”), his ruthless annexation of furnishing items from the Home Shopping Network. Over two months of infighting have paid off with humor Barrington characterizes as “very contemporary”—a characterization that receives the media approval of a *Nightline/Tonight Show* joint broadcast.

Later that day, reflecting in an office festooned with government-issue T-shirts and bumper stickers, Barrington says, “When I look around here, I don’t see bureaucrats and tired civil servants—just patriots in uniforms of gray. When I look at rules and regulations, I don’t see it as red tape—just as an extra red stripe on Old Glory.”

Driving home, bone-tired after another nonstop eighteen-hour day, Barrington flips on the radio and hears a DJ say, “Hey, did you hear about the new septic tanks in Baghdad? Hussein says that as soon as the Iraqis figure out how to drive them, they’ll invade.”

Barrington smiles. Already the task force’s work is getting circulated. “Good enough for government work?” he asks his reflection in the rearview mirror. “You bet your ass!” ■

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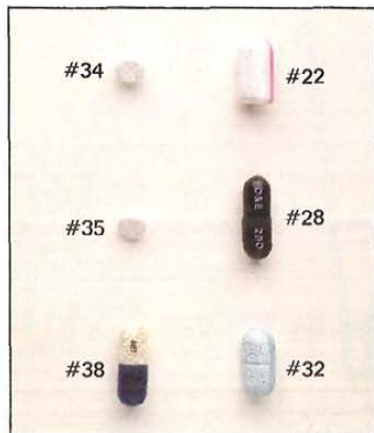
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Jonathan Rosen

TRUE FACTS

MAINE'S BANGOR DAILY News reported that "the Bangor Ground Round [restaurant] was sold recently to Dorks R Us of Freeport." Dorks R Us, according to the brief business item, is apparently a division of Dorks Unlimited. (contributed by Douglas Raskoff)

T F

50¢ Off
Total purchase price of a wide **Barbecued Children** From our deli.
With coupon and \$10.00 purchase (\$5.00 purchase for Senior Citizens). Limit one per customer. Good Nov. 29-30, Dec. 1, 2, 1987.

IN SAN FRANCISCO, Gregorio M. Valezquez hopped into a taxicab driven by Peter Van Fleet. As the cab rolled along I-280, Valezquez allegedly pulled a knife and held it at Van Fleet's throat, demanding money. After a near collision on the highway, Van Fleet pulled over, followed by a police cruiser.

When arrested, Valezquez told police "he was merely using the knife to point out where he wanted to go." San

Francisco Examiner (contributed by Fred Brandt)

T F

IN TINICUM, PENNSYLVANIA, a Philadelphia man was pinned in his car when the emergency air bag inflated during a minor accident. According to Tincum Police Chief Robert Lythgoe, a second motorist approached and asked about the problem.

"I can't get out," the first man reportedly said.

"Are you sure?" asked the second man.

Then, according to Lythgoe, the second man robbed the man behind the air bag of all his valuables and fled. Delaware County Times (contributed by John J. Topoleski)

T F

bus pulled out with his luggage on board. He had been making a phone call at the time. The man's luggage was returned and no charges were filed.

"Oh, yeah, one other thing," Feinmark told the Los Angeles Times. "When the guy peeled himself off the wipers, we found a dead bird wedged in there. We wondered if the guy was a psycho. But the driver said, 'No, it's been up there for three days. We never cleaned it off.'" (contributed by Cary and Sahara Krytzer)

T F

IN BANGKOK, THAILAND, a police officer, Somboon Jandpuchong, asked four-year-old Peerapong Suwannarin to fetch his eleven-millimeter pistol as he was leaving the boy's house. But

phone bill. The Robbs claimed that the calls to Sports Pick and the Adult Date Line, which totaled twenty-eight dollars, were made by their cocker spaniel, Tyrone Jamal. Tyrone had been taught to knock the receiver off the phone, then dial 911 in case of emergency. The Robbs had marked the appropriate extra-large phone buttons with peanut butter.

"We know the dog did it because no one else was home," Bonnie Robb said. Orange County Register (contributed by Jeff Nigra)

T F

IN OKALOOSA, FLORIDA, thirty-two-year-old Cindy McNeely of Woodstock, Georgia, "playfully asked her husband for a piggyback ride." But when McNeely mounted a chair to climb onto her husband's back, the chair tipped and McNeely fell over the railing of their condominium balcony to her death eighteen floors below. San Francisco Chronicle (contributed by Patrick Cosola)

T F

"HELP A LAS VEGAS CHILD" EAT ONE TODAY!

