

AS WE ARE

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

#4

MATTHEW
SWEET

Letters
To Cleo

13



Sweet & Spicy

MST3K

MATTHEW SWEET
IS KEANU REEVES
IN JOHNNY PNELMONIC.

LETTERS TO CLEO:
FILMED IN
LONG-TORSO-VISION™

THREE BUCKS!
COME ON, BUY IT!
YOU KNOW
YOU WANT TO.

0 50644 42922 4



Sooner or later...

You've got
to get
dressed.

ULTRA
WEAR

Distinctive clothing lines
for discerning stores

1486 Broadway #908C
212.840.1268

New York, New York, 10036
fax 212.840.1297



"the magazine for
working young people"

September-October 1995
Vol. 2, No. 1 (Whole No. 4)
ISSN: 1073-6194

Editor/Publisher

Jason Pramas

Associate Publisher

Simson Garfinkel

Executive Editor/

Music Editor

Buck O'Shea

Designer/Art Director

Peter Crone

Photo Editor

Jill MacLeod

Assistant Music Editor

Jim Bouzan

Associate Art Director

Christine Coffey

Assistant to the Publishers

Larissa Carlson

Contributing Writers

Michael Aho, Julie M. Baker,
Eric Chaet, Patricia Dognazzi,
Theo Emery, Renee Freiheit,
Rick Friedman, Emma Momma,
Donna Nicolino, Andrew Schriever,
Dan Zevin

Contributing Artists

Clay Butler, Ted Cormey,
Cultural Jetlag, Laura Lakeway,
Harry Petzold, Ted Rall

Sales - Ann Harrison

Production Facilities

Virtumall, Inc.

Printing

Turley Publications (Palmer, MA)

© Copyright 1995 by As We Are, Inc.

Note: This copyright covers only the form of this publication. The rights to any work contained herein remain with the authors and artists, unless otherwise specified.

Clip art in this issue ©1995 SoftKey International Inc. and ©1996 Corel Gallery

WHERE IT IS

- 2 Who WE Are**
- 4 Letters**
- 8 Shorts**

Cover

- 33 Matthew Sweet: *The Sweetness and The Light***
interview by Buck O'Shea
- 46 Crow and The Gang: MST3K** by Andrew Schriever
- 54 New & Improved: LETTERS TO CLEO**
interview by Buck O'Shea

Features

- 12 "Managing Your Boss"** an excerpt from the book *Entry-Level Life* by Dan Zevin
- 16 Drugs and the Electronic Cold War**
by Simson Garfinkel
- 22 The Domestically Disabled Male**
by Julie M. Baker
- 28 A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Cook: Musings on Marinara** by Jason Pramas
- 31 Disposable Teens (and the Crisis in Social Services)**
by Renee Freiheit and Emma Momma
- 42 Seeing Solomon**
an art review by Jason Pramas

Departments

- 10 The Book Shelf** by Donna Nicolino
- 15 As We Swill** - the beer column by Cap'n Beer
- 36 CD Reviews**
- 39 Poetry Page**
- 40 Activist Archives**
- 52 LABOR: One Hundred Days That Shook The Unions**
by Theo Emery

Columns

- 19 Winter Soldier** by Jason Pramas
- 64 The Hostile Elder** by Rick Friedman

Photo Essays

- 26 Games of Chance** by Jill MacLeod
- 44 Gateway to the Pacific** by Laura Lakeway

Cover Design: Peter Crone; MST3K image, Andrew Schriever; MST3K comments, Trace Beaulieu

AWE HOTLINE: (617) 492-2440

National Distribution: Alternate Route Circulation (800) 451-0827

WHO WE ARE

Michael Aho is a poet. Since graduating from Bates College in 1993, Michael is searching for bliss in Somerville, MA, but will settle for a veggie-burger and a slick haircut.

Julie M. Baker, 30, is a domestically disabled writer who lives in Boston, Ma. with her partner John and their two cats - Basil and Pepper. Her dreams for the future include publishing a novel and learning to stuff a Turkey.

Jim Bouzan is the Assistant Music Editor of *As We Are*. He recently graduated from UMass-Boston with a degree in philosophy. He is 21 and needs both a job and a girlfriend.

Clay Butler is the creator of Sidewalk Bubblegum. Damn, he funny! His address is: P.O. Box 245, Capitola, CA 95010.

Larissa Carlson is Assistant to the Publisher and Copy Editor. "My day job as a horticultural service technician is like living in a Dilbert cartoon. I look forward to my evenings of sanity at AWA where I'm putting our articles on the World Wide Web."

Eric Chaet has done many things, please stand by: Worked in box factory and post office. Once active in the Congress of Racial Equality (C.O.R.E.), taught philosophy and world literature at colleges and universities and math on a Navajo reservation. Has written many stories and poems. Since 1986 has been silkscreening. Consultant: assignments range from industrial and agricultural logistics, to a Lunar astronomical base.

Chris Coffey is the Associate Art Director of *As We Are*. She is a free-lance artist born, raised and residing in Boston, MA. She is in her 20s.

Ted Cormey honed his drawing abilities as a participatory viewer of the many fine episodes of "*Captain Bob*." He can now draw a variety of scenarios, most notably those featuring some sort of shore-based avian. He is a graduate of Ithaca College and is 24.

Peter Crone 24, is the Designer/Art Director of *As We Are*, and the graphic designer for a MA-based auto parts distributor. He is beginning to wonder just how healthy it is to sit in front of a computer through the majority of his waking hours. He is an English and Communications graduate of the University of Massachusetts at Boston. He keeps a residence somewhere south of Boston.

Patricia Dognazzi is a poet living in the Boston-area.

Theo Emery is a freelance writer living in Boston and attempting to make his way in a world rife with misinformation. He is a very old 24.

Rick Friedman has been a successful free-lance journalist since 1983. For the preceding 25 years, he was an award winning journalist, columnist and editor for newspapers and magazines in Chicago, NY City and Boston. He is 64, and is The Hostile Elder.

Simson Garfinkel is the Associate Publisher of *As We Are*. He writes about science and technology from his home in Cambridge, MA. He is 30.

Ann Harrison is a freelance writer living in Somerville, MA.

Cultural Jetlag are Jim Siergey and Tom Roberts. Damn, they funny! They can be reached at: 4135 N. Hermitage, Chicago, IL 60613.

Laura Lakeway is a 29 year old (honest) freelance photographer living in Boston. When not following The Grateful Dead, she manages a custom black and white photo lab and gallery of photography in The Kenmore Square area.

Jill MacLeod is the Womanager of a prominent Boston photo store and the Photo Editor of *As We Are*. She is 29 and not happy about it.

Emma Momma and **Renee Freiheit** are the pseudonyms of two Massachusetts social workers who prefer to remain anonymous.

Donna Nicolino, is the administrative assistant at Curbstone Press, a non profit publishing house. She is also on the board of directors of the Willimantic Food Co-op and is an editorial coordinator for a grassroots economics organizing newsletter. She lives in Willimantic Conn. but grew up in Long Island N.Y. and has lived in Nebraska and CA. She is like 28.

Buck O'Shea is Executive Editor/Arts Editor of *As We Are*. She is currently touring cross country in search of the true identities of celebrity clowns, notably New England's own Willie Whistle, as well as the more notorious bozos in the mid-west. She is 32.

Harry Petzold is Lawrence, MA's preeminent postman/artist/mountain biker. He is a Vietnam-era veteran and a York-Rite Mason. He is 43.

Jason Pramas is the Editor/Publisher of *As We Are*. He is Director of the Boston Local of the National Writers Union/UAW. He founded and ran the *New Liberation News Service* from 1990-93. He is a Gray Panthers National Board Member. He lives in Cambridge, MA, BUT he is from Peabody, MA. He is 28.

Ted Rall is a nationally syndicated cartoonist.

Andrew Schriever is a free-lance digital imaging artist. He is also an English instructor and master's candidate at UMass-Boston. He has a girlfriend in Chicago who he misses sorely. He also plays a pretty mean guitar. He is 24.

Dan Zevin is author of *Entry-Level Life*, and a widely-published freelance journalist. He is around 30.

AS WE ARE

The Editorial Board of *As We Are*, (l-r) Buck O'Shea, Jill MacLeod, Peter Crone and Larissa Carlson, attempt to talk editor Jason "Fearless Leader" Pramas down from his pedestal after the success of issue #3. Missing: Jim Bouzan, Christine Coffey and Simson Garfinkel.



AWA photo by Jill MacLeod and Sean Hassay

ATTACK OF THE 50-FOOT EGO!

**GET *As We Are* ...
Before Things Get Ugly.**



name:
address:
city, state, zip:



8 issues for just \$15



4 issues for \$10

check enclosed

bill me



PO Box 380048
Cambridge, MA 02238

(617) 492-2440

<http://as-we-are.com/awa/>
<http://virtumall.com/newsstand/>

If you have e-mail, you can reach us at:

Letters to AWA: letters@as-we-are.com
Feedback/Comments: editors@as-we-are.com
Subscription Information: subs@as-we-are.com
Advertising Information: ads@as-we-are.com
Business: biz@as-we-are.com
Anything else: info@as-we-are.com
If it just can't wait: edpub@as-we-are.com

Submissions:

Features: features@as-we-are.com
News: news@as-we-are.com
Arts/Music: arts@as-we-are.com
Fiction/Poetry: fiction@as-we-are.com
Tech/Computers: tech@as-we-are.com
Design/Artwork: design@as-we-are.com
Photos: photo@as-we-are.com



READER RESPONSE

Dear As We Are Staff Members:

I was recently exposed to your magazine for the first time, and I think it is the kick in the butt that my generation of cynical, lethargic, hopeless-feeling consumerites needs. Including me. If you ever start a grassroots organization, please count me in – I'd be excited to work with intelligent people of my own generation on rational political projects. It's easy to feel like there is no hope for reasoned answers to today's problems with people like the Lead or Leave organization around, not to mention greedy corporate types controlling the government and ridiculing anyone who isn't just out for themselves. They're sowing so much "stranger fear" in all of us that we don't even look at anyone in the street...

...Anyway, thanks for your mag – it's great and I'm going to tell all my friends about it.

Kyle Partridge
Cambridge, MA

In response to the article "When to Say No to Police Searches" (Vol. 1, No. 3), I agree that not many are aware of their rights. These rights don't always matter, however. Last year I was living in Arizona and was horrified at a case that made it to the Arizona Supreme Court. I can't remember the exact details, but it had to do with a kid protesting officers searching his car without permission and finding pot, (anything from resin to a seed to a pound is a felon); (you only get off if your parents are very rich.) The search was unwarranted and broke the 4th amendment but the poor kid went to jail anyway.

Also, cops hardly ever ask the simple question "Can I search your...", they are taught to twist the phrases into things like. "Is there any reason why you wouldn't want me to search your car?" with both yes and no giving permission. Most people, flustered at the confrontation, unknowingly give permission. So watch out!

Stacy Pettigrew
Troy, New York

Dear Jason,

Much enjoyed your latest issue, particularly the "Lead or Leave" exposé, which actually seemed more of an insightful indictment of the laziness of most journalists. It also points out the vague way in which policies are developed based on fuzzy ideas that are never quite pinned down logically, but somehow labelled as consensus, the push for the balanced budget – which I believe most politicians really know is a dubious goal – the latest example. I actually read most of the magazine, which is unusual for me with any publication.

We are pleased to appear in it and hope you keep it coming.

Sincerely,
Jim Siergey (with Tom Roberts)
Chicago, IL
(Siergey and Roberts are "Cultural Jetlag" – purveyors of fine comics to *As We Are* for over a year.)

Hi!

I saw your article in the latest issue of "As We Are" magazine (Vol. 1, No. 3). It was a pleasure to read a well-balanced article on the aspartame issue! Keep up the good work.

By the way, I have received a number of letters (emails) from people who are addicted to aspartame (not the caffeine in the beverage) and are going through withdrawals trying to get off of it. As a matter of fact I am preparing a list of ideas to help one aspartame addict get off of the stuff.

Once again, thanks for the article.

Best regards,

Mark Gold
Cambridge, MA
[<MGOLD@PURPLE.MIT.EDU>](mailto:MGOLD@PURPLE.MIT.EDU)

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hiya Readers!

Welcome to it.

This issue belongs to that woman of many titles, Buck O'Shea, our Music Editor and new Executive Editor. She has not one, but two cover interviews – with Letters To Cleo and Matthew Sweet. Kay Hanley of Letters breaks some new ground with us, sharing some of her Boston music scene past with fellow scenester, Buck; and reviving a certain much-misunderstood Anglo-Saxon word. Buck has taken to calling Matthew Sweet, "Mattie Sweetie," since she discovered him to be such a nice, thoughtful, "jes plain folks" kinda guy. Rare qualities these days in the music industry.

You'll find a lot of new faces in the magazine. Andrew Schriever throws a big bone to the fans of *Mystery Science Theatre 3000*, the runaway cable TV hit where freak robots in a space station act as a sort of b.s. detector for society by making fun of old "B" Sci-Fi flicks – while they're showing.

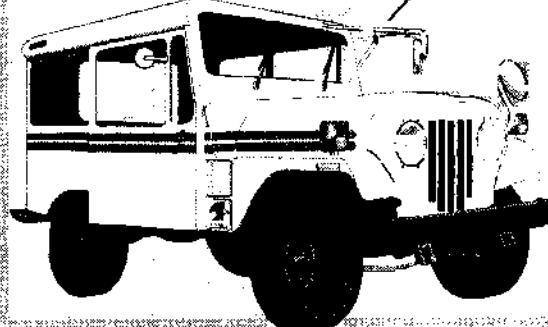
And, oh yes, just in case you think this issue is *As We Are Lite*, we have: two Massachusetts social workers writing under pseudonyms take on the tremendous problems they face trying to help "at-risk" teens through the Department of Social Services' residential programs; some feminists in Florida stir up the muck in the "War To Get Guys To Wear Condoms" with a reprint of a controversial leaflet they passed out recently; The Hostile Elder returns – spewing venom at the far right; and I do my best to honor Gray Panthers founder Maggie Kuhn, who passed away recently.

Plus, there's essays, shorts, poetry, toons, and much, much more. Should be enough to keep you all busy 'til the next one.

Keep those letters coming,

Jason

We Need More Hate Mail!



As is becoming tradition here at *As We Are*, the following is the one and only piece of "hate mail" we've received for our previous issue:

Mr. Pramas,

I heard you speak on a radio station and was very impressed with your concerns for the future generations, and all of our futures. Your magazine does not reflect any of that and I'm disappointed. Certainly the language used in some of the articles is not necessary and I find it most offensive. You can express concerns, ideas, solutions, quite well without being offensive. I do not want your magazine in or near my home and request that you remove my name from your mailing list as well as not pass it to anyone else. Thank you.

Jo McCracken
P.T., WA 98368

Since you do not want us anywhere near your home, I am assuming that you are not now reading my response to your letter of concern. Additionally, since the offending lines, passages etc. were in fact not delineated, it is difficult to give an accurate response. Because of this, and for the benefit of the remainder of our readers, let me relate a short personal story which I think illustrates *As We Are*'s ideas on censorship and related subjects. Since I was a very young tot my fondest memories of mom and dad included a confusing mix of adherence to three sets of values; Catholic - Don't feel what you feel, don't say what you feel, don't act as if you feel. Irish - Be oversensitive, overreact regularly, swear recreationally. Woman - Don't get angry... period. This last value was particularly difficult for me especially after accompanying my father from Sunday services only to die of embarrassment when he greeted an old friend thusly "Jesus Christ, how the hell are ya!" I did not think this appropriate at the time. Now I am grown, as is the rest of this magical staff we call *As We Are*. We print obscenities if a writer's true intention is to be obscene, or funny, ridiculous, sarcastic etc. We do not print materials that are hateful, hurtful or demeaning and, more importantly we do not claim to project our definition of "offensive" toward our reading audience.

Buck O'Shea

Save Mumia Abu-Jamal

Though *As We Are* is not a magazine that jumps onto every political bandwagon that passes us by, this one is too important to ignore.

A fellow journalist, Mumia Abu-Jamal, is slated to be killed by the State of Pennsylvania on August 17, 1995 at 10 p.m. We must all help save him.

As We Are has reviewed the deposition filed recently for the defense team, led by renowned attorney Leonard Weinglass, and has come to the conclusion that Jamal should never have been placed on Death Row. We have also come to agree with the defense and with Jamal's myriad supporters around the world that Jamal deserves a new, fair trial — since his first trial was a complete travesty of justice.

The facts in the case are these: In the early morning of December 9, 1981, Jamal was driving his cab around Philadelphia when he came upon a policeman engaged in savagely beating up his brother and harassing his brother's companions. Jamal left his cab to give aid to his brother. Shortly thereafter, the policeman had been shot dead, and Jamal seriously wounded. Other police, arriving on the scene, charged Jamal with killing the cop.

Jamal had frequently been the target of police harassment, since his years as Minister of Information for the Philadelphia Black Panthers. An award-winning journalist, fearless radio and TV commentator, and former President of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, Jamal was not much loved by Philadelphia's white establishment.

According to the defense deposition, Jamal was denied due process at nearly every turn by Judge Albert Sabo, known locally as a "hanging judge" with a penchant for sending black defendants to Death Row. Sabo has sentenced more men to death (32) than any other sitting judge in the U.S. Only two of these men were white. Sabo was also a

Sorry Dougie.

Doug Coupland is a new man. Five years ago, he launched the plague of idiotic labels for young people, when his book *Generation X* hit the stands. Originally contracted to do a new spin of the "Preppie Handbook" for a new generation, he ended up writing an angst-ridden, utterly pointless fable about upper-middle class kids slumming in the desert with too much time on their hands.

Marketers, waiting in the wings for a name they could call the generation, seized on "Generation X" as their new hot moniker. In the process, Coupland's book sales went through the roof, and he preceded to make a pretty penny as poster boy for upper-middle class angst-ridden youth everywhere.

Last month, he announced in *Details* magazine and the *New York Times* that "Gen X is dead."

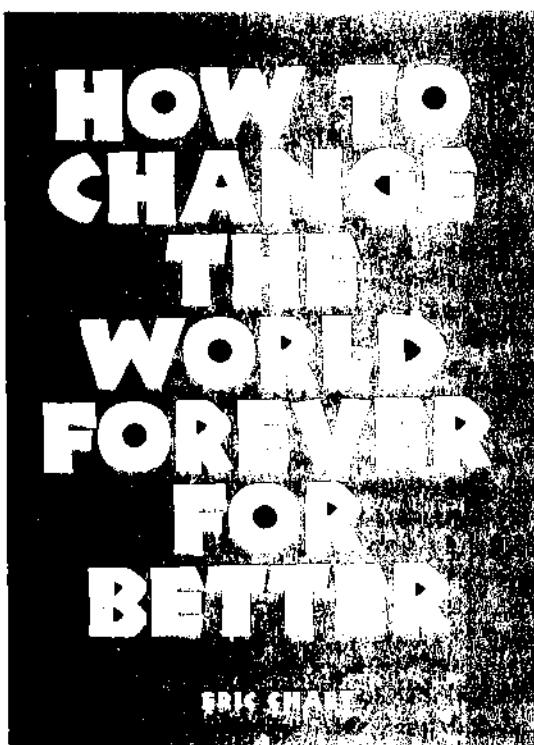
We guess that means that he's wrung every last cent he could get from the term. Ah well, onwards and upwards. Although his subsequent books have sold like wet wallpaper, we feel sure that in another five years, he'll be able to pay for his retirement with a star-studded HBO retrospective called something like "Gen X: The Way It Was. A Very Special Evening With Doug Coupland."

How To Change The World Forever For Better

lays out what an individual can do to transform her/his situation — and transform the labyrinth of injustice and "normal madness." Eric Chaet's self-published 2nd edition is a bold, idiosyncratic,

strong, funny, unfashionable, millenia- and galaxies-ranging, surprising, demanding, rewarding "business plan" for The Big Business.

Paperback, \$10.00



Eric Chaet
2363 School Rd.
Greenleaf, WI. 54126

[Advertisement]

Lead or Leave Dead At Age 3

After *As We Are* Editor Jason Pramas spent almost a year doing the research necessary to publicly draw-and-quarter them, Lead or Leave officially up and died early last May. The blessed event came only a month and a half after Pramas' magazine-swallowing article, "Lead or Leave and the Sellout of My Generation," hit the stands nationally in *As We Are* #3.

No surprises here at *As We Are* Central Command. The group, run by media creations Rob Nelson and Jon Cowan, had been treading on thin ice from their inception with their claims to be "leaders of Gen X" and their banking-industry funded attacks on Social Security. When they upped their membership claims from 30,000 in November of 1993 to over 1,000,000 less than two years later it was

only a matter of time before someone called their bluff.

As We Are is proud to claim bragg-

LOL, Inc. Zombies Jon Cowan and Rob Nelson

ging rights for releasing the most damning and comprehensive article to do just that. And after we went to press with #3, we thought that it would be really great to share our findings with as much of the national press as we could reach, as well as most of the Washington non-profit community.

A little over a month later *US News and World Report* printed a story that they had closed up shop - followed quickly by the *Washington Post*, and *Newsweek*. While these stories were far more forgiving than ours - and while certain reporters saw fit to pick our brains, call Pramas' piece the "definitive work on Lead or Leave," and then not quote him - we couldn't be happier that the Big Media finally turned on their bastard children.

We're even happier with the knowledge that when the remnants of Lead or Leave attempted to take over the youth delegation

at the White House Conference on Aging in early May, they were stopped cold by a combination of: a) the *US News* story, b) 500 copies of Pramas' article distributed free to the press and conference attendees by the National Council of Senior Citizens, and c) the active dislike of Lead or Leave by most of the other youth delegates.

When, zombie-like, the Lead or Leave representative Gretchen Dee tried to speak the first night of the conference, she got booted off the stage. Jenny Craig of the United States Student Association, with her message of intergenerational unity, got a standing ovation. Many attendees were curious how it was that a non-existent group like Lead or Leave should be represented at the convention, when there were so many genuinely grassroots youth organizations that had not been invited. But it all worked out in the end.

Perhaps Pramas' late March keynote address, "Toward an Intergenerational Revolution," to the bi-annual Gray Panthers National Convention, helped set the stage for their White House flameout as well. In the speech, Pramas called for an intergenerational coalition to form and make the destruction of Lead or Leave, and other groups calling for generational warfare, one of their first tasks. Whatever Pramas' effect on the debate, this we can say for sure, Lead or Leave is dead, and *As We Are* helped bring them down.

Still, there was another Lead or Leave "Zombie Sighting" in mid-June in the op-ed pages of the *LA Times*. Rob Nelson was for some reason allowed to have another go at publicly bashing Social Security. In a fit of desperation, he actually went as far as openly and unilaterally threatening an "intergenerational war." Amusingly enough, however, he signed his piece with the title "Chairman of the Board of Lead or Leave, Inc." At least he's been forced to be a little more honest for a change.

A letter of response from Pramas, calling on the *LA Times* to stop running Nelson's opinions as if he represented the entire generation, was not printed.

Readers with other Lead or Leave Zombie Sightings are encouraged to send them here to: AWA, PO Box 380048, Cambridge, MA 02238. Copies of Pramas' "Toward an Intergenerational Revolution" are available for \$2 each at the same address.

former member of the Fraternal Order of Police. As such he was automatically biased, and should never have been allowed to preside at Jamal's trial.

When Jamal's court-appointed attorney tried to remove himself because of his inexperience and let Jamal defend himself, Sabo refused - despite, or perhaps because of, Jamal's effectiveness in doing just that during the brief time he was allowed to do so.

Jamal was denied funds for ballistic tests and forensic tests that might have helped prove his innocence. It has since come to light that the bullets found in the dead police officer and the bullets found in the gun Jamal carried, but had left in his car, did not match. The major corroborating witness the police were able to find was a prostitute who twice before had played witness for the police in exchange for deals allowing her to work the streets with impunity. Other witnesses changed their initial testimony to fit the prosecution's case after the fact. This testimony should have been thrown out of court as inadmissible evidence, but was not.

Other witnesses were never allowed to try to pick Jamal out of a police line-up. No witness except the prostitute said Jamal even had a gun in his hand during the confrontation. Still other witnesses contend that there was a "third man" who appeared out of an alley, shot the cop and Jamal, and escaped scot-free. Jamal has always contended his innocence and insists it was a police frame-up against him based on his previous political activities. He was forced to endure a veritable "kangaroo court" where the prosecution was allowed to impugn him for his political activities and beliefs in totally inappropriate, unprofessional and unconstitutional manner.

When time came for Jamal's sentencing, the attorney the court had forced on him was not given sufficient time to prepare. As a result, no real plea-bargaining occurred, and Jamal went to Death Row for Murder in the 1st Degree.

Despite these facts, and the massive judicial misconduct in his first trial, not only has the State of Pennsylvania refused to give



LOL, Inc. Zombies Jon Cowan and Rob Nelson

him another trial, but also Judge Sabo remains the presiding judge in Jamal's case.

Sabo refuses to "recuse" (remove) himself from the case. Higher courts have refused to hear Jamal's appeal. Jamal, meanwhile, sat on death row for 13 years. Shortly after the release of his book, *Live from Death Row*, last spring, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge saw fit to sign his Death Warrant.

Considering the overwhelming evidence that the Death Penalty is most often given out to the poorest, usually black, members of society, who lack the means for a good defense, we cannot in good conscience support the Death Penalty for any offense. Not when the current "justice system" seems to work primarily for the rich and powerful, in the interests of the rich and powerful.

In the Jamal case, it is quite possible that he is innocent, and the victim of a massive police frame-up that happened to catch one of their own in the crossfire. The jury is still out on that question because there never was any real jury — only a predominantly white jury, illegally hand-picked by Judge Sabo, who did not have all the facts of the case at their disposal when they were asked to come to verdict. Only one juror was black. Some of the white jurors are now known to have conspired amongst themselves to bring down a guilty verdict 13 years ago, in violation of the statutes governing fair jury conduct.

As We Are, therefore, demands in the strongest possible terms that the State of Pennsylvania stay the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, our brother journalist, and give him the fair retrial his case deserves. Justice demands nothing less. If Jamal is executed this will mark the first time that a Death Row prisoner in Pennsylvania has been denied a stay. Given that the defense team has offered up over 500 pages of new testimony and evidence since June 2, 1995, when Jamal's Death Warrant was signed — it is unthinkable that the Court would not stay the execution long enough to properly review this material. Yet the unthinkable is about to happen. As we go to press, Judge Sabo still has not ruled on Jamal's stay. And the

Social Security Tax Loophole Helps Rich Get Richer

As We Are has spent a great number of pages defending Social Security as beneficial for young and old. But there is still much room for improvement. The May 1995 newsletter of the Solidarity Organizing Committee, a New York based labor organizing group brought up a good point.

There is a large loophole for the rich built into the current Social Security tax system. Everyone pays 7.65% of their wages into Social Security at the present time. Sounds fair enough right? But there is a wage cap on that percentage, set at an income of \$61,200/year. In other words, the more money you make, the less you actually have to pay into the system.

If this cap was eliminated, and the Social Security Administration could collect the full tax from everyone, including the equal payments all employers pay into the system, an extra \$100 billion a year would be brought in, according to Arnold Olenick, a Cambridge, MA financial and management consultant (in a Feb. 8 letter to the *New York Times*).

The SOC says that would be enough to keep Social Security solvent for the foreseeable future. Or it could theoretically be applied to reversing every proposed cut to Social Security that the Republican-dominated congress is proposing at the present time.

Let's do it.

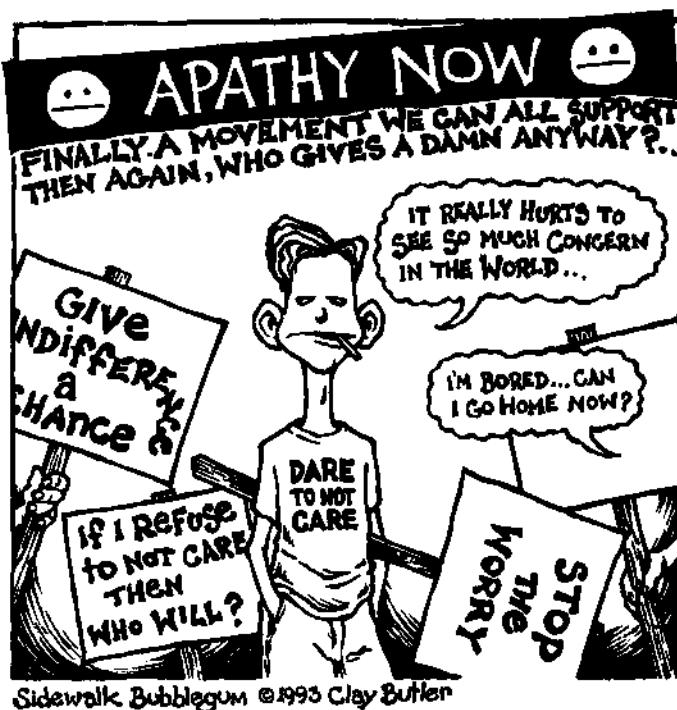
America's Growth Industry

From the July/August 1995 *Dollars and Sense* magazine:

"A new employment trend isn't showing up in official figures: companies are looking behind prison bars for cheap labor. Since 1980, the number of working prisoners has increased 360%. In 1994, nearly 70,000 prisoners were working in industries from hi-tech to telemarketing to motel service to retail stores."

"In a stunning example of this trend as well as the problem of privatization, Lockhart Technologies of Texas closed its Austin branch, fired 150 workers, and moved its operations to a prison firm run by a private security firm called Wackenhut, according to the Labor Research Association. Lockhart pays the prison the minimum wage for each worker, but the workers keep only 20% of their wages and receive neither workers compensation nor benefits."

Dollars and Sense "what's left in economics" is available by mail for \$18.95/year for 6 issues. Write to D&S, One Summer Street, Somerville, MA 02143-9969.





Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1995 Clay Butter

The Underground Press Conference

The 2nd Annual Underground Press Conference is coming up! And *As We Are* will be there!

If you're in Chicago on the weekend of August 18-20, head over to DePaul University where Mary Kuntz Press is hosting this second national "gathering of the zines" in the Windy City.

There will be a dozen panels on how-to topics, political topics and business-oriented topics all relating to the wild wonderful world of little magazines and the people that do them. Plus, this year's "Gallery of Zines" will be opening at DePaul's Library where it will remain on display until February 1996. Speeches, performances, off-site "Way-Underground" panels, and art installations will lead up to the Saturday Night Underground Ball (SNUB). There acts of unspeakable weirdness are scheduled including the "Anti-Gallery of Zines" show, where copies of all the Gallery of Zine zines will be available for thumbing through and stealing.

Jason Pramas will be doing the panel "The Pot Calling The Kettle Black" - where participants including R. Seth Friedman of *Factsheet Five*, and a cast of dozens will slug it out over that nagging question of the zine scene, "What is Selling Out?"

As We Are staff members are also planning a "Way-Underground" appearance at Barbara's Bookstore on the evening of August 18th (at the Broadway store), but that's still up in the air; so call Barbara's at (312)477-0411 for up-to-date info on that score.

For registration information contact: Mary Kuntz Press, PO Box 476617, Chicago, IL 60647-6617; (312)486-0685; fax (312)486-9001; e-mail: MKuntz@aol.com. \$25 entrance fee (\$10 hardship fee); \$35 for a pass and a quarter display table, \$75 for two passes and a half display table, \$100 for two passes and a full table. Limited dorm space available at DePaul for \$29 per person per night. Double rooms only.

Obituary

Ace, beloved dog of Jon Leavitt, passed away on July 21, 1995. She was 14. Her grave-stone, outside her Lawrence, MA residence of some years, reads simply "Woof." She has posthumously been named "Official Dog of *As We Are* magazine." She will be missed.

Wedding Announcement

Charles Provenzano, co-founder of *As We Are* magazine, was married to Cheryl Cronin on July 22, 1995 at a lovely outdoor ceremony in Gloucester, MA. The couple, both now of Cambridge, MA, are keeping their own names, but are definitely "honeybunnies" in the truest sense of the term. Provenzano, a computer programmer, and Cronin, a university administrator, are honeymooning in Aruba as we go to press, and thus cannot stop this announcement from being printed. Did we mention that they're "honeybunnies...?"

clock ticks away.

It is clear to us that only grassroots action will save Jamal at this point. Fortunately, there have been numerous actions around the country and world in his defense, centering around activity outside the Philadelphia courtroom where Judge Sabo had continued to stymie defense attempts to save Jamal's life. Large demonstrations in San Francisco and Minneapolis have been met with savage police brutality and mass arrests. But this escalating grassroots campaign has borne fruit. The consuls of various foreign governments have condemned Jamal's death sentence. The 35,000-member National Black Police Association recently issued a statement in his support. The *Philadelphia Inquirer*, traditionally an enemy of Jamal, has called for his stay. And even Penn. Sen. Arlen Specter, has begun to express public doubts about the necessity of Jamal's execution.

There is hope yet. Readers who would like to help save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal can do the following:

- Call Judge Albert Sabo's office and demand that he "recuse" himself immediately at: (215)686-3770, or fax, (215)563-1623.
- Call Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge to demand a stay of execution and a new trial at: (717)787-2500, or fax, (717)783-3369.
- Find out what you can do to help in your area. Contact International Concerned Friends and Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal, PO Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143; (215)476-8812.



The Book Shelf

The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era (Jeremy Rifkin, Tancher/Putnam, 350 pp. \$24.95, Hardcover).

A grim and violent future rife with chronic unemployment and crime, or a cooperative utopia with a 20-hour workweek and lots of free time for community involvement and creative interests: these are the two scenarios that Jeremy Rifkin sets forth as possibilities for America's future in *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-market Era*.

Rifkin's main thesis is that automation and computerization of the workplace is obliterating jobs at an unprecedented level and we will need to rethink our notions about work, community and government if we are to avoid an economic disaster. He presents an amazing parade of statistics to illustrate his points with clarity: For example, he states that in the 1950s, average unemployment was 4.5 percent, and 3 percent unemployment was considered full employment; in the 1990s, unemployment has averaged 6.6 percent, and Wall Street analysts are arguing that it should not dip below 6 percent, lest we risk inflation. In the 1980s the gap between the richest and the poorest Americans began to widen for the first time in two decades: by the end of the decade, the richest 5% owned 30.3% of the household net worth, an increase of 4.1% since 1983. In other words, the top 5% of wage earners increased their annual income by more than \$20,000 in the 80s, while the poorest saw theirs decrease by about \$500. He also has some less-than-cheering news on the prospects of college graduates: "More than 35 percent of recent college graduates have been forced to take jobs that don't require a college degree, up from 15 percent just five years ago...the job market for college graduates is now the poorest since World War II." And the trend shows no signs of abating.

But all is not lost. Corporate CEOs, for example, are doing quite well. Writes Rifkin, "In 1953 executive," compensation was the equivalent of 22 percent of corporate profit. By 1987 it was 61 percent...Had the nation's manufacturing workers shared in the productivity gains and profits to the same extent as management, the average factory laborer today would be earning more than \$81,000 a year."

Occasionally, Rifkin seems to be stretching a bit to paint one of his possibilities for the future. Stressing the spirit of volunteerism in America, he cites a 1992 Gallup survey which shows the level of volunteerism to be surprisingly high"...in 1991...51 percent of the population, gave their time to various causes and organizations. The average volunteer

gave 4.2 hours of his or her time per week." Although I have no data to prove this statistic wrong, it is a number of which I am skeptical; I certainly can't say that half of all the people I know volunteer about 4 hours per week. He also glosses over United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as an example of a benign government organization which "supports local NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) projects and initiatives in the third world.", which instead of one which bullies third world governments into growing agriculture for export, to the detriment of their own people and economy.

To help illustrate the negative impact of computers on employment, he asserts that even the art of book writing is falling victim to computerization, as some computers are now capable of churning out intelligible, if rather unimaginative tracts of prose and that computerized robots are now being used by doctors to assist in complex human surgery such as hip replacement, encroaching on those in the medical profession. However, judging by the computer writing sample Rifkin uses, I wouldn't tell Toni Morrison to seek other means of employment anytime soon. Nor would I encourage surgeons to do so; in the example that Rifkin uses, the doctor's presence and skills are required during the operation, while the "Robodoc" assists in imaging the bone structure and drilling.

Aside from these examples, the book seems to be on solid footing. Particularly interesting is the chapter on "Technology and the African-American Experience". Here, Rifkin briefly recounts the economic history of blacks in the United States, from slavery to the sharecropping system; to displacement by mechanical cotton pickers in the 40s and subsequent migration to the industrial cities of the north. There, automation was just beginning to replace workers, and many companies were moving out to suburban areas, partly to accommodate employees who were fleeing the cities, and also to distance themselves as much as possible from the cities' unionized centers. As a result, many blacks were left stranded in urban areas, having lost the manufacturing jobs that had moved to the suburbs, but lacking the money to move there themselves. Many found work in the public sector, steadily increasing their numbers there until by 1970: "The government employed 57 percent of all black male college graduates and 72 percent of all female college graduates." Unfortunately, in this age of government streamlining, many are likely to lose their jobs there, as well.

Also intriguing is the section on just how Americans came to be so obsessed with consumption. Rifkin explains how, in the 1920's, traditionally frugal Americans are encouraged to spend more and more on luxury items, introducing the concept of buying on credit to the American public. "The Key to economic prosperity," Rifkin quotes Charles Kettering of General Motors as saying, "is the organized creation of dissatisfaction." The ploy worked so well that by the time of the stock market crash of 1929, "60 percent of the radios, automobiles, and furniture sold in the United States were purchased on installment credit."

The first half of the book is largely dedicated to showing the advances made in technology since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, concentrating on the past several decades. He describes, often in gee-whiz tones, the amazing gains in efficiency and profits achieved by instituting such

methods as "lean production": (combining new management techniques and machinery to produce more output with fewer resources and less labor) in the auto industry and using computers to speed office procedures and flatten the traditional hierarchy. However, if Rifkin makes automation and computerization sound good in the first half of the book, the second section provides more than enough disturbing information and predictions to sober the reader.

Here, Rifkin paints two possible scenarios for a future America. One he presents as more likely, given the current economy, in it, the few high-tech jobs created aren't nearly enough to account for the tremendous losses incurred by automation. A tiny few at the top rake in tremendous amounts of money, while the vast majority struggle along, working several part-time jobs at poverty-level wages, and reap little or no benefits. Blacks, Latinos and children are the hardest hit. Hunger, crime and homelessness are rampant, as are the health problems that are caused by them. Those at the top live virtually in another world from the vast majority at the bottom. Rifkin quotes Labor Secretary Robert Reich, sounding amazingly Chomskyesque. "Distinguished from the rest of the population by their global linkages, good schools, comfortable life-styles, excellent health care, and abundance of security guards, (the elite) will complete their secession from the union. The townships and urban enclaves where they reside, and the symbolic-analytical zones where they work, will bear no resemblance to the rest of America."

One of Rifkin's solutions to the impending economic disaster is to drastically shorten the work week and raise wages to compensate. He points out the historical roots of this idea by describing the "share the work" movement of the 1930's: spurred by rising unemployment, many labor groups banded together to push for a decrease in the work week, so that more could be employed, and very nearly won a national 30-hour week. Certain companies, such as Kellogg's, actually did experiment with a shortened work week at that time, with considerable success. To further illustrate his point, he notes that great advances in technology have always preceded a drop in

work hours; most recently from 60 hours per week to 40 with the transition from steam technologies to oil and electric technologies in the early 20th century. However, despite the advent of the computer revolution, this has not happened. Instead, many have been displaced by the new technology, and those who are working are doing so for longer hours (totaling as much as one month per year).

Once the workweek is shortened, he argues, the increased free time will translate into greater community involvement and less stress. The "third sector" (or the "volunteer and independent sector"), which is currently in a state of growth, will be infused with both fresh volunteers and government money, which will allow nonprofit organizations to hire the unemployed. As the government cuts back its services, writes Rifkin, "Community-based organizations will increasingly act as arbiters and ombudsmen with the larger forces of the marketplace and government, serving as the primary advocates and agents for social and political reform."

In order to achieve this, Rifkin advocates a "shadow wage"; a tax deduction for every hour of volunteer time given to legally certified tax-exempt organizations, to encourage volunteerism. Deductions could be prioritized, he suggests, with larger deductions going to volunteer efforts that are high on the government agenda. The government should also award grants to nonprofit organizations for the recruiting and training of the poor, and provide a social wage as an alternative to welfare payments. This would not only help the recipients but also the communities in which they will work, he argues.

Aside from the question of whether it is wise to give the government that much financial control over the non-profit sector, the problem is selling the government and the corporate CEO's on this idea. Although a few companies like Hewlett-Packard and Digital Equipment have successfully experimented with the idea of the shortened work week, most in the business community remain steadfastly opposed. Rifkin mentions that a recent survey of 300 business leaders soliciting their support for a shorter work week did not receive a single positive response. One CEO even responded, "My view of the

world, our country and our country's needs is dramatically opposed to yours. I cannot imagine a shorter work week. I can imagine a longer one...if America is to be competitive in the first half of the next century." It would seem unlikely that the federal government would take the lead and do anything to re-empower the working class at the cost of corporate profits.

As a solution to this dilemma, Rifkin unfortunately focuses much less on grassroots organizing initiatives than on the activities of a few highly placed individuals and NGO's who are active on this issue. Certainly, the efforts of people like Nobel Laureate economist Wassily Leontief and Congressman John Conyers, chair of the Government Operations Committee, are needed and appreciated, but it hardly needs to be said that an action so drastic as instituting a 30-hour work week (let alone a 20-hour week) will require monumental public pressure. Rifkin also suggests (rather naively) that the way U.S. businesses could avoid being at a global disadvantage by decreasing the workweek and increasing wages is to negotiate similar agreements multilaterally with other nations. However, the prospect of the U.S. and for example, Mexican government and business leaders teaming up to shorten the workweek and increase wages on both sides of the border, is fantastic at best. These are the same people who still insist that the North American Free Trade Agreement, which was designed to benefit large corporations at the expense of labor and the environment, is beneficial to both Mexican and American workers.

Still, the issues that Rifkin raises are urgent ones, and need to be addressed. The book is valuable in that by sheer force of statistics it makes it possible to believe that there isn't a problem, or that if there is, the "free market" will solve it. His alternatives are intriguing, and even if one feels that some of them are not quite practical, they are certainly worth exploring. Averting an economic and human crisis such as Rifkin describes will require as many different ideas and opinions and as much effort as can be mustered. 

- *Donna Nicolino*

MANAGING YOUR BOSS

The most important lesson any Working [Entry-Level] Lifer can learn from a supervisor is how not to supervise. This lesson is easily reinforced through "discussion sections" or "lab with trustworthy cubemates. When your boss is out, assemble in the conference room, order a pizza, and tear your supervisor to shreds the way each of you normally does in the privacy of your own home. Bring the following profiles to your next lab session for a lively interaction:

The Control Freak

Professional Profile: These supervisors are easily identified by three traits:

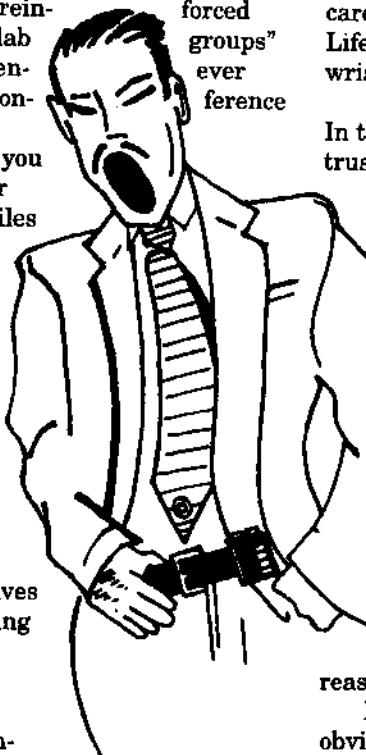
1. They do not let you do anything.
2. Anything they do let you do, they make you do again.
3. Then they do it "correctly."

Control Freaks cannot stop themselves from redecorating your cube, resetting your margins, and rethinking your thoughts ("are you sure you want to reduce that page by forty percent instead of thirty-nine and seventeen-thousandths percent?") You'll know they are working to potential once they achieve a complete "Control Freakout". This entails plastering every piece of office machinery (1) with the following sign: ABSOLUTELY NO ONE BUT ME IS AUTHORIZED TO TOUCH THIS PIECE OF OFFICE MACHINERY.C.F.

Management Technique: To properly manage the Control Freak, you must understand his or her philosophy of work delegation: "If you want the job done right, do it yourself." It is only through hysterical pleading that the Freaks relinquish any responsibility, such as allowing you to make them a 1:27 lunch reservation at the second booth in the back room of Chez Snooté -- which they will change as soon as you hang up.

To motivate these managers, try writing them a standard "suicide memo" and they may even permit you to do something related to your job. Your new duties will always be presented as very important responsibilities:

Freak: I've been thinking. It's high time someone really demonstrated leadership skills and started pulling apart all the Jumbo Gem paper clips I've seen clumped together around here. Think you're ready for the challenge?
Lifer: I'll certainly give it my best



shot, C.F.

Freak: There's a lot riding on this project, as far as your career goes. It's a very important responsibility.

Lifer: I'll get right on it as soon as you uncuff me from your wrist, C.F.

In time, Control Freaks may be groomed into managers who trust you with interesting, stimulating projects. And in time, you are going to frolic through the forest with Casper the Friendly Ghost.

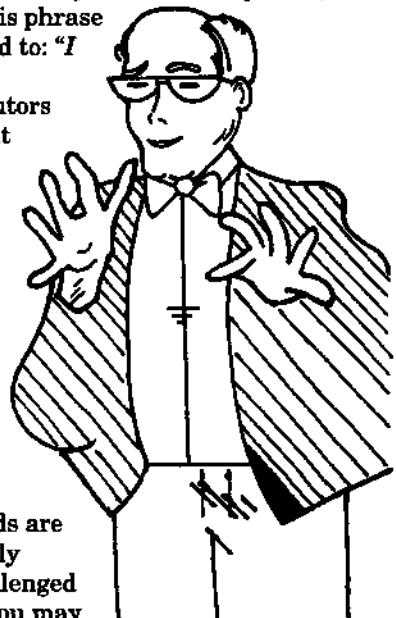
The Tutor

Professional Profile: The Tutors think you are retarded. That is why they hired you. They long to be your mentor; your friend; your role model. They remember what it was like when *they* were struggling Entry-Level Lifers. If they were normal managers, they would have blocked this experience out of their memories long ago.

In their friendly, condescending way, Tutors feel the need to teach you everything about your job (2). Each lesson is preceded by the word "now," as in: "Now. Here is how we staple," or: "Now. It is time for us to learn to tie a double knot." Unwilling just to teach you what to do, they must also teach you *why*. "Now," they say. "The reason why we staple is so that things stick together."

Many Tutors eventually assume a parental role, an obvious mistake. Extending their tutelage from the professional (stapling) to the personal (spermicide), they offer advice on the most embarrassing facets of your private life. These lessons are preceded by the phrase, "If you ever want to talk..." This phrase translates in the Real World to: "I want to talk."

More than anything, Tutors want to be your buddy. That is why they'll stop by your cube each Friday at 4:59, generously share more of their work with you, and cheerfully say: "Don't stay too late, it's Friday!" Then they'll go home.



Management Technique: Managing the Tutor can be rewarding if you take the time to absorb his or her wisdom. Once thirty seconds are up, continue acting mentally challenged or you may lose your job. Follow this simple rule:

BY DAN ZEVIN

From Entry-Level Life by Dan Zevin. Copyright © 1994 by Dan Zevin. Reprinted by permission of Bantam Books, a division of Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

When the Tutor starts with "Now," you respond with "Oh!"

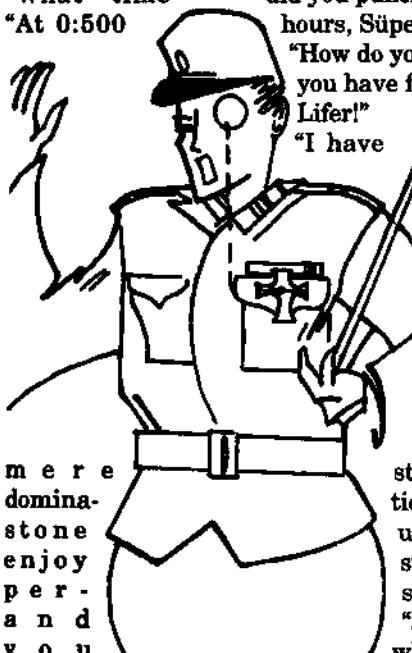
For example: "Oh! I did not realize that these staples came attached in long rows," or: "Oh! I did not realize that babies were not delivered by storks."

As long as you pretend the Tutors know more than you, they will remain loyal, productive managers. But use this technique with discretion. In the Real working World, promotions are given out to the *mildly* – not the *severely* – retarded.

Der Süpervisor

Professional Profile: They goosestep down the hall each morning at 8:00 hours. As the click of their heels grows louder, sweat begins soaking your desk blotter. They arrive at your cube to deploy the day's work orders. As always, these are both arbitrary and contradictory:

"What time did you punch in today, Lifer?"
"At 0:500"



mere
domina-
stone
enjoy
per-
a n d
y o u
compu-
ters and fire you several times a day. But first, they march you out to the water cooler so your colleagues won't miss anything.

When Der Süpisors are not tapping phone conversations, counting pens in the supply closet, or clocking your lunch break, they are placing perverted classified ads of this sort: *Dom. Slvdrvr. sks. Submisu Masocst 4 hot humiliation.* These ads are placed in the Help Wanted section, not the Personals.

Management Technique: To improve your working relationship with Der Süpisors, take the GREs immediately. Then legally change your name and city of residence.

The Bionic Boomer

Professional Profile: These megalomanagers have everything: condos in superior neighborhoods, kids in superior play groups, marriages in superior court. How do they "do it all" while you barely have the strength to remove the plastic film from your dinner tray each night? By farming out their private lives to freelance help and concentrating on some-

thing far more lucrative: their careers. When they combine this with the ulcer medication, psychoanalysis, and cocaine addiction, these bosses become bionic.

Being bionic, they are also creatures of artificial intelligence (3). Instead of experience, they are programmed with highly irrelevant data received in MBA management training programs. This technology allows them to catapult to the top without working up from the bottom, the way human employees do. Equipped with no idea how things get done in a real office, they practice a "virtual reality" style of management that assumes you, too, are a machine:

BOOMER (without irony): Do you have a couple minutes?
YOU: Are you kidding?

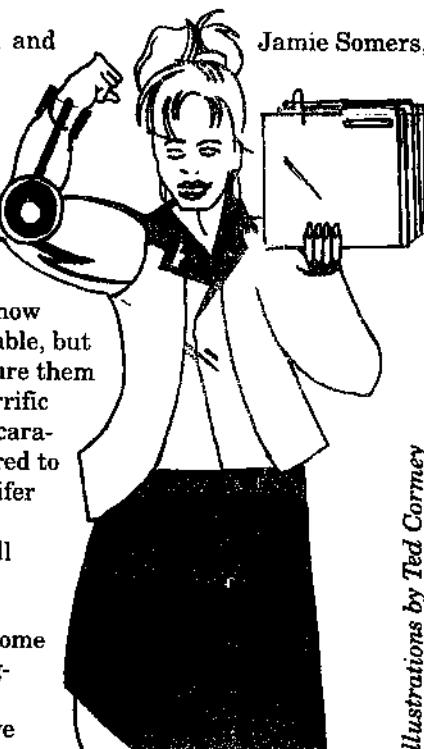
BOOMER: No, I am not. I need you to make mailing labels for the general population of the continental United States. How long do you think it will take? Ten minutes?

As supervisors, the Boomers' greatest strength is a snappy style of dress. Females go in for the Sexy Librarian look – prim without being proper – while male counterparts opt for Armani power suits and ambitious attempts at Steven Segal-style ponytails. Thus disguised, they engage in daily robotics as if everything is under control.

Management Technique: Getting the most from bionic bosses is as simple as understanding they are one step away from a short circuit at all times. This is especially true since they quit smoking and "went on the patch." Remember, Boomers appear superhuman on the surface, but their lives have spun completely out of control. The observant Lifer detects the nastily chewed fingernails; the premature wrinkles; the deep sobbing sounds.

Like Steve Austin and before them, these bionic individuals live in fear that someone will discover they are only a simulation. To avoid tripping a wire, manage them in a *completely non-threatening manner*. Show them that you are capable, but not *too* capable. Reassure them that they're doing a terrific job at work and the Nicaraguan nanny they've hired to raise darling little Lucifer and Jezebel is doing a terrific job at home. Tell them you've noticed an improvement in their Chronic Fatigue Syndrome since they started chugging that hazelnut-Mylanta espresso you've been serving them each day. Above all, do not remind them that the 80's are over.

- (1) except the hidden camera above your desk
(2) usually incorrectly
(3) and tans



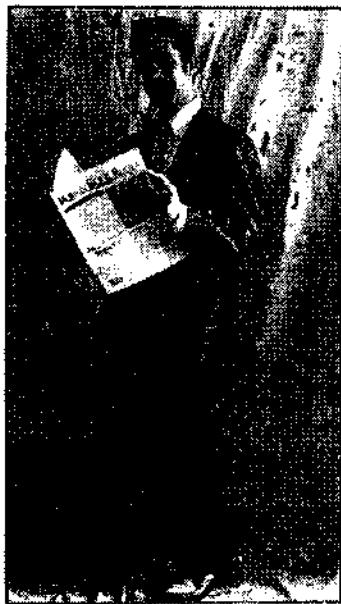
Illustrations by Ted Cormey

BOSTON BOOK REVIEW

The Best of Both Worlds



The Apollonian



The Bostonian



The Dionysian

The thinking person's book review.

The aim of the *Boston Book Review* is to seek out and promote the highest achievements in contemporary writing. Readers can expect to find in the pages of the *Boston Book Review*, the smartest writers on the most important books.

The *Boston Book Review* is available in over 500 bookstores and newsstands in the United States and Canada. Look for the BBR on the World Wide Web at <http://www.bookwire.com/bbr/bbr-home.html>.

Subscribe to the *Boston Book Review*. Discover the well-written.



THE BOSTON BOOK REVIEW

Make checks/money orders payable to
THE BOSTON BOOK REVIEW
30 Brattle Street, 4th floor
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 497-0344

SUBSCRIPTIONS

1 yr. (10 issues) \$20.00

Canada and International add \$16.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

a w a

[Editor's Note: As We Are does not recommend that untrained amateur beer-tasters, under-age youth, and people from alcoholic families try this at home. Please kids, leave swilling to the professionals here at As We Are. Parents! If you discover your kids attempting extracurricular swilling, please, give them a strong reprimand, confiscate the remainder of the offending beverages, and send them here to: As We Are, PO Box 380048, Cambridge, MA 02238.]

For a long time, we here at As We Are have wanted our very own Beer Column. Unfortunately, we haven't been able to find anyone who's knowledgeable enough to write it for us. The logical solution? We decided to throw a beer bash featuring Boston's finest (mostly) brews, quaff them in mass quantities, and rate them on our patented 5-point scale - which we call "The Martin Scale," after "Martin" - the cute little angel-with-the-grunge-hat mascot that graces many of our pages.

Our rating system is based on the premise (well, the editor's premise) that Sam Adams Lager is probably the most consistently awesome beer that will ever be released in a bottle.

The scale works as follows:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1 Martin = | Tastes like Zima [Warm Spit] |
| 2 Martins = | Tastes like Red Dog [Cold Spit] |
| 3 Martins = | Tastes like Bud [Yellow Water] |
| 4 Martins = | Tastes like Molson's [Yellow Water With A Bit Of Kick] |
| 5 Martins = | Tastes as good as Sam Adams Lager |



Probably the main problem with our...er... "rating system," is that the more our swillers swilled, the more trashed they got. So the comments on the later beers get a bit...well...bizarre. The participants' names have been omitted to protect the guilty.

The Comments (All Boston Accents Guaranteed Authentic)

Beer #1 (Ipswich Ale) [2.75 Martins]

"Aftertaste bitter. It makes me want to cry."

"Makes me feel like Faye Dunaway in 'Barfly.'"

"It kind of gives me that warm tingly feeling on the roof of my mouth."

"It's piquant."

"Ipswich tastes like beer."

THE WINNAH

Beer #2 (Commonwealth Breweries' Boston Burton) [4.25 Martins]

"Bitter. It's brown. I like it. I brought my ibuprofen."

"Brown fuzz. I could drink this all day. We're talkin' serious yeast infection here."

"Need a bit more punch. Not the fruity kind."

"Batch 27 is o-tay!"

"Good beer. Very good beer."

Beer #3 (Haffenreffer a.k.a. Heffen-reffah a.k.a. The Green Death) [2.625 Martins]

"It's sweet. Not bitter. It's not offensive, you'd hardly know its there. Could drink with limon y sal."

"Reminds me of the technicolor yawn."

"I've had better cough syrup."

"She's soaking in it! Beer of my youth. Or was it beer of someone else's youth..."

"I wouldn't drink this when I was 18 and I won't start now."

Beer #4 (Sam Adams' Scotch Ale) [3.25 Martins]

"Peat smoked. Didn't druids used to dump their sacrificial victims in the peat bogs. We could be drinking the dead. Its malt slightly less bitter than peanut skins."

"Whiff factor odoriferously molasses. I could eat this with a polish sausage, pepper and onion."

"I can taste the alcohol too much."

"Wicked pissah. It's weeid."

"Feels like plaid wool being dragged across your tongue."

Beer #5 (Harpoon's India Pale Ale) [4 Martins]

"Smells like molasses, but it isn't sweet."

"Kinda bitter. This stuff could turn Mary Tyler Moore into a cheap slut."

"I dig the heaviosity in that brew, man!"

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

"Harpoon tastes like soap."

"Give me beer... or give me death!" — Al Bundy

DRUGS AND THE ELECTRONIC COLD WAR

Last year, federal and state courts authorized law enforcement agents to conduct 1,154 wiretaps. A whopping 76 percent of the intercepts were the result of ongoing drug investigations.

U.S. law recognizes wiretaps as one of the most intrusive forms of investigation available to law enforcement agents. That's why the 1968 Safe Streets and Omnibus Crime Control Act — the law that created Congressionally-sanctioned wiretaps — requires law enforcement officials to first exhaust all other forms of investigation before applying for a warrant to tap somebody's phone.

Lately, law enforcement officials have been turning to that tool of last resort more and more often. Janet Reno's FBI has conducted twice as many wiretaps as did the FBI under Watergate attorney general John Mitchell. And while the number of annually authorized wiretaps took a dip in the late 1980s, wiretapping is now at an all-time high, according to the annual "Wiretap Report" prepared by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

To understand why cops are so hot on listening to the private conversations of its citizens, you need to understand something about the nature of crime and the nature of drugs.

Talk to any officer, and you'll learn something fundamental about the typical criminal: crooks are, for the most part, stupid. The criminal mastermind depicted so often in popular culture — like James Bond's nemesis Dr. No, or Batman's Joker — simply does not exist. And, since there are enough opportunities for the bright, well-educated people in society to make money, it is beyond the scope of good reason that such individuals would turn to a life of petty crime.

Crime within the realm of drugs, (or more specifically, the prohibition on drugs), changes the equation significantly. As it did with alcohol in the 20s, prohibition

greatly increases the payoff that intelligent people can find in a life of crime. Being a bank robber might pay as well as being a lawyer, but

BY

being a drug dealer in the 1990s pays as well as being a stock broker did in the 1980s.

The fact that the so-called "crime" of distributing drugs is morally ambiguous compared to other high-paying crimes, like extortion or kidnapping adds to the complexity of the equation. Drug dealing is largely a victimless crime — as long as the drugs are good and the user doesn't have to steal to support the habit. Even when you consider the toll on the user, the overall cost to society of the drugs like heroin or cocaine are almost insignificant compared to the costs of the highly addictive and legal drugs such as nicotine or alcohol. Simply put, illegal drugs are not the cause of society's problems, and the people selling them know this.

Thus, whereas intelligent Americans might lack the economic incentive or have a moral barrier to engaging in many crimes, fewer barriers exist to prevent them from entering the underground drug trade.

To see how this leads to increased wiretaps, one needs to realize that most crimes in this country go unsolved. Nevertheless, many, if not most, criminals eventually get caught.



SIMSON GARFINKEL

That's because people who live by crime need to commit crime after crime in order to sustain their income. Sure, you might make \$3,000 tax-free by robbing a bank, but if you want to pay your rent, eat, and buy gas for the getaway car, you'll need to be knocking off at least one bank a month. All of those robberies add up. It is this repetition that is the key to catching your typical crook: eventually the crook makes a mistake.

(That repetition is also the reason why there were only 1,154 reported wiretaps last year. According to legal insiders, the real incidence of wiretaps is probably much higher—perhaps as many as 10 illegal wiretaps for every tap that's been authorized by a magistrate. The illegal taps are conducted unofficially, part of the "old boy" network that exists between telephone company officials and law enforcement agents. The information gained from illegal wiretaps can't be used for a conviction, but it can be attributed to paid "informants" and used to convince a magistrate of the need for a court-sanctioned wiretap. The information can also be used for extra-legal activities, such as intimidation or blackmail.) [see sidebar]

The smarter the felon, or the higher their placement in a criminal organization, the less likely they are to make a mistake. Take your average felon running a multi-million dollar drug importing and money laundering business, and you've got a smart cookie indeed—certainly someone who is smart enough to keep his activities well-hidden. The only way to get the evidence to convict these people, law enforcement people say, is through electronic surveillance.

And therein lies the problem. Law enforcement wants to use wiretaps to catch smart criminals—the criminals for whom there is no other effective way to catch them. And yet, these are the very same criminals who have the greatest ability and incentive to use technology to protect their communications.

This is a recipe for a technological arms race between crooks and law enforcement. And it's an arms race that has been resulting in a loss of civil liberties for all Americans.

Take the case of cellular telephone fraud. According to some estimates, there is more than a billion dollars worth of cell phone fraud each year in the United States—much of it in New York City and Los Angeles, where cloned cellular phones let mobsters charge their calls to their unsuspecting victims. Organized crime has spent millions of dollars to develop the technology to rapidly clone cellular phones. Why? Because cloned phones provide anonymous, untraceable communications. According to at least one source, most of New York's crime bosses would be happy to legally purchase anonymous phone service from the phone company. Unfortunately, the cell phone firms are legally prohibited from offering such anonymous service. And hence, the prevalence of cell phone fraud.

Last year, the Clinton administration convinced Congress to pass the Communications to Law Enforcement Assistance Act. The law legally prohibits telephone companies and other communications providers from providing communications service that cannot be wiretapped. Simply put, it turns the nation's telephone system into a surveillance network. Although that new technology will be good enough to trap most petty crooks, it will be next to useless against the genius criminals that the FBI is out to get—they will be smart enough to encrypt their communications. And

so the FBI is trying to figure out how to outlaw the use of strong cryptography that can't be wiretapped.

In the end, such attempts won't stop the really smart crooks from protecting their communications. But they will subject law-abiding Americans to ever-increasing government surveillance. And that capacity for surveillance is likely to be used against many groups beyond the drug dealers for whom it will be built. 