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WHILE DRIVING through North Hollywood, Police Officer Marty Feinmark noticed a man hanging from the windshield wipers of a Trailways bus. Feinmark ran toward the bus, but just as it stopped "a motorist tapped him on the shoulder and tried to report an unrelated accident. Then a lady started hammering on the outside of the bus door, apparently thinking it was a local."

The man on the windshield wipers, it turned out, had grabbed hold after the

when the policeman jokingly asked if he knew how to use the weapon, little Peerapong aimed at Somboon, pulled the trigger, and shot the cop dead. (Hampton, Virginia) Daily Press (contributed by C. J. Kilgore)

T F

ACCORDING TO BONNIE and Tom Robb of Aliso Viejo, California, they did not make the calls to two 900-number telephone services that appeared on their

True in advertising: crazy kid stuff.



MARIE ARCHER, A MAINTENANCE worker at the Eastville Greyhound Stadium in Bristol, England, was working on the dog-racing track when she was run over by the mechanical bunny used to pace the dogs. "Authorities said the bunny, sixty centimeters high and capable of speeds up to about fifty kilometers per hour, crashed into Archer from behind as she worked near the rail."

"It was an atrocious night

and the hare must have come out of the mist and rain before she could see it," said Dennis Pope, the track manager. (Regina, Saskatchewan) *Leader-Post* (contributed by Greg Kahan)

T F

RESPONDING TO ACCUSATIONS of corruption, President Corazon Aquino ordered the National Bureau of Investigation to probe the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes, a popular national lottery. Investigators arrested a judge and a lawyer involved in one drawing, prompting the lottery's board of directors to resign.

To demonstrate the fairness of the newly cleaned-up lottery, officials televised the very next drawing—the first time that had been done. The winner, with a ticket worth \$200,000, turned out to be retired Brigadier General Alfredo Lim, director of the National Bureau of Investigation. *Washington Post* (contributed by Steve Guion)

T F

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PROTESTORS TURNED out to greet Vice President Dan Quayle on a visit to Portland, Oregon, leading to what one newspaper called "a five-hour street skirmish between demonstrators and more than one hundred police." According to the unnamed paper, "The demonstration took a bizarre turn when twenty-four young people wearing ill-fitting suits and ties lined up on Sixth Avenue, swigged vinegar, syrup of ipecac, and food coloring, and vomited red,

white, and green. One demonstrator, who declined to give his name, identified the group as the Reverse Peristaltic Painters and said they had intended to vomit in red, white, and blue to protest Quayle's visit." (contributed by M. F. Beal)

T F

FROM THE SUN OF LONDON, England:

"A man pumped three bullets into a fortune-teller because he did not like his predictions. Felice Gullaci, thirty-eight, told police that clairvoyant Raffaele Montebruno was 'depressing about my future.' Raffaele was badly wounded. A policeman in Genoa, Italy, said: 'Unfortunately, he did not see it coming.'" (contributed by Stephen Verney)

T F

AN UNIDENTIFIED ASSAILANT attempting to rob a sandwich shop in Brantford,

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Rule Do Not acknowledge the engagement of their daughter, Donna Ann Rule to John Berkauzer, Now or Ever.

Ontario, armed only with a spoon, failed to convince a store employee he was serious. According to the *Brantford Expositor*:

"A worker at Big Top Dairy and Sub Shop at 218 Erie Avenue was sweeping the floor at about 10:30 P.M. Thursday, when a man entered the store, struggling to pull a white plastic bag over his own head.

"When he was unable to cover his head properly, he tore the bag away and pulled

out the spoon, pointing the round end toward the employee. The man said he was holding up the store."

The robber fled after the employee hit him with his broom. (contributed by Robert Lickers)

T F

A NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD woman was charged with shoplifting after an employee at an Orem, Utah, market claimed she "opened a pack of razors, went to the liquid-soap section, lathered, and shaved her armpits." *Rocky Mountain News* (contributed by Jack Tanner)

T F

FROM THE DETROIT News:

"Federal Judge Richard Enslin recently handled a suit accusing the state police, Lansing police, and the Ingham County jail of violating the rights of a man arrested in 1986.

"The man sued under the

MacGillivray, Jr., Enslin said.

"'For brevity,' the judge said, 'his current name will be shortened to I am the Beast.'" (contributed by Scott Van Tine)

T F

MARCIA MASON, A thirty-five-year-old West Des Moines woman, didn't recognize the symptoms of advanced labor, so she delayed leaving for the hospital. But by the time she decided to go, it was too late: her son had popped out into her shorts. Mason, according to the *Des Moines Register*, "noticed the tiny little arm hanging from her pants."

"I was wearing baggy shorts," she said. (contributed by James Hopcus)

T F

ATTENTION, CONTRIBUTORS! We send each contributor the sensational "True Facts" T-shirt for every submission used, as well as a credit. For every photo used, we send each contributor a T-shirt plus ten dollars in genuine American currency

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of the nurses and staff of Horton Memorial Hospital on Morrison 3 for the wonderful care given to me.
The late Olive Caridad and sons

name 'I am the Beast Six Six Six of the Lord of Hosts in Edmond Frank MacGillivray, Jr. Now, I Am the Beast Six Six Six of the Lord of Hosts Iefmjn. I am the Beast Six Six Six of the Lord of Hosts. I am the Beast Six Six Six Othlohiefmjn. I am the Beast Sssotlohiefmjn. I am the Beast Six Six Six. Beast Six Six Lord.'

"He had renounced his given name, Edmond Frank

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LI'L BASTARDS

by John Bendel



Jonathan Rosen

TRUE
FACTS
REPORTER

THE EARLY YEARS

Your True Facts Reporter recently interviewed an Alaskan fisherman named Joe who grew up in California's Bay Area suburbs.

"When I was about twelve, I had these two buddies of mine and we decided that we'd become the terrors of the neighborhood," said Joe. "One night we went out and scooped up all the neighborhood cats and put them in a burlap sack. We dipped their tails in the gas tank of my dad's lawn mower, then lit 'em on fire. The cats would shoot like a rocket. Just pjeewww! One neighbor called up my dad and told him to tell me to quit shooting flaming arrows down the street. That's how fast those cats went. Boy, we were bastards, I tell ya."

Indeed. More evidence follows:

There was this guy in school. We called him Bonerman, because we'd be taking showers after phys ed and this guy'd get a boner. He used to pick his boogers in class, too. So one day after phys ed, we throw him down, stick a lit cigarette in his ass, then duct-tape his butt cheeks together. You shoulda seen Bonerman runnin' to the coach's office naked, with this lit cigarette hanging out of his butt. We got kicked out of school for that. So we had a week off and what's there to do but go on a shop-liftin' spree?

We hitchhiked to Los Altos, which is about ten miles away, and went into this jewelry store. There was some nice old lady in there. Ten

o'clock in the morning, and we're really slippin' her some shit. We were real polite, and she couldn't figure out that twelve-year-old kids on a school day aren't out lookin' to buy diamond rings, or the Hope emerald or whatever. While we're talkin' nice to the old lady, one of the guys reaches behind the counter and snatches this ring board. He puts it in his coat while we're there runnin' interference on this broad. Nice meeting you, by God. Beautiful store. Jesus Christ, it's a nice place. And out the door we go.

Hitchhikin' home, we start lookin' at the ring board. There's about thirty rings on there, and they're priced anywhere from \$350 to \$2,500. We don't know what to do with these rings, so bein' the mental giants that we are, we pick 'em out and start throwin' 'em at cars. If a car wouldn't pick us up, we'd whip an \$800 ring at 'em. We musta tossed twenty grand worth.

When I was sixteen we discovered that a marble would break a plate-glass window when applied with a wrist rocket—you know, a slingshot?

Well, I had this red Jeep, and one night we drove by Denny's on El Camino Real, the strip, and the place is packed. There's forty, fifty people in there, eatin' their supper, mindin' their business. So I lean out of the Jeep and shoot a marble as we're driving by. But pretty soon, we turn around and come back to take a look and, yup, one window's out, but—weird—nobody's

there. The place is empty. Of course, we're still mental giants, so we shoot out another window.

But it's really strange the place emptied out so fast, and the parking lot is still full of cars. So we pull into the Red Lion Inn up the street and park the Jeep. We figure we'll walk down to Denny's and have a Coke and see what's goin' on. So I hide the slingshot in the bushes and we walk on down the road. When we walk into Denny's there's people peekin' around corners, from everywhere. Everybody in the restaurant is under a table or something. They think there's a sniper out there.

We walk up to the counter, and the manager comes up and says, "I'm sorry, guys, we're gonna have to ask you to leave. We've had a little bit of a problem here and we're not serving, so would you please go." So we go, but not real smart. With all these people peekin' around corners and out from under tables at us, we go out the door laughin' like hell.

Halfway back to the Jeep, about eight Palo Alto police cars converged on us at one time. It looked like a big-time bust. They frisked us and searched the Jeep, just like on *Dagnet*. And there're marbles rollin' all around the back of the Jeep, because we'd already busted out about fifteen windows that night. But there's no wrist rocket, so they didn't catch on.

When they let us go, I figured there is a God after all.