WIRETAPPING, AMERICAN STYLE

Politics plays a double role in wiretapping. The first is a broad ethical problem: "To tap or not to tap?" Our society has struggled with this question ever since the invention of the telegraph.

The first widely known wiretappings occurred during the Civil War when both Federal and Confederate troops intercepted electronic messages by setting up rudimentary taps on enemy telegraph lines. After the Civil War, some law enforcement officials continued to use wiretaps as a means of investigating suspected criminal activity, but there was a catch: there were no laws addressing wiretapping. Some states passed their own wiretap statutes; others did not. Some states allowed wiretapping, others did not. Complicating matters still further was the fact that telephone and telegraph wires crossed state lines. It became increasingly difficult to determine which state's laws had jurisdiction over an interstate cable.

The Federal government stepped into this mess in 1918, when it passed a law allowing wiretaps, but strictly as a counterespionage tool during World War I. Wiretapping proved so effective, however, that law enforcement continued to use it after the War to help fight bootleggers and crack down on the rampant crime spawned during the era of Prohibition. This "illegal" use of wiretapping was challenged in the courts, but with little success: in 1928, the Supreme Court ruled that the Fourth Amendment prohibition against unreasonable searches and seizures covered only material items. Conversations, the Court said, weren't material goods. And it was open season for the wiretappers.

Congress didn't reverse the court until 1968, when it passed the Omnibus Crime Control Act. Wiretaps were seen as the only effective way to breach the closed organized crime societies of the time. But because of the intrusive power of wiretaps, the 1968 Act established a legal procedure by which the law enforcement agencies could obtain wiretaps, and promised that evidence that was obtained illegally could not be used in court.

But politics has always played a second role in wiretaps as well: deciding who should be tapped. That's because wiretaps are frequently used not for law enforcement, but for harassment of left-leaning political organizations. There is a well-documented history of various local and federal agencies, generally dominated by political conservatives, conducting intimidation campaigns against progressive political groups. Wiretaps frequently play an important part in these so-called "investigations." These campaigns operate with the

Wiretapping page 38

WHAT WILL THE **NEXT** YOUTH CULTURE BE? HOW WILL THE ADOLESCENTS OF THE FUTURE REBEL AGAINST THEIR PARENTS AND INSPIRE COUNTLESS ARTICLES BY MAGAZINE WRITERS DESPERATE TO SNIFF THE NEXT BIG THING? ALL EVIDENCE POINTS TO...

SPAWN 101

ALSO KNOWN AS "SPAWNERS", THIS OUTRAGEOUS NEW GENERATION DERIVES ITS NAME FROM A NEW FAD IN MUSIC, WHEREIN KIDS OBTAIN OLD "EASY-LISTENING" 101 STRINGS & MONTOVANI ALBUMS FROM THRIFT SHOPS AND PLAY THEM AT 78 RPM SPEED ON DISCARDED TOY TURNTABLES. OVER THIS "BED" OF MUSIC, THEY READ FROM APPLIANCE INSTRUCTION MANUALS IN MONOTONE.



WHAT DOES A MEMBER OF SPAWN 101 WEAR? MISMATCHED UNIFORMS FROM FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS! SPAWNERS TAKE VARIOUS MINIMUM-WAGE JOBS FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS EACH, WITH THE SOLE PURPOSE OF STEALING UNIFORMS FOR THEIR ENSEMBLES!



SPAWNERS FAVOR THE EAR-TO-EAR-COMB-OVER HAIRSTYLE, TAKEN FROM THE HABIT OF MIDDLE-AGED MEN TO HIDE THEIR BALD SPOTS BY REARRANGING THE HAIRS THEY HAVE LEFT.

DRUG OF CHOICE? STRAINING AQUA VELVA THROUGH SLICES OF WONDER BREAD AND QUAFFING THE RESIDUE IS THE SPAWNER'S TURN-ON!



THEIR LINGO GOES WITH THIS LOOK: TIRED, CORNY PHRASES THAT MIGHT BE FAVORED BY USED CAR SALESMEN AND INSURANCE AGENTS. WORDS LIKE "KIDD" AND "SO'S YOUR OLD MAN" ARE COMMON AND "AMSCRAY" IS THE SPAWN 101 WAY TO SAY GOODBYE ON ANY OCCASION!

©1995 ROBERTS & SIERGEY

WINTER SOLDIER

AN OCCASIONAL COLUMN BY JASON PRAMAS

Mourning, and Organizing

Maggie Kuhn, founder of the Gray Panthers – the organization dedicated to “age and youth in action” – died on Earth Day 1995 at the age of 89.

She was my friend.

I knew Maggie for the last year and a half of her life. I met her over the phone after deciding that an interview with the head of the Gray Panthers would be a great way to close out my cover story “Smoke and Mirrors: or Why Corporate America Wants a War Between the Generations” in *As We Are* #1.

I recounted my impressions of that conversation in the conclusion of “Smoke and Mirrors.” How I felt Maggie and I immediately connected despite our age difference. But I never wrote about the effect that conversation had on my life, and *As We Are*. I suppose the main thing my first talk with Maggie left me with was: “you’re on the right track, kid.” And she left *As We Are* with the intergenerational attitude we’re becoming known for. The idea that people, uniting around mutually shared beliefs, was a far better basis around which to build a “good society” than the limiting and transitory bonds of solidarity within a single generation.

I spent time with Maggie in person on only three occasions. All three visits were mixed together with activist events. The first time was at her home, itself an experiment in intergenerational co-housing, in the pleasant Germantown section of Philadelphia. It was May, 1994, and I had agreed to do a press conference with her in defense of single-payer health care. The conference took place in a nursing home that was only a few blocks away from her house.

The press really didn’t show up in any numbers, but that didn’t stop us from speaking our piece. Our audience was about 30 nursing home residents and local health care activists. They were well-informed, and kept us on our toes the whole time. But it wasn’t until after the event that I really got to know the woman I had heard so much about over the years.

Maggie was extremely frail. She could barely walk. Her eyes were bad. Her spine bent and disintegrating from osteoporosis. She had had innumerable operations for innumerable health problems. But for all this, although it may sound cliché, she was full of life. She loved to have visitors, and her house was overflowing with thousands of large and small mementos that were testimony to her tremendous effect on many peoples lives over the last 25 years.

The keys to various cities around the world littered the office area, where her assistant Sue Leary worked, like cheap party favors. Pictures of Maggie in all kinds of situations filled shelves. Many of the world’s more famous thinkers and activists had, at one time or another, paid their respects to her. And the evidence was quite literally on the walls. Her small living room had some dozens of giraffe

statues and plaques all around the shelves and endtables.

This reflected her membership in “The Giraffe Society” which if I’m not mistaken is a real organization dedicated to “people who stick their neck out.” Sue, my girlfriend Marisa, and I went out to get some simple food for lunch at a local food co-op. While there, we discussed Maggie’s generally poor health, and her growing frustration at having her own body betray her.

Maggie was no saint. She was a just a person. It was her ability to see what needed to be done and her courage to do it that made her such an effective torch bearer for the intergenerational movement she founded. Still, her humanness got the better of her sometimes.



Maggie Kuhn, the late Gray Panthers founder with Jason Pramas, editor of *As We Are*.

But that day she was “on.” The four of us had a lovely lunch. Afterwards, Maggie peppered Marisa and I about younger activists, and what we were thinking about various issues. I could see within her the sharpness of a born tactician. I think she longed to be back at the helm of the Gray Panthers – which she started in her early sixties after losing her job due solely to her age. She was one hell of an organizer. Her group, after all, started with only 6 people in 1970. The timeliness of her message coupled with the early Gray Panthers decision to unite with the youth-led anti-Vietnam War movement caused the group to grow to include over 120,000 members by 1975. As long as she was able to travel constantly, up to 100,000 miles a year at times, speaking, energizing, agitating, organizing – the Panthers were “insanely great.”

Under her leadership, the Gray Panthers ended forever the notion that people’s productive lives end at age 65. They punched holes in the mandatory retirement age. They sparked numerous reforms in federal and state programs for older Americans, and emerged as stalwart defenders of Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security – in many cases helping to actually expand benefits for many Americans of all ages, even at the height of the Reagan administration.

Yet they were more than just a reform group. They were an activist organization. They stood for peace, justice and real solutions to real economic, political and social problems faced by real people. They stood for people before profit.

photo: Marge Lenzers

They stood against reactionary jingoism and the warrior state. They stood for a people's democracy, not for a corporate America.

But, as Maggie began to fade; so did the Gray Panthers. The organization had grown so much, so quickly, that issues of leadership, and the all important "passing of the torch" had never really been dealt with. Maggie was such a strong personality that such considerations had been put off until it was almost too late. In a way, it's almost like people expected her to live forever. Odd that an organization predominantly made up of people over 65 should think that way, but that's the human spirit for you.

Over the last 3 years, however, the Gray Panthers got back on the fast track. Hiring Dixie Horning as Executive Director was the last in a series of major reorganizational moves that included moving the office out of Maggie's house in Philadelphia and into far more visible quarters in Washington, DC. Like a young adult moving out of their parents' house and into the wide world; so too it was with the Gray Panthers. Maggie had, in a sense, given birth to the Panthers, and ultimately she had to let her child go. It was no doubt painful for her, but worked out for the best. If she had died earlier – before the organization got back on its feet – it would have been a catastrophic blow. And America might have lost yet another vibrant progressive organization to the dustbin of history.

When our talk was over, Marisa and I bid our farewells. We kissed Maggie and hugged Sue. Maggie seemed tickled by my quick peck, and reiterated something she had said over the phone when I described myself, "I've always liked men with beards." An amusing end to a pleasant first encounter.

Only a couple of weeks later, the newly-hired Gray Panthers Executive Director Dixie Horning asked me if I would accept a nomination to the Gray Panthers National Board. I accepted. At 27, I would be the youngest board member by about 20 years.

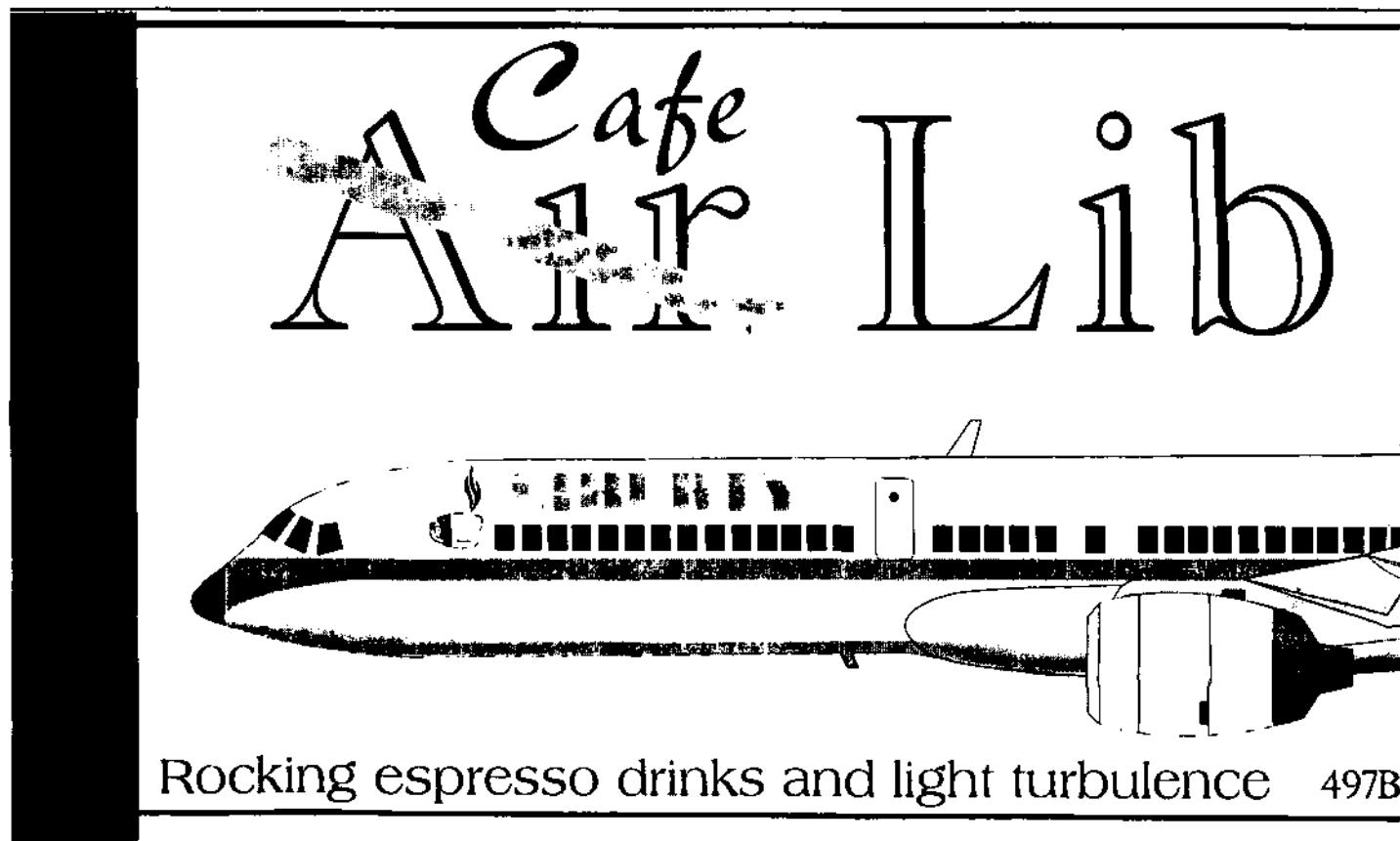
At the June 1994 National Board meeting, they decided to seat me as an at-large member with a four-year term. Dixie Horning said she'd work me hard, and I was warned that it would be slow going sometimes, but by-and-large joining the Board was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

At that same meeting, I visited Maggie, along with the rest of the board at her house. She had briefly attended one session of the Board earlier that same day, but her condition made it difficult for her to stay. Back at her home, she was swamped with attention and catching up with folks. She found a moment to tell me how glad she was that I had joined the board. I thanked her, and let her get back to everybody else.

I would not see Maggie again for almost a year. At the January 1995 National Board Meeting, the other members did a nice thing. They nominated me to be on the short list of potential keynote speakers for their 25th Anniversary Convention in Philadelphia that April – with the likes of Lani Guinier and Cornell West. I figured I didn't have a chance.

But a couple of weeks later, I was asked if I'd like to be the keynote speaker. With Maggie Kuhn. The Gray Panthers had surprised me yet again. I got to work on the speech.

The last time I saw Maggie was one of the most exciting weekends of my life.



When the first plenary session started, Maggie addressed the over 100 assembled Gray Panther delegates from all over the country (and a few foreign delegates as well). Before we got started, the Board asked me to give her some flowers. Then she did her thing. She spoke for about 10 minutes, and although she couldn't really see her notes, she could still ad lib like a pro. The delegates loved it, as did the press, who came out in fair numbers for her.

She stuck around for my speech, "Toward an Intergenerational Revolution." After I finished, Sue Leary asked me to help wheel Maggie to her car. I got her down the stage ramp, and through the crowd, although lots of people were trying to talk to us.

I got her out to the lobby, and Sue went to get the car; so I squatted down in front of Maggie, and we had a very quick, very serious talk while a photographer clicked away. I remember her basically saying that we'd gotten off to a good fresh start, but that there was still much to be done.

Then Sue said the car was open and I pushed Maggie out to it. There was a fierce wind up, and it was difficult to help her into the car. And I had a weird flashback at that moment. I had done the same drill with the wheelchair and the car many times toward the end of my grandmother's life. It was oddly foreboding. It was also the kind of experience that led me to want to work for generational unity. I led it slide, and waved her on her way.

The next day, the Gray Panthers threw a huge 25th anniversary bash for her, in a wonderfully gaudy function hall near the hotel. Many luminaries showed up for this event from Molly Yard, former head of the National Organization for Women, to Peter Yarrow, of Peter, Paul and Mary. When everything was over, Marisa and I went up to her

seated on a platform, stuck our chins on her table and said hello. Our talk wasn't deep, just chatty.

I backed up a few steps and said, "see Maggie, I told you I'd wear a suit for you." She laughed, "and you look very handsome in it." Other people were mobbing her; so we agreed we'd talk later when there was more time. We left her to her well-deserved moment of glory.

That was the last time I saw her alive.

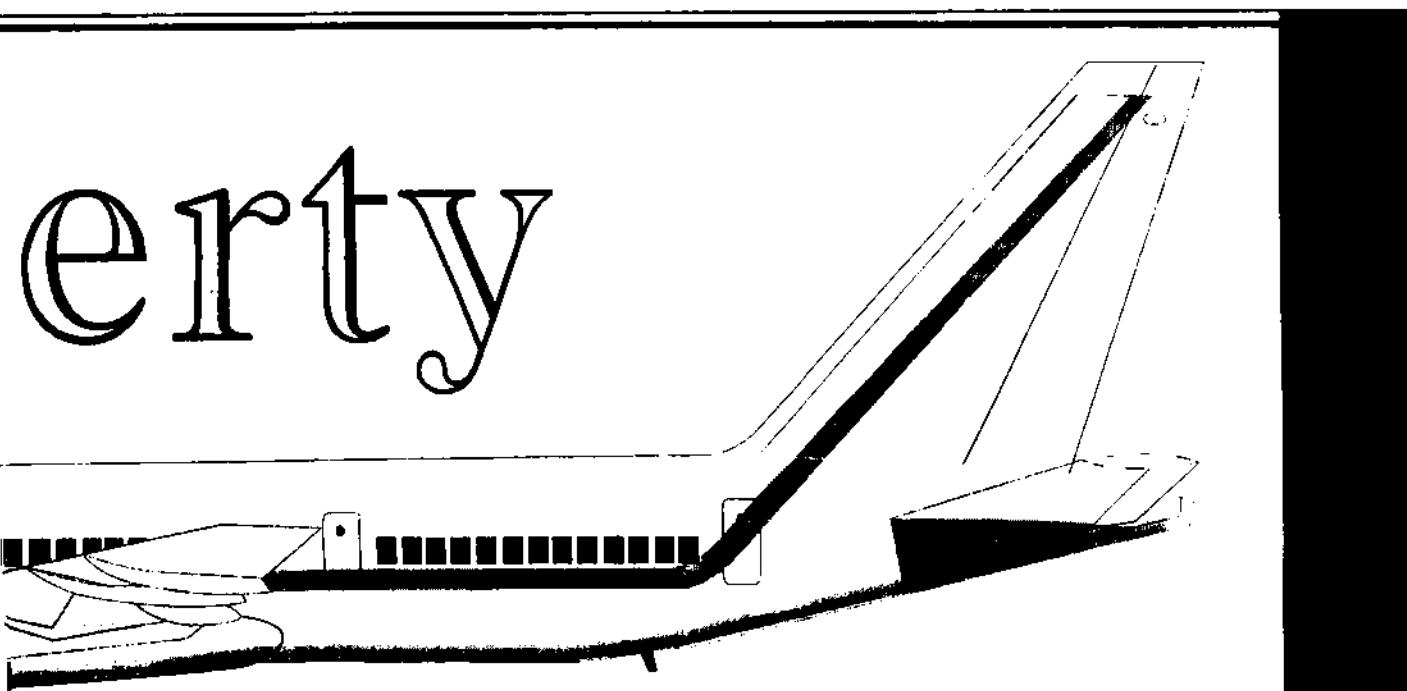
There's not much else I can say about Maggie. Rarely has someone I have known for such a short time, had such a profound effect on me. I can only hope that myself, and the thousands of other Gray Panthers can build a legacy that follows closely her wishes for the organization that owes so much to her.

There is one other thing. For the brief time I knew her, it was always clear that she knew she was "shuffling off this mortal coil." And I don't think she felt that her task on earth was complete yet. I have met other people who knew their end was near, in my time, and many of them come to face it with a certain air of resignation. Maggie had none of that. Which is why she so enjoyed meeting young activists like Marisa and myself - who shared many of her views on age and aging. It also explains why I liked her so much. She didn't plan to "go gently into that good night." Neither do I.

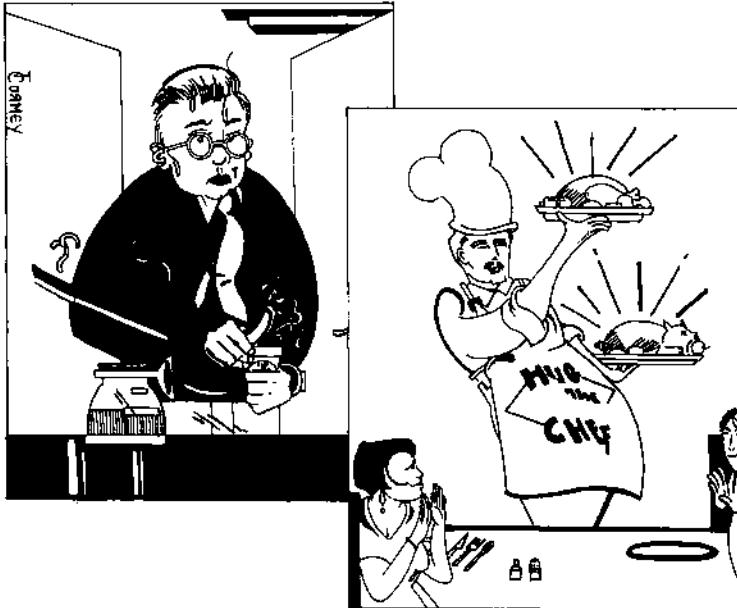
If you'd like to know more about Maggie Kuhn's life, read her 1992 autobiography, No Stone Unturned, available at bookstores nationally. For more information about the Gray Panthers call the Gray Panther National Office at (202)466-3132, or write them at: 2025 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Suite 821, Washington, DC 20006. Membership is open to people of all ages.



erty



Phone 492-9900 Web <http://www.cafeliberty.com/>
Massachusetts Ave. Central Square, Cambridge



The Domestically Disabled Male

The man stands over a table, his eyes fixed down on his work. His long tapered fingers move carefully and deliberately. The fluorescent overhead lights reflect off sterile white walls, creating a brilliant halo around the man's tall body. A wall speaker fills the room with the gentle sounds of Muzak. Nearby machines emit beeping and clicking noises that play over the instrumental melody. The man pauses from his task to reach up and wipe a glistening head of sweat off his furrowed brow. He turns to a young woman standing beside him and requests assistance.

Is this man performing intricate brain surgery with the help of his trusty nurse? Unh-uh. He is an accountant in a business office, attempting to make instant Cup-O-Noodles.

The directions on the side of the plastic-wrapped styrofoam cup clearly describe the three-step preparation process: 1) Peel back lid; 2) pour in boiling water; and 3) let stand for three minutes before eating. But, without even glancing at the instructions (or even the accompanying illustrations), the man bombards his female co-worker with a dozen questions about the proper preparation of this culinary treat.

Is this man illiterate or suffering from a traumatic brain injury? No. In fact, he has two Master's degrees, one of which is in English.

Meet Al, a domestically disabled American male. Before you laugh Al off as a peculiarity, consider the thousands, maybe millions, of men (and women) out there who share Al's handicap. Look around. You may be sitting next to one right now.

Now, meet John. He is the member of his household who makes the mandatory covered casserole dish for office parties and potluck suppers. John excels at all the domestic arts. He cooks, cleans, does laundry, and clips coupons with a vigor reminiscent of my Lithuanian great-grandmother. He shamelessly flips through cookbooks in friends' kitchens and never hesitates to sing the praises of Stain Stick to anyone who complains of troublesome laundry stains.

Is John the type of guy who hid out in high school Home Ec. classes to avoid Wood Shop and team sports? Guess again. He was the top scorer on his high school basketball team, brought home his fair share of bookshelves and ashtrays, and can hold his own in front of a television screen (the bigger the better) during football parties. John is a Man's Man. But he is also a member of the lesser known minority of domestically abled men.

Al. John. The two extremes. Why are they the way they are? Were they born that way? I think not. Al's "disability" is a direct result of explicit and implicit messages he received from his parents. In Al's family, the children's chores were delegated according to gender (boys mowed the lawn and girls washed dishes) and his mother was the only parent responsible for domestic tasks. Not only did Al's father fail to contribute equally to the domestic upkeep of the household, he did little to instill respect for this work in the minds of his children. Cooking and cleaning were not considered important or meaningful

by
Julie M. Baker

tasks and, therefore, the person who performed them was neither important nor meaningful. Why would Al want to do work that he sees as having no status or value? So Al can not be dismissed as a loser; he's a product of his environment. He didn't have a chance.

John, on the other hand, learned at an early age that his mother's domestic work was valuable. Because she was a single parent for most of his upbringing, he saw her as hard working and absolutely necessary to the functioning of their household. As a widow who raised nine children, she was to be admired and emulated rather than looked down on.

O.K., so gender-typing chores and modeling a sexist distribution of domestic tasks teaches boys that "all that stuff is women's work" and they shouldn't have to do it. Does that mean women should?

When I told my boss about Al and the Cup-O-Noodles, he suggested an interesting solution to the problem. "Al needs a girlfriend." A girlfriend? A girlfriend??!! "yeah," he insisted, "Do you know anyone?" First of all, I would not do such a cruel thing to my worst enemy. Is it a girlfriend's or wife's responsibility to care for these domestically disabled men? What makes us more qualified? Do people honestly believe that women are better at domestic work because we're born that way? That we have some special impulse or gene that predisposes us to scrub toilets? Physiologists have established that male and female brains weigh exactly the same, so we can assume that women do not have an extra "housework" mechanism. Women are *trained* to do these tasks and do them well. How many boys got an Easy Bake Oven from Santa?

Until recently, when I came out publicly as a domestically disabled female, I never questioned why I should be expected to emulate June Cleaver just because I have breasts. I simply thought my abhorrence for all domestic tasks was yet another manifestation of my rebellious nature. I did not cook or clean *because* I was expected to. So there. In examining the sex stereotyping in my family, however, I discovered that my distaste for domestic tasks did not originate in a vacuum.

One night when I was in junior high school, my mother asked my father what vegetable he would like with his dinner. Because I was praying he wouldn't say beets or lima beans, I listened closely for his response. "String beans," he said, clearly and distinctly, then went back to watching *Star Trek*. Twenty minutes later, at 6:00 p.m. sharp, my mother announced that dinner was ready, as she did every night at 6:00 p.m. (at my father's request). The kids filed into the kitchen to have our plates filled with meatloaf with ketchup baked on top, lumpy mashed potatoes (the kind that made you gag when you ate them with milk), and...guess what...string beans. My father sat in his chair at the head of the table and waited to be served by my mother. She brought him his plate, also filled with meat loaf, mashed potatoes, and string beans, and placed it in front of him, without waiting for or receiving a thank you. We glanced at him expectantly, waiting for him to lift up his fork, the sign we could begin eating. My father looked down at his plate, pointed at the string beans and asked, "What the hell are those?"

"String beans," my mother replied in her saccharine-

sweet don't-upset-your-father voice. We all tensed around the table, not daring to look at one another. "I hate string beans," my father shouted as he hurled his plate across the room like a white ceramic frisbee. The plate broke into three pieces as it landed with a crash. The red, white, and green food particles settled onto the floor and the walls. There was a string bean on my shoe. No one moved, except for Luke, our Springer Spaniel, who ambled over to gobble up the unexpected snack. After a minute of frozen silence, my mother walked into the kitchen and emerged with a blue and white checked handiwipe and dustpan. She shooed the dog away, cleaned up the mess, and went back into the kitchen without uttering a word. She returned to the dining room and quietly asked my father what he would like to eat instead. He gave her some grumbling reply and she disappeared into the kitchen. I heard the sounds of the electric can opener and a match striking against the black, chalky strip on the box of kitchen matches. A few minutes later, she returned with a newly prepared plate of food for my father; meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and a less offensive vegetable, corn. We continued our dinner as if nothing had happened.

What did I learn from this incident? That my father was a bullying, male chauvinistic pig? No, I already knew that. Instead, I learned that my mother was powerless and dominated and that I never wanted to be like that. Unfortunately, my adolescent brain connected my father's violent outburst to the fact that my mother was responsible for cooking dinner. I vowed that, not only would I never be treated like that, I would never learn to cook. The way I figured it, if I didn't prepare food, no one would have the opportunity to throw it across the room. It was one of the few vows I ever kept. Not only did I refuse to cook well into adulthood, I would not willingly do any tasks that could possibly be labeled domestic. I went to the laundromat when all 26 pairs of underwear were dirty or when I needed to wear a particular outfit. I only cleaned my apartment when guests were coming to stay overnight or the cats started hissing at the dust bunnies. I bypassed traditional tedious grocery shopping altogether by eating take-out food or stopping at convenience stores on my way home.

So who am I to criticize domestically disabled Al? As inept as I was in the kitchen (I burned more than one of my roommate's pots while boiling water), I could prepare Cup-O-Noodles for myself. Not only that, I am *expected* to be able to prepare Cup-O-Noodles (and a lot more) for myself and all the Als of the world. I am also expected to be the one to produce those covered casserole dishes. When I first attended pot luck suppers, I used to receive shocked exclamations when people found out I hadn't prepared the contribution from my household. When the other guests realized that John was not just carrying the dish, but that he had actually cooked it, I would usually hear "He cooks? You're so lucky!" Lucky? Lucky??!!!

Well, maybe I am. But, did anyone ever tell my dad or Al's dad that they were lucky? I doubt it. Were our mothers showered with praise for making casseroles and serving their husbands? No, because that was what they were *supposed* to do. That was their role. Women like myself who reject that role, or just plain aren't good at it, are considered inferior women and made to feel ashamed for our deficiency.

cies. Men, like John who take on domestic responsibilities because they truly enjoy them, are considered freaks or saints. Why is domestic ability the rule for women and the exception for men?

These days, I refer to myself as recovering from a domestic disability because I am trying to change my reactionary rebellion against anything remotely domestic. I'll never put Martha Stewart out of a job, but occasionally I accept the value of preparing something a little tastier than Cup-O-Noodles. I now understand that when I wash a load of laundry, I doesn't mean I'm ready to accept the unacceptable behavior that my father exhibited toward my mother.

So, I'll be fine. (And besides, I have John around to whip up those covered casserole dishes.) Al...well, he's probably a lost cause. But what about all the Als and Julies who are currently coming of age? First, parents *must* consider the effect that distribution of domestic tasks will have on their children. If young boys never see daddy do a dish, why should they? And when young girls see their mothers' power diminishing through domestic work, what will keep them from falling into the same trap of reacting and going to the opposite extreme like I did?

Secondly, society must place a higher value on domestic work. If the people responsible for domestic tasks in the household receive no recognition for their contributions, what kind of self-worth will children have when doing these tasks?

Those of us who will raise the next generation have the power to perpetuate or eradicate domestic disability. Inequity and dirty dishes? Or justice and clean socks? It's up to us.



AWA Helpful Tip: Read "The Politics of Housework," the epic essay by Patricia Mainardi that changed the way Americans think about housework. This and other founding papers of the 1960s Women's Liberation Movement are available from the Redstockings Women's Liberation Archives for Action. For a catalog of these and more recent materials, send two first-class stamps to: Archives Distribution Project, PO Box 2625, Gainesville, FL 32602.

HOW TO BE A GOOD WIFE

Have dinner ready. Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal - on time. This is a way of letting him know you have been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs. Most men are hungry when they come home and the prospect of a good meal is part of the warm welcome needed.

Prepare yourself. Take fifteen minutes to rest so that you will be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your makeup, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh looking. He has just been with a lot of work-weary people. Be a little gay and a little more interesting. His boring day may need a lift.