RICHARD SALA

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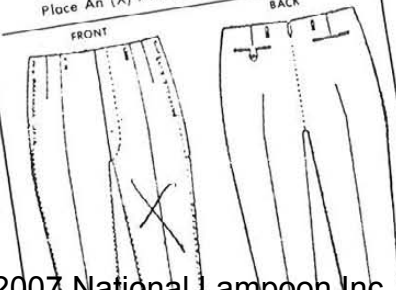
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TRUE
FACTS
REPORTER

In the Trades

by John Derevlany

Seafood for Thought

For David Berelson, Jr. (a.k.a. imitation crabmeat) is the currency of love. But perhaps it's his love of currency that's behind his article, "Surimi: Seafood of the 90s," in October's *Frozen Food Digest*.

Why the lavish praise for a product that is not only "a manufactured seafood... a fresh refrigerated yet precooked seafood," but also "romantic and fun"? Could it have anything to do with Berelson being the president of the Berelson Company, the country's foremost distributor of surimi products? Or could it be Berelson's "new, innovative technology [that] makes these products more 'crab-like' than ever before..." —a "fact" stated in a second article in the same issue of *Frozen Food Digest*? One suspects that the connection between Berelson's heart and his wallet is close indeed.

Berelson's concept of romancing-the-surimi isn't even original. I remember reading something along these lines a few years ago in *The Straits Times*, a major English-language daily in Singapore. Back then, a story titled "Single Girl-San Comes to Town" reported a rash of Japanese women visiting Singapore with only four things on their mind: sex, shopping, sightseeing—and seafood.

Quoting a local hotel manager in the small Southeast Asian country, the article stated, "Some of these Japanese women would entertain Singapore men who they meet in discos in their hotel rooms." And when you hear euphemisms like "entertain," you know it can only mean one thing:

Surimi.

Angling for Literary Greatness

What about Berelson's other claim, that test-tube seafoods like surimi will be the fish of the nineties? I turned to a competing publication for answers—specifically, the November 26 issue of *The National Provisioner*. Reading an article on the future of the seafood industry written by TNP managing editor Greg Smith, I found myself battered by gale-force nautical clichés. "Like

comedian Rodney Dangerfield, the seafood industry keeps looking for respect. ... Like navigators charting a voyage, the [National Fisheries Institute] has plotted what must happen... [and] will have to tack against several ill winds capable of blowing it off course..."

But what about surimi? TNP fails to provide an answer to the surimi question—although its improved coverage of the seafood biz is otherwise showing promise. TNP, you might remember, underwent a relaunching last year, changing its name from TNP, "Meat News Weekly" to TNP, "Meat, Poultry, Seafood Newsweekly." "Institutions must advance to keep pace with the times," it stated, quoting Thomas Jefferson in the premiere issue of the new TNP. And its stylish layouts, which make the most of its slaughterhouse photo features, pay off that promise.

Luckily for us, this institution keeps topping itself each week with articles on the latest in "beef salads," letters titled "Yeah for Hot Dogs," and the occasional—and welcome—instance of vegetarian bashing (John Romans, a professor of meat science at South Dakota State University, recounts a story in the October issue about sports hero Michael Jordan becoming a vegetarian, only to sit on the bench with a foot injury until he began eating meat again.)

Iraqis "R" Us

In the world-news department, *Chain Store Age Executive* once again beat out most of the major dailies and television networks covering the Gulf crisis, breaking a story on the looting of a Kids "R" Us store in Kuwait City. While other media continued to regurgitate party lines on the political and economic significance of the Iraqi invasion, *Chain Store Age Executive* got right to the point. "The soldiers had a penchant for toys and games," the publication quotes an unidentified witness in a November exposé.

Some nice reporting there by *Chain Store Age Executive*. Kudos, too, for explaining how Kids "R" Us is an Arab version of Toys "R" Us, with the word "toys" allegedly dropped from the name so as "not to inflame Moslem sensitivities against graven images."

Poetry Corner

"Although the Christmas retail skies continue to darken, a number of gift stars are starting to twinkle... There always is a Christmas."

—Anonymous merchandising executive, from Richard Halverson's "Popular Gifts Add Gleam to Dim Christmas," *Discount Store News*, November 5, 1990.

MOYERS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25)

"Woe betide the rogue who sets before me an inferior libation," the genial philosopher was wont to remark.

"And what," asked Moyers, "is the chief requisite for the perfect daiquiri?"

"That it be frozen to a precise temperature, dear Moyers; this above all. For, you see, the daiquiri is not a common or garden intoxicating beverage: it is, rather, the tippie of heroes and questers, and those who go on long journeys."

"Indeed," exclaimed Moyers in amazement.