Clear away the clutter. Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives gathering up school books, toys, paper, etc. Then run a dust cloth over the tables. Your husband will feel he has reached a house of rest and order, and it will give you a lift too.

Prepare the children. Take a few minutes to wash the children's hands and faces (if they are small), comb their hair, and if necessary, change their clothes. They are little treasures and he would like to see them playing the part.

Minimize all noise. At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of the washer, dryer, dishwasher or vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet. Be happy to see him. Greet him with a warm smile and be glad to see him.

Some don'ts: Don't greet him with problems or complaints. Don't complain if he is late for dinner. Count this as minor compared to what he might have gone through that day. Make him comfortable. Have him lean back in a comfortable chair or suggest that he lie down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him.

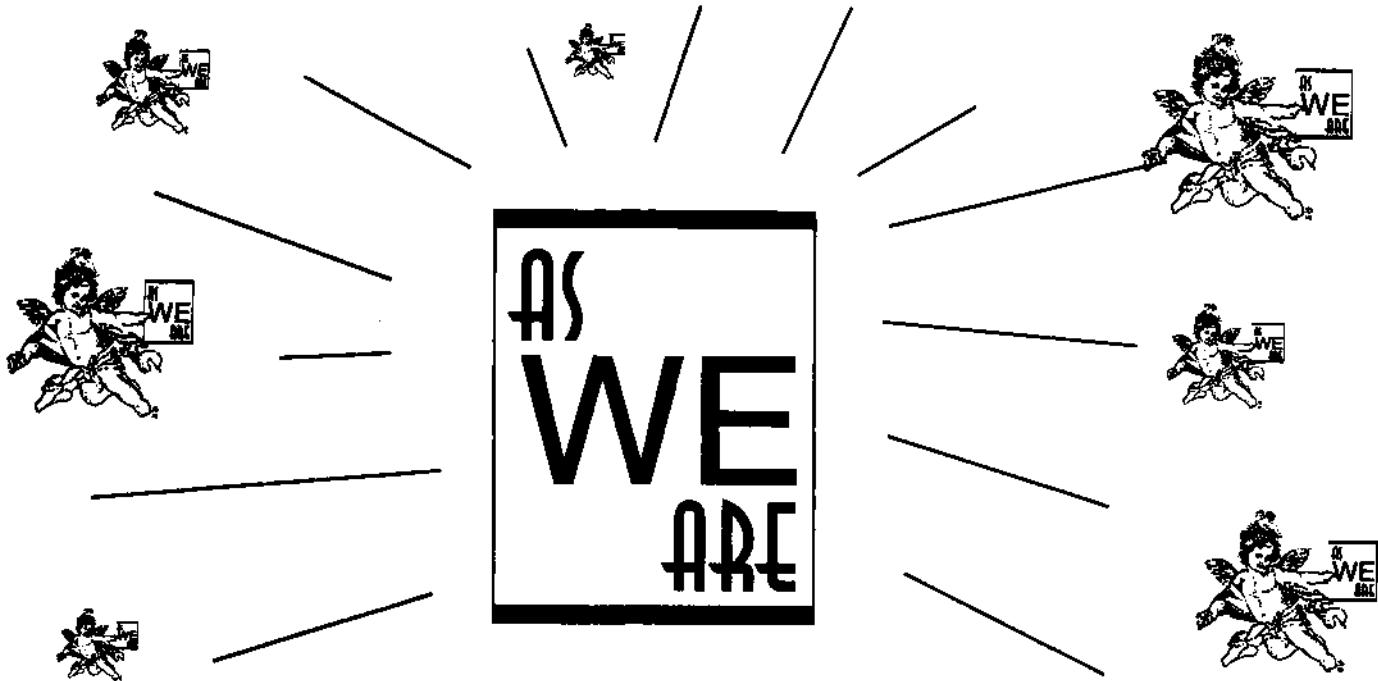
Arrange his pillow and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soft, soothing and pleasant voice. Allow him to relax and unwind.

Listen to him. You may have a dozen things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first.

Make the evening his. Never complain if he does not take you out to dinner or to other pleasant entertainment. Instead try to understand his world of strain and pressure, his need to unwind and relax.

The goal: Try to make your home a place of peace and order where your husband can relax in body and spirit.

- Excerpted from a 1950's high school home economics textbook



*as
WE are*

the good magazine
that's good for you.

Printed on high-fiber
PAPER and covered
with vitamin-enriched **INK**.

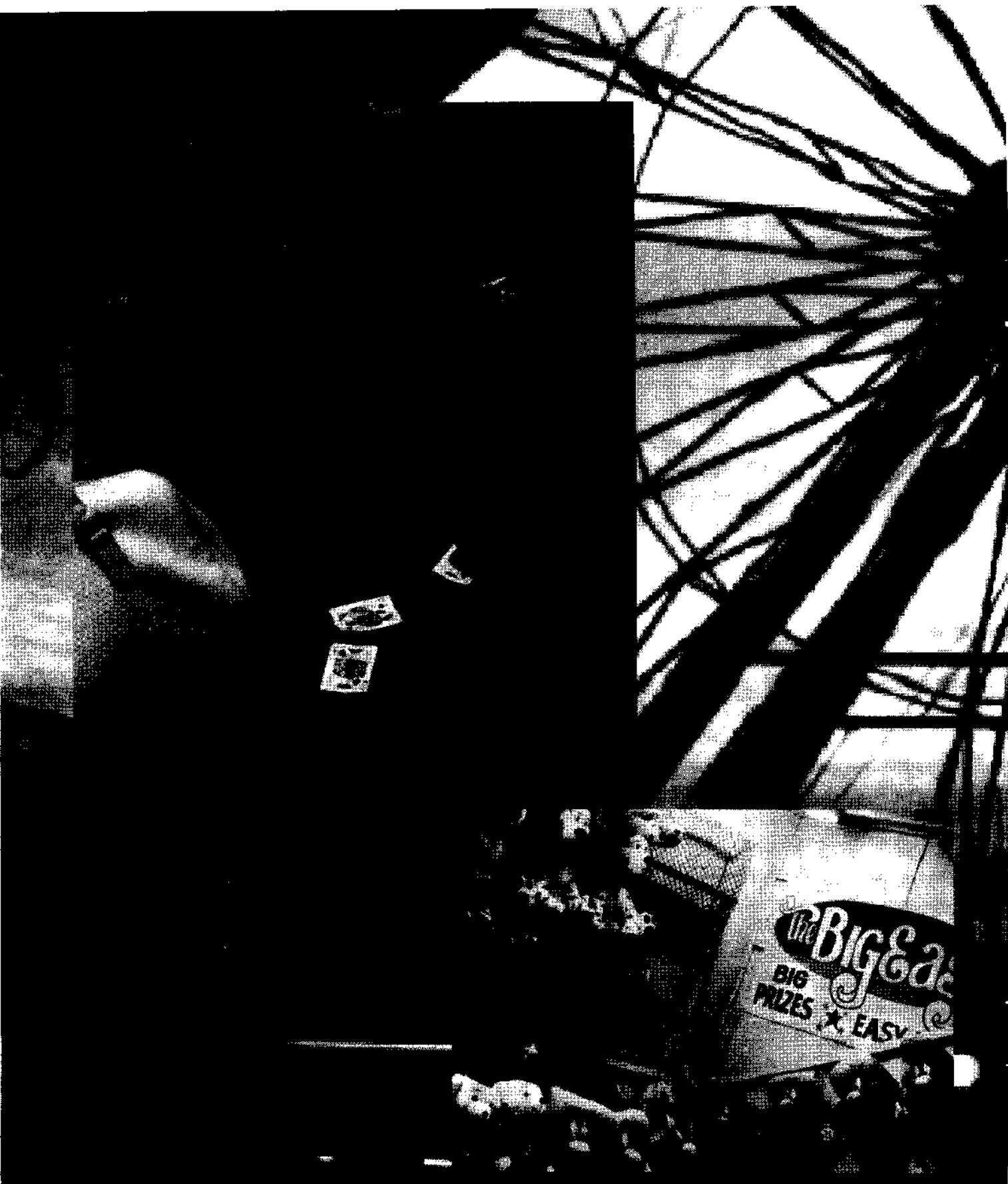
Good for the mind, body, and digestive
tract, as **WE** are. Please read before ingesting.

Subscribe to the teachings of As We Are
It's the best thing you can do for yourself... and
for the world. And besides, ALL your friends are do-
ing it. What won't your mommy let you? Lick the
page. You know you want to. Lick it!

For subscription information please see page 3.
Have you licked the page yet? We did.



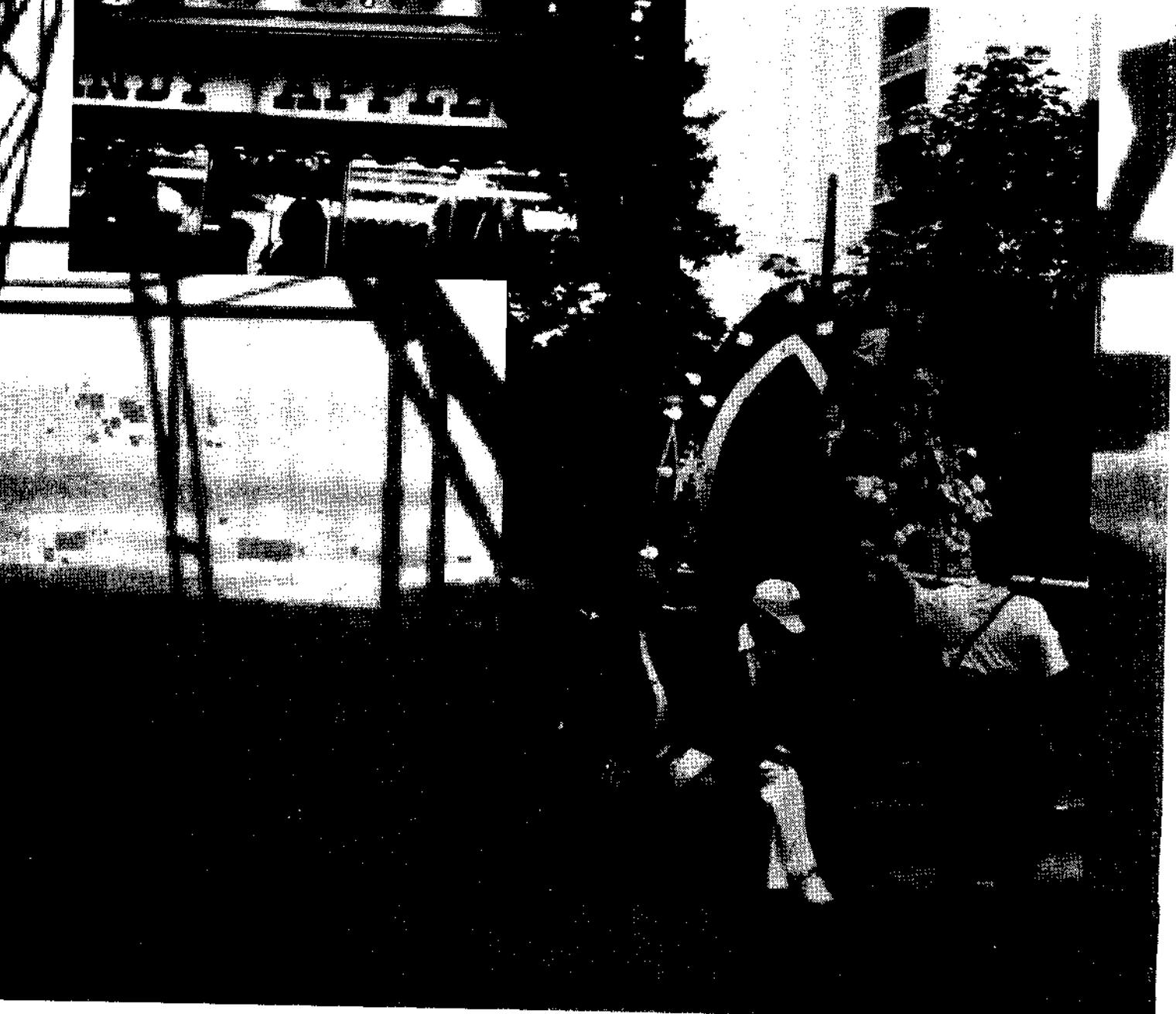
"I saw the light... and it really hurt my eyes."



Photography by Jill MacLeod

Games of Chance

MICRO COTTON CANDY



A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Cook: Musings on Marinara

by Jason Pramas

There is no food more primal for me than pasta. It's the best. When I was a kid, my family would only have it once every week or two. This made me sad. "One day," I thought, "I will be able to have pasta whenever I feel like it." While most kids dreamed of being President, this homely fantasy was my wildest dream.

As luck would have it, my mother started working long days temping when I was about 12; so my younger brother, Chris, and I were unceremoniously put in command of the evening meal. Needless to say, pasta began appearing on the menu much more frequently.

And it was at that time, that my quest for the perfect pasta sauce began.

My mother's system for training us worked well. Every morning she would leave appropriate ingredients out on the kitchen counter. Late every afternoon, she would call us up with specific directions, or the names of cookbooks to check. We would do the rest.

Chris and I would switch off cooking nights. We both performed our duties without too much trouble. The only difference between us was one of style. Chris was always technically apt around a stove, but never liked to experiment much. He'd generally follow Mom's instructions to the letter, whereas I was more likely to screw around in hopes of reaching a new gustatory plateau.

Many times I would blow it and end up serving something like "Roast Chicken

with a Ketchup-Orange Juice Glaze" or "Unintentional Flambée de la Eggplant," but occasionally – and usually in the realm of pasta – my future potential as a weekend chef shone through.

At first, I only made the pasta dishes Mom recommended. Unfortunately, at that time her pasta repertoire boiled down to only two versions. The most common was the bi-weekly spaghetti with meat sauce. The other was spaghetti with lamb sauce. She made these pasta sauces "Greek-style." Appropriate enough, given that my family is Greek and all, but tragically, whatever the brilliant accomplishments of my ancestors in the cooking arena, Greek-style pasta sauce seems to translate to "runny."

Now don't get me wrong, we're all excellent cooks, but Mom never seemed to take pasta too seriously, and it showed. Her basic meat sauce involved some pureed tomatoes and a little tomato paste mixed with way-too-much water poured over a pound of browned ground beef mixed with sautéed onions, carrots and celery. This mixture was then cooked to death for a few hours with an extremely tame spicing of basil, oregano, salt and a little pepper. She did, however, sauté the vegetables in olive oil first, so everything tasted pleasant enough. Though never exciting. But I give her credit using the right oil, anyway.

Much as I ate this sauce with gusto for over a decade without complaint, in the

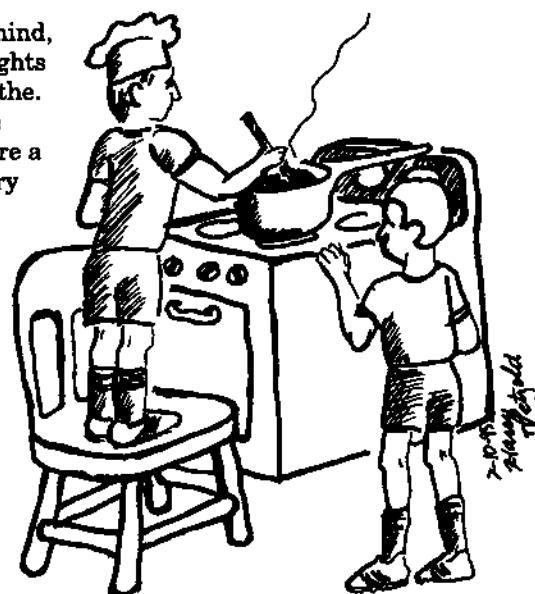
back of my mind, certain thoughts began to seethe. Maybe these thoughts were a genetic outcry from the DNA of some distant Italian ancestor. Maybe they were triggered after eating my Italian next door neighbor's, Mrs.

Fountain's, sauce. Or my Italian Aunt Jay's "gravy." But whatever their origin – noble or ignoble, genetic or the product of watching one too many Ragu commercials – two things stood foremost in my mind. One, should not a tomato sauce for pasta be...thick; so that it sticks gob-like to the pasta and doesn't pool nastily in the bottom of the serving dish? And two, should a good red sauce not have some kick? Some dash? Some, I dunno, zest for life?!

My early experimentation led to some pretty gratifying results. The first big development came when I started making the sauce thick. The secret of my pasta revolt came in adding THE WHOLE CAN OF TOMATO PUREE with very little water to make the sauce base. This immediately brought forth accolades from my parents like: "It's too thick" or "I don't like it this thick." Thus emboldened, I persevered. I already had something that looked like Ragu, but unfortunately it still tasted like Ragu.

Luckily, that same year, the family went on a two-week trip to Canada. There I discovered two more things that would influence my development as a cook forever. First, I discovered that no matter what kind of restaurant we went to in Canada – Ethiopian, Japanese or whatever – it was owned by Greeks. This led to my formulation of Pramas' First Law of Restaurants: All Restaurants Are Owned By Greeks. If you don't believe me, go to the renowned Ming Garden restaurant in Moncton, New Brunswick – as I did that same memorable trip.

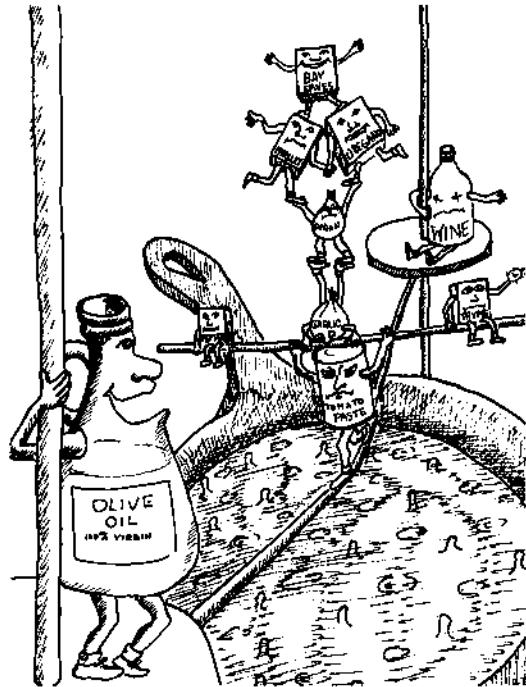
During a driving summer rain storm, my family was forced into a dimly lit parking lot, brightened only by an old neon sign that read "ING ARD." Presented with a sticky red menu, we ordered up what we hoped was a feast. We sampled tasteless appetizers like "Pink-Tinted Styrofoam Chips" and "Bo-Bo Balls" (with Mystery Meat™) that we figured must have tantalized the palates of the local Scotch-Irish gourmands for many a year. Grimly determined to find something decent to eat, we moved on to the main menu. Our fate hung in the balance. If we left Ming Garden, we knew that the only other food available for 100 miles was



the "Entrails and Soda Bread" special at the local pub ("The Wretching Hellene"). Perusing the entrees, we were stopped cold. There on the main menu we found the dish "Moo Shi Gyros" listed in the "pork" section between "Pork with Brown Goo" and "Pork with Red Goo."

That fact, and the owner's name, Fat Chow Stephanopoulos, on the business card, were all the proof that my theory needed. Somewhere in the back of every restaurant, there is a Greek running the show.

The other discovery I made in Canada, one directly related to cooking, was



that pasta sauce could contain herbs other than basil and oregano. While eating pasta in a basement French-Italian bistro (owner: Yorgos Phreakanastasiou) in Montreal's Cité Vieux (City of Frogs), I discovered that my mouth was afire. Driven towards puberty by these strange and exciting oral sensations, I asked the waitress what was in the sauce. She said lots of pepper and...rosemary. I had

never seen rosemary before; so I said: "you mean these little pine needles. The waitress said: "yes." My mother, embarrassed that some anonymous Quebecan might discover our little family spicing problem, said: "Oh, come on, Jay, I have rosemary in the spice cabinet at home, I use it on roast sometimes." To which I replied, in the manner of Rhode Islanders, "Ma, I never open the spice cabinet. I'm e-scared of it."

You see, most American homes, Greek homes included, have a "spice cabinet." This cabinet, over the course of years, usually becomes a repository for every container of "Instant Beef Flavored Substitute" and "Thai Fish Testicle Sauce" that a family member buys in a fit of impulse shopping – never to be used or even looked at again. Actual spices and herbs that see day-to-day use tend to be kept on a counter within easy reach.

The spice cabinet can become a scary place. The subject of bedtime horror stories (like the noted "Spice Cabinet That Ate Jimmy's Face") and the single largest cause of alcoholism in housewives.

The next time I was called upon to make spaghetti sauce, naturally, I pulled on a pair of rubber gloves, reached into the darkest, longest-unused section of the spice cabinet, found the rosemary...and

put a bunch in the sauce. Along with more pepper. It was good. Real good.

My parents thought so too. "It's too spicy," they said, and, "I don't like it *this* spicy."

At some point around my fifteenth birthday, my mother and I picked up a new trick while watching "Julia Child Cooks With Tremendous Amounts of Wine" that I later incorporated into my sauce. On one show, an unusually inebriated Julia knocked a bowl of sugar into a simmering red sauce while gesticulating wildly with a gallon jug of vermouth. She looked sheepish, mumbled something about "creativity in the kitchen," tasted the sauce, proclaimed "Iss real good," and collapsed into the bouillabaisse. So, a little sugar – to cut the acidity of the tomatoes – became a regular bit for me.

In college, on the cusp of my 17th and 18th years, I discovered the idea of vegetarianism – a practice I have never managed to stick with – since like all good Greek boys, I cannot resist lamb.

Still, for most of every year, being broke, and somewhat health conscious, being a vegetarian made good sense. This school of thought introduced me to my third major breakthrough – the novel concept that pasta sauce could be made WITHOUT MEAT.

Tragically, for all the good this inspiration might have done for my sauce, in my college years I entered into a brief blind alley I call the "Hippie Deviation." This was when my many WASP and Jewish friends, neither group from ethnicities known for their culinary acumen, discovered dope and with it an insane and inexplicable desire to add tofu, bean sprouts and chick peas to every conceivable kind of food. Certain things like the as-yet-untried Hummus Bi Toffuti might work with this combination, but no self-respecting pasta sauce does.

Accordingly, I quit the dope and got my sauce back on track. My final leap of culinary imagination came after college while I lived in Burlington, Vermont for a couple of years. My Indian-American friend of the time, Elango Dev, loved to make a more successful hippie concoction (actually Italian in origin) called "aoli" – an intense garlic and parsley mixture that is spread on bread. Elango, as befitting his Madras heritage, loved garlic. He would use amounts of garlic in food that would send mayonnaise-complexioned people of stout constitution running screaming into the streets – searching mindlessly for a pub serving Irish stew or a Kosher Dairy place that specialized in potato kugel.

It was from Elango that I learned that it is within the realm of acceptable cooking to add more than one clove of garlic to a marinara sauce. I now generally use four.

Since then, I have not been able to improve my red sauce. I've gone as far as I can go with it. It is for others, perhaps one of the reading audience, to take it further. But, like physicists casting about for the Grand Unified Field Theory, I don't expect to see any improvements in my lifetime.

So here's the recipe. Try it. Spread it throughout the land. If I have done nothing more than guarantee that no child will ever have to eat bland tomato sauce again, then my purpose on earth is fulfilled. I can die now, the happiest of men. And the only 28-year old in history composed of more than 50% pasta...

Jason's Big Red ("The Mother of all Marinaras")

Ingredients: (in order of appearance)

- Olive Oil
- 1 large yellow onion
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 large can tomato puree (or crushed tomatoes)
- 1/4 can of water
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- Basil
- Oregano
- Rosemary
- Tarragon
- Thyme
- Black Pepper
- Cayenne Pepper
- Salt

Directions:

Peel and chop the onion, fairly roughly (not too small). Peel and chop the garlic very small, then smash the pieces with the flat of your knife. Make sure spices are close at hand and that the can of tomato puree is opened.

Heat large saucepan at medium high (close, but not quite at, your stove's highest temperature). Put hand near bottom of saucepan after about a minute. It should feel pretty hot. If it feels wildly hot, lower heat a bit. Cover bottom of pan in olive oil. Don't be shy. Give it a good thick coat, it's almost impossible to add too much—and hey, it's "good" fat.

Wait 15 or 20 seconds, throw in a piece of onion to test the oil. If it starts sputtering and making frying sounds, throw the rest of the onion in—otherwise wait another 15 or 20 seconds and try again.

Lower heat a bit. Sauté onions until they start to look clear (translucent). Add garlic. Sauté both until they brown a little bit.

Lower heat to medium, add tomato puree. Go to your sink, fill the tomato can about a 1/4 full of water. Swish it around to collect the puree that didn't go into the sauce. Pour the tomato water into the sauce. This ensures that there will be enough extra liquid in the sauce when you're cooking it down so that you won't end up with red slag.

Add the sugar. Then add about a handful each of basil, oregano and tarragon. Add a half-handful each of the thyme and rosemary. Salt and pepper to taste. With the pepper, use about 1/2 as much cayenne as black (careful, the cayenne is strong). If you don't have cayenne, you can use a few drops of tabasco sauce instead. Stir well.

Let it come to a slow boil (should only take a couple of minutes until you see bubbles breaking the surface of the sauce). Turn heat to low.

Partially cover the saucepan with its lid (don't put the cover on all the way, or it will start boiling again). Stir every 5 or 10 minutes. Cook for about 30 minutes. Remove from heat. Serve over pasta.



TV... CREATING THE BEST NEWS POSSIBLE



DISPOSABLE TEENS

(AND THE CRISIS IN SOCIAL SERVICES)

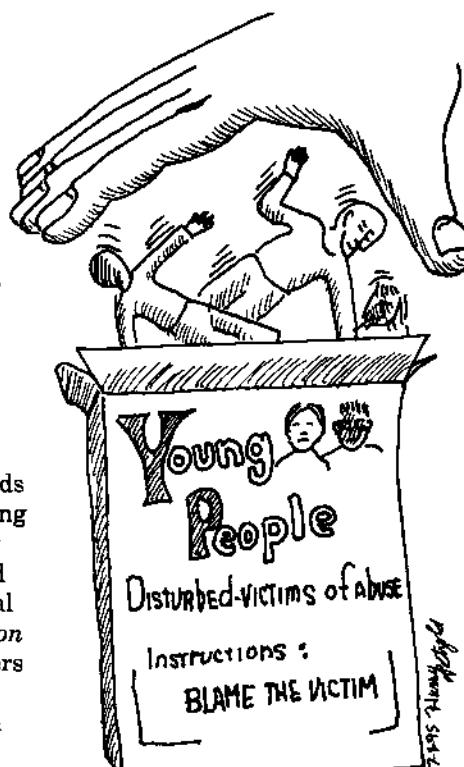
The struggles of welfare recipients against the federal funding crackdown begun with the Contract with America is just one facet of a broad attack on disadvantaged groups, including "at-risk" teenagers. Teenagers who are at-risk are now confronted with long-term deficiencies in support programs, combined with current funding shortages that place treatment programs in greater jeopardy.

The state-run system that provides support for young people is breaking down. With \$65 billion projected to be cut from social services programs in the next five years, young people will be some of the hardest hit. Cuts will eliminate Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) for 6 million children ("For the People", a publication of Mass. STAND June 28, 1995). The Congressional Budget office estimates that \$1.7 billion of the cuts will come from programs for abused and neglected children (Betty Reid Mandel, "Shredding the Safety Net," *New Politics* Vol 5, No. 3 Summer 1995). It's been proposed that all \$5 billion allotted for youth and crime prevention programs be cut from the Clinton 1994 Crime Bill (Andrew White, "Eyes to the Right," *City Limits* Feb. 1995). Other programs to be cut include job training programs, aid for drug and alcohol treatment programs, and assistance to pregnant women under 18.

As if these cuts weren't alarming enough, they are being delivered to a barely-functioning system. A special commission investigated the Department of Social Services in Massachu-

sets in 1993 and found that caseloads for DSS workers (the number of young people that a DSS worker is directly responsible for) were already beyond crisis level and recommended a "total overhaul." (Michael Grunwald, *Boston Globe*, Feb. 6, 1995, p.1) DSS workers in Massachusetts were advised to make no new referrals to residential treatment centers for budgeting reasons in the spring of 1995. Many doctors and social workers say that any money saved this way will be lost when children re-enter the system through the Department of Mental Health or the courts, and one residential center director described the current situation as "total chaos" (Michael Grunwald, *Boston Globe*, May 18, 1995, p.25). Many teenagers are still in danger of having their funding cut and being sent back to difficult home situations.

As two people who've worked in residential programs for emotionally disturbed adolescents, we have seen our share of problems with the mental health system at large and residential treatment centers specifically. A residential is a 24-hour live-in treatment center for teenagers who need more support than foster homes. Teenagers



come to residential through families and schools that can't meet their needs, often by way of a psychiatric hospitalization or a brush with the law.

Some teens develop serious chemically-based mental problems, but this diagnosis often masks a teenager's amazing story of survival in the face of abuse on individual and societal levels. "Emotionally disturbed" teenagers can be those with an unusual dose of defiance in their veins, and may have earned the label by saying "fuck you" to the wrong authority figure, or have been abused so many times that they no longer trust society or themselves. Instead of criticizing the system that creates this distrust, we label the teenagers as the ones with the problem. This not only lowers their self-esteem, but also virtually ensures their unresponsiveness to authority figures—

BY RENEE FREIHEIT AND EMMA MONNA

however helpful and well-meaning they may be.

In this way, a treatment center is intended to provide support, but also to contain those in society who seem abnormal or disruptive. Some would argue that mental health facilities have historically been used to keep control over sections of society that seem "dangerous". Middle-class urban professionals in the Victorian era set up institutions to deal with the unsettling sight of poor children in the streets. Many of the poor in urban areas were newly arrived immigrants, who were seen as a potential threat to the social order. Attacking the poverty which caused these social ills and many others was too radical of an approach, so institutions were created instead (Holloran, p. 248).

The residential treatment system emerged as a response to orphanages at the turn of the last century. Orphanages which had served as everything from refuges for the poor to warehouses for them were investigated, criticized and reformed by a new cadre of college-educated social workers trained with a rigorous scientific methodology. This methodology gained widespread acceptance in the 1930s (Peterson, Holloran, *"Boston's Wayward Children."* Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994, p. 238).

Since that time, "residential" has generally attempted to mimic a family setting - which is believed to be necessary for imparting values, and providing constant clinical assessment, counseling, and behavior modification. Residential focus on teaching residents extremely basic and badly-needed skills, which most people do automatically: such as how to get out of bed, make it to a job interview, how to take a shower, prepare a meal, not explode when angry, etc. These programs also aim to develop a person's ability to make moral judgments.

Unfortunately, residential usually stop there. The programs don't appeal often enough to teenagers' reason, or give them information about the real world consequences of their actions. Residential set up an elaborate reward and debit system (sometimes using food or point systems as rewards) which teenagers in treatment cannot directly apply outside of the program. For the residents, life is turned into a game in which individual manipulation of existing rules is the only way to get anything they want. Constructive methods of rebellion, resistance, and challenge that actually work in the real world are rarely taught as options.

Teenagers who come from homes where they have been subjected to substance abuse, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and often hostile racist attitudes, are initially put into residential to get them out of abusive situations. Once inside, they may be quickly branded and pigeonholed as "oppositional", "anxious", "rebellious", and a host of other negative labels. Both the awareness of a teen's past history and the success that she may have had in staying alive and resistant to abuse are lost in the shuffle.

The professionalization of social work has had other, unforeseen, consequences on the residential programs. Staff interaction with teenage residents tend to become reduced to a series of medical diagnoses. Diagnoses that mask discussion of the environmental factors that contributed to the teen's plight.