One evening, the two found themselves at a swanky uptown lounge, the proprietor of which prided himself on the excellence of the daiquiri served therein.

Campbell promptly ordered two frozen strawberry daiquiris.

"We shall soon test this fellow's mettle," said Campbell, downing a fistful of salted peanuts.

Presently the drinks were proffered, and Moyers reached forward to take his glass.

"One moment, Bill," warned Campbell. "Stay your hand, for you are untutored in such matters. Let me taste that for you."

Moyers gravely nodded his assent. "Sound mythological thinking, sir."

With that Campbell sniffed the liquid in his glass, sipped, rolled it between his teeth, swirled, gargled, and, finally, spat.

"This daiquiri has been served to me under false pretenses!" shouted Campbell.

At this the proprietor came running over. "Are the strawberries not fresh?" he stammered.

"Indeed the strawberries are fresh, but the liquid itself is not frozen," Campbell repeated with loud emphasis for the benefit of the startled customers.

"I can assure you, Mr. C., that this is not the case."

"Do you call me a liar?" fumed Campbell.

"Indeed not, Mr. C.," mumbled the poor fellow.

"Then lead me to your refrigerator so that I can ascertain for myself. Come along, Moyers, you shall bear testimony to the outrage."

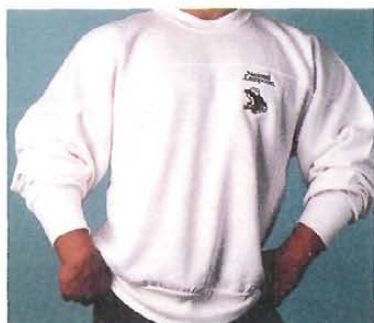
Flinging open the doors of the refrigerator, Campbell beheld some twenty or so already prepared strawberry daiquiris in the refrigerator proper, with perhaps four or five in their appointed place in the freezer above.

"Just as I suspected," crowed Campbell triumphantly. "Many are cold but few are frozen!" ■

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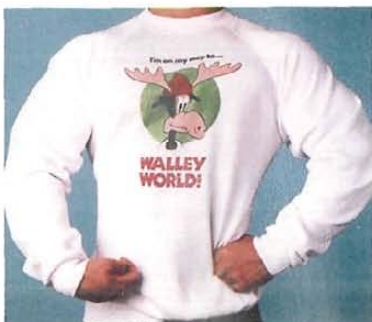
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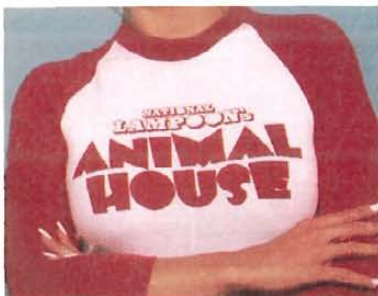
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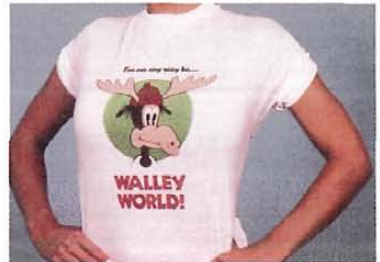
- (A) WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MONTANA — Four riflemen firing a ceremonial salute at a military funeral accidentally shot the minister. — *San Francisco Chronicle*
- (B) MANCHESTER, IOWA — To deter wandering in the halls, authorities at West Delaware High School required each student on his way to the bathroom to wear a toilet seat around his neck. — *Washington Post*
- (C) After an eighteen-month study, the British Academy of Science recommended to Parliament that British rock stars be prohibited from selling their semen to commercial sperm banks. — *UMKC University News*
- (D) A local citizen was arrested and charged with public indecency after he allegedly was observed placing his male organ in a jar of slow dressing at the local supermarket — *Downers Grove (Illinois) Reporter*