A young person's progress through a residential system is measured by whether their socially unacceptable behaviors decrease or not, even though many young people have been hurt so badly that they are just beginning to deal with

what will be life-long problems. Teenagers who don't make progress are seen as "resistant", and the implication is that they are "bad", even if they are actually dealing with the effects of trauma that no amount of individual will-power and elbow grease can wash away. Individual teenagers are blamed, rather than looking at what is happening to young people as a group in our society. Placing the blame on them as individuals evades society's responsibility to change the political and economic system; so that the conditions which created most of the teen's problems are eradicated.

The strength of a structure like this lies in consistency. Programs go to great lengths to ensure that all staff treat all residents the same, and follow a set of guidelines that encompass all possible actions. This structure is set up to give the teenagers caretakers who are predictable, which the teens often didn't have before they came to a program. But in many programs, residents are often given very little, if any, information about their direct caretakers. This is supposed to keep the relationships between teens and staff interchangeable and predictable as well. But, once again, this often sterilizes and professionalizes the relationship to the point of uselessness.

Caretakers are usually forbidden to bring personal experiences, strengths, successes and failures to work. A lesbian, an incest survivor, a recovered addict or alcoholic spends a good part of her energy trying not to say "I've been there," when a teenager is going through a crisis or trying to make a decision. In fact, staff members who have some of the same past experiences as the young people they work with are seen by other staff as potentially unstable or questionable. Societal norms are very much enforced among staff, rather than being challenged, which ensures that prejudices are passed on to the young people who are being educated.

As a result, many teens feel all the more awkward about their own "messed-up" situations. This creates an embarrassment and a fear that they will be judged through a white, upper middle class lens. No real model of steps from crisis to safety is offered if every adult must profess to never having encountered crises themselves. Part of the reason for this devaluing of direct care workers' experience and knowledge is that psychiatry is a medical profession and "deviants" have been re-categorized as "sick" (Holloran, p. 240). Therefore, only someone with a medical degree is seen to be qualified to shape the treatment of a young person.

In easily over half of the current cases, a teenager is shipped from one program to the next, never able to make connections or to feel rooted. Especially if the teenager has grown up in the system of foster care and group homes, a residential usually seems like just another state care institution. This constant shifting can continue through adolescence, which wastes the teenager's time, disrupts her progress through school, wastes money and effort, and recreates all the loss and instability of home. Support for at-risk teens needs a major overhaul, beginning with the terms teens are labeled with and ending with a just system that would be able to acknowledge the root causes of abuse. Some of these reforms would merely involve shifts in semantics - where a teenager is now called a "victim of abuse," which implies passivity, let them be called "survivors." Simply referring to the teenagers in this manner and focusing on their skills in survival may give them more of a



JUNK Matthew Sweet

He was half way across the country before we caught up with him. But as soon as we began chatting, Matthew Sweet and I could have doubled for any couple stuck in the latest corny AT&T commercial, preferring to relax into one long, languid and informal exchange rather than attempt reaching out and touching one another. (Besides, I don't even know if that's legal.)

Interview by Buck O'Shea

Courtesy photo: Jeff Bender/Zoo Entertainment

As We Are: Ames, Iowa....Don't know much about it. Is it one of the square ones?

Matthew Sweet: Hmm, I think so. Although, it doesn't really feel square, but it does feel pretty overcast, cloudy and rainy.

And you have a show to do.

Yeah. Good weather, bad weather, it doesn't affect us too much.

Didn't you play a show in Oklahoma City shortly after the bombing?

Yeah, it was a very depressing scene there. I think that all of us [in the band and crew] really felt that you didn't get a sense of the extent of the devastation to the downtown area from watching TV. There's so much focus on the building itself; but the surrounding area is really messed up too, all the windows are out and a lot of buildings just collapsed. You really get a feeling of how creepy it is that someone could do that so easily and the real tragedy of it is that the city did nothing to ask for it. It was retaliation for something totally unrelated to Oklahoma City.

When did you decide to turn the Oklahoma City show into a benefit?

We had our show booked there before it happened and there was a good turnout. It was a pretty heavy scene for all of us so we just decided to make it a benefit at the last minute. I felt like we oughta do that. We were glad to see people turn out for the show, and we were appreciative, but you still couldn't get past the feeling that something wasn't right and there was kind of a gloominess going on.

And, from what I understand, you had more than one reason to feel on edge.

Yeah, they put us in a hotel where the FBI, the CIA and the ATF were headquartered?

Were headquartered?!!
Yes.

Well, in that case we're very glad you were able to speak with us today.

Yeah, me too.

Let's talk about the public response to your first two releases. Specifically, how do you account for the disparity of views on the previously released *Girlfriend* and *Altered Beast*?

I have to make the argument that although *Altered Beast* got publicly trashed in a couple of places, the general reviews for it were really good. There were a lot of critics who really got into that record. In certain ways, the reviews I got for *Altered Beast* were more satisfying than anything I got for *Girlfriend*. In hindsight, people kind of glorify the response to *Girlfriend*. It's not like there weren't people who were lukewarm about that album.

How do you feel about the present work, *100% Fun*?

I'm not really one to blow my own horn about it. I mean, I like it [laughs]. Some of the same themes are there from earlier albums. I just spoke with a guy who said there's lot of God on *Girlfriend* and it's been missing from the last two records.

I wouldn't say that it's missing, but it's definitely not as pronounced. Do you find the two equally mysterious, that is, women and God?
I guess I do. I don't find women as mysterious as my feelings about them. God is such a general thing. Over time, it's been harder and harder for me to believe that there is a God, in the traditional sense.

Do you have a religious background?

In my world, I guess I believe more that God is nature and is no less mysterious, beautiful, or terrible for

not being some guy who's going to save us. I believe there's goodness in people who care about each other, hope and faith and all those things with or without a God.

Do you struggle with these issues in your songs?

I struggle with issues in the songs all the time. I guess I struggle with things in my life. Lyrically, it may not be exactly what I'm struggling with, but those feelings get in there. I guess I struggle with the same things that most people would who examine their life. First of all there's the massive, biggest problem that we're all going to die, which is really a bummer [way cute giggle]. I think that's the central problem, which is why people need God so bad.

Were you a philosophy major?

No, I've come up with this stuff on my own. You don't need philosophy to look around and say that the world doesn't quite make sense. The problem with me is that I wanted it to be true, it made sense to me as a child: "He's there, that'll help". As I got older, I just realized it wasn't true.

What happened? When did the cynicism set in?

Nothing happened, it's just the more that I looked around and absorbed what was going on around me, the harder it was for me to reconcile it with those ideas. I think a lot of those ideas in religion are great, beautiful things about how to look at the world or how people interact and how to deal with yourself. The general ideas are really good, but it doesn't make me believe that there's this other place that we're all going to go to, I hope it's true. I have to think that if there is a God, I could be a fool and not know and he'd still forgive me. So I am willing to take that leap and take responsibility for myself and say that he's not there.

In many of your songs, you've got a

The Sweetness & The Light

very important second person thing going on - you, you, you.

Well, it just has to do with perspective. Sometimes I feel like I'm on the outside looking in.

So the songs are more situational?

I think of it as being a really general thing - the "you" could be anybody. It's not just people I know, or people I'm in relationships with. I often times write really personal relationship-type songs that are totally fictional as far as it's happening to me right then. I often times write songs where I think I'm more the "you" in it than I am the person singing in it.

"It's kind of a great thing because on the one hand it's sort of special, it leaves some impression, but on the other hand it's like the rudest thing you can do. It's nasty because it makes such a mess everywhere and it gets on everything and all over you."

That's interesting!
But I think people look at my songs because they have that conversational tone. They seem to want to assign my life to them and understand them in that way, like, "Why did he write that? About who?" There are very general, emotional feelings that I write songs from and the lyrics can come from anything. They may not be very related to anything, or they may really be related to something, it just depends.

That's a pretty good answer. So Rick [Menck - drummer/Velvet Crush - As We Are, issue #3] is playing on a few of your songs? He's a great guy, isn't he?

Oh yeah, he's one of my greatest old friends.

He was telling me this story when we got together that you sent him a letter with glitter in it. I thought that was very cool.

It's a very Athens, [GA] thing to do. People from Athens send me letters with glitter in them all the time.

You're kidding!

No. It's kind of a great thing because on the one hand it's sort of special, it leaves some impression, but on the other hand it's like the rudest thing you can do. It's nasty because it makes such a mess everywhere and it gets on everything and all over you.[more giggling].

Well, it just goes to show you how impressions can be, because it sounds to me so 70s.

It was more child-like. I think all of us were into this sort of pre-school-level of art, it was in the wake of punk rock and everything, it was radical to be into poppy-glittery songs.

Rick tells me that he's learned a lot from you. It sounds like you learned quite a bit from him too.

Well, just in terms of music and the music business. I find out a lot of things from him. If he tells me, "These guys are good," I'll go, "What about so-and-so? I keep hearing about them." He'll say, "Oh they suck, don't even worry about them." He's a real junkie, just kind of waiting for the next thing to come out. I remember him just kind of hanging out looking for stuff to come out of Creation records. He's a very intelligent person in a very emotional way.

That's a very good assessment - "in an emotional way."
I mean he's intelligent in a lot of ways. He's very sensitive. Usually sensitive people are very intelligent.

When I talked with Velvet Crush, they talked a lot about perfecting the three-minute pop classic. Is that what you're hoping to do as well?

I think just by living and expressing yourself, somethings going to last from that. There's gonna be somebody who still cares about it sometime in the future. Things only become exotic with hindsight. There's all kind of bands that nothing was happening for in the 60s that we like revere and worship and love their work now. I guess I would be less of the mind of trying to create a pop-masterpiece thing. You can't think you're gonna do that, you gotta be just doing it. You just have to try to find the feeling in yourself, and try and bring it out the best you can. I guess I just don't think of it that same way and I think Velvet Crush is more hoping that is just happens too.

I think you're right about that.

I mean, once the song is there you can talk about it until you're blue in the face and everybody can analyze it and decide what I meant or what I was doing. It doesn't have to live up to anything, it doesn't have to be anything but a feeling that got into music. By people analyzing it, it's kind of a strange thing anyway because you can't go back and feel what you felt at that time. So there's no sense in doing that. Sometimes you recapture a feeling. I think songs often serve to remind us of a feeling. It's like a cliche, it's so classic. Something is going on in your life where you have a very strong emotional feeling and there's a song you hear then that you identify with or you feel something from; that song will always take you back to that feeling, even if you can't remember that feeling any more, when you hear that song, you'll know you had it. I mean those are the moments in our life that are most important.

Well, I guess we can figure out what you feel strongly about.

Yeah, well it's something I can't get from my own songs as much, I can't really listen to them and feel the way I felt when I made them. I know what that feeling is like because I get it from other people's songs. So that's the highest form of flattery when people get a feeling from something it's beyond analyzing it and comparing it to things, it just means something to them on their own level, that's the most important thing. And Velvet Crush has those types of fans too. It's hard when you do your music, you never can get enough encouragement to feel good about it. So one day, your

We Couldn't Come Up With a Good Title for Our MUSIC Review Section

Royal Trux ■■■■■
Thank You
(Virgin)

What I'm hearing from the new Royal Trux album is nothing new: another pale, half-hearted, head nod to the Rolling Stones' *Exile on Main Street*. The latter album is a rock 'n' roll gem whose influence is so widespread today that only a few, like The Black Crowes or Primal Scream, manage to pay homage in a respectful way. In turn, Royal Trux attempts to mimic the swank and joyous decadence of *Exile*, and on a few cuts they almost succeed. Overall, however they lack any kind of musical vision or integrity.

Fronted by a guy/girl team, Neil Hagerty and Jennifer Herrema, Royal Trux slips into a few, bluesy grooves every once in a while. The opening cut, "A Night to Remember" has a hooky, trippy guitar riff, of which something similar fails to resurface until Track 7, "Light on The Levee." Most of the numbers, in an attempt at versatility, dwell in lazy free-time, erratic dissonance, and warbly production. Hagerty and Herrema are always out of key when they attempt their Jagger/Richards' vocal harmonies. Granted Jagger and Richards were out of key too, but at least they wrote memorable tunes. Royal Trux songs leave you flat and dissatisfied with rock 'n' roll as an art form. I also don't exaggerate when I say that Herrema, who handles most of the vocal work in her raspy growl, at times, sounds too much like Otto, the bus driver from *The Simpsons*.

—Jim Bouzan

Royal Trux ■■■■■
Thank You
(Virgin)

What I'm hearing from the new Royal Trux album is nothing new: another pale, half-hearted, head nod to the Rolling Stones' *Exile on Main Street*. The latter album is a rock 'n' roll gem whose influence is so widespread today that only a few, like The Black Crowes or Primal Scream, manage to pay homage in a respectful way. In turn, Royal Trux attempts to mimic the swank and joyous decadence of *Exile*, and on a few cuts they almost succeed. Overall, however they lack any kind of musical vision or integrity.

Fronted by a guy/girl team, Neil Hagerty and Jennifer Herrema, Royal Trux slips into a few, bluesy grooves every once in a while. The opening cut, "A Night to Remember" has a hooky, trippy guitar riff, of which something similar fails to resurface until Track 7, "Light on The Levee." Most of the numbers, in an attempt at versatility, dwell in lazy free-time, erratic dissonance, and warbly production. Hagerty and Herrema are always out of key when they attempt their Jagger/Richards' vocal harmonies. Granted Jagger and Richards were out of key too, but at least they wrote memorable tunes. Royal Trux songs leave you flat and dissatisfied with rock 'n' roll as an art form. I also don't exaggerate when I say that Herrema, who handles most of the vocal work in her raspy growl, at times, sounds too much like Otto, the bus driver from *The Simpsons*.

—Jim Bouzan

Eric Pakula, Pandalis Karayorgis,
Eric Rosenthal ■■■■■
Between Speech and Song (Cadence)

This jazz quartet has created a unique and rich musical space, far above the mire of mere novelty or



untamed abstraction common among contemporary jazz. Pandalis Karayorgis (piano) and Eric Pakula (alto sax)

produce a quirky, organ-like sound when playing in unison, reminiscent of Monk and Coltrane. Rather than emulating this sound, it is derived from attempting a similar task, that of focusing of two performers' distinct styles in presenting a melody. The CD consists of more than a score of these two composers' efforts, along with one 'standard' by Lennie Tristano. Each selection is played and recorded with as much solidarity and as little pretension as one could hope for in contemporary jazz. Their work is quite extraordinary in its efficiency: in a typical three-to-five minute cut, they present the core material strongly and conduct their improvisation tangentially, yet are very demonstrative of the form and phrasing of the compositions, at all times passionate yet whimsical. The result is a very wild ride through a host of surreal landscapes. This animation is balanced by the intelligently brushed textures of Eric Rosenthal on drums, and Jonathan Robinson on bass, allowing some relief to the prodigiously eccentric yet well-matched personalities behind the saxophone and piano.

—David Alt

Jazz Lee Alston ■■■■■
Jazz Lee Alston (American)

Jazz Lee Alston has crafted a strong debut CD with a stunningly personal vision, at once surprising and disarming. She is at heart a poet, supremely capable of expressing her experience as a black woman of uncommon strength and self-assurance. This disappointingly short disc (27 minutes/

six songs) contains some strong language, coupled with powerful images of addiction and domestic abuse. It has unusual depths, power, and focus for the work of a young artist at the beginning of her career.

The opening song, "Love...Never That" relates events surrounding the tragic death of Alston's cousin, a victim of domestic abuse. The smartass, whispery tone of her voice is at odds with the tragedy it describes, and the effect is haunting. "Glass Dick," Alston's agonizing and chilling take on the loss of self and the profaning of the soul that parallels crack addiction, is shocking and vivid. She uses strong sexual imagery to portray the seduction of drugs. Ultimately, the image and the reality fuse, and her harrowing tale ends with the protagonist using sex to feed her addiction.

"Me, Myself, and I," Alston's ode to the joys of masturbation, is sensual, sassy and remarkably self-assured. It contrasts sharply with "round Black berry" her only misstep on the disc. Her attempt to wallow in the Donna Summer/Barry White "Let's screw and moan a lot, baby" morass seems forced and awkward. This tune has a pandering, formulaic feel to it, and differs sharply with the impression that Alston is a woman with a strong and highly individualized sexual identity. However, the disc offers few such moments that fail to convince, and they do not diminish the power of this impressive debut.

The CD is well-produced with understated arrangements that encourage the voice and message of Alston to break through. Fresh, powerful, and not likely to be heard on your local AOR FM station anytime soon.

—Bruce Forney Menin

Terrell ■■■■■
Angry Southern Gentleman
(Pointblank)

This is not a good title for an album by a folksy, roots-oriented, acoustic singer-songwriter from Los Angeles. Maybe Greg Allman could get away



with this as a title, but after listening to Terrell, I'm not convinced of any anger or exposure to the wrong side of the tracks.

Terrell has a knack for telling interesting stories though through his music. "Strawdogs" tells the story of a group of criminals masterminding a bank heist, while "Newhope" is about a small-town hick who suddenly decides to escape his disillusionment in a pickup truck. The music is produced perfectly for this type of story-telling format, with an up-close and personal studio vibe. Terrell is also an adequate singer and guitar player, laid back, professional and sophisticated. However, as far as vocals go, I don't think he knows where to draw the line between rootsy toughness and studio sophistication. He leans too much to the latter while his lyrics require the other.

The problem I have with Terrell is the same problem I have with bands like Hootie and the Blowfish and Blues Traveller—for music that is supposedly derived from the roots music of soul, blues, gospel, and folk, it sounds too watered-down, too mainstream, and the worst sin of all, too white. Just because Terrell's band utilizes classic folk and rock instruments like dobros, slide guitars, B3 organs, and violins, doesn't keep this "angry" singer-songwriter from falling into the sleepy-time category of adult contemporary.

—Jim Bouzan

Zero *Chance in a Million* (Horizon/A&M)

Zero is an amalgam of San Francisco musicians, gigging together in the fall of 1992 and recording this live album at Great American Hall. Chance in a Million features players creamed from the best SF bands of the last 30 years. These include the Dead's lyricist Robert Hunter, and a bass player from innumerable Garcis/Saunders sessions—John Kahn. Peter Sears, keyboardist from Jefferson Starship, participates as did the late Nicky Hopkins, pianist with Quicksilver. Martin Fierro sax player with Sir Douglas Quintet in the late 60s steps in, as does bassist Bobby Vega who worked with Santana in the late 70s. Vince Welnick, longtime keyboardist with the Tubes rounds out the entourage. These very diverse talents are remarkably simpatico, and the result is a lot of very high energy, eminently danceable, always listenable music.

The sound is very crisp, with

keyboards featured prominently. The band can rock, as well as deliver scorching rhythm-and-blues. The songs cover a lot of stylistic ground, and are executed with precision and great feeling by a stage full of very talented musicians. The players immerse themselves in the music, never quite getting lost, and always coming up with fresh twists, and delicate touches. The dreamlike instrumental ballad, "Forever Nowhere" brackets a shimmering and evocative piano solo (sounds very much like Hopkins) with some soaring slide guitar work by Steve Kimmock.

The cut that follows, "Mercury Blues," barrels along propelled by guitarist Steve Kimmock's scorching lead runs, Fierro's incendiary saxophone, and alternating twin keyboard solos. There is a tightness and polish to the performances and a sharpness to the sound that obscures the fact that the album was recorded live. The music is at once fresh and derivative, and manages to evoke the best of 30 years of the "SF sound" without becoming a parody. Their energy is infectious, and the CD bears up under repeated listening. These boys can play.

—Bruce Forney Menin

Ajax *Ex-junkie* (Zoo Entertainment)

Having really nothing to say about this disk, I will simply describe its musical essence which consists of one title track which is remixed and subsequently renamed seven times; i.e. 1. Ex-cheerleader mix 2. Ex-tra bass mix 3. Ex-boyfriend mix, etc., etc., etc. After having listened to the first mix and following the conviction that Mephistopheles had indeed possessed

my CD player, I found myself trying desperately to turn the incessant rap-babble off, only to be accosted by it once again when

I failed to hit the stop button with my shoe. Upon trying to physically remove the CD, I accidentally hit the play button and was sure my fate was sealed...Thinking quickly, I grabbed



the holy oil next to my bed (it could happen!) and sprinkled my demonized boomer vigorously, chanting passages memorized, as a child, from Exodus. Some things just can't be explained, like for instance, why is it that this anorexic, angst ridden, house-hold cleaner dubbed, lead cutie is portrayed on the CD's cover, bathed in an eerie white light....? hmmm...

—Buck O'Shea

Various Artists *Livin' Lounge* (Continuum)

Whoever thought that the cornball jazz and tawdry showmanship of Las Vegas-lounge acts like Sammy Davis Jr. and Dean Martin would inspire an entire musical genre. Subtitled "The Fabulous Sounds of Now," *Livin' Lounge* captures the sounds of contemporary lounge acts such as Buster Poindexter (a.k.a. David Johanssen) Andy Prieboy, and The Lounge Lizards. Everyone on this compilation seems to have honed their hip, ironic humor from watching Bill Murray satirize lounge singers on Saturday Night Live. Buster Poindexter used to be in punk rock's own New York Dolls, so we know he's not taking this too seriously.



I find this record a blast mostly because of the lyrics. They're all about cheap whiskey and even cheaper women. The

Wonderful World of Joey has a song that begs, "Get outta my life, but first get outta my girl." Other examples of lounge's hip, irreverent humor include Andy Prieboy's "Cannot Not" and The Vice Royal's "Girl in a Martini Glass." But, unfortunately the music itself does not surpass the cool irony it extenuates in most cases. The tunes range from steamy bossa novas to trumpet-blaring swing music. Many of these lounge acts know the form well and they use it to their advantage. But it's easy to tell that these guys, in all their dry martinis and leisure suits, are more style than substance.

—Jim Bouzan

Wailing Souls *Live On* (Zoo Entertainment)

Some of the more interesting aspects of this CD are the stories

behind the soulful music of Lloyd "Bread" McDonald and Winston "Pipes" Matthews, the talented duo that is Wailing Souls. Born and raised in Trenchtown Jamaica, Matthews and McDonald spin tales of the violence and chaos that once surrounded them as children. Having lost many friends to gang violence, the two reflect thoughtfully on the spiritualist path that led them, via Bob Marley and others, to their understanding of the world; specifically "One people, one world, one God." And it is this understanding that comes through in such selections as "Live On", "Don't Give Up" and "Nuff Suffering."

Employing the use of many a percussion instrument (one which I failed to identify kept me checking the alarm on my watch incessantly) the band gains an additional strength from the clear vocals of the aptly named "Pipes" - wailing being his specialty. An uplifting selection of covers were chosen partly to inspire the listener and partly because of the duo's philosophical nature. Whatever the past of Matthews and McDonald, their message here is clearly to "overcome," and it is refreshing.

- Buck O'Shea

Wiretapping from page 17
— tacit, and mostly secret, approval of agency leadership and their backers in government.

The most recent example of this situation was the FBI's investigation of the AIDS activist organization ACT UP. Another prominent example was the FBI's campaign against *La Solidaridad con el Pueblo de El Salvador* (CISPES) in the early 1980s, which took place at the height of the Reagan Administration. Wiretaps, break-ins, and infiltration of CISPES were conducted against this non-violent organization whose most dangerous act was conducting symbolic civil-disobedience actions against various backers of the U.S.-backed military dictatorship that ran El Salvador at the time.

The crux of this problem is that there is very little oversight over the organizations that conduct electronic surveillance. Wiretaps, by their very nature, must be kept secret in order to be effective. But that makes them easily misused. To this day, there are few enforceable controls over the FBI, local police and affiliated law enforcement agencies that cover their use of wiretaps.

Faith No More

King For A Day/ Fool For A Lifetime (Slash/Reprise)

This new album by L.A.'s premier metal-funk-rap-punk-and-everything else outfit has not been receiving the praise it rightly deserves. The trendy, alternative-ass-kissing critics at *Rolling Stone*, for example, have been quick to write off *King For a Day* as eclectic trash. I say let them wallow in their jeans

advertisements and leave the music reviews to people with taste. Don't they know that Faith No More have been busting out of the confines of musical labels for the last seven years now, unprecedented in their hard-rock diversity and penchant for fusing genres.

On *King*, FNM continues their musical-genre hopping, opening with two throat-cutting metal tunes, "Get Out" and "Ricochet." The next few numbers, sound like they come straight out of a Marvin Gaye anthology. The bass and guitar truckle in with funky R&B licks, the keyboards wash over



with horn samples, and psycho-singer Mike Patton mellows out with his best soft-rock vocals. Patton has many vocal personalities ranging from sweetly melodic to super insane. "Digging the Grave" serves as an example: the verse plows through with an exaggerated baritone, screaming out the title in the chorus, while finally sweeping in with the clear melody, "Throw something in or let something out/ You let the door open wide." Upon hearing him, you would realize that if the guy had not found a rock band to sing in, he would have, long ago, given in, in some anti-social fashion, to those "voices in his head."

The drummer for this band, Mike Bordin, is one of the few drummers in the rock world with a distinct sound. He holds down the beat with a tribal rhythm that holds as the center of the widely diverse styles of the band. Whether FNM is doing something that sounds country-like, "Take this Bottle," or a gospel-layered tune, "Last to Know," the drums serve as a consistent element throughout the album. FNM soars despite falling out of the 120 Minutes orbit. Eclecticism is exactly what makes them an agent of hope in this discouraging musical age where most bands use three chords to fit their one-dimensional sound.

- Jim Bouzan

ment agencies that cover their use of wiretaps.

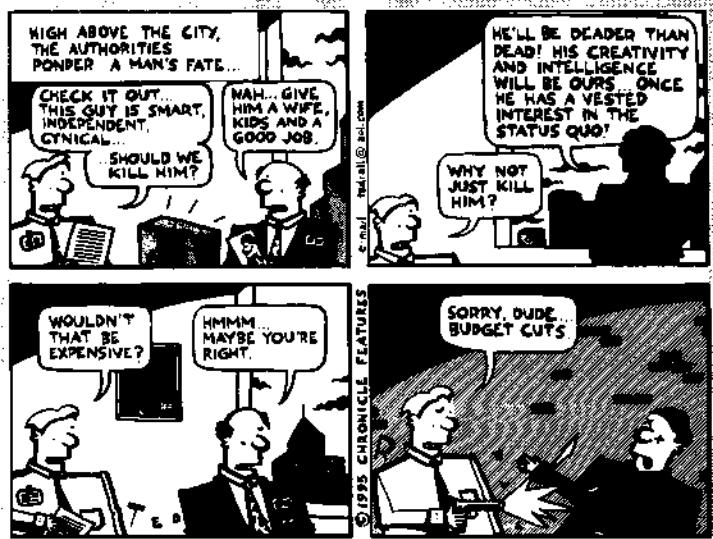
All too often they step over the line between legitimate crime-busting activities and acting as political police for purposes of social control. Obviously, what one considers "legitimate" is a big debate, but it is a debate that needs to happen as the nation

recovers from the Oklahoma City bombing. Because it is precisely at such moments that agencies like the FBI seize the public's fear of chaos and random violence to give themselves unlimited powers.

Americans of all political stripes allow this disturbing development to go unchecked at their peril — if history shows us

anything. And in this case, history shows us that we should all think twice before handing our privacy over to organizations who have shown little capacity for restraint when given the keys to all of our personal lives.

- Jason Pramas and Simson Garfinkel



JUNE TWENTY-ONE

Before,
It was the slim fitting slip dress
with the black flared bottom
that made her seem half shade.
Or maybe, the beaded choker
she wore, velvety pearl seed drops of
frosted gray glass, glowing like
moon tears on her porcelain throat.

When
she placed a hand on his body,
stroked his smooth forehead,
we knew. Her heart beat
visibly into her back and her
look blazed into his face,
creating the shadow.
There was a simple gold
band on her right ring finger.
It tricked the eye to believe that

she was the specter.

How
her conscience cracked couldn't matter.
It's just that she knew he
escaped in the room, a mahogany
mist, the smell of pine wafting
among the ash bin. She breathed
him in deeply, hysterically laughing,
sympathy and flowers stretched
beyond making meaning.
As if any mortal can command and call thunder;
sorrow is endless when memory is burning.

We didn't know if it would be better if
she just exploded, became the air with him,
or fell into the earth with her white arms flailing.
She had given that much in her lifetime.
The service just wasn't enough.

PATRICIA DOGNAZZI

UNTITLED

I want to buy a car I said
What kind of car you looking for?
he asked, like I knew he would
and I replied without pausing
I want something big and strong,
low and sleek, like a cheetah;
its gotta be olda, beaten up
working-class chic, no plastic,
no fake bumpers, six cylinders
and an extra tire.
How much would you like to spend?
What it takes, buddy, what it takes.
I know what you need, he says,
trying to look prepared,
we just got this in last week
it's got a dual over-cam drive—
skip the talk, I say, lets ride.
He takes it off the lot
then I take over the wheel.
I give it hell,
he asks me to slow down,
I jam the brakes, hard,
hear the sound of metal
get out and give him the keys,
not enough ball, I say, and leave.

—MICHAEL AHO

JONATHAN KOZOL JANE HAMILTON JOHN SAYLES
ROBERT STONE FRAN LEIBOWITZ ETHAN CANIN
WILLIAM CASS KAYE GIBBONS DAVID MCCAULAY
ROBERT COLES ALICE MUNRO PETER CAREY
MARIANNE FAITHFULL ALLEN GINSBERG EDMUND
WHITE JANE SMILEY GLORIA STEINEM REYNOLDS
PRICE RUSSELL BANKS LANI GUINIER SANDRA
CISNEROS JANE WAGNER JIM HARRISON KINKY
FRIEDMAN ANNE LAMOTT BARBARA KINGSOLVER
ISABEL ALLENDE AMY TAN TOBIAS WOLFF
LAURIE ANDERSON SUSIE BRIGHT ALBERT FRENCH
ALL THESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TO BARBARA'S
ANDREW VACHSS NTOZAKE SHANGE WILLIAM
BURROUGHS JOSEPH CAMPBELL GLORIA NAYLOR
MARTIN AMIS WALTER MOSLEY J.G. BALLARD
KATHY ACKER KUZO ISHIGURO CYNTHIA HEIMEL
SPALDING GRAY PAUL AUSTER BEBE MOORE
CAMPBELL ANNE RICE ART SPIEGELMAN CAROLYN
FORCHE PENN AND TELLER NAOMI WOLF TIM
O'BRIEN EUGENE ISSI NICHOLSON BAKER BILL
BRYSON BRENT STAPLES RICHARD FORD W.P.
KINSELLA ROBERT OLEN BUTLER STUDS TERKEL
SHERMAN ALEXIE DAVID SEDARIS ANCHEE MIN
MICHAEL ONDAATJE SUSAN SONTAG MARK LEYNER
FRANK CONROY JERZY KOSINSKI KAREN FINLEY
RICHARD BRAUTIGAN JOHN LYDON ANNIE PROULX
ERIC BOGORIAN NAT HENTOFF DOUG COUPLAND
MARITA GOLDEN BUCKMINSTER FULLER JOSPEH
HELLER LI-YOUNG LEE SHERWIN NULAND MARK
HELRIN ARMISTEAD MAUPIN WILLIAM GIBSON
ABBIE HOFFMAN
HAVE YOU?