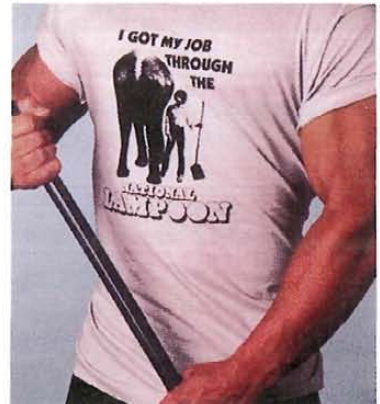
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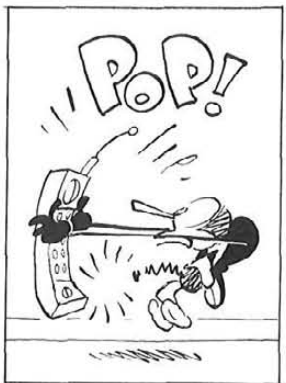
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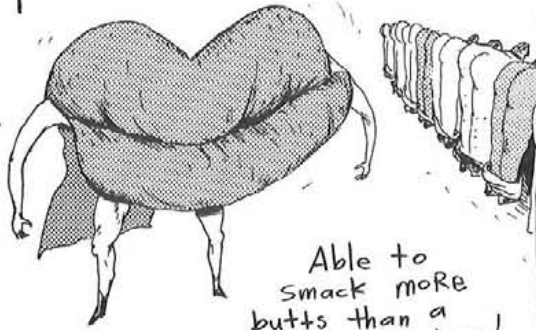
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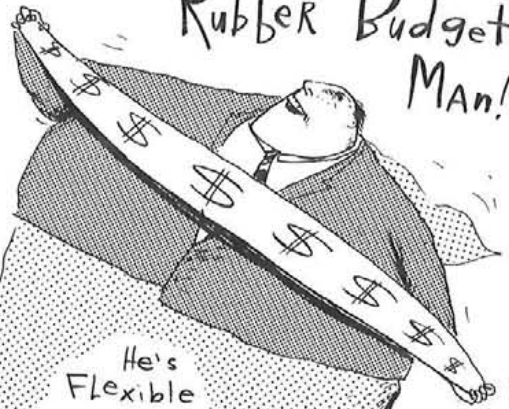
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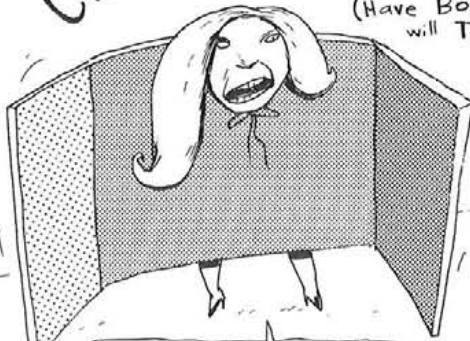
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COITUS!

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(Cousin of Ass-
Kissing Man)



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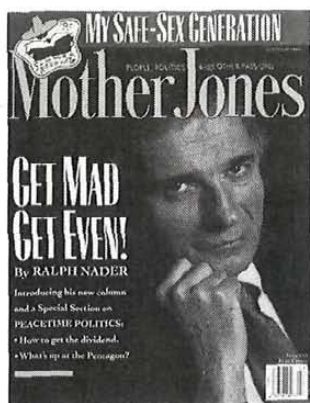
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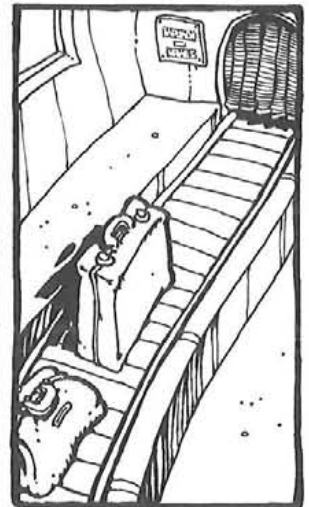
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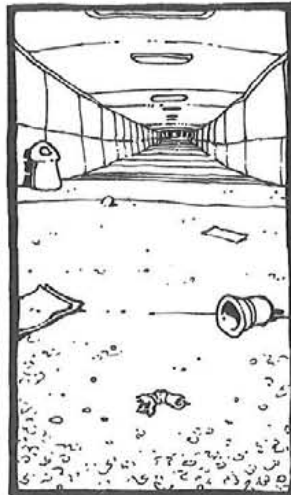
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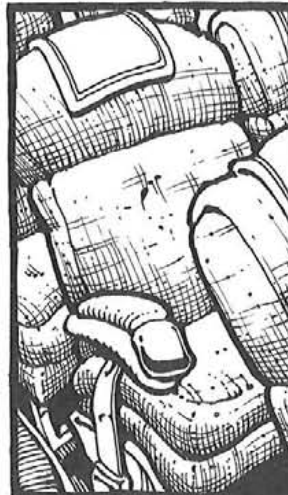
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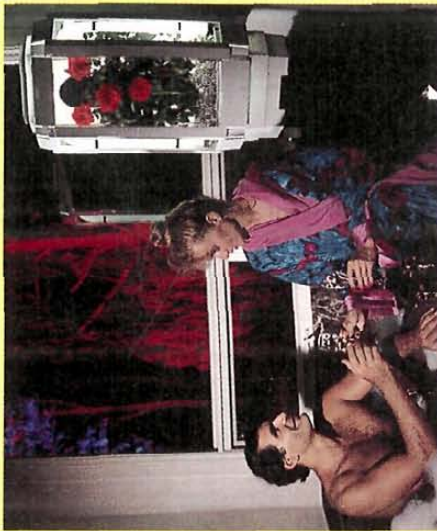
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 M. E. Quoney (D)
 Ferdinand Magellan (D)
 Moses Supposes (R)
 Seka (R)
 Benson Terrific (R)

North Carolina
 Brian "Tuna" Meltsner (R)
 Phil Ruzotto (D)
 Fantasy Stevens (D)
 Wilbur Weenut (D)
 Bertton Quact (D)
 Murray Kempton (R)
 Lizzie Borden (R)
 Ferguson Bemelman (D)
 Jack Brahm (D)
 Billie Joe McAllister (D)

North Dakota
 Sweepta Fist (R)

Ohio
 Grant Musky (D)
 Ken Daneyko (R)
 Paul Faborzi (R)
 Honor Blackman (R)
 Pierre Jackson (D)
 Basketball Jones (R)
 Ewell Blackwell (D)
 Xaveria Flinstone (R)
 Douglas Kenney (R)
 Inga Jaari (D)
 Old McDonald (D)
 Gilbert Balding (D)
 Tiresias (D)
 Laurence Charles (R)

Ed Figueroa (D)

Oklahoma
 Cole Porter, Jr. (D)
 Oral Fixation (D)
 Thomas Vatterk (D)
 Chief Running Deer (R)
 Leo Scorpio (R)
 Patrick O'Furniture (D)

Oregon
 Sigmund Muffin (R)
 Rose Alenbthol (D)
 Pudge Bailey (R)
 Soupy Tureen (R)
 Jay Ward (R)
 Martin Chuzzlewit (D)

Pennsylvania
 Lester Chum (D)
 Freaky Deaky (D)
 Francis Duca (D)
 Connie Yeardit (D)
 Phillip Phaticat (R)
 Tom Dooley (R)
 Cletis Hassenpfeffer (D)
 Witold Curtains (R)
 Beclan McManus (R)
 Candy Samples (D)
 Merrill Stubing (D)
 Frederick Blau (D)
 Chalcemagne (D)
 George Foster (D)
 Alvin Dork (D)
 Fred Waring (R)
 Breece O'Japanecko (R)
 Steve Bunsasted (D)
 Latka Gravas (R)
 Simbad Going (D)
 Hoogy Carmichael (R)
 Andrea T'oue (R)
 Martin Daugherly (D)

Rhode Island
 Oregor Mendel (D)
 One-Eye Sykes (D)

South Carolina
 Joseph Cotton (R)
 Stuart Chillybelly (R)
 Hugh Banter (R)
 Rex Recd (D)
 Mickey Rivers (D)
 Harriet Tub (R)

South Dakota
 Charley Pride (D)

Tennessee
 Howell Taylor (D)
 Julian Johnson (D)
 Frank Sheanavugans (R)
 Pink Lady (R)
 Mel Brooks (D)
 Paul Quackenbush (D)
 Tulane Vanderbilt (D)
 Dana Carrey (R)
 Erskine Potlatch (D)

Texas
 Joe Tex (R)
 Sinfad Rodrigues (R)
 Steve Cannon (D)
 Leonard Malin (D)
 Victor Mature (R)
 Olga Jones (R)
 Adam Moon (R)
 Gienghis Khan-Neidermeyer (D)
 Arnie Zeus (D)
 Jimmy Kissing (R)
 Samuel Barber (R)
 Immanuel Kould (D)
 Ray Bryant (D)
 Lee Harvey Blotro (D)
 Barry "Flip" Toor (R)
 Sean Lashline (D)
 Michelle Rotelle (D)
 Stewart Brand (D)
 Elihu P. Greecbottom (D)
 Cleason Pickereer (D)
 Winnie the Grever (R)
 Amos Alonso Stagg (R)
 Quincy Firestone (R)
 Jeff Chaucer (D)
 Ethan Allen Nemser (D)
 Twigger (R)
 The Virginian (D)

Utah
 Cynthia Crestfallen (D)
 Warren Spahn (R)
 Scrubbing Bubbles (R)

Vermont
 Frodo Baggins (D)

Virginia
 Hume Doorjamb (D)
 J. Scott Barker (D)
 Fungus Amopagus (D)
 Bruce Hornsby (R)
 Cootie Wines (R)
 Felix Millan (D)
 Escarlal (R)
 Brian "Tuna" Meltsner (R)
 Procrustes Adams (R)
 John Hampden (D)
 Van Lingie-Mungo (D)