**BARBARA'S
BOOKSTORE**
ESTABLISHED 1963

OPENING AT CHICAGO'S
NAVY PIER, SUMMER '95

1350 North Wells St Chicago, IL 60610 312.642.5044	3130 North Broadway Chicago, IL 60657 312.477.0411	1100 Lake St Oak Park, IL 60301 708.848.9140
--	--	--

Activist Archives:

The latest documents in progressive politics

[Editor's Note: As part of As We Are's ongoing commitment to giving exposure to progressive activism around the U.S., we've started this new regular section called "Activist Archives." Every issue, we'll feature a leaflet or broadside produced by any grassroots organizing group that sends their work in for publication in these pages. We're particularly interested in stuff put out by under-30 groups, or folks doing intergenerational organizing. If your group has a piece you'd like us to consider, please send it to us at: "Activist Archives", AWA, PO Box 380048, Cambridge, MA 02238.]

Women. Do you have trouble getting guys to wear condoms? You're not alone.

[This flyer was produced on 4/23/95 as a project of the 1995 community education class, "Women's Liberation: Where Do I Fit In?" taught by Gainesville Women's Liberation (GWL). Women in New York City, Philadelphia, Orlando, FL and Vero Beach, FL are also distributing this flyer. The experiences described here are those of the class participants and people we interviewed.]

In our experience, guys almost never volunteer to wear a condom. The burden is on us, the women, to ask. Not only do we have to initiate the use, we often have to supply the condoms and sometimes put them on guys, because they won't. **We know why we want men to wear condoms, and it is unacceptable that we have to do all the work and take all the responsibility to get men to wear them.**

Men resist wearing condoms, and they use a variety of tactics. Sometimes they tell us lies ("I won't come inside you," "I can't get you pregnant"). Sometimes they will outright refuse to have sex with a condom, but usually their resistance is subtler, like whining ("Aw, come on..."), trying to make us feel guilty or selfish ("It doesn't feel as good"), or letting us know that there are plenty of women out there who won't make him wear a condom.

Extreme forms of men's "passive" resistance include losing erections and not being able to come. These problems men have seem to be involuntary ("just biology"), but our experience shows if we insist on condoms anyway, these problems usually go away. These problems can be another pressure tactic men use to get us to let them not wear condoms.

The struggle to make men use condoms makes sex less pleasurable for women and a lot more work because we're fighting a wall of men's resistance. Even men's subtle continual pressure on us to have unprotected sex or use other forms of birth control (like the Pill) wears us down, and sometimes we give in. Then we are forced to take all the risks of unprotected sex in order to get pleasure and love from men, and to reduce struggle and tension with them when they whine and complain.

For men, not using condoms is a matter of convenience and marginally more enjoyment. They apparently don't think they'll get AIDS or other STDs.

But women fight back even though men resist, because we have so much more to lose:

- Women get pregnant and have to either have an abortion – or do the physical work of reproduction, carrying a fetus for nine months and then giving birth. In addition, women usually shoulder the financial burden of either choice, and if they carry the pregnancy to term, they are expected to raise the child as well.
- Women suffer much greater consequences from STDs than men. Chlamydia and gonorrhea can make us sterile; genital warts and herpes can cause cervical cancer – things that don't happen to men with these same diseases. Women are also much more likely to catch AIDS from men than vice versa.
- We also face irritating and serious side effects and long-term effects of chemical contraceptives like the Pill and the Depo Provera shot.
- Even if we don't get pregnant or catch an STD, we still have to worry about these things and worry about getting the guy to wear a condom. These worries make sex much more of a drag for us: less spontaneous and less fun while the guy is apparently care-free.

Men, take your share of responsibility in sex

- Always assume that you need to wear a condom. Do not assume that women have taken care of birth control. Don't wait for the woman to have to ask. Be prepared by having condoms and knowing how to use them.
- Don't give us a hard time about using them under any circumstances.
- Pay the full costs of the birth control we choose or abortion, or pay at least half of childbirth and

childcare costs, if we choose to have a child. (1)

Men use a whole gamut of resistances and tactics to avoid wearing a condom. They succeed because women haven't formed a united front on this issue yet. There is always the threat that your man will go find someone else, another woman who will go that extra mile, another woman who won't make him wear a condom or make as many demands on him to shape up in general. So we women end up doing things we wouldn't normally do if the relationship were more equal. Women know that our chances of keeping a guy are better if we don't make him wear a condom or we don't insist that he treat us better - if we make demands for him to shape up, we're afraid he'll think we're a "nag," "bitch," or just too much of a pain to be worth his time. The threat he uses is that some other woman will be nicer to him, less demanding.

Women struggling individually on the great condom front, each with our own guy, is not working - we end up fighting this battle with each new guy and repeatedly in relationships. Men do improve some when we individually pressure them, but then they backslide. To get all guys to wear condoms, unconditionally, let's all of us get together, all of us who are having sex with guys, and insist that men wear condoms. Let there be no "other woman" for men to turn to. Making men wear condoms is a political issue, not just an individual, personal problem we're having.

Women, what we can do to make our lives better?

- Make men wear condoms. We need to join forces on this: we all need to make this demand together, now, for us to win - to get all guys to wear condoms.
- Talk to other women about this.
- Copy and distribute this flyer.
- Join a feminist group.

We believe that all men have been able to get away with fighting us on wearing condoms because they have more power than us, the power they get from male supremacy. "We define male supremacy as behavior which benefits men at the expense of women. Men get better pay, more freedom from menial or repetitive chores in the home, an unwarranted sense of personal worth and deference from women in hundreds of little ways each day." [Judith Brown, "Editorial," *The Radical Therapist, Special Issue: Women* (Aug.-Sept. 1970)] (2)

We women need an organized women's liberation movement to fight back against all these little and big ways that men keep us down every day, *including not wearing condoms*. If enough women demand condoms, at some point men will automatically put them on - we won't even need to ask.

Footnotes

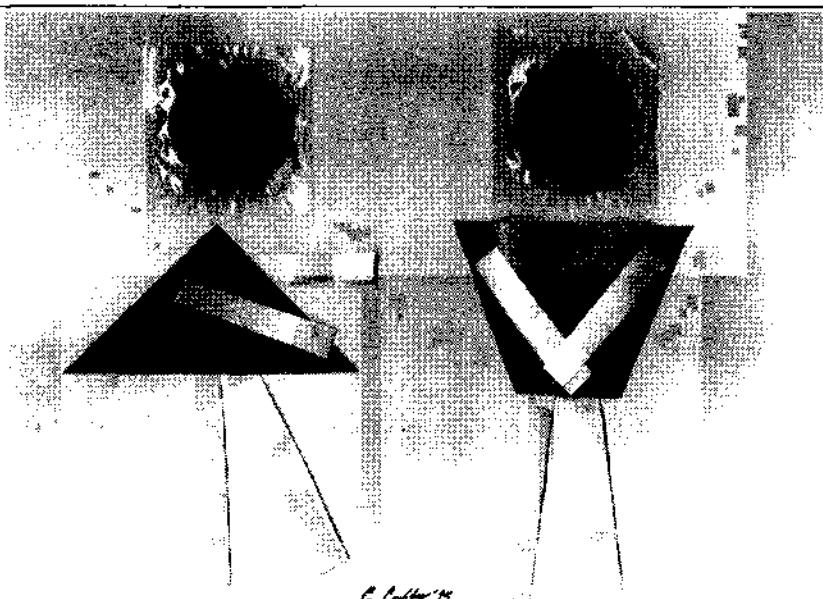
(1) Women must pay the full physical price of pregnancy, either by undergoing an abortion or carrying the pregnancy for nine months and giving birth. There is no way to "even up" this biological inequity. The least men can do is pay the full cost of birth control and abortion.

(2) Judith Brown is the founder of Gainesville Women's Liberation, the first southern Women's Liberation Organization, and co-author, with Bev Jones, of the groundbreaking 1968 paper, "Towards a Female Liberation Movement."

Let us know what you think of this flyer by writing to GWL, PO Box 2625, Gainesville, FL 32602.

*She Said,
He Said...*

Christine Coffey



C. Coffey '95

Seeing Solomon



Review of Steven Solomon's *Paul's Notebook*
Installation at the Middle East Restaurant,
Cambridge, MA, June 1995

Photos of the Work by David Caras
Original self-sketches by Steven
Solomon

Steven Solomon can talk. (Man, can he talk.) He's a city-bred intellectual of the old school walking among us – verbally assaulting the listener with rapid fire riffs that make a hell of a lot of sense when you slow it down in your head. He can attack a subject from several angles. He can talk about an artwork in relation to the Breeder's first album, long-forgotten Russian thinkers, and Pauline Kael movie reviews. And after five minutes he can join the threads of his argument together into a glorious whole.

It's a good time just sitting there jawing with him, as I have on three occasions recently. But he's been getting a little miffed that interviewers at various publications have been running big spreads of his words – and packing his art off into the corner of the page. So, he wants *As We Are* to showcase the art itself. Because he can do many things, but what he wants people to think about is his art. His work. His passion.

"I'm a big believer in the autonomy of the viewer. I'm not a believer in a hierarchy of opinion," he said to me recently over french fries at Cambridge, MA's Middle East Restaurant.

He likes people to feel free to see what they see in his work. But I think he does

seem to want them to ultimately see what he sees. Ever since he was a kid in New York City, sitting awed late at night, pouring over the style of Curt Swan's 1960s Superman comics, imitating every line of the work, spend-



ing four years perfecting the form of one Superman drawing of his own, he's been gradually stripping away the excess from his art. But he's not seeking purity. He's very clear about that.

"Purity aesthetically leads to fascism."

He is seeking a sort of direct connection to his audience. If he gets the work right, they will be seeing the essence of his emotions and intellect. His latest show, *Paul's Notebook* reflects this. The process that led to his latest work started while he spent formative years imitating other artists – as every artist does. After Superman comics, it was Neal Adams' Batman comics. The comics led him to appreciate and imitate the art of the Renaissance. "1960s Superman



Paul's Notebook

has the Renaissance in it. The values of the Renaissance. Poise. And the kind of musculature. The intense idealization of the human figure."

From there he went to the work of Giacometti, the 20th century primitivist sculptor. The vanity of renaissance

perfectionism went out the window for Solomon in favor of the raw emotionalism expressed in Giacometti's African-influenced sculpture. Solomon too became a sculptor. For years he labored at it. Then one day it wasn't enough. There was still too much there. Too much obscuring the connection between artist and audience.

So one day he went down to the lumber yard and had them cut wood panels to his specifications. And he began to paint. He covered the panels with work in red paint. He was listening to Public Enemy. He was painting like a madman in the basement studio where I first met him. But he felt red was too manipulative. Too exciting. That was his previous show. He caught some flack in the press for jumping genres so abruptly. Yet, he hasn't really. He uses elements of sculpture in his work. He puts wax onto the panels in different spots which gives the two-dimensional paintings more life. Makes them jump out at the viewer. His response to the grief he gets for his disregard for established artistic categories is classic.

"There's no jump. A human being gets up in the morning...and first you brush your teeth. Well you're not a brusher. And then you go on and maybe you pay your bills. Well you're not a businessman. Then you go to your job. Well then...you're an office worker? Then after that, you go meet somebody. Well...then you're a Latin Lover? No. The whole idea of breaking things down like that, and compartmentalizing things, is useful but it needs not to take over. So, if you call me a sculptor when I sculpt that's fine. But if you expect me to walk around in a fucking smock all day, you're out of your mind."

In *Paul's Notebook*, Solomon is getting closer to his goal. The colors are more somber. The subjects are mostly in black. The backgrounds mostly white, yellow or light blue. I've been able to view most of this show a number of times -



Wife (original black on yellow)

ing her." The way he accentuates certain curves body seems to tell the viewer what he's focus-

of her
ing on.

It reminded me of a hunch-backed girl I once met at a crazy "anarchist" gathering in Minneapolis. It was a very painful image. But intensely human. I wanted to buy the painting immediately. (Though, I, of course, didn't have any money.)

Solomon told me the background of the painting. There was a woman he had been dating for a couple of years. Marriage was



9/95
> Solomon 95

by Jason Pramas

Solomon page 58

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1995 43

both in his studio and at the Middle East. His larger works, reproduced above, are the ones I find most visually arresting. Both are 6 feet by 4 feet in real life.

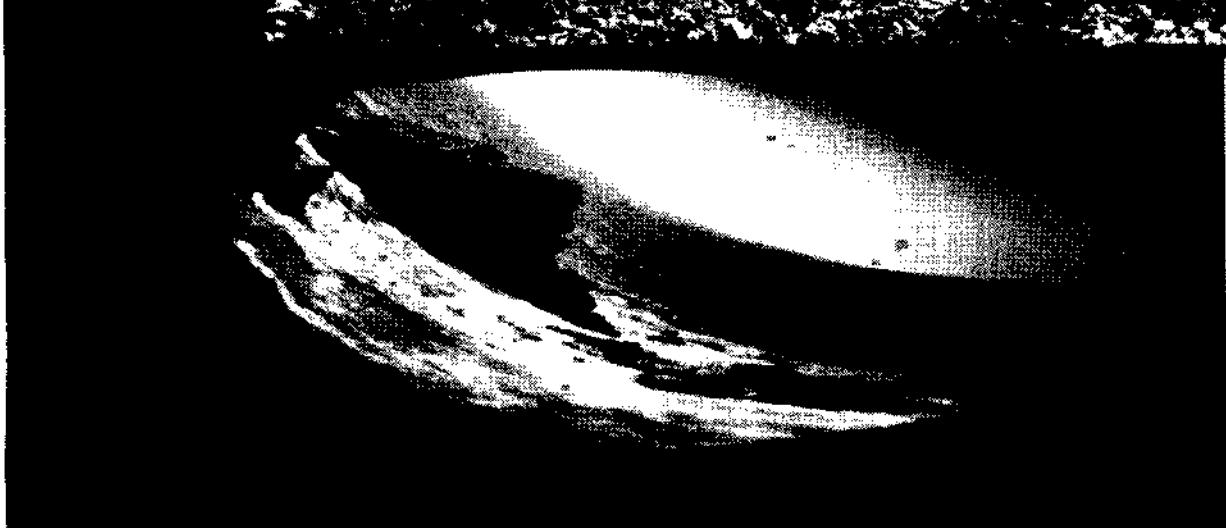
Here Solomon has room to move. Here, even without knowing the background of the works, I find things to relate to on a very human level. "Wife" is my favorite. When I first saw it, he immediately wanted to know what I was thinking. I said, "I see a woman. And she's very sad. She's drinking heavily, but it doesn't dull the pain she's feeling. In the background, almost receding away, I see a door. She can't seem to escape what's bother-



Napa Valley

Photography
by Laura
Lakeway

Near Haight Ashbury

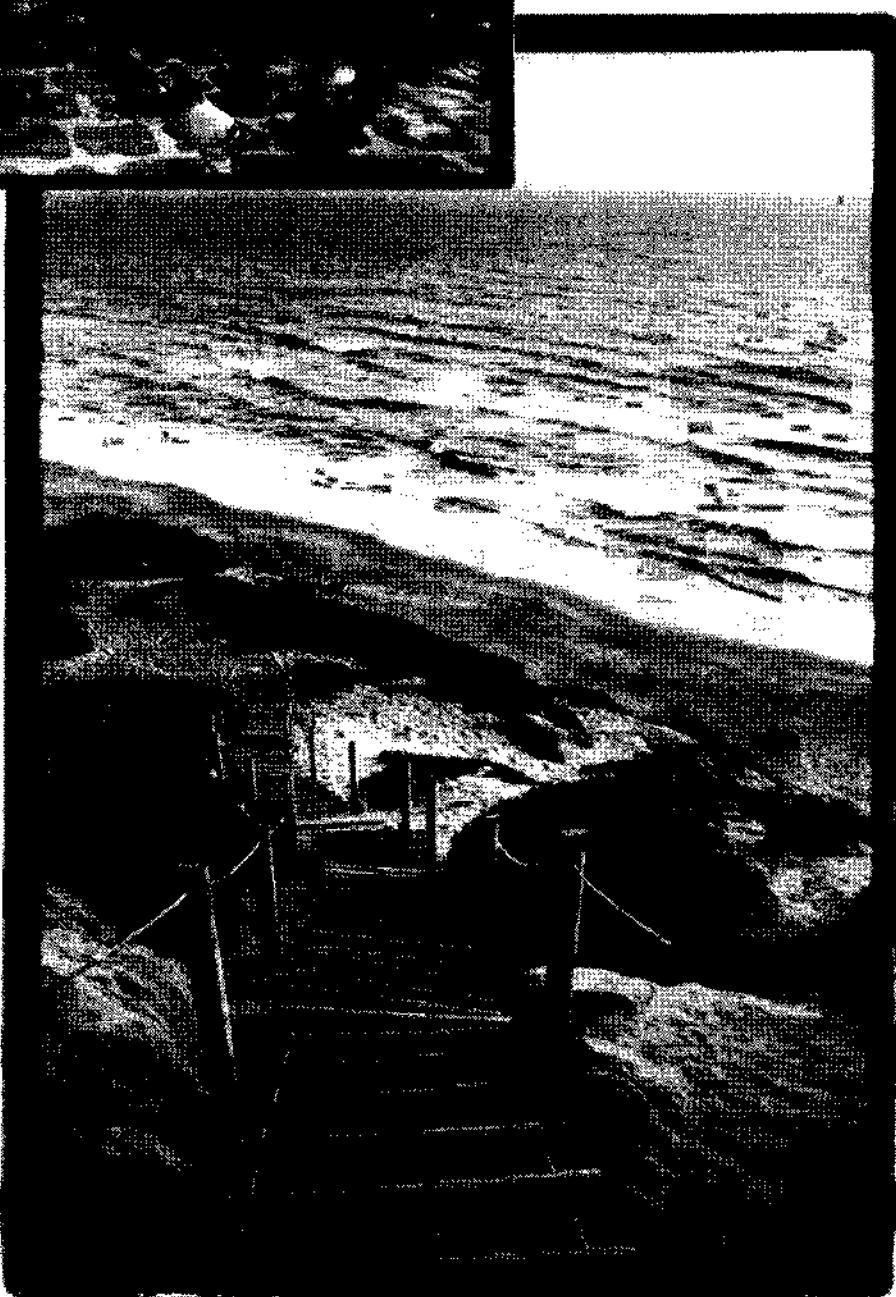


Camera Obscura



Pigeon Man near
Fishermans Wharf

Gateway to the Pacific



Gateway to The Pacific

CROW AND THE GANG:



In the abysmal wasteland that is modern television, where studs like Erkel roam free, and the Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers can take merchandising to new cinematic lows, it's pretty easy to lose faith in TV's potential for cultural impact. Where once Americans shared in the warmth of Burns and Allen's wit and spontaneity in every living room, we now find ourselves channel surfing, with gypsy moth attention spans, through, for lack of a better way to put it, crap. Icons such as *Blossom*'s Joey and *Baywatcher* Pamela Sue preside at the top of this heap, safeguarding a continuing tradition of moronic plots and 1-D characters.

Having realized this, do we sit passively by while someone somewhere is sketching plans for *Saved By The Bell*, *The Doctorate Years?* To quote every uninspired, recycled, scripted, rallying speech that weaves its way onto the screen: "No, I say, no!" We've got to reclaim our intelligence from the mindless meanderings of the average script. And for those of us (author not excepted) whose brains have been electronically lulled into a state of passivity, may I suggest an antidote: *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, a lingering bastion of independent, creative television which stays true to its grass roots.

MST3K (to use quasi-cult following *MSTie* lingo) is Comedy Central's flagship show, now entering its seventh season. It takes all that is good in civilization and applies it to all that is bad.

MST3K

BY ANDREW SCHRIEVER

Like most brilliant works, its premise is simplicity. An evil Dr. Forrester (Trace Beaulieu) and his gullible lab assistant/sidekick, TV's Frank (Frank Conniff, who departed last season), send one of their employees into space via surprise rocketship launch and then experiment on his mind. They force him to watch the worst films ever produced, ranging from the sci-fi classic monster-turtle Gamara films to Joe Don Baker as a cop co-starring with romantic hooker/interest Linda Evans in *Mitchel*.

Joel Hodgson, the show's creator, played Joel Robinson, their first experimental guinea pig forced to sit through these turkeys. In order to maintain his sanity he creates a complement of loveable wise-cracking robot buddies to keep him company during the screenings. Crow T. Robot (again, Trace Beaulieu) is the Groucho-Marxist quick-wit puppet-composite with a sepia-toned bowling pin for a mouth and a savvy lacrosse helmet headpiece. Tom Servo (Kevin Murphy) is the sensitive, yet ego-maniacal tenor-voiced gumball machine infused with life. Gypsy (played by Producer Jim Mallon) is the vacuum-headed supersmart female presence relegated to perform the higher functions of the Satellite of Love, the experimental space lab/prison where the crew resides.

In 1993, Joel managed to escape from the satellite and captive Temp, Mike Nelson (head writer, Mike Nelson) was shot into space to replace him. Bottom line: Mike, Servo and Crow are subjected to feature length, and on occasion, industrial short films and their only means of rebellion is to shoot a barrage of snappy comebacks and obscure references at the action on the screen. Sound familiar? Ever done this? If not, try sitting through *Ishtar* without saying a word.

The silhouetted forms of Mike and the 'bots sit in the theater as they endure the movie, and (this is the best part) do the work for you. They criticize the movies so you don't have to. Your job is to keep up with as many as 800 jokes in the show's two hour period. Commercials provide an opportunity to catch your breath.

The canon of "C" movies and shorts they draw from is impressive.

Case in point: a Junior High School-targeted industrial short funded by a musical instrument company. This 20 minute 1950s debacle features a typical, suburban, white American teenager who just wants to be popular. He's got

the flat top, the pearly-toothed grin, and the tucked in Cro-Magnon Oxford short sleeve shirt (sans pen protector). He really wants to swing with the school girls in front of his locker. His problem? He's lame and uncommunicative, a white-breaded pre-baby boomer incapable of thought or conversation. His salvation? While sitting in his room after school, he's visited by a Peter-Panish she-male in blue tights who pops out of nowhere and calls him/herself "Mr. B. Natural."

Get it? "B" natural? Nudge, nudge? Through a horrifying psycho-Cleaver-family montage "Mr." B Natural takes our teen-angst hero through a tour of all sorts of different musical instruments which will make him popular.



Crow T. Robot of MST3K

The beauty of this short is that some aspiring filmmaker in the 50s actually thought of this as a persuasive school-room advertisement which would make little Timmy run right out and buy an oboe. This stuff is solid fodder for the MST writers' mill. Joel parodies the teenager with a voice-cracking, paranoid alter ego who continually comments on Mr. B Natural as some satanic vision putting Sirhan-

Sirhan-esque voices in this kid's mixed up head. Servo provides a running commentary on "the unbearable whiteness of being," focusing on the socially sterilized, flat-panned teen acting in the static school hall scenes. When B Natural starts in on his/her musical balletic dance routine Crow begins to weep openly, begging for Joel to make it stop and wailing "this isn't happening!"

The longer films feature the guys' referential onslaughts at imagery and dialogue. The writers' group that rags on the film is so diverse that in a given viewing the jokes will range from Gilligan's Island references (*Mitchel's* boat chase climax bearing a vague resemblance to the S.S. Minnow leaving port) to Dr. Strangelove to Nietsche to the Wizard of Oz to Muhammed Ali-speak ("I want you, Frasier!"). Another piece of cinematic gristle, *The Brain That Wouldn't Die*, offers a plot wherein a mad doctor accidentally decapitates his fiance and keeps her head alive in a lasagna

The beauty of this short is that some aspiring filmmaker in the 50s actually thought of this as a persuasive school-room advertisement which would make little Timmy run right out and buy an oboe.

pan filled with what Mike and his sidekicks term "neck juice." The doc tries to find a beautiful babe to kill and behead so that his fiance (tab A) could be affixed to his busty new victim's torso (slot B). The film is a walking target for sarcastic comebacks because it tries to take itself seriously. The obvious barrage of comments concern the head as a potential door stop, changing the neck juice, moving the head out onto the porch for some fresh air and the head caught in a fire making its own gravy. These quips are coupled with subtle, dry, comments about the cinematography itself. The film thrives on badly sequenced shots with character close-ups against a black backdrop when a second ago they were in a bar. The 'bots respond in unison with cries of "no, I'm in another dimension!" If these movies are cheese, then MST3K is a fondue party.

Particularly worthwhile are the screenings of bad films with good stars who won't say no to bad scripts (very Geraldo)—among them, Gregory Peck and Gene Hackman. More commonly, the films feature pseudo-actors who have made partial livings in bad films. Watch the re-runs for *Alien from L.A.*, a mousy Kathy Ireland debut, or *Girls Town*, featuring Mel Torme and Paul Anka in their swinging prime. This is to say nothing of the cinematic parade of horrible directors such as Ed Wood and Roger Corman, who is known for mutilating the Hollywood Western and Sci-Fi genres.

The viewings are broken up with host segments, wherein Mike and company parody either the film, or some other piece of culture that takes itself too seriously. One segment emulated a pretentious Ingmar Bergman film, with super-slow camera close-ups panning back and forth to slowly tell a joke whose punchline is: "when you're out of slits, you're out of pier" (insert "Schlitz," "Beer").

Other segments feature the robots doing a scene from *Love, American Style*, and a recent spoof of the Grateful Dead where Crow, dressed as Jerry Garcia, does a ten minute rambling guitar lead while the band around him gives up waiting, drops their instruments, starts playing chess, and reading *War and Peace*. Another recent favorite is the dual universe Classic *Star Trek* parody wherein Mike and Crow transform into evil Kirk and Spock.

Like *Trek*, the show has acquired a dedicated following. The MSTies (the equivalent to Star Trek's Trekkies) are now approximately 70,000 fan club members strong. It is the show's relationship with the fans that helps it to keep hold of its humble roots. Since its conception on local UHF station KTMA in Minneapolis, Mystery Science Theater ends with Joel or Mike reading a fan letter and telling how to write in to the info club. Despite their increasingly growing popularity, the show's creators continue to maintain close ties with the MSTies, at times even stopping by to chat with fans in the MST folders on the Internet, where a core fan base thrives.

One America On-Line fan, Debra L. Witzel, perfectly

summed up the show's appeal by evoking a quote from this century's greatest quick-witted critic, Groucho Marx: "I may be one of the unusual ones, but I find it almost impossible to watch a movie unless I can hurl at my companion, male or female, questions like, 'Didn't we see that heavy last year in *Puberty is Here to Stay*' or 'I forgot who directed this stinker

- what's his name?' or 'Do you think she's really guilty?' I realize this sort of idiotic twitting can be maddening to my companion, not to mention the surrounding movie-goers, but it's a compulsion that unfortunately I cannot control..."

Witzel translates this to the *MSTie* phenomenon, saying the show "has made us three shadowy little allies in the war against modern society. A peaceful protest. Loud, but peaceful."

The protest is spreading. And getting louder. Recently, I spoke with Trace Beaulieu, who is not a doctor, or a robot, but plays both on TV. He discussed the continually expanding future of *MST3K*. They have just finished filming *Mystery Science Theater 3000: The Movie* (Gramercy) which they hope will be due out in the fall. The film follows the TV premise. But where a TV script takes nine days from conception to shooting, the film version took months of writing, which Beaulieu thinks results in their best work to date.

Also in the works is a book on the show, published by Bantam, and a CD-Rom is in its planning stages, featuring two short industrial films which may invite interactive quipping. So, even on entering its 7th season, the show remains dynamic and forward-moving.

MST3K has also broken through the constraints of cable, with syndication in at least 47 cities coming this fall and expansion to foreign markets.



Mike of *MST3K*

As to how many more seasons they can sustain their creative momentum, Beaulieu remains unclear: "I think if it gets to the point where someone is sending the show off to Industrial Light and Magic to be digitized or something, or we find we don't have to do the silhouettes anymore because we could just sit in our offices and record the voices later or just record a bunch of vowels and consonants and then use the magic keyboard to put it in... I think when it stops being interesting then we will move onto other things."

Like *Trek's Next Generation*, they've had a noble run and



The head of TV's Frank floats over the evil Dr. Forrester

they are moving into making fun of films on the big screen, where they were meant not to be stomached in the first place. Maybe this will lead to *MST3K2: The Wrath of Crow*, or part three, *The Search For Servo*.

In the meantime, Comedy Central has an endless barrage of repeats to keep us safe from the dozens of other channels with nothing on. Tune in on Thanksgiving each year, and you'll be treated to "Turkey Day," (recently hosted by Adam West) featuring a full day's worth of favorites.



Tom Servo of MST3K

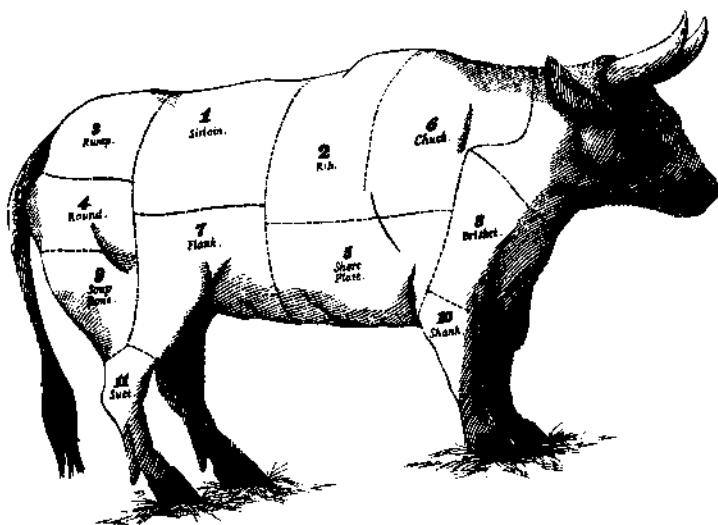
The show's upcoming syndication will help continue to weave its critical consciousness into our ways of thinking for a long time to come. Although, this is not always necessarily a good thing. *Mystery Science Theater* does have a tendency to create a horde following of hyper-critical cultural quippers. For this reason, I am no longer allowed to watch my roommate's favorite shows in the same room as him. But, I guess like all things worthwhile, quality exacts a price.

WE
IN

TURN PAGE FOR INTERVIEW WITH TRACE BEAULIEU

**SUBMIT TO AS WE ARE.
Journalism, Commentary, Fiction, Poetry, Illustrations,
Photography & anything that will reproduce well in two-
dimensional black & white**

Submissions Deadline for **SEPTEMBER 8, 1995**
AS WE ARE #5: Send submission, SASE,
& contact info to
AWA • PO Box 380048 • Cambridge, MA 02238



If you are what
you eat, do you
really want to be
a cheeseburger?

Café Voltaire
Good food. Good for you. Good for the Earth

3231 North Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60657 312-528-3136

Sunday-Thursday 11:00 am-1:00 am, Friday-Saturday 11:00 am-3:00 am,
Sunday Brunch 11:00 am-3:00 pm

BEHIND THE SCENES AT MST3K: AN INTERVIEW WITH TRACE BEAULIEU

Trace Beaulieu is the man behind both Crow T. Robot and the evil Dr. Forrester as well as a writer for Comedy Central's Mystery Science Theater 3000. In an interview with As We Are, Trace talks about the development of the show as well as "the buns of summer beefcake catalog..."

As We Are: What's the difference between *MST* when you first started it and what it is now.

Trace Beaulieu: Well, I do think it's changed. In the early days we didn't have a lot of resources. Maybe that was a good thing. We had to rely on what we thought was funny. But the first shows we did at KTMA were very off-the-cuff in

"We're pretty much left alone to do what we want to do. We use our own group as a governor. If it makes us laugh then there's a good chance it'll get into the show. It's a very democratic way of working. It could be socialist. I'm not sure."

never seen before and now we have the facility and resources to actually craft these shows. So the writing has improved dramatically from not having any writing to now, where we have up to ten people working on the show.

A: Do you have a favorite episode?