Washington
 Isidore Demist (D)
 Wanda Fonda (R)
 Sonny Suxkiler (D)
 Daniel Wapping (D)
 Bean Martuscello (D)
 Michael Metro (R)
 J. V. Wadd (D)
 Bartleby Jemima (D)
 Escarlal (R)

West Virginia
 Templeton Ray (D)
 Richard Hill (D)
 Jesse Barfield (D)
 Noel Coward (R)

Wisconsin
 Maude Evans (D)
 Digitalis Pepsin (D)
 Ralph Malph (R)
 A. Macoe Bartle (D)
 Dink Lasker (D)
 Ed Ronge (R)
 Charles Blackford (R)
 Oddibe McDowell (R)

Wyoming
 Daniel Ortega (D)

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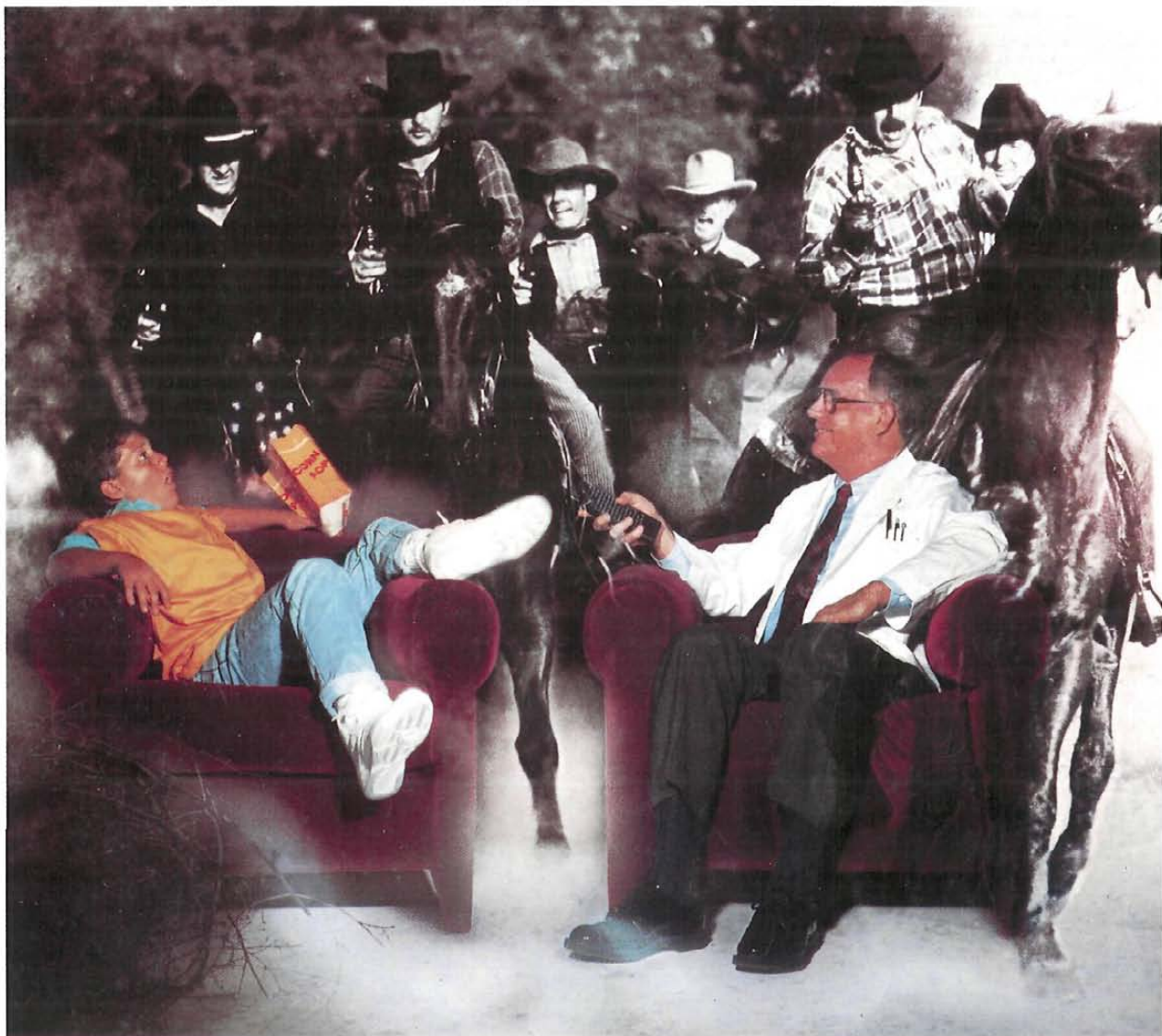
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