T: Oh boy, a favorite episode. It's hard to narrow it down to one. After doing 120 of these, I think we've done? That's over 500 sketches. It's just now getting to the point where they're kind of like time capsules. I'll turn on the television and see season 2 or 3 and go "I have no memory of this. I don't remember wearing a dress. I don't remember putting a pie in Frank's face." It's like a new show. The more recent ones, the ones I can remember anyway. We did a "Mirror, Mirror" one.

A: Yeah, the *Star Trek* parody.

T: The *Star Trek* parody. That was a lot of fun. And the Frank episode. The last one where Frank is taken up by Torgo the White. That was an awfully fun one to work on.

A: Regarding that, that's actually on my little list,

T: I'm segueing for you.

A: Yeah, this is beautiful. Good flow. Will there be another Frank? Will there be a Frank Jr.?

T: Well, we could just make a Frank out of all the parts that Forrester has, of Franks. But we have not decided creatively

that we did not have a lot of time to write these. We did the show in a day and that meant that it's not quite as solid a block of comedy that I think it is now. The first time we saw the movie was actually when we made comments to it, so it was spontaneous, but kind of slow.

A: So you kind of wrote the script as you went along.

T: Yeah, the movie portion of it was just improvised comments off a movie that we had

yet how we're going to resolve that. A number of things are in the works. They're probably all too expensive so we won't do them.

A: Got it. So, the chance of there being say, a puppet down there, to sort of counteract Crow and Servo...

T: It's a good idea. I really can't comment on that. But now I have your idea so now when the puppet comes out you can sue us.

A: Alright, fair enough. And I got it on tape. You guys got picked up fairly early by HBO/Viacom when it launched Comedy Central. Does being backed by corporate sponsorship ever affect your creative decisions in the writing or the production?

T: We have a lot of freedom. We're in Minneapolis, even further out of Minneapolis. We're isolated from those guys. We speak on the phone and every now and then we go out and meet with them, but it's not like we're being lunched or shmoozed by Hollywood agents or producers. We're pretty much left alone to do what we want to do. We use our own group as a governor. If it makes us laugh then there's a good chance it'll get into the show. It's a very democratic way of working. It could be socialist. I'm not sure. We pretty much know what we can get away with. Not that we're trying to get away with anything.

A: What can you tell me about the *MST* book you're working on?

T: Well it will be a book, probably soft cover, and it will have a lot of fun stuff from the writers.

A: So it'll be, I think of the kind of Letterman anthologies that come out in the humor section?

T: Closer to, it's somewhere between a big glossy book of cats and the buns of summer beefcake catalog. Somewhere between that.

A: Wow, that sounds fascinating. Right. I hope you're bringing in other models.

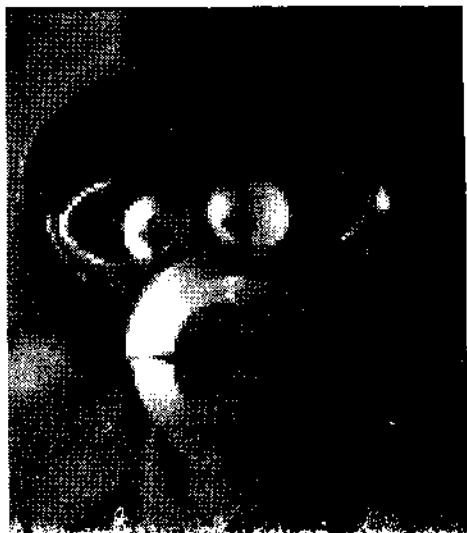
T: Uh, no, no. It's going to be us. It's a bold move.

A: We'll look forward to that.

T: You may not want to.

A: With the movie, the syndication, CD-rom and the book, this is a huge expansion prospect. How is this

gonna affect *MST*? Your independent grass roots will probably be a lot harder to contain I imagine, because this is really pushing you guys up to non-cable exposure.



Crow T. Robot as played by Trace Beaulieu

T: We're hoping that it'll get the show out there more. I think we're always gonna be a little bit *grass roots* and maybe a little cultish. I don't know how broad an appeal the show is going to have. I think when it stops being interesting then we will move onto other things.

A: How do you stay fresh after 6 seasons and going into a 7th?

T: We try to bathe every day.

A: Ok.

T: And injecting new writers into the group.

A: The technique of doing this does seem like nothing else that's ever been done.

T: It's a very cultural thing, but I don't know if the shows we've done here would translate to other cultures. I think they'd work ok in England. Canada, I don't think would get it.

A: You want to say why, or is that self explanatory?

T: I would hope it is. You're not Canadian?

A: No. Canadian roots.

T: Oh, well...

A: It's ok. I live in Boston. I've renounced them.

T: Oh, ok. We kid the Canadians. Our favorite neighbors to the North. And my father-in-law is from Mexico City, and he was telling me that it's huge in certain parts of Mexico, that

people watch it to learn how to speak English.

A: You're gonna produce a round of sarcastic ESL students.

T: Oh, yeah, a lot of really obnoxious kids. I cannot confirm or deny that as factual but I thought it was an interesting concept anyway.

A: How would you describe the show's relationship to its fans?

T: I think we have a warm, casual relationship. We certainly would not be doing what we're doing, or have done, as long as we have without the fans. In the early days we had no feedback on the show when we were doing it at KTMA and then we opened the phone line and then the mailbox and its just been building ever since.

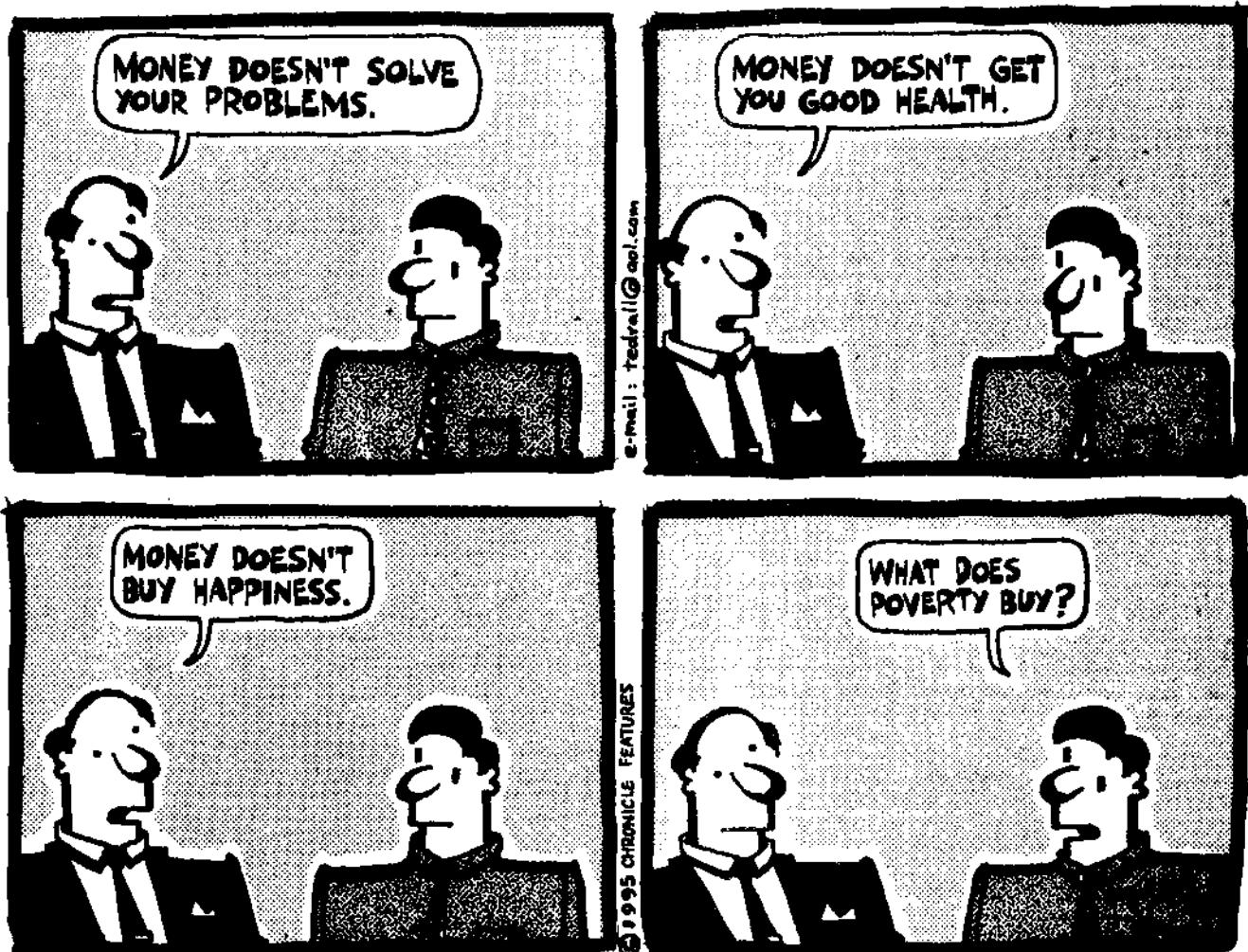
A: A lot of the fans are on America On-Line. Do you guys ever get on and say hi to them?

T: Sure, we cruise the NET all the time. [Marketing Director] Julie Walker's constantly on the NET and Kevin, Mike and I are all, we get in there from time to time, mostly downloading *Doom* quads.

A: Right, I could see that.

T: We play a lot of that.

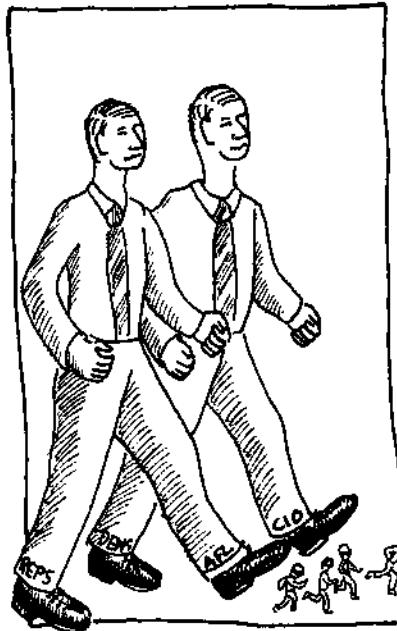
—Andrew Schriever



—Ted Rall

ONE HUNDRED DAYS THAT SHOOK THE UNIONS

In recent years, American unions have been fighting like hell – not for a living – but for their lives. Battered after decades of down-sizing and capital flight, union-bashing and strike-busting, union membership has plunged from 30% nationwide in 1970 to 15.5% today, a faint shadow of the mighty trade unionism of the post-war era.



Look as they may for allies in the Beltway, the unions find none. Since November, Republican appeals to the middle class have been replaced by the specter of Dick Armeay calling for the end to the minimum wage, the anti-labor neo-liberal policies of NAFTA and GATT, the threatened dismantling of Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and pronouncements of "the end of work." As Rick Bender of the Washington State Labor Council put it, "They talk about the Contract with America. This is a contract on workers."

While Clinton extends one hand to labor leaders, the rank and file see a dagger in the other. The President has not been forgiven for his NAFTA advocacy, and despite attempts to soothe the ire of his party's traditional constituency by touting employment statistics and banning permanent replacement of strikers, those medicines have proven to be snake oil. Most of the jobs created since the post-recession "recovery" were part-time and low-paying service jobs, and in May of this year alone, the nation lost over one hundred thousand jobs, the sharpest monthly drop since 1991. The ban on government contracts with companies that use replacement workers was largely symbolic, full of loopholes, and immediately targeted for rejection by Congress. The working class has fallen into what Robert Reich has dubbed the "anxious class," Americans in fear of losing their work, Americans who in a 1994 AFL-CIO study commissioned expressed "disappointment, indifference and apathy" to unions. And so, in a speech to a service employees conference in May, John Sweeney, president of the 1.1 million member Service Employees International Union (SEIU), bluntly stated what had been obvious for years: that not only was the US labor movement "irrelevant to the vast majority of unorganized workers in our country", but he had "deep suspicions that we are becoming irrelevant to many of our own members."

Sweeney's appraisal of the labor landscape is far more than mere rhetoric. With realization of how little they have in common with either their employers or their bureaucratic leaders, unionists have ceased to mourn and begun to organize in a dramatically militant turnaround which may shape both union politics and national politics for years to come.

Storming the Palace

In recent months, a fierce internecine battle has evolved between the inert union old guard and the more militant affiliates of the AFL-CIO, a struggle for labor's future which has shaken the union's highest echelons. Lane Kirkland, the 16-year president of the union, has long faced criticism for his distance from rank and file members and his wavering leadership during the NAFTA debates. Faced with the possibility of an unprecedented challenge in the union's October election, Kirkland announced earlier this month that he would step down as of August 1, and anointed his second in command, Thomas Donahue, as his successor.

In October, Donahue faces a challenge to the AFL-CIO's leadership lead by John Sweeney, who heads an insurgent slate which includes Richard Trumka, 43, president of the United Mine Workers, and Donna Chavez-Martinez of AFCSME, as the candidate for executive vice president of the AFL-CIO.

The militants within the AFL-CIO appear to be in a position to succeed in their palace revolution, having mustered the support of 21 national and international unions representing 7.3 million members, or 56 percent of the AFL-CIO's 13 million members. The slate has three general goals: moving resource from union central to organizing at the local and plant level; to be more attentive to working women and people of color; and to restrict support to politicians who support union policies.

The time is ripe for such changes. A recent report from the University of Pittsburgh found that though membership in unions is declining, the unions are wealthier than they have ever been. Were this abundance used for what unions do best – organizing – rather than pumping money into PAC's and national campaigns, labor nationally might be able to do what Sweeney's SEIU has done: organizing sectors long dismissed as unorganizable, and doubling in size while other unions decline.

So, too, is the militancy of the insurgent slate appropriate for our time. The aggressively anti-labor GOP in Congress and in top positions throughout the country demands an aggressive union as a counterweight against the Republican

BY THEO EMERY

machine. Kirkland's bureaucracy tempered labor as a force not to be feared, but to be placated. The power of a union lies in its ability to disrupt production through direct action, something for which the SEIU and the other coalition members have shown a particular talent which neither Democrats nor Republicans can easily ignore.

Make New Parties, or Keep the Old?

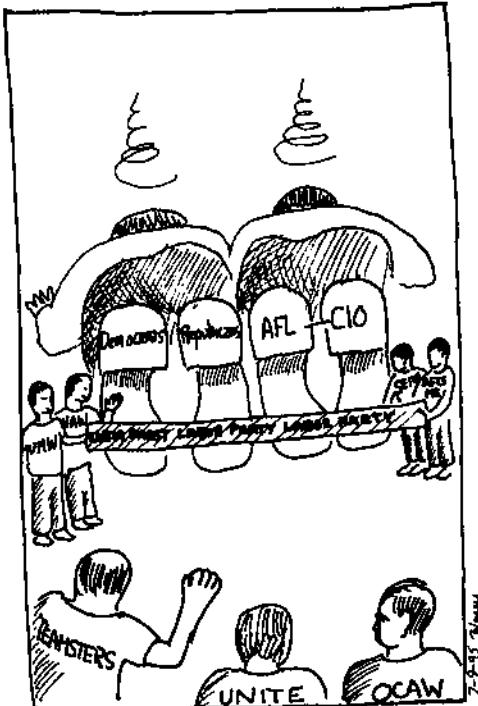
While Republicans recently have been the target of union attacks – as in the storming of Newt Gingrich's office in Cobb County and Congressman's Robert Flanagan's office in Chicago – the Democrats have been the recipients of a chilly silence. Since the New Deal, the Democrats have been the vehicle for labor, the party which have supposedly spoken on behalf of working people. But NAFTA changed that; as the democrats turned their backs on labor during the Congressional debates, so too has labor turned its back on the Democrats.

For the last several years, affiliates of the AFL-CIO have contemplated organizing a labor party to represent the needs of working people in the country. The effort began tentatively in 1989, when the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union polled its membership to discover that 55 percent thought both Republicans and Democrats jointly represented corporate interests, and that a labor party would better serve the interests of working people. Tony Mazzocchi, former national chair of OCAW, was chosen as the initial organizer of what came to be called the Labor Party Advocates (LPA).

In the aftermath of NAFTA, the call for a labor party grew yet stronger. The Texas OCAW union publicly renounced the Democrats and threw their weight behind the LPA, and LPA's voice rose from a tentative whisper to a call for action. Robert Wages, president of OCAW, wrote in *Newsday* last fall that "Only workers can speak for labor... We must raise our voices for real change instead of retreating from the attacks of a greedy and violent corporate system. We must form a political party that speaks for labor."

Since November 8, the Republican Congress has only deepened the

country's conviction that the two parties serve no interest but their own. Recent polls show that at least half of all Americans favor creation of a major third party. The thuggish anti-labor



stances of the Republican and the meek acquiescence of most Democrats confirmed the LPA's belief that labor's time has come. "If you're a mouse," says LPA, "it doesn't make a difference whether you are governed by black cats, white cats, Demo-cats or Republi-cats, they're still cats."

The LPA has received endorsements from locals, district councils and three international unions - the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union,

the United Electrical Workers and the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees. Last winter, the LPA held a meeting of 400 workers in a Hayward, California union hall. LPA endorsers from unions and trade councils throughout the Bay Area attended. Jack Henning, head of the AFL-CIO's largest state affiliate, the California Labor Federation, delivered the keynote address.

Later that month, the LPA held its first "formal gathering" in St. Louis. The meeting included a cross-section of 55 labor activists, functioning as the LPA's executive committee. The group set up operating rules and approved charters for local chapters and planned for a convention to be held later this year or early next year. "We want to create a political cadence," Mazzocchi said at the meeting, "a new beat to march to."

Where the unions march remains to be seen. There is by no means consensus that the struggle for the AFL-CIO or the creation of the LPA are the answer to the union's crisis. And there remains the question of whether political action, either through the AFL-CIO hierarchy or through a third party, is any replacement for organizing and "pulling the pin" with direct action and strikes. For the time being, however, the new initiatives bode well for working class people and their unions. "A struggle must go on until all the toilers come together on the political as well as the industrial field," said a representative of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and so the struggle continues.

WE



New & Improved **LETTERS TO CLEO**

Interview by Buck O'Shea



Letters To Cleo are (l-to r) Michael Eisenstein, Kay Hanley, Stacy Jones, Greg McKenna and Scott Riebling

Courtesy photo by Mike Ladd/Giant Records

As the boys from the band Letters to Cleo wander around the break down lane of Rte 93, (Boston, MA) attempting to fix a flat tire which has now, with touring, become an occupational hazard, Kay Hanley talks to As We Are via the van's mobile phone. And you won't believe what was yelled over the background traffic.

You've been touring a while, how's it going?

Good. It's going very well.

Tired?

Yes. Starting Monday, we have almost a month off, which is incredible. We haven't had a month off at home in a year. We're very, very excited.

So anything interesting happen while traveling across these great United States?

Well, we got detained at the border on the way over to Toronto, dogs and everything.

Really, why?

They thought we had drugs. (Suspicious pause). Let's just say they had good reason to believe we did.

I see. How's your voice holding out?

Well, right now it's kind of crappy. All these outdoor shows that we've been doing, they're no good for your voice. My voice is kind of crapping out a little now but it's still okay.

I have to ask you this. For this issue we have Matthew Sweet and you guys on the cover. One of the editors had mentioned that the headline was going to be something like "Sweet and Spicy." When I mentioned this to a certain someone, I was told "she's not as sweet as you think she is."

Oh really?

So what do you think they meant?

I have no idea.

Are you more spicy than sweet?

I think I'm equal parts both.

A lot of the media tends to focus on you. That's a lot of attention for one person. How do you feel about it?

I really don't have any perspective on it because I've been in this since I was 16 years old, since I was in high school practically. I really don't have any other frame of reference. I just don't know it any other way. I mean it's not "The Kay Hanley Show" or anything. It's not just my thing, we all work together. Because of that, I don't feel as

if all the attention is on me all of the time. Anyway, I think it's just something you take for granted, male or female. If you're the front person, you get a lot of attention.

I suppose that's true. I heard you went over to the UK for a little while and someone got sick? What happened?

Our drummer was stricken with the chicken pox.

You're kidding.

No, he came down with full-blown chicken pox in a scuzzy London hotel room, and we got to hang out and drink cider and shoot pool.

Did you have some dates over there that you had to cancel?

We had to cancel everything. It really sucked, but we got to hang out and eat the shitty food.

You said that so sweetly!

O.K. Let's just get this over with now, I'm a fucking cunt. I'm a fucking bitch. (laughs...and laughs...and laughs...)

That sassy little remark reminds me of the night you guys played T.T. The Bear's Place (Cambridge, MA) on New Years Eve. You were playing with The Keep (now Mauthmann), and you had an interesting way of ringing in the New Year. I think it went something like "10, 9,...shut the fuck up...okay 8. That slayed me.

Yeah, that was great. (laughs) that was a great show.

So what are your feelings about the new CD? *Wholesale Meat and Fish*—where did the name come from?

It was just a sign we saw. We're bad title's of things. But the CD itself, we're very excited about. So that probably means nobody's gonna buy it.

Why is that?

It's the first record we've done that we even kind of liked. So that sort of puts a jinx on it in a way.

But it's not as if you didn't like the last release...is it?

I didn't like it. In fact, I don't like anything we do.

I thought it was when you progressed as an artist that you looked back at your old stuff and cringed.

Well, the songs on the last CD were old even when we recorded them. For the new record it's all stuff that we've written within the last year-and-a-half. We're just really excited about it. We feel it is just really something we can be proud of. That, in and of itself, is cool. It's a great feeling to do something that you really like. But that always seems to mean it's going to be a commercial disaster.

It doesn't sound like it's worrying you too much.

Well, I mean we've been as lucky in the past. It would be nice to see people really appreciate our new stuff. Aurora Gary Alice came out a long time ago, almost a year-and-a-half ago. Then we started making the new record...we started recording it in L.A., and we were a week-and-a-half into the new record when KROQ (FM, Los Angeles) added "Here and Now," and we were like "Ahhh, wait a minute?" So the next thing you know "Here and Now" is getting a lot of airplay. Instead of focusing on this new record and getting it out, we're touring for an album that we should have been done supporting. It was really strange the way things worked out, granted, I'm not complaining. I'm happy with the way things worked out, it's just kind of ass-backwards.

How is the radio airplay going?

Thankfully, "Here and Now" is dying down, and we're going forward with the next record, which should be out August 1, and the single will be out just before that.

What are your plans for the release of the record, the same type of route as far as distribution and radio airplay? Do you expect the same type of coverage?

I'm not expecting anything. I'm hoping.

You're just going to wait and see?

Well, now that we're on a major label...hold on a second... (turns away from the phone) Will you guys shut the fuck up!?

Ooh, more sassy obscenities!!! Can

I print that?

Oh yeah, print the whole fucking thing!! (laughs) So they set the thing up and do whatever it is that they do and they send out the advance single and whatever. So they do all that crap and then it's on the radio. But it all depends on whether people like it or not. If they like it, it'll get played. If the right dicks are getting sucked, it'll get played. If not then it won't.

Well, that's a pretty interesting way to put it. I saw a recent article talking about the fact that you had some small successes that came one after the other. Can you tell us some more about that?

Yeah, we pretty much went through the same shit as any other band. We started out playing TT's [the Bear's Place, Cambridge, MA] on Tuesdays, till we finally got to Wednesday, and then were lucky enough to get to Friday. It was about four-and-a-half years of this before anything happened. I don't know if there was any defining moment...except that the big lucky break was "Here and Now" getting added to KROQ.

KROQ...The one in New York? No, this one is in L.A. Then WFNX [Boston] got behind us which was unbelievably helpful and it was at the time that *Aurora* was released, which was amazing to us. So, it was just getting to Friday nights and building up a loyal following...

And Mike Creamer was managing? Yeah, Mike has always been our manager.

You know when I met Mike Creamer, I was hanging out at a club. A band that I was booking was playing there, and you guys were there. He was counting heads and I said, "Mike, why don't you just find out the capacity of the room." And he was like, "Yeah, yeah Buck...15,16..." It must've taken him all night. Yeah, he wants to find out for himself (laughs).

He's a nice guy though.

He's a great guy. When I met Mike Creamer, I was in high school, I was a janitor at city hall, and he worked for

the city equity board. I used to dump trash, and that's how he met me. I was dumping his trash for a long time, and so we got to know each other. This was before I was in a band. When Greg and I put the band together, he was like, "I can help you get some shows." So he helped us get some shows and now here we are.

Are you surprised by the band's quick success, especially when you come back to Boston and hang out with all the bands that have been doing this for ten years or more...how does that make you feel?

It just makes me feel unbelievably grateful...Really fucking grateful.

So what's coming up? Are you going overseas or are you going to stick around here?

Well, we have a few gigs to do before we head to New Orleans. Then, we're home again for three weeks. We're just going to hang out, record a few B sides, maybe write a few songs. Then we're off for two months with the band Run and Our Lady Peace. It's going to be really cool. It'll be a big "boyfest". I was really trying to get a girl band on the opening slot, but that didn't work out.

What kind of girl bands are you looking at now, what are your favorites?

I like all girl bands. Any band with a gift in it, I like.

There's just so much female talent out there too. I'm really into P.J. Harvey right now.

Yeah, she's cool. I saw Juliana [Hatfield] the other night and for the encore she came out with her guitar and covered that song "Blue" by the Jayhawks. It was one of the purest rock n' roll moments I've ever had. It was wonderful.

Is she an influence on you?

Not really. I like her, I admire her, I respect her. The women in rock who influenced me are Kristen Hirsch, my idol. I adore Liz Fraser from the Cocteau Twins, Bjork...

Ah! The little pixie.

She's one of the most inventive people around. She just does what she wants.

I can remember having a fixation on Chrissie Hynde when I was about seventeen, but that was a long time ago.

I think I was listening to Run DMC back then.

Eeeeh! You don't wanna take after those guys, man they ugly!

No. Well, I wouldn't like them now anyway. That was back in like '82. That rap stuff, punk rock, I'm just not into it anymore.

You don't like punk rock, you just like acting like a sassy little punk?

(laughs) Well, I didn't really like punk then and I definitely don't like it now. It never really made a difference to me. I like Ozzy Osbourne more than Iggy Pop. I like Brian Johnson from AC/DC more than Iggy Pop. I always chose metal over punk.

So what about the music scene in Boston compared to some of the other places. How would you rate it?

It's the best scene in the country, and I'm not kidding.

You were down at The South by Southwest Showcase in Texas too, right? I was down there covering the '93 show.

Did you have a good time? Austin is an awesome town. What did you cover?

Let's see, the Swinging Steaks and...

I love the Swinging Steaks! You probably know Greg McKenna from our band because he used to go out and see them and Ball and Pivot, Buddy System...

You're kidding! Buddy System? (For those unfamiliar with this name, Buddy System consisted of one man and hundreds of thousands of dollars of equipment... very cool)

Yeah, just that unbelievable. I thought that bit was gone forever. But now there's a new record out and I've heard that it is complete genius. That was around the time that V66 was big too. Then MTV took over.

We just ran a story in *As We Are* about Sumner Redstone, the owner

of MTV. The guy owns like half the communications in the country. He's like Big Brother.

He's everywhere, aaarrgh! I don't know, I guess I'm a bit jaded about the music biz these days.

Have you ever read the book *Hitmen*?

No.

It would seem as if the music industry is really sleazy now. But it was so much more sleazy in the 70's and 80's. You can't even imagine, because the thing is there was no Soundscan then [Soundscan is an independent computerized chart tracker]. And because the technology wasn't there to keep track of things, nobody knew what was going on and artists couldn't protect themselves.

They didn't have access to information. Now people know what's happening.

with their music so it's far less sleazy now than it was.

(laughs)

Yeah, in some ways it's good but in other ways it's not so great. I mean, I bet you can't make one move without your lawyer.

Well, yeah, that can suck for a lot of bands that get a shitty lawyer. We've got one and he's not a scuzbag, he's wonderful so I can't say that it's really a hassle for us.

Anything you'd like to add, I know you have to get back to fixing your tire there.

Yeah, who said that I wasn't as sweet as you'd think I'd be?

Your publicity manager!

I'm not as sweet as you'd think that I was? Fuckin' bitch.

I think when we told her about the cover idea she couldn't resist.

Well, she knows better than anyone.

So when will you be back in town? In September. We'll be hanging out around Boston.

Well, it was great talking to you. Yeah, you too Buck, see you at Foley's [A Boston barah].

*Kay Hanley wishes it to be known that she is currently on a crusade to make the somewhat jarring word "cunt" part of every day colloquial language. WE

Editorial assistance from Jim Bouzan.

REPORT TO BLAKE

Blake, I won't read your work again right now, maybe never, or maybe sometime when I don't know what else to do.

I'm busy consulting my imagination: how to redeem my routines resist the normal attacks on my splendid potential & make unprecedented moves of mental warfare: poems, songs, polemics, talk, pictures, forms, acts.

Your London was a bloody town— wars of seven, thirty, one hundred years against the French, Algonquin, Spaniards, Turks. You went there to work and burn yourself out in acid & metal & ink & unconsummated scheming.

They wouldn't buy your epics on London streets, tho. I doubt they could look right at you. & what you had done was imperfect, too— too many characters—frantic, reeling—so baroque.

I barely caught your intent, the hope & strategy in the midst of your fallen giants. I flashed back then into the rhythms of my own experience in the mundane shell.

What an advance of thought! Yet how far from actually swaying the general will from ending the continual, sporadic Armageddon, the exploitation, suffering, resignation, fierce competition, bitter respites.

Here's how it balances: I rise from sleep unprecedented my hope throbbing my resolution clean & bright my path & possibilities clearer for your strange lights.

I chew on your protein, Blake, & spit out your gristle.

If others of us still in the midst of the battle can struggle to sufficient wakefulness & insist your moves may yet come to fruition, Blake.

-ERIC CHAET

EVEN MORE

POETRY!

Solomon from page 43

always sort of in the air. Right before *Paul's Notebook*, she broke up with him. He was crushed. He had named the picture before the breakup. But he kept the title. That took guts. He seems to have almost transposed his feelings onto her picture to create "Wife." She may not have felt as he felt, although he says that the painting accurately depicts her emotional intensity. But it doesn't matter. It's his work, and he is getting closer to stripping away the distance between artist and viewer, if my response is any judge.

Although not quite. "You think that's a door?" he said a little archly when I first suggested it. "I always thought of it as a window."

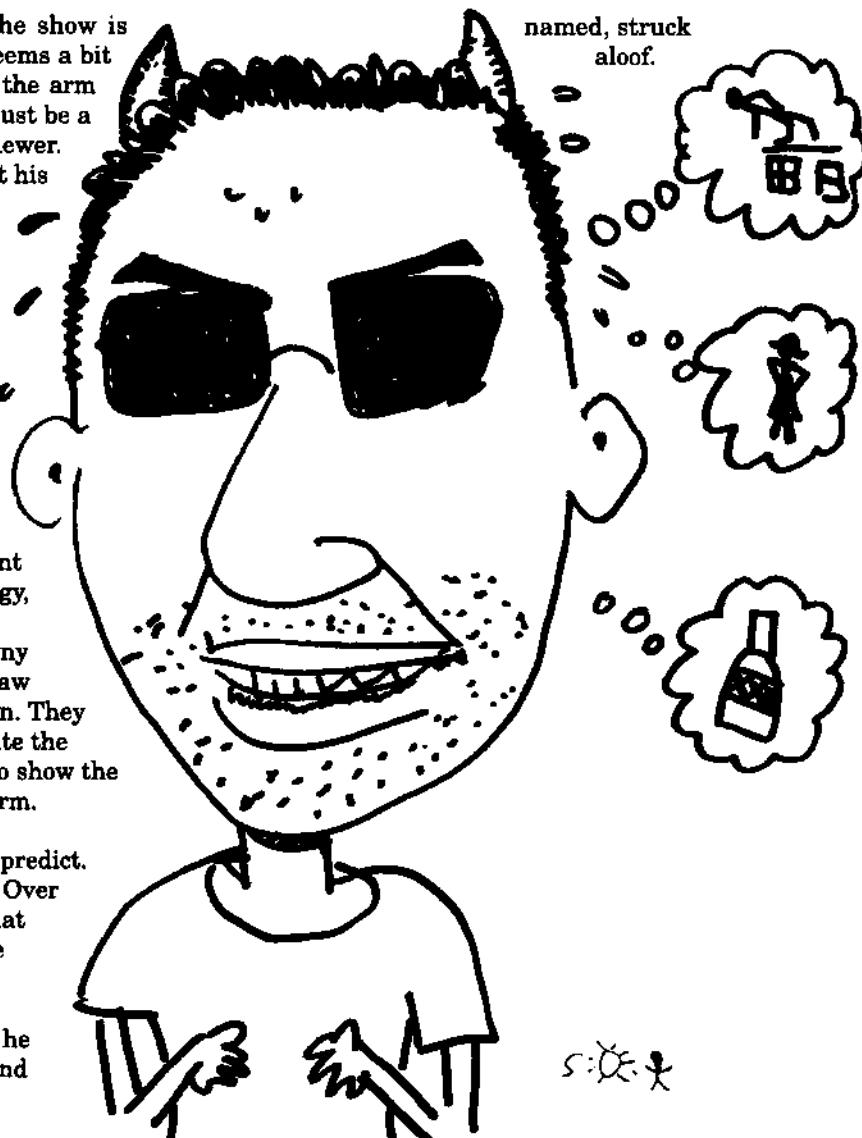
"Paul's Notebook," the work after which the show is me in an almost opposite fashion. The subject seems a bit The glasses act as a shield. But the position of the arm (Solomon often focuses on arms) holding what must be a notebook is almost inviting the curiosity of the viewer. To get to "Paul's" head, we obviously must look at his writing. The painting grew on me. It seems that Solomon is capable of capturing the subtleties of a human being with a very few lines. Or as he puts it "the heterodoxy of a subject."

Looking at the work, I want to know more about "Paul." I want to know who he is. And I want to know what's in the notebook.

Solomon says that the real life Paul was "the world's worst busboy." He worked at a restaurant where Solomon waited tables eight years ago. He was another one of the brilliant nuts who seem to populate Solomon's life. He went on to get into grad school at Harvard in psychology, and is currently studying for his doctorate at Stanford. The notebook is a metaphor for the many facets of Paul, but also for the journal Solomon saw him writing in many years ago at a café in Boston. They became fast friends, and still keep in touch despite the distance. In *Paul's Notebook*, Solomon is trying to show the many facets of the real Paul in typically spare form.

I think he succeeds.

Steven Solomon is an artist to watch. Not to predict. He's a questing soul with lots of ground to cover. Over the years to come I have not the faintest idea what he's going to do next. But I do think I can tell the direction he's moving in. Undoubtedly, he will continue to tighten the connection between his growing audience and himself. More than likely, he will continue to do so with wit, with humanity, and with passion. Try to see him when you can. 



"We are all Martins."

Teens from page 32

feeling of strength from the get-go.

Other ways to empower teens might include training for assertiveness (especially for young women), negotiation and problem-solving skills, and appropriate ways to get those things they most desire. They can be taught to say "fuck you" without getting locked up, a skill many adults use every day to save their sanity. Making critical or negative remarks wouldn't be cause for penalization. Ideally, criticism would begin development of genuine critical thinking skills.

Changing needs would allow teens to structure their group therapy, and to come up with suggestions for individual programs and privileges. This type of program would need to acknowledge a caretaker as a person, not just a replaceable employee, but would be far more effective than current programs in the long run. In giving priority to individual relationships, employers would need to recognize the skill and emotional energy that goes into such exchanges. They would be forced to compensate staff for the role of caretaker/counselor, not the role of anonymous babysitter.

On the social level, residential centers need to challenge the status quo in order to make a better world for teenagers. For example, it is necessary for programs to acknowledge and actively support gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning young people. Gay teenagers have been described as even more at-risk for suicide than straight teens, and the social services' silence on this issue puts teenagers at risk every day. As in the areas of class and race, the treatment system isn't built to discuss people as members of marginalized groups. Because homosexuality is under attack in society at large, a center serving as a refuge or support for at-risk teens must not just mirror society's tacit disregard of the subject; it should bring up sexuality as an open topic of discussion, backed up with education for all involved.

Transforming residencies from short-term band-aids for families in crisis to one link in a durable support network requires a shift in dominant societal views of families, young

people, and class. The media often portrays teenagers as corrupt drug-addicted criminals and immoral sex-fiends. At-risk teens are scapegoated as the source of decay in society. In this way, the problems of society are placed on the shoulders of some of its members with least power.

Social welfare organizations and programs need to take an activist approach to helping our young people, moving the spotlight from individual problems to the faults of the system. To begin, we need to form networks of concerned teenagers and survivors of that system. Then we need to create organizations of progressive child care workers, DSS workers, advocates and teachers to help place such teenagers in progressive residential centers and to obtain funding for these centers. These alliances need to exist first, because we can't change or dismantle the system as individuals. Priority would be placed upon emotional support for the staff, a commitment to teamwork and democratic decision-making in all aspects of a program.

To organize this large effort, discussion/action groups of caretakers and other interested people need to develop an awareness of common concerns. Specific issues that need to be addressed include dealing with the way caretakers are manipulated to provide the central structure of treatment, sometimes without credit or compensation. Other concerns include decreasing the hours per week worked by the residential staffs, increasing the number of breaks, changing chaotic schedules, and the mitigating the strain that comes from a lack of support coupled with the emotionally draining nature of the work. Brainstorming about alternative services will be the next step, with an eye on the explicitly political nature of this project.

Programs do exist as models (of various political and treatment standpoints, though usually they shy away from politicizing their work) that allow teenagers to have real, personal relationships with their caretakers. The Elizabeth Stone House (for adult women) is staffed by former mental health care recipients, and some drug-treatment programs also employ recovered addicts as counselors, and these counselors share their own experiences in the course of treatment.

The issue of neglect of human services needs to be connected to a larger idea: in a truly just society, this scrabble over money for the purpose of protecting our young people would not happen. If you are interested in becoming involved in this debate, you can check out the following resources: Readers in New England can call Mass. STAND, a network of human service groups formed to fight the Contract on America. They're at 37 Temple Place, 3rd Floor, Boston MA 02111, or contact the Massachusetts Human Services Coalition at (617)482-6119. If you're a human services worker who needs support on your job, contact your union or consider contacting a union office to organize at your workplace. Readers elsewhere in the U.S. can contact the Coalition on Human Needs, 1000 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20007, (202)342-0726; which provides information on wealth and poverty issues.

Those truly concerned about the fate of at-risk teens must speak out and build groups that work for sweeping reforms of the residential. As much as possible, we must make stopping this crisis a part of all of our agendas for a better society.



Submissions Deadline for
AS WE ARE #5

SEPT. 8, 1995

Send submission, SASE, & contact info to
AWA • PO Box 380048 • Cambridge, MA 02238

Matthew Sweet from page 35

record is great and the next day, it's junk. You can't control that thing that's based on a feeling or a moment, it's not something you can plan or construct.

Do you have a lot of control issues in your songs?

Yeah, but doesn't everybody have issues of control? Don't you wish you knew what was happening in your life? In my music, I don't know if control...(pause) control maybe is a big factor in that I got into doing my music on my own and I played all the instruments. But I don't think that was born out of control as much as just a general embarrassment, like not wanting anyone else to hear my ideas 'cause I didn't have that much faith in them. I felt comfortable about it when I didn't have to deal with anyone else's reaction. I guess I can be controlling as much as the next person, sometimes I try and make something go my way. I don't think it's a...maybe it is a central issue in my life in that your life, you can't control. It's really the issue that you can't have control, it's a loss of control. The terrible fear of flying, that's a terrible control issue.

It's an issue for everybody I suppose. Basically, they want someone else to control things or they want to control them.

I think it is and I think it might be one of the reasons that the songs have appeal. People have those things working under the surface. Although they might not think it or they might think it or whatever, they do... I think people do have this vulnerable feeling that "right now I feel as though I don't have control", but it's all an illusion. One of the first, most horrifying moments of my life is when I realized that nobody was feeling particularly stable and no one really knew what was going on or who was in charge. And that was part of becoming an adult for me when I realized that nobody knows anything. That's a scary thing, when you're a kid you think that someone knows what's going on somewhere. I think everyone's faced with coping with that, this major issue of being just afloat in a world that's really quite hostile, and making their way in it. So maybe that is kind of a universal feeling.

Tell us more about "Sick of Myself", it's a great song title.

I just found it amusing, a song called "Sick of Myself." It wasn't supposed to be a statement about me. It's really kind of a bitter-sweet thing. In a way if you really get into that song, it's really kind of sad. But it was born out of a moment when I wrote it, I was in an excited, good kind of mood. I found it sort of humorous that it had the play on my whole thing, almost like "Dinosaur Act" on *Altered Beast*, which was sort of the same way, made fun of rock music but was also a relationship kind-of song. That one came out of nowhere, I wasn't planning on recording it. It was made as a demo, and we just decided to use it.

Oh, I didn't know that.

Yeah, it was a demo I was making with Rick Menck. We were just recording some drums for me to use at home to make a demo later and I wanted great sounding drums for it since we were there anyway. Brendan [O'Brien - producer]

came in and heard us playing it and said "I hope you have words and a tune for it" and I said "I do" and we just finished it and it ended up on the radio.[Laughter]

A very conscious and focused effort, I can see. But why did you go after Brendan O'Brien if he produced the Chili Peppers and Pearl Jam? What kind of things did you hear that you wanted to use?

I thought the records he produced just sounded really good [laughs]. I mean not even just those records, but the Black Crowes, Dan Baird, just like a lot of the people Brendan had worked with. I just thought he didn't seem to have an exact sound, but just like a really good sense of mixing, a real full range.

And that's it?

I was thinking about making a record that was really poppie with a lot of harmonies and everything. And I thought I wanted it to be really strong and direct if I'm going to make this kind of record. So I called my manager and said can I try and get this guy Brendan O'Brien? And it turned out that Brendan was kind of a fan, so really it was pretty easy to put together. I was a little nervous about it before I went in like maybe I was crazy and I don't know what to expect. But once I got with him, I got along with him so great...he's so talented, not only working with sound, but he's also a very talented musician, very motivated, really cares about the stuff he does. It's just like air and water for him. It's just instinctual. He's a rare kind of person I think.

What are the top five albums you're listening to these days.

Oh, man.

I'm not a man!

(Giggles). Beyond the *Valley of the Dolls* soundtrack would have to be #1, for some reason I'm just obsessed with that movie. It just gives me that melancholy feeling. It's just weird and funny and trashy, or cheap. It just gives me this feeling and I think it's because the music is really good too. What else. I got a Bob Wills anthology that I've been listening to that I really like. The Dwight Twilley *Sincerely* record I've been really liking. *Sticky Fingers*, the Rolling Stones record, I've been going through yet another binge on. What else... Frank Black I listen to a lot.

That's pretty good! I didn't think you'd be into digging all those up. But that's pretty good, right off the top of your head.

Those are just things I've played in the last few days.

Which one are you listening to the most, *The Valley of the Dolls*?

Yeah, just because I finally got a copy of the movie. But I already had the cassette.

Do you know that people had told me how nice you were before I talked to you?

Oh, really?! Who told you that.

Well, especially Melissa at Reprise Records.

Oh, Melissa's great!. She's nice too.

I have a specific question. I don't know if you remember a piece by Rob Sheffield in *Details Magazine* it's kind of a different, weird type of review?

I didn't read that one, but I heard it was kind of one of those back-handed ones...like you don't know where he's coming from. I got a lot of those for *100% Fun*. It's like they don't want to say it's bad, but they make sure it's really back-handed so just in case you hated me you wouldn't think it was that good. It's very bizarre. Like they're not quite sure if it's cool to say it's okay or not.

Believe it or not, that's what these people get paid for, being as ambiguous as possible. It doesn't make much sense a lot of the time. I have to laugh when I see the writing.

Sometimes it's really funny like have you read that *Spin* review about *100% Fun*? That one is hilarious. I would be embarrassed to have that one in my magazine. It was such a laugh.

Sheffield wrote something like what you know best is "tormented, romantic yearnings buried deep in the heart of the average, red-blooded American dweeb."
He's just a smart-ass that can't acknowledge his feelings or something.
[Laughter]

Do you think of yourself as the average, red-blooded, American dweeb?

Well, sure I do, but I think of him as an even bigger dweeb [laughs]. Who's the bigger dweeb, a guy who can admit he has feelings, or a guy who can't admit it. Like everyone's a dweeb who looks at people that way, I mean, who'd want to be him. I'll stick with the dweebs.

(Pause here for interviewer and artist to giggle uncontrollably)

Do you think of yourself as a tormented romantic?

I don't know. I guess I don't think of myself that way. Tormented and romantic at times, I guess.

Good answer. You just turned 30,

right?

Yeah, I wish I just turned 30. Before we know it, I'll be 31.

Oh ya? When are you gonna turn 31?

Not till October.

Oh, I'll be 32 in three weeks. So I can't have sympathy for you.

It's not so bad, but you know, time flies.

I've been thinking about getting older! Can you tell me about your song "get older."

It's supposed to be really positive. I like that song. It's like "get older," everybody's doing it. You can't resist."

At the end of that song you say, "If you know what you want?"... and now, do you know what you want? God, I don't know. I think so many people feel that way, like they don't really know what they want. Not only is all the time slipping away, but what's really worth doing? So, I guess I've got so many things that I wanted, I guess I don't really know what I want anymore. I just want to be able to still be able to find a positive feeling and look forward to being alive. I guess that's what I always try to keep inside and look for. It's just something that turns me on and gets me caring about living.

Do you consider yourself a positive person?

I laugh in the face of tragedy as well as anybody does. Yeah, I think I'm pretty positive. I try and have a sense of humor.

Melissa wants me to ask about your sneakers?

What about them?

I'm not exactly sure, to be honest with you. She said there's something about your sneakers that you're really into.

I wore some Airwalks in my video, and I got hooked up with them because of these guys at BMG (records) and they sent me a whole ton of them. Maybe she's talking about my sparkling ruby sneakers.

Yeah, that's it, the ruby sneakers!
I have this magic pair of Airwalks that

I like to think will bring me luck. They're like plastic, they have sort of a metallic, deep ruby-color in them. They're kind of crazy. When they sent them to me I kept looking at them thinking "how can I put these on." I could get a lot of mud over them so they don't look new and shiny, but they still stay shiny. Now they're like my new fashion statement.

So there's glitter inside the plastic?
Only on the ruby ones. They're really kind of maroon. They're kind of dark, they're really not super-loud, but they're crazy enough to attract some attention.

What is it with glitter? All I remember about glitter is dropping it on large clumps of glue when I was little. But other than that I haven't heard much about it since the 70s. And speaking of the 70s, are you going back there?

No.

No? How come people keep accusing you of it, because they're dweebs?

Well, everyone wants to define everything by something else, like if I'm not part of the Green Day revolution, then I wanna be in the 70s. It's gotta be something. I'm not a band, so we can't talk about how cool my band is, or whatever. I'm just a guy. There's a picture of me from the 70s on my record cover so people think of the 70s from that.

So, let's set the record straight about this 70s stuff.

The 70s are fine, really. There's some good stuff there and there are certain things from that time that I like. I mean I grew up then so I guess I'm 70s nostalgic about it, but it's not like I want to head some big 70s revival. I was real glad when the decade was over, but little did I know the 80s were upon us. [Laughter]

I remember Rick saying something I kind of agreed with, a lot of the music from the 80s was so over-produced, which rendered it too banal to care about.

I don't know, compared to now... like Fleetwood Mac records are very...well... they were over-produced in a way that

worked. Then there are those records that are very raw, simple-sounding like Beatles' records, really dry and fat...I bet you're talking like *Boston* right?

You got it. Anyway, it seems like people are going to make you answer for some generation. I hear

"I have to think that if there is a God, I could be a fool and not know and he'd still forgive me.

So I am willing to take that leap and take responsibility for myself and say that he's not there."

you've been given a hard time for not being a spokesperson for your generation?

Well, you know, I don't know 'cause this subject really makes me pissed.

Then by all means, get pissed!
I don't know what a spokesperson for their generation is, what am I supposed to say?!? To me, I don't think of things generationally. I'm not of the pack mentality. I don't want to lead any revolution of anybody. I think of things in terms of people, one-on-one, and my own relationships. I'm not here to preach to anybody. I sympathize with their problems. I'm not gonna tell them how they're gonna change or even if they will.

You would rather just play your music and be left alone.
Yeah, I think most people would rather not be considered a "role model" or "spokesperson", they just want to play their stuff. It's a strange thing to be glorified or to have your music glorified. I mean, I can't speak for anyone else but myself. I think Kurt Cobain was a great artist and a funny guy but...(pause) with records in general, you can't make that much out of them. It's a dream to glorify them to that level. It's just people making some sounds and doing some music. A lot of people will do it again and a lot of people have done it before. When you get into attaching life and death to that, it's gone too far.

Really?

Yeah. One of my favorite things about John Lennon is in this movie when these hippie guys go on a huge trek to meet him, and they come onto his estate. He's talking to them and he's trying to convince them that it's all meaningless and it's just some words the Beatles wrote. It's not worth devoting your life to. I just always respected him for that, because it's so true. I mean Kurt Cobain assured himself a legendary status by the way he chose to die. I can't pretend to know what was going on in his mind or what drove him to that. He must have had a lot of pain or wanted attention beyond what anyone could ever imagine. It's one or the other.

Oh, here! I found the *Details* review, and it's a winner. "Single, white male, 20's, attractive, non-smoker," seeks female companion. Must love the Beatles, obscure Japanese video games, and endless discussions about sexual frustration."

Who knows, people have problems.
[Laughter]

I have to agree with you there. They have to start thinking of themselves a little more. They're missing the point.

What is the point?

Anyone who thinks it's some thing about guys and girls...I don't know, maybe there isn't a point. Maybe they're making up a new point.

I don't think these writers have a point, they just want to sound cool. They usually just sound stupid. Exactly. They're trying to look shifty and creative. I think they look kind of dumb actually... and kind of dweeby. It really is ultimate dweebness. [belly laughter] I really like critics and writers who care about music, and get into it, who are positive about it. Anyone who just lives to be negative is a jerk, and they're missing out on the boat.

I'll take that as a compliment. So what's coming up for you?
Touring, touring, more touring.

And who's in the lineup?

Tony Marsico plays bass and sings, and that would be before *Altered Beast* or around that time... Stewart Johnson, who plays drums on the other half of the new record, is playing drums, and Ivan Julian is on lead guitar.

Sounds great. So why don't you wrap up by telling me what your idea of "100% fun" is?
It's that moment when you tell yourself, "I'm really happy now, don't forget it." So you won't forget later on. If you've never had that moment, maybe you never had 100% fun. 

Editorial assistance by Jim Bouzan.



see You

Elder from page 64

• **BROCKTON, MA:** Brian Joseph Clayton, 20 founder of the New Dawn Hammershins, pleaded guilty of conspiring to violate the civil rights of Jewish and Black citizens of Brockton and Randolph.

• **LITCHFIELD, CT:** Russell Trimm, 25 was indicted on federal charges that he burned a cross on a black family's lawn. David LaCasse and Timothy Winslow, both 22, pleaded guilty to participating in the cross burning.

• **ISLAND PARK, NY:** Mark Metzger, 43, was sentenced to two to six years in prison for participating in the racially-motivated beating of three Black youths at a restaurant.

• **PORT JEFFERSON STATION, NY:** Stephen Sobczak, 23, was charged with a bias crime after he threw a pig's head through an Orthodox Jewish family's window.

• **FLINT, MI:** Law enforcement agents in 1994 seized 10 guns, including six Chinese assault rifles, and some 200 rounds of ammunition during a raid at the residence of Eric S. Chapman, Grand Dragon of the Templar Knights of the KKK.

How bad is it getting? Several hate groups have formed an alliance with Aryan Nations, among them the White Order Knights in Colorado, the White Knights of Missouri and the Nebraska-based National Socialist German Workers Party-Overseas Organization (NSDAP-AO). The alliance between the European-based NSDAP-AO, the most prolific worldwide distributor of neo-Nazi literature and Aryan Nations gives Butler's group the distribution rights to NSDAP-AO's anti-Semitic tabloid, *The New Order*, read by thousands of neo-Nazi Skinheads in the U.S. and Canada. Aryan Nations distributes this hate rag together with its own scurvy propaganda.

While Bob Dole bashes Hollywood and defends right-wing talk radio against "political correctness," the hate groups are becoming even more defiant of any kind of law-enforcement opposition. They are exploiting the GOP stands against immigration, gun control, states rights, abortion and homosexuality to recruit members.

Right-wing politicians are tapping into these messages of hate, guns and the White Christian American Way for support. In late January, House Speaker Newt Gingrich promised Rev. Lou Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition that Gingrich would convene hearing to examine gay "influences" on public education. Sheldon has called homosexuality "the most pernicious evil today."

Right-wing GOP leaders are pushing to include in a budget rescission package a permanent "Hyde Amendment," which would allow states to deny Medicaid funds from being expanded for abortions in cases of incest and rape.

Right-wing politicians will introduce a Constitutional amendment to prohibit the "physical desecration" of the United States flag, timing it for passage just as the Presidential and Congressional campaigns heat up.

Many in the ultra-right wing call themselves "ministers" of self-proclaimed "church," and right-wing GOP politicians are bending these messages of hate, guns and the White Christian American Way their own way. Religious Right leaders are working with Rep. Ernest Istook (R-OK), Gingrich's pointman on school prayer. Gingrich, Istook and their friends are pushing a constitutional amendment on "religious expression" in public places. Religious Right allies in Congress, including Sen. Jesse Helms and Rep. Sam Johnson, plan to introduce a federal funding cut-off proposal designed to push schools into allowing so-called "voluntary"

prayer.

Here's the kind of far right wing crap on school prayer you and I will be hearing more and more of in the months ahead:

Randall Terry, founder of Operation Rescue - "What this is coming down to is who runs the country. It's us against them. It's the good guys versus the bad guys. It's the God-fearing people against the pagans, and some of the pagans are going to church."

Jerry Falwell, founder of the Moral Majority: "Our goal has been achieved. The Religious Right is solidly in place, and religious conservatives in America are now in for the duration."

Pat Robertson, televangelist: "There is nothing in the U.S. Constitution that sanctifies the separation of church and state."

Pat Buchanan, Republican presidential candidate: "There is a religious war going on in our country for the soul of America."

Newt Gingrich: "The Supreme Court's school prayer decisions were bad law, bad history and bad culture. And if the court doesn't want to reverse itself, then we have an absolute obligation to pass a constitutional amendment to instruct the court on its error."

Jesse Helms: "The liberals talk incessantly about separation of church and state even though it is not even in the Constitution. The First amendment certainly does not say anything about separation of church and state."

I'm reminded of a song repeated over and over in a PBS television drama about RAF pilots during the Battle of Britain: "The Bells of Hell go ding-a-ling, a-ling, they ring for you and not for me."

The Battle for the soul of America is ringing in this pagan's ears. Who's fighting alongside me?



Next Time!



Rick Friedman is:

FAR RIGHT
FAR LEFT
FAR OUT
FAR DOWN
FAR UP
FAR IN
FAR OUT
FAR DOWN
FAR UP
FAR IN



FAR RIGHT vs.
FAR LEFT

In the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing there's been an outpouring of GOP crap comparing the far right with today's far left. Bullshit.

There was a far left once, back in the 1960s and early 1970s, which included the Weather Underground, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Youth International Party (YIPPIES), and the Black Panthers (like H. Rap Brown). Like the Far Right of today, the Weather Underground blew up buildings and robbed banks. SDS and the Yippies made a lot of noise and H. Rap scared the shit out of white people.

The only thing the Far Right has accomplished in the 1990s is a growing body count of dead abortion doctors, dead abortion clinic workers, dead federal employees, dead kids, dead day care workers, dead Jews, dead gays, dead Blacks, dead Hispanics and the deaths of some of the far right's own well-armed, barricaded nutcases.

Yet since the Gulf War, today's far left has been gripped by a malaise that it is only just beginning to shake out of – as the attacks of the far right grow too serious for Americans of good conscience to ignore. Sadly for me, today's left is still just a pale shadow of what it once was.

The Far Right today is shouting to blow out my eardrums. There is no effective mass far left movement today. But there sure as hell is a far right, along with the religious right – that is after my ass and yours. They've made hate crimes part of truth, justice and the American Way.

What is the far left today? Rap music? I haven't heard of Public Enemy bringing a federal building down with people inside of it. Who or what the hell is there out there on the left that compares with the Aryan Nations? Oliver Stone? Aryan Nations is one of the most violent, radical neo-Nazi groups in America. These Idaho-based fascists swept into 15 new states last year after being in only three in 1993. Richard Butler, who founded these Hitler-lovers two decades ago, predicts his armed spastics will be in 30 states by the end of 1995. Butler and his white supremacist army are coming

our way. Fully armed.

How bad is it getting? The New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence project, "Gay/Lesbian-Related Homicides, 1992-1994," documented the murder of 151 gay and lesbian victims in 29 states and the District of Columbia. Nearly 19 percent were judged to be motivated by anti-gay bias. An additional 26 percent were suspected of being committed by gay bashers. How many straight people have members of Queer Nation killed?

According to the Anti-Defamation League, in 1994 there was a 10.6 percent increase in anti-Semitic acts over 1993. How many acts of violence against Christ-lovers has the New Jewish Agenda committed?

How bad is it getting? Aryan Nations leader and Identity Christian "minister" Mark Thomas has a 24-acre compound near Macungie, PA, where semi-automatic weapons are used on targets that show a "running nigger." There's also a Jewish target. As many as 300 Skinheads, Aryan Nation members, and assorted Klan groups have gathered at Thomas' property during the past three years to shoot at "running niggers" and cardboard Jews that must resemble me.

The reason for these targets: training members in anticipation of a "racial holy war" the group says it may have to start to rid America of dangerous people like me. Hell, I once was turned into the FBI for making fun of J. Edgar Hoover police bulletins in a newspaper column.

How bad is it getting? Aryan Nations members, Identity believers, Posse Comitatus partisans and former Klansmen are entrenched in militia units in nine states: Montana, Idaho, Colorado, Michigan, Texas, Missouri, Tennessee, Florida and Pennsylvania. Breathe easier. They'll protect us all against Gangsta Rap and Hip-Hop.

If you live on the east coast and feel safe from these nuts, forget it. They are no longer just in faraway-sounding places like Idaho Falls, ID. They're on your doorstep. I pulled the following from a long 1994 list in Klan Watch's most recent "Intelligence Report."

In a World that's Media Jungle.

It combines the excitement of television, the in-depth possibilities of print with the interactivity of the personal computer.

It's the ideal vehicle for advertising, catalog sales, and information publishing.

It's the killer application of the 90's, the multimedia way to the Information Superhighway.

It reaches millions of affluent, interested users around the world for less than the cost of a magazine ad.

With qualities like that, you are guaranteed a whale of a profit!

Who is the King of Beasts?

VirtuMall New Media Marketing is your one-stop shop for establishing a profitable presence on the World-Wide-Web

Virtumall's services include on-line ordering by credit card or check number, transaction security, on-line marketing, user statistics, digitization of graphics and text, and 24-hour technical support

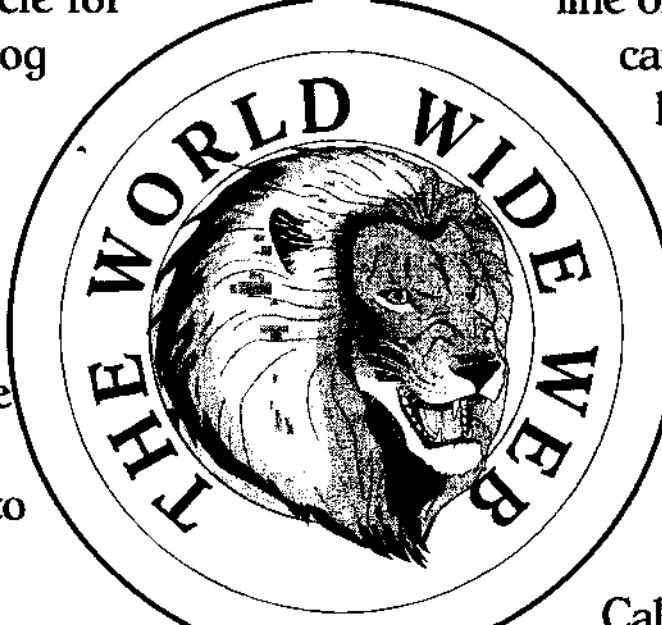
Call us today to find out what the World-Wide-Web can do for your business!

1-800-VMALL 96

VIRTUMALL

VIRTUMALL NEW MEDIA MARKETING

930 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
Phone: (617) 497-8006 • FAX: (617) 492-0486
E-mail us at comments@virtumall.com
Our address on the World-Wide-Web is:
<http://virtumall.com/>



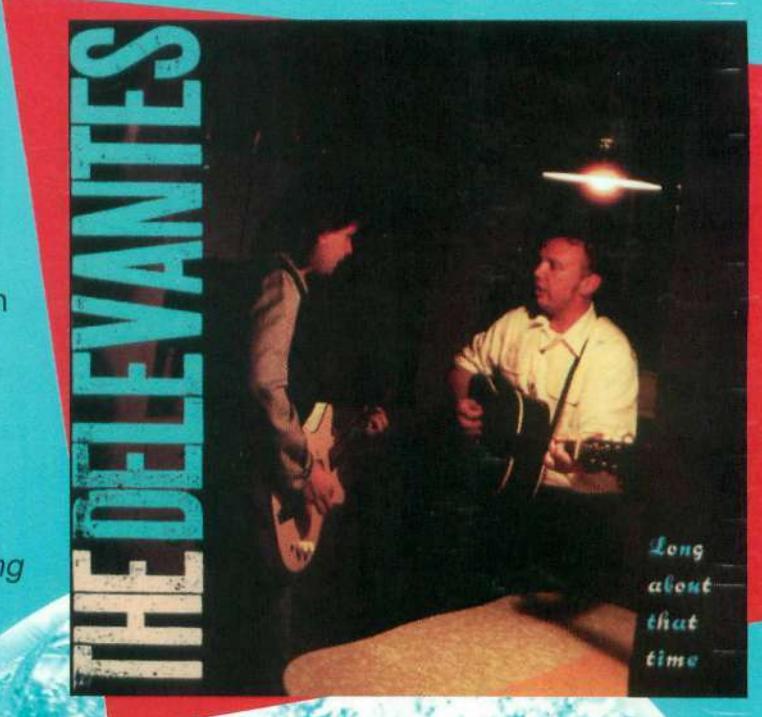
THE DELEVANTES

Long About That Time

Rounder 9041

Brothers Bob and Mike Delevante moved to Nashville from Hoboken, New Jersey and soon became one of the most talked-about new acts in Music City. Their fresh blend of American roots rock and country features intelligent, hook-filled songs played with enormous energy and sung in delicious sibling harmony. Their debut album *Long About That Time* is produced by E Street Band veteran Garry Tallent. "All I can tell you is that it's great music. All you need to know is that The Delevantes are one of the most talented bands in America today."

—Robert K. Oermann



*Long
about
that
time*



ROUNDER
RECORDS

SINCE 1970

To order by phone using Visa, Mastercard, or American Express, call 1-800-44-DISCS